

Precinct Statement

Adopted 24 September 2012, updated October 2013



DESCRIPTION

Precinct 29 is situated along the northern side of Harcourt Street in Hawthorn East. The majority of this precinct is within the Harcourt Street heritage overlay area (HO151) which is significant for its concentration of Victorian mansions.

The precinct has a unique character created by grand buildings which are often set deep into the site behind large, landscaped front gardens. The sense of spaciousness is reinforced by wide lot frontages (20m or more) and substantial side setbacks, which separate buildings from one another.

Although fence heights are varied, where fence heights are low, the generously landscaped front gardens provide greenery to the streetscape. Medium and large street trees positioned along grassy nature strips enhance the leafy green feel of the precinct.

Design Guidelines

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Concentration of Victorian mansions;
- 1 to 2 storey dwellings;
- Deep front setbacks;
- Generously landscaped front gardens;
- Large side setbacks;
- Low to medium height front fences; and
- Large gardens.

PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

To enhance the consistent, grand character of streetscapes by maintaining the strong presence of the precinct's historic dwellings.

This will be achieved by:

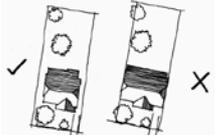
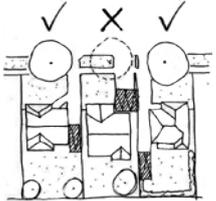
- Discouraging subdivision of historic mansion sites;
- Encouraging the retention of large trees and landscaped gardens;
- Ensuring new developments and additions do not dominate adjoining historic places;
- Encouraging design that integrates with the heritage styles of the precinct;
- Ensuring garages and carports do not dominate the streetscape;
- Maximising soft landscaping and minimising areas of hard surfaces;
- Encouraging the retention of original fences; and
- Ensuring new fences are appropriate to the dwelling behind.

THREATS/ISSUES

- Loss of historic buildings;
- Loss of historic front gardens to subdivision or new buildings;
- New buildings that dominate adjoining heritage places;
- Unsympathetic or dominant dwelling extensions;
- Car parking structures in front setbacks that obscure views of the dwelling behind;
- High front fences and front fences that are inappropriate to the dwelling; and
- Removal / loss of large trees.

Design Guidelines

TABLE OF ELEMENTS

CHARACTER ELEMENT	OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID	ILLUSTRATION
VEGETATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain the historic landscaped setting of dwellings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain the historic front gardens of significant heritage properties. Ensure the retention of large trees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of large trees. Loss of front gardens to buildings and hard landscaping. 	 <p><i>Encourage landscaped gardens</i></p>
SITING AND BUILDING HEIGHT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain the significance of the precinct's historic buildings. To maintain the existing well vegetated backyard character. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the siting and height of buildings complies with Council's Heritage Policy, maintains the landscaped, garden character of the street and retains the views of the precinct's historic buildings. Ensure buildings are setback from both side boundaries to retain the spacious setting of dwellings. Ensure buildings are sufficiently setback from rear boundaries to maintain the open, backyard character of the immediate area where this exists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings set in front gardens that negatively impact on historic gardens or that obscure views of the historic buildings behind. Dwellings built too close to their rear boundary with other residential properties. 	 <p><i>Side setbacks</i></p>
FRONT BOUNDARY TREATMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure the height and design of front fences are appropriate to the era of the dwelling and integrate with the streetscape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure front fences are no more than 1.5m in height and are appropriate to the era and style of the dwelling behind. Ensure the retention of original front fences where heritage overlays apply. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High solid front fences. Fence designs that are inappropriate to the era and style of the dwelling. 	 <p><i>Avoid high front fences</i></p>
CAR PARKING STRUCTURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure basement garages do not increase the visual bulk of buildings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure basements project no more than 0.5m above natural ground level, unless the finished floor level of abutting properties is greater than 0.5m. Where possible, locate the entry to basement garages to the side or rear of dwellings so they are not visible from the street. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Driveways and car parking structures that dominate the front setback. Basement ramps that commence at the street frontage. Basement garages that result in buildings with a 2.5 to 3 storey appearance from the street. 	 <p><i>Location of car parking structures</i></p>

General Information

ABOUT THE NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER STUDY

This Precinct Statement was completed in 2012. The methodology involved a review of the Residential Urban Character Study from 1996 as well as substantial community consultation and fieldwork. As a result of this review the City's residential areas have been divided into 75 precincts.

The common characteristics of each area in terms of building scale, setbacks, building style and form and the area's landscape character were taken into account when determining the boundaries of each precinct.

The resulting Neighbourhood Precinct Character Statements describe the existing character of each precinct as well as the precinct's preferred future character.

Those characteristics most valued by the community were reflected in the preferred character statements. The accompanying design guidelines table provides direction for new buildings which ensure future development assists in achieving the area's preferred character.

The Boroondara Neighbourhood Character Study is based on an analysis of existing neighbourhood character and does not take into account other planning policy objectives such as housing capacity, access to services and sustainability.

HOW THE PRECINCT STATEMENTS WILL BE USED

The Precinct Statements will be used when assessing planning permit applications in residential zones. In instances where no planning permit is required (e.g. for single dwellings on lots over 500m²), the Precinct Statements will be used when assessing report and consent applications to vary the siting requirements of the Building Regulations.

New development proposals will be assessed against the directions contained in the "objective", "design response" and "avoid" columns in the design guidelines Table of Elements. Proposals will need to demonstrate how they meet the objectives in the table if they do not meet the relevant "design response" or "avoid" criteria.

With the exception of the guidelines relating to rear garden character, the view from the street will be used to assess consistency with the design guidelines. Existing development that does not comply with the design guidelines should not be used as a precedent when designing new buildings or building extensions.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

The Precinct Statements will be used in conjunction with other policies and guidelines in the Boroondara Planning Scheme.

Where a conflict occurs between the Precinct Statements and an existing Design and Development Overlay or Council's Heritage

Policy, the provisions of the Design and Development Overlay or Council's Heritage Policy will take precedence.

Glossary

CHARACTER ELEMENTS IN DESIGN GUIDELINES TABLE OF ELEMENTS

- **Building Height and Form** – refers to building height (as measured from natural ground level), roof form and the massing of building elements.
- **Building Materials and Design Details** – refers to external building materials, façade articulation and design elements such as verandahs, awnings, window configurations and eaves.
- **Car Parking Structures** – refers to the presence and location of on-site car parking structures such as garages, carports, driveways and uncovered car spaces.
- **Front Boundary Treatment** – refers to the presence, height and style of front fences.
- **Lot Frontage** – refers to the width of lots.
- **Siting** – refers to front setbacks, side setbacks and the area's rear garden character.
- **Vegetation** – refers to the trees and landscaping on the site.

GENERAL TERMS

- **'Box'-like** – refers to a building with proportions and detailing that give the building a box-like appearance. Typical characteristics include sheer two storey walls, no or narrow eaves, a symmetrical, un-articulated front facade and a low pitched or flat roof form with parapet detailing.
- **Historic Buildings** – refers to early buildings that date from the establishment of the area or that are important to the area's history.
- **Heritage Buildings** – refers to historic buildings that are subject to statutory protection through a Heritage Overlay or the Victorian Heritage Register.
- **Period Reproduction Design** – refers to design that incorporates mock heritage detailing such as Mock-Georgian and Mock-French Provincial elements.
- **Front Setback** – The distance between the front property boundary and the dwelling, categorised as:
 - **Small:** 0 to 5 metres
 - **Medium:** 5 to 9 metres
 - **Large:** 9+ metres
- **Front Fence Height:**
 - **Low:** 0.5 to 1.2m high
 - **Medium:** 1.2m - 1.5m high
 - **High:** over 1.5m high
- **Roof Forms:**
 - **Flat** – refers to a roof with a gradient of 10 degrees or less.
 - **Pitched** – refers to a roof with two slopes that meet at a central ridge.
- **Multi-Unit Dwellings:**
 - **Flats / Apartment Buildings** – refers to several dwellings contained in a multi-storey structure.
 - **Town Houses** – refers to dwellings of 2 or more storeys that have their own entrance and private yard, but which adjoin another dwelling.
 - **Villas** – refers to groups of dwellings which have their own entrance and private yard, which may or may not adjoin another dwelling, but which generally share common areas such as driveways and car parking.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Understanding Planning Terms Information Sheet, City of Boroondara, (search for this title at <http://www.boroondara.vic.gov.au>).

What house is that? A Guide to Victoria's Housing Styles, Heritage Victoria, (search for this title at <http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/heritage>).

ResCode provisions, Clause 54 and 55 of the Boroondara Planning Scheme at <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/boroondara/home.html>.