

2.1

GENERIC PROVISIONS URBAN DESIGN







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Part 2 Generic Provisions

2.1 Urban Design

Urban design concerns the arrangement, appearance and functionality of urban environments. It involves the shaping and management of built form and public space. Good urban design can improve the quality of the urban environment, bring environmental and economic benefits, enhance communities and neighbourhoods, enrich urban culture and improve sustainability. Urban design integrates the processes and expertise of town planning, transportation planning, architecture, landscaping, art, engineering, environmental management, social sciences and economics.

A good public environment requires care, skill and attention in its creation and management. This section ensures good urban design is integral to all substantial development that impacts the public environment. Different components of this section will be relevant to different types of development. Many of the urban design principles in Section 2.1.1, for example, will only be applicable to the preparation of masterplans, large developments and works in the public domain.

2.1.1 Urban design principles

The following twelve urban design principles are essential for the effective functioning of good public environments everywhere. They all have a part to play in making places that are valued and significant for those who use them. Each principle contains a summary statement and more detailed explanatory text.

2.1.1.1 Principle 1: Structure and connections

Organise places that are consistent with, or improve, the urban structure and are well connected.

Structure refers to the way an urban area is physically put together to form an overall layout. Elements include the predominant landform; networks of natural systems, open spaces and landscape; street and block patterns; hierarchies of movement routes; networks of public spaces; defining edges and barriers; and identifiable areas at different scales. Closely spaced and integrated movement networks linked to well-used routes provide greater connectivity and permeability; increases potential interaction, exchange and choice for residents; and supports the use of sustainable forms of transport. The fundamental structure of the LGA will be difficult to change but forms the primary foundation for continuity. Well structured elements of the urban environment can form the basis for a coherent functioning whole and support current activities and accommodate evolving change to use and form.

2.1.1.2 Principle 2: Accessibility

Provide ease, safety and choice of access for all people

Movement routes interconnect urban areas, but the ease and flexibility of access can vary. Direct physical access to activities combined with the ability to see into and understand places are crucial to a well functioning public environment. Access for different modes of travel is essential and must focus on the walkability of the urban environment. Access for wheelchairs, prams, bikes, public transport and motor vehicles is also important, in this order of priority, as are the connections between different modes. A choice of routes provides different options and experiences, links different destinations, supports different modes of travel and maintains activation of the public environment.

Good public spaces invite freedom of access and avoid exclusivity or coercion. Physical access should be supported by visual access, which implies direct sightlines or unfolding views, signs or other visual cues, as well as being able to see other people.

2.1.1.3 Principle 3: Complementary mix of uses and types

Maintain and create a complementary mix of uses and types of buildings and spaces

The Inner West LGA offers a range of experiences and opportunities to access education, employment, housing, business, community services, retail, entertainment, recreation, open spaces and other activities. Locating uses close to each other enables easy access to a range of required activities and supports a more sustainable compact city form. The degree to which uses are mixed will vary from a full mix in centres or specific mixed use areas through to areas where there is a predominant use with other supporting uses.

A broad mix of building types within an area offers choice in terms of housing diversity, easier relocation within the same area, greater diversity of activity, greater socio-economic mix, interesting streetscapes and different age and condition of building stock that allows for different market pricing.

A mix of public space types suits different locations, activities, lifestyles or life stages; meets different urban activity or recreation needs; and enriches an area.

Activities can conflict or be mutually supportive. Good urban design encourages complementary relationships between differing uses and types.

2.1.1.4 Principle 4: Appropriate density

Provide appropriate density, with the highest density focused on commercial centres and public transport nodes where accessibility is the greatest

Increasing density in commercial centres and transportation nodes can make the Inner West LGA more sustainable. Higher densities reduce the pressure of urban sprawl; reduce the distance to activities and transport; support sustainable transport, especially walking; encourage a more active, healthy and engaging pedestrian oriented lifestyle; support community networks; improve the efficiency and viability of public infrastructure; reduce the energy use, pollution and waste; and support the demand for appropriate accommodation diversity.

A sliding scale of density must be provided, that reduces density further out from commercial centres and transport hubs. This provides for a variety of choice and reduces development pressure on established lower density areas that have high heritage, streetscape and other amenity values.

2.1.1.5 Principle 5: Urban form

Manipulate urban form to clearly define public and private space and create spaces that are appropriate to the hierarchy, function and character of places

The form and fabric of a place define the living environment and establish a hierarchy of both public and private spaces. The form of buildings and hard and soft landscaping creates spaces with different scales and proportions appropriate to the function and character of different places, and can also emphasise varying degrees of movement and rest. The urban form should create a clear distinction between public and private



space with buildings addressing public space and not creating ambiguous leftover spaces that become unused and uncared for.

2.1.1.6 Principle 6: Legibility

Help people to understand how places work and to find their way around

Legibility is the ability for people to read and move around the urban environment by understanding what landscape and streetscape features can be followed to get to a destination; where it is safe or appropriate to walk; where a public building is located; and where the required entry might be. This understanding relies on the legibility of the urban environment rather than signs. People understand their urban environment in consistent and predictable ways, forming mental maps based on paths, nodes, landmarks, edges and districts. The Inner West LGA needs easily understood urban design language components.

2.1.1.7 Principle 7: Activation

Stimulate activity and a sense of vitality in public places

Inner West LGA's urban spaces are safer and more attractive when they are being used. Good urban design introduces active, safe, well-used public spaces by orienting public aspects of building frontages toward streets and other spaces. Activities in and overlooking public spaces provide eyes on the street that increase personal safety and help prevent crime. The most activated spaces are those which accommodate a variety of activities throughout day and night and are used as pedestrian movement through to places people want to go to. Most activity occurs naturally when public spaces are well designed; however, special places may incorporate special events that further establish place identity. Careful attention to the processes of activation creates opportunities for civic interaction, community development and the sharing of culture.

2.1.1.8 Principle 8: Fit and adaptable public space

Support the intended use of spaces while also allowing for adaptability

Public space must be useful, efficient, comfortable, safe, healthy and generate diverse activity. To create these places, design must consider the behaviour and requirements of users to create a way for different spaces to support different uses. Spaces should be adaptable for a variety of people, uses, events, weather patterns, times of the day and weekly and seasonal cycles, is most desirable.

2.1.1.9 Principle 9: Sense of place and character in streetscapes and townscapes

Recognise, preserve and enhance the characteristics that give places a valued identity and create high quality and distinctive streetscapes and townscapes

Places are valued because of their individual characteristics. The identity of the Inner West LGA can be closely linked to the identity of its citizens. Urban design should understand, preserve, celebrate and continue to develop high quality and distinctive streetscape and townscape character. Section 2.1.2 provides a detailed description on the characteristics that form streetscapes and townscapes in the area where this DCP applies and Section 2.1.3 provides guidelines on fitting infill development into the area's streetscapes.

2.1.1.10 Principle 10: Consistency and diversity

Balance design consistency and diversity to create order and interest

Design diversity is valued for intellectual and aesthetic stimulation, but too much diversity is chaotic and characterless. The Inner West LGA needs to balance consistency and diversity, and individuality and community. Successful urban design

will mix unifying elements to create coherence and order in the public domain, punctuated by elements that are different and creatively challenging. Difference is particularly appropriate at important public spaces and buildings, landmark and gateway sites or elements with unique social and cultural meanings.

2.1.1.11 Principle 11: Continuity and change

Enhance the sense of place and time by embracing change yet respecting heritage values

The Inner West LGA has changed with the culture that underpins it. As it has grown and developed, its cultural identity has evolved. Urban design should consider both the past and the future. Retaining elements of the public environment from generation to generation helps define cultural identity. The continuity maintained by the LGA's fundamental structure should be overlaid with the preservation of important sites, buildings and artefacts and the retention of the cultural identity of places as they evolve. A rich cultural heritage can be seen in the layering of elements from different periods, including contemporary contributions.

2.1.1.12 Principle 12: Sensory pleasure

Create places that engage the senses and delight the mind

Sense involves more than appearance - it includes hearing, taste, smell and touch, and awareness of position and movement through space and across topography. Design should engage sensory abilities other than sight. Good urban design addresses visible and invisible dimensions of human experience by creating rich urban environments from the broad scale down to the detail that delights the mind. In doing so, the design of a place can trigger a positive emotional response and enhance a sense of self-worth and belonging.

Objective

- O1** To achieve high quality urban design.

Control

- C1** All development applications involving substantial external changes that are visible from or effect public space or have significant land use implications must be consistent with the relevant aspects of the 12 urban design principles that make good public environments, which are to be addressed within the Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE).

2.1.2 Streetscape and townscape

One of the critical aspects of urban design is streetscape and townscape. Streetscape refers to all the visual elements of a street that combine to form the street's character. Townscape refers to the overall appearance or perception of a definable area. It may be a commercial centre, or a residential precinct bounded by major roads or topographic features.

Streetscape and townscape character is generated by the combination of:

- Topography and natural features;
- Public space type (such as roads, streets, lanes, squares, parks, nature reserves, waterways or car park areas);
- Street structure (such as grid or cul-de-sac, cross or T-intersections, orthogonal or obliquely angled, block size and proportion);
- Subdivision pattern (such as shape, dimensions, area and orientation);



T – intersection provides long front on views of houses.



Victorian character of Dulwich Hill shopping centre with interesting silhouette of parapets and awnings unifying the townscape.



- Street type (such as width, carriageway/footway/landscaping arrangement and proportion, straight or curved);
- Building setbacks;
- Buildings, fences and other structures (such as type, scale, orientation, form, style and use);
- Street/building height to width proportion;
- Street trees and other hard/soft landscaping in streets and private land;
- Materials and finishes; and
- Car parking arrangements.

Some areas may have a distinctive townscape with clearly distinguished characteristics and borders, such as key buildings. In other cases the character of areas is mixed and the characteristics of one area may merge into another.

For example, Inner West LGA's commercial centres have maintained an essentially unified townscape, each having an individual character which should be protected and enhanced while still allowing for change. The consistent silhouette of roof profiles and parapet lines against the sky and continuity of shop awnings are unifying characteristics. The existing and desired future character of centres where this DCP applies is discussed in Part 9 (Strategic Context) of this DCP. Part 8 (Heritage) of this DCP provides details on the heritage significance and contributory elements of the streetscape for heritage conservation areas (HCAs).



Oblique intersection at Stanmore commercial centre opens up the space and provides angled views to the buildings on the western side.



Three storey hotel acts as a marker of the Stanmore commercial centre.



Waratah Mills – Displays industrial scale and townscape character.

Inner West LGA's streetscapes and townscapes are a tangible record of its development history. Understanding, preserving, celebrating and continuing to develop high quality and distinctive streetscape and townscape character can create a cohesive public environment and cultural identity.

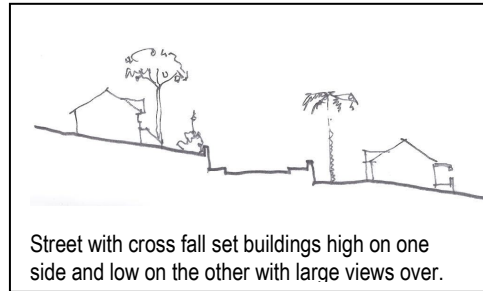
The LGA has been divided into a series of planning precincts with identifiable townscape features and character. Planning precincts are discussed in Part 9 (Strategic Context) of this DCP.

2.1.2.1 Topography

Topography strongly influences streetscapes. On land where this DCP applies, commercial centres and streetscapes containing grand villas on larger lots are often located along the relatively flat ridge tops where they are prominent and usually on wide connecting roads that follow the ridge tops and contain more open vistas. Industrial uses are frequently located on low lying land. Flat terrain often produces symmetry of scale on both sides of the street, sometimes with long enclosing vistas. Undulating topography can produce stepped building forms and vistas that extend beyond the street space. The Abergeldie Estate, for example, contains curved streets that follow the ridge lines, which can produce spatial closure and interesting oblique views to the buildings bordering the space. Where there is sloping topography, streets vary depending on the steepness of the slope and orientation in relation to the slope.

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Where the slope falls across the street, buildings are raised above the street on one side and set down on the other. Where streets run on the slope there are distinctly different vistas looking up and down the slope.



2.1.2.2 *Subdivision pattern*

The grain of a streetscape is determined by the arrangement and size of buildings on their allotments. Small allotment subdivisions, as occur throughout the earlier developed parts of the area, produce a finer grain than larger allotment subdivisions. For example, the subdivision pattern of parts of Camperdown and Newtown have lots that are consistently small, narrow in frontage, high depth to width proportion and orthogonally oriented to the street. This is very different to the subdivision pattern of parts of Dulwich Hill that has variable lots, larger in area, wider in frontage, lower depth to width proportion and that include different orientations to the street.



Single storey scale and fine grain of terrace house row on small allotments. The uniform ridge line is an important unifying characteristic.

2.1.2.3 *Street space and scale*

Street spaces can vary widely from the tight narrow pattern of the earlier developed eastern parts of the area, with buildings built close to front and side boundaries, to the wider carriageways in the parts that developed in the Inter-War years with single storey houses spaced apart and set back at the front.

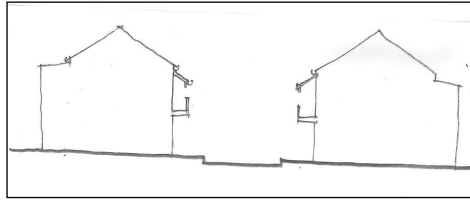
The presence of street planting also makes a difference to the way street spaces are experienced.

The scale of the street space is a product of its width and the height of bordering buildings. The predominantly single storey scale and wider streets of the Inter-War period housing areas creates a more open street space.

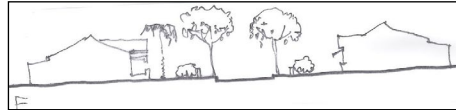
Narrow streets with two storey terraces on both sides produce a confined intimate scale. Some streets, in smaller precincts in Petersham and Lewisham, have a scale which is a product of concentrations of Inter-War period residential flat buildings.



Larger scale and industrial character of a factory building.



Intimate scale of narrow street space bordered by two storey terraces.



Open street space with single storey houses and deep front gardens.
Street tree planting can create a more enclosed feel to the space.

Where warehouse and factory buildings of three and more storeys are congregated, such as in parts of Camperdown, the very different height to width ratio creates a distinctively industrial feel to the street space.

2.1.2.4 Building character

The differences in building character across the Inner West LGA reflect the different phases of development. The sizes and types of buildings also contribute to the character of streetscapes.

The character varies from the mid to late Victorian streets of one storey and two storey terrace houses, to streets lined by Federation period cottages and semi-detached houses, to the very consistent streetscapes of Inter-War period brick and tile single storey dwelling houses.



Early Victorian terraces built to the boundary reflect an earlier period and character. In this example, the buildings form the walls on the street frontage.



Federation period cottages with small front gardens produce a different scale and character.

Building designs that give no consideration to the architectural character, scale and massing of existing older buildings detract from the quality of attractive streetscapes and erode their distinct sense of place.

2.1.2.5 Walls and fences

The interface of building sites and the street space is an important aspect of streetscape. Houses, commercial buildings and industrial buildings built to the front boundary result in a marked contrast to areas where low front fences with gardens in generous setbacks prevail.

Materials and heights of fences relate to the buildings of each phase of Inner West LGA's historic development and are part of the relationship between streetscape

elements. High front fences are not part of the streetscape character of Inner West LGA. Refer to Section 2.11 (Fencing) of this DCP for details.



Consistent Inter-War period streetscape with low brick fences and small front gardens

2.1.2.6 Landscaping

Planting in the street and on private land can make a difference to streetscapes. Street tree planting provides public amenity and environmental advantages.

Where front setbacks are small, front gardens generally have low plantings and small trees that are secondary to the buildings. Other areas with deeper front setbacks can have well developed gardens with mature trees which allow screened views of buildings.

In residential areas it is important to minimise hard surfaces in the front of buildings, such as driveways and hard stand car parking, to maximise the streetscape combination of planting of trees, shrubs, grass and front fences.

Refer to Section 2.18 (Landscaping and Open Spaces) of this DCP for details and controls for development and landscaping requirements.

2.1.3 Infill design guidelines

Infill means a new building in an established streetscape. An infill building may be on a vacant site or be a replacement for an existing building that is derelict, incompatible with the streetscape or that underutilises the development potential planned for the site. Good infill design is compatible with its context and makes a positive contribution to the urban or suburban character.

Good infill design needs to appreciate a site's setting, which can only be gained by a site and context analysis. Refer to Section 2.3 (Site and Context Analysis) for more details.



Example of a new contemporary (infill) building showing horizontal and vertical control lines which reveal the pattern of setback, height and openings within the streetscape.

Mock replications of period buildings must be avoided, as they invariably involve a mismatch of stylistic devices from different architectural periods, which is disrespectful to the authentic period buildings and diminishes the historic meaning of their locality.

Successful infill design considers:

1. Character;
2. Scale;
3. Massing;
4. Siting;
5. Materials and colour; and
6. Detailing.

2.1.3.1 Character

The streetscapes and townscapes of the area can be grouped according to a distinguishable character. Character is shaped by a number of factors:

- The underlying land form and landscape elements;
- The age and styles of existing buildings;
- Streetscape;
- Subdivision patterns and historical phases of development;
- Land use;
- Scale and form of buildings;
- Setbacks of buildings (front, side and rear);
- Materials, building techniques, details and colour schemes;
- Views, vistas and skylines;
- Proportions – height to width of building forms and windows and doors;
- Proportion of solid to void;
- Articulation of building form – play of light and shadow on verandahs, awnings, cornices, hoods, recesses, eaves, overhangs and the like;
- Affluence; and
- Planning law/controls.

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Character is the interplay of those factors in an area which marks their uniqueness. Broad areas of the area have been defined as Planning Precincts (see Part 9 (Strategic Context) of this DCP) using many of the factors that contribute to a place.

Some parts have distinct Victorian, Federation or Inter-War period character. Overlaying the historic influences on character is the pattern of land use whether residential, industrial or business.



Two storey scale of Victorian terraces with parapet roofs establish the scale and character of the locality.



Inter-War period buildings create a distinctive character in the Stanmore commercial centre.

Contemporary designs can respect the existing character by complementing and not detracting from the existing buildings that establish that character. Style sheets indicate the key characteristics of residential and commercial buildings in the area in Part 4 (Residential Development), Part 5 (Commercial and Mixed Use Development) and Part 6 (Industrial Development) of this DCP.



Contemporary infill designs can fit into a Federation period streetscapes adapting similar roof forms, and modern versions of the verandah and bay window.



Inter-War period residential streets set a context of cohesive scale, form, materials and details which can be sensitively reinterpreted in a contemporary design.



2.1.3.2 Scale

Infill buildings should generally respond to the predominant scale of their setting. Understanding of the inter relationships of building heights, widths and bulk will maintain the grain of the locality.

Subdivision of larger lots and consolidation of smaller lots can produce buildings of disparate scale, eroding otherwise consistent streetscapes and townscapes.

Out of scale buildings cannot be made visually smaller by minor manipulation of form, detailing or the selected materials, finishes and colour. The effect of its different scale can be reduced by breaking up long wall planes by openings and recesses and roofs into smaller forms to elements more in keeping with the scale of the existing buildings nearby. Setbacks to upper levels can also help to make a transition between adjacent buildings of different scales. Upper level setbacks can also be kept below sight lines from the main vantage points to avoid differences in scale as buildings present to the street.

2.1.3.3 Massing and form

Massing of a building is its overall three dimensional shape or volume. Modelling is the arrangement of the parts of a building to produce the total form. Maintaining a consistent form is important in places where the existing development displays a repetitive building form.

Roof shapes are major generators of building form as seen in many parts of the area. Examples include the cohesiveness of streetscapes in the commercial centres, as generated by repetition of parapet forms made interesting by subtle variations; and the consistency of brick and tile hip and tile bungalows in Inter-War period housing subdivisions such as the Abergeldie Estate.

In some Federation period streetscapes, gables, wide verandahs and slender chimneys are distinctive elements of building form.



Gables, verandahs and porticos with parapet roofs create the forms of small Victorian cottages. The repetition of form and details sets up a rhythm in the streetscape.

Good design considers the form of buildings that contribute to the site context and incorporates these, in a contemporary way, into the design without copying them.

2.1.3.4 Siting

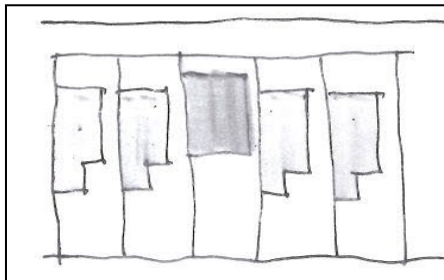
In the well-established neighbourhoods of the area, the siting of buildings is dictated by the rectilinear nature of the subdivision patterns. Buildings are almost universally orientated parallel to allotment boundaries, with a distinguishable setback pattern.



Single storey terraces sited close to front boundary establish a strong pattern.

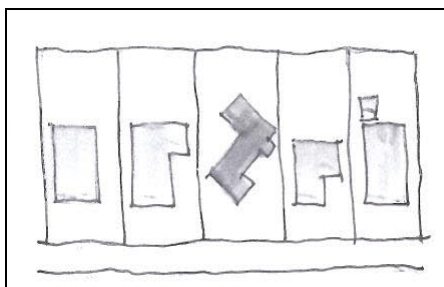
In streets where existing buildings have no side or front boundary setback, new buildings should conform to this arrangement. This applies particularly to the commercial centres.

In the streets with a more suburban character, buildings on wider and deeper Inter-War period allotments can be set 900mm off one boundary and have a driveway on the other with a deep front yard establishing a consistent rhythm set by the gaps between the houses. Infill buildings that eliminate the wide side setback disrupt this rhythm and detract from the streetscape.



Buildings ignoring the predominant setbacks disrupt a consistent streetscape.

Buildings set on an angle to the allotment boundaries will also affect the streetscape negatively. New structures set forward of established building lines such as garages and carports are also detrimental to established streetscape.



Buildings set at an angle break the rectilinear pattern of siting parallel to boundaries.

2.1.3.5 Materials, finishes and colours

The original materials of the older buildings in many of the Inner West LGA's streets are remarkably intact.

Rows of intact small scale detached houses and semi-detached houses have retained their face brickwork (tuck pointed in the early 20th century examples) slate or tile roofs and painted door and window joinery.



Terrace row unified by consistent roof form, terracotta tiled roofs, shared chimneys and iron lace detailing to verandahs.

Terrace rows with rendered walls and parapets, or slate and corrugated steel pitched roofs survive. Although many original traditional paint colours have been altered, they can be restored.

The areas of Inter-War period bungalows provide some of the best examples of retained original materials and colours, with red brick walls, terracotta tile roofs and painted joinery in combinations of cream, dark green and deep red.

The predominant materials and colours of surrounding buildings need not be replicated exactly in infill buildings but can be used to provide points of reference.

Modern materials can harmonise with the traditional materials by managing the proportions and details of new elements. Colour can be applied to a new material to pick up the hues of traditional materials of adjoining buildings. Tonal contrasts can be employed to heighten the prominence of the materials of the existing adjoining buildings and make the infill building complement those buildings.

2.1.3.6 *Detailing*

Details are characteristics that distinguish different periods and styles of buildings, incorporated into building components, such as verandahs, awnings, shutters, chimneys, window joinery, specially moulded bricks and embellishments in plaster and timber.

Identifying and understanding the purpose of details that characterise an area can inspire contemporary responses to help new buildings to fit into the context. For example, shutters and sun hoods have not only aesthetic but also functional value in terms of energy sustainable designs, which can be incorporated into the design of new developments.

Contemporary materials can be joined together in ways that create articulation of form and texture of surfaces to provide visual interest. At the public/private interface details of fences, gates, garden walls and selection and treatment of planting can help new development complement the local character.



Small cottages with consistent rendered walls with subtly varied paint colours, tiled roofs, iron picket fences. Common details such as the porticos, chimneys and timber verandah joinery help to create a unified streetscape.