Moreton Bay Regional Council

Next Generation Neighbourhoods

A Policy Directions Paper informing the Better Housing Amendment

For Public Consultation

Alignment with our roadmap

The Better Housing Amendment is helping to achieve the outcomes of our Corporate Plan 2022–2027 and realise our vision:

Our Moreton Bay. Amazing places. Natural spaces.

The strategic pillar this amendment specifically relates to is:

Our well-planned places

Our well-planned places pillar aims for Moreton Bay to have a network of well-planned and connected places and spaces, enhancing lifestyle, accessibility and employment choices by 2033. This amendment will be considered in the development of our Growth Management Strategy.

Read more about Council's Corporate Plan and the pillars that underpin it at:
moretonbay.qld.gov.au/Services/Reports-Policies/Corporate-Plan#a1-3

Acknowledgment

We acknowledge the Kabi Kabi, Jinibara and Turrbal Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways of the Moreton Bay Region, and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. We recognise that the Moreton Bay Region has always been a place of cultural, spiritual, social and economic significance to First Nations people.

We are committed to working in partnership with Traditional Custodians and other First Nations communities to shape a shared future that celebrates First Nations history and culture as an irreplaceable foundation of our region's collective identity.

Disclaimer

About the Better Housing Amendment

The Better Housing Amendment proposes changes to the *Moreton Bay Regional Council Planning Scheme 2016* (MBRC Planning Scheme) to support *better housing and better neighbourhoods* across our region.

Since the MBRC Planning Scheme commenced, our neighbourhoods have grown and changed. And residents have told us they want more space in their neighbourhoods—for greenery, for privacy and for parking.

This amendment proposes a range of updates to the planning rules to enable Council to address residents' concerns and ensure we achieve housing diversity where we need it most.

The amendment includes changes related to:

- Next Generation Neighbourhoods
- Off-street car parking
- Secondary dwellings
- Student accommodation
- Warner Investigation Area boundary reduction

Better housing, better neighbourhoods

Timeline

2021–2022

Prepare amendment

Changes drafted and submitted to State Government for review

Timing subject to change.

Mid–2023

Public consultation

A formal submission can be made on the proposed amendment

Mid/late 2023

Finalise amendment

Consider feedback and Minister signs off

Late 2023/early 2024

Adopt amendment

Changes formally start

What you will find in this paper

1 Background to this paper

1.1 Purpose

A Council resolution on 29 October 2019 prompted a review of Next Generation Neighbourhoods. This policy directions paper summarises the investigation findings and identifies recommendations for an amendment to the MBRC Planning Scheme.

The focus is in the Next Generation Neighbourhood Precinct (NGNP) of the General residential zone and equivalent Transition Precinct (TP) of the Emerging community zone in the MBRC Planning Scheme, both referred to in this paper as "the precinct".

1.2 Next Generation Neighbourhoods review

Preparing a new policy for planning occurs in a cyclical process, where policy design and implementation 'loop back' to review and ongoing policy improvement.

For any new policy, testing and monitoring is the way to understand whether desired outcomes can be or are being achieved, if any unintended consequences are occurring, and if there are any unnecessary barriers to delivery.

Five years into the implementation of the Next Generation Neighbourhood concept, Council resolved to review development outcomes associated with its Next Generation Neighbourhood Precinct.

The Next Generation Neighbourhood Precinct covers a number of growing areas of the Moreton Bay Region. It traverses all urban parts of the region and many communities have experienced change in these areas and observed it in action.

Community sentiment

Residents, and 'communities of residents' throughout the region have raised ongoing concerns about on-the-ground experiences of Next Generation Neighbourhoods relating mainly to the design and function of dwellings, style of density in particular locations (i.e. townhouses and terrace lots), and impacts to neighbourhood amenity.

The absence of core liveability elements has been a common observation by the community including a lack of greenspace throughout development, poor transitions between established and emerging areas, insufficient car parking, and dwellings without adequate sunlight and natural ventilation.

Industry sentiment

While expressed community concerns have informed the review, this has also been balanced with an appreciation and understanding of the challenges to housing delivery, particularly in a complex and sensitive market like Moreton Bay.

Steps have been taken to engage with local industry stakeholders throughout the review including a formalised Joint Industry Working Group (with four (4) sessions held throughout the latter part of 2021).

Building a legacy—the review

The review presents a pivotal opportunity to 'take stock' and adjust the MBRC Planning Scheme's Next Generation Neighbourhood policy framework to support the delivery of vibrant, varied and comfortable neighbourhoods and remove barriers to dwelling types that support affordable living.

The review has involved significant work to reflect and understand community and industry concerns across a range of development examples. Continued education and communication about the Next Generation Neighbourhood concept and the opportunity it presents for the region is also being undertaken with a **video** and **housing design guidelines** to help current and future residents better understand the opportunities that Next Generation Neighbourhoods provide.

1.3 What are Next Generation Neighbourhoods?

Next Generation Neighbourhoods are intended to provide the greatest mix of dwelling types in the region, to support diverse and affordable housing to meet changing community and household needs.

At present, the precinct is generally focussed around the region's activity centres, train stations and emerging community areas, and aims to support the following key outcomes:

- **Diverse housing options**—a diverse mix of dwelling types—including Dwelling houses (varied lot types and forms), Dual occupancy and Multiple dwellings;
- **Housing mix**—The MBRC Planning Scheme promotes these diverse dwelling types through simpler assessment processes, i.e. no development application needed where certain requirements can be met (accepted development) or only a simple development application without formal public notification (code assessment);

- **Minimum residential density**—a minimum site density of 15 dwellings per hectare to maximise the number of residents benefitting from locational advantages and infrastructure;
- Emphasis on **walking and cycling**, and being well connected to **schools, parkland and community facilities**;
- **Local centres** providing services and employment opportunities; and
- Anticipates that **existing character will change over time** as the Next Generation Neighbourhoods emerge.

1.4 History of Next Generation Neighbourhoods

The concept

Next Generation Neighbourhoods are unique to Queensland planning. As a relatively new concept, it was embraced at its early stages by Moreton Bay Regional Council in preparing the current MBRC Planning Scheme.

The concept came from the **Next Generation Neighbourhood Planning handbook** prepared in 2011 —a joint project of the South East Queensland (SEQ) Council of Mayors (under the federal Housing Affordability Fund) and the Queensland Government.

The need

The handbook responded to the Queensland Government's former SEQ Regional Plan's smart growth principles. These encouraged walkable neighbourhoods with a mix of housing options.

These principles also recognised the need to provide quality housing for people of all income levels and create distinctive, attractive communities.

The opportunity

This signalled a shift toward a vibrant 'new normal' for residential development, and one that Moreton Bay —one of Australia's fastest growing urban regions— sought to embrace.

By their intended nature, set out in the original handbook, Next Generation Neighbourhoods were anticipated to deliver a high quality of design by focusing on the form and mass of buildings, the relationship of buildings to the street, and the relationship of buildings to each other.

The Next Generation Neighbourhood Precinct is intentionally distinguished from traditional suburbs with a greater diversity of housing at different densities anticipated across the precinct compared to other residential areas like the Suburban Neighbourhood Precinct. This is important, as a traditional suburban style of development is not sustainable everywhere, particularly in areas that benefit from easy access to shops, schools, community facilities, and public transport.

While the precinct is about achieving a diverse mix of housing types, the original handbook intended there be transparency and clarity as to how this diversity will be delivered on the ground, and the outcomes that can be expected by the community.

2 Policy directions to support better outcomes

2.1 Key issues

Whilst the review identified a number of issues, those relating to matters that can be addressed or influenced by the MBRC Planning Scheme are the focus of this paper, and include:

Strategic issues

- Inconsistencies about the purpose of the precinct and the scale and intensity of development anticipated, creating uncertainty about density outcomes, future character and intended form.

Planning and design issues:

- Lack of diversity in subdivision layouts and housing products;
- Overdevelopment on small lots—high site cover, small setbacks;
- Design quality of higher density housing types (e.g. townhouses); and
- Lack of green areas—street trees, landscaping, areas between and around buildings, and communal open space.

2.2 Approach

To inform future policy directions, investigation of these issues included:

- Further scrutiny of the MBRC Planning Scheme's expected outcomes for the precinct, and areas of alignment or inconsistency—focused on housing types, expected density and locations.
- Reviewing relevant development applications approved under the MBRC Planning Scheme to understand the effectiveness (or otherwise) of provisions and areas for improvement.
- Input and advice from Council's design experts on best practice urban design principles for key housing types.
- Reviewing and comparing standards with other SEQ (and Queensland) planning schemes to help identify a best practice response.
- Documentation of key findings and recommendations into a policy directions paper (this paper).

The review only focused on design issues for walk-up scale residential development (up to three storeys).

Based on the issues identified though the review, three key policy directions (PD) are proposed to support improved development outcomes in Next Generation Neighbourhoods. Section 3 of this paper outlines the recommendations to achieve these key policy directions.

Policy direction 1
Housing diversity and affordability

The precinct has consistent and clear policy to support its role in delivering a greater mix of dwelling types, including diverse and affordable housing options.

Policy direction 2
Walkable and well-serviced neighbourhoods

To maximise the use of existing infrastructure and deliver high-quality neighbourhoods, the greatest mix of housing types and the highest density of housing forms in the precinct occur in walkable, well-serviced catchments to train stations and existing or proposed higher order and district centres, that provide a wide range of goods, services and employment opportunities.

Outside these areas, reduced housing mix and lower density housing forms are anticipated, recognising the reduced proximity and walkability of these locations to major public transport nodes or centres.

Policy direction 3
Design quality, amenity and liveability

The precinct supports neighbourhoods that:

- contain variety and interest in their built form through a mix of housing types;
- include more greenspace for liveability, amenity, and to reduce 'overdevelopment'; and
- sensitively integrate with their surrounds, where these areas are not planned for growth and change.

3 Recommendations for improvement

3.1 Housing mix and density in the 'right places'

Rationale

The diversity of housing intended in the precinct is not being delivered in a way that is entirely consistent with the original policy intent. The precinct will continue to be the best opportunity in the region to accommodate a broad mix of Dwelling houses, Dual occupancy and Multiple dwellings at various price points in the right, well-serviced locations. Clarity is important, and consultation with industry stakeholders supported density and diversity outcomes increasing in proximity to services and facilities.

Also across the precinct, there are considerable limitations on Dual occupancy development and its various forms (due to an established dispersal policy). There are also limited examples of Dual occupancy and Multiple dwelling developments occurring inside the walkable catchments of train stations and centres. There is an identified policy gap for greater concentrations of higher density housing forms to be incentivised in these catchments; with continued support for a range of varied dwelling products and neighbourhood compositions across the precinct as a whole.

The precinct will continue to support a varied mix of housing types throughout with density expectations clarified. This will improve flexibility in well-serviced areas and redirect the focus of the assessment on appropriate built form and open space outcomes as detailed in the following recommendations of this paper.

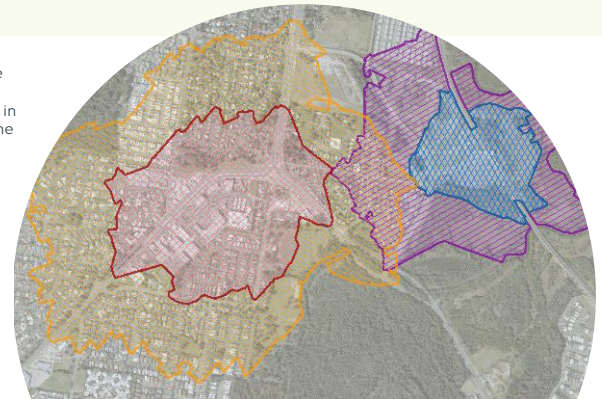
Recommendations

R1

Clarify and strengthen existing policy and add new requirements to better articulate the delivery of housing mix and types expected. This will promote increased densities (than currently occurring) within the walkable catchments such that:

- the existing maximum 75 dwellings/ha site density that currently applies across all Next Generation Neighbourhoods will be:
  - removed for locations inside the walkable catchments (800m radius) around train stations and higher order and district centres to encourage growth and the highest diversity of housing in preferred locations;
  - reduced to 50 dwellings/ha outside the walkable catchments while continuing to support a mix of dwelling types;
- existing provisions regulating the intensity and size of buildings and the amount of open space and landscaping will be strengthened for all Next Generation Neighbourhoods;
- a minimum 15 dwellings/ha site density will be maintained in the strategic framework.

400m and 800m walkable catchments around train stations and centres used in the MBRC Planning Scheme (example at Rothwell).



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Good example

Dual occupancy on a narrower lot within the walkable catchment in Margate. No proposed minimum site dimensions allow one dwelling to locate behind the other and share a driveway.

Recommendations

R2

Remove current regulatory barriers and adjust current design requirements for particular forms of development to support the appropriate location and scale/form of Dual occupancy and Multiple dwellings, including:

- Remove existing dispersal requirements that currently limit where Dual occupancy development can be established.
- Remove minimum frontage width requirements that limit the amount of Dual occupancy development within walkable catchments of train stations and higher order and district centres.
- This form of accommodation supports living and working in well-serviced locations within these catchments. No other changes are proposed to minimum site dimensions for these forms of development within the walkable catchments where they are encouraged.
- Outside of walkable catchments, replace existing dispersal requirements to facilitate Dual occupancy more simply and selectively on lots with a:
  - minimum site area of 450m^2 where having two or more street frontages (e.g. corner lots where parking and access can be better managed); or
  - minimum site area of 500m^2 and minimum frontage width of 15m.
- A new requirement for a minimum site area of 800m^2 for Multiple dwellings where outside the walkable catchments will seek to moderate the scale and intensity of development form, and better incentivise locations inside the walkable catchments.

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3.1 Housing mix and density in the 'right places' *continued*

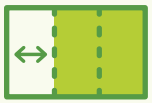
Rationale

Findings from a review of subdivision development applications revealed that a mix of lot sizes does not always facilitate diversity of housing types or design along streetscapes. Although achieving housing diversity is a challenge, the MBRC Planning Scheme can have a positive influence on both housing and design diversity.

Diversity outcomes in the MBRC Planning Scheme can be reframed to require a mix of both detached and attached housing options to help achieve the housing diversity and streetscape variety intended in the precinct. Recommendations for other aspects of development provided in this paper collectively support streetscape diversity and amenity by managing building footprints, tree planting, open space and breaks between dwellings in a complementary way.

Council completed its Housing Needs Investigation (HNI) on 2 November 2022 with key findings identifying a need for increased housing diversity beyond separate houses (including opportunities for smaller dwellings for smaller households) and encouraging more infill development in well-serviced areas which has been a challenge in the region. The recommendations of this paper supporting housing density and mix in the 'right places' seek to align with the HNI findings.

Recommendations



R3

Strengthen existing subdivision requirements to ensure flexibility for lot size and configuration that supports an appropriate variety of housing forms envisaged in the precinct, including:

- A mix of lots supporting the right balance of attached and detached housing forms relative to location—this includes encouraging lots supporting higher density forms such as Multiple dwellings and terrace Dwelling houses in walkable catchments or located near parks, public transport and lower order centres outside these locations;
- A mix of lots supporting an increased scale and intensity of development along streets inside the walkable catchments and a lower intensity that is more dispersed outside these locations;
- Lots arranged to provide a noticeable variation of frontage widths when observed from the street to support attractive streetscapes with opportunities for regular breaks between groups of buildings on narrower lots.

The amendment includes removal of prescriptive lot depths, quantities and percentages for different lot types within the planning scheme that are causing implementation concerns, to promote lot (and housing) diversity in a more flexible way and suited to the location. This follows discussion on this topic with the Joint Industry Working Group.

Good example

The range of lot sizes and layouts in Narangba supports an appropriate mix of housing types outside the walkable catchments. This predominantly includes Dwelling houses on a range of (smaller) lots..

Good example

Arrangement of lots in Narangba supports higher density terrace Dwelling houses opposite a local park outside the walkable catchments in this subdivision layout.

3.2 Neighbourhoods with more 'green'—open space, trees and landscaping

3.2.1 Subdivision layout and design

The key outcomes of recommendations supporting increased open space breaks and tree planting throughout subdivision layouts are illustrated in Figure 1 and Figure 2 and detailed further below.

Rationale

Subdivision layout and design has a significant influence on the amount of open space areas including open space and visual breaks between dwellings along streets. This can be impacted where there are concentrations of narrower lots. Streetscape outcomes and the ability to incorporate green spaces and areas for mature trees to be planted need to be considered at the subdivision stage of development.

Current MBRC Planning Scheme requirements focus on existing vegetation retention for habitat values and connectivity rather than the distribution of new mature trees throughout subdivision layouts. This typically limits vegetation to habitat areas at the edge of development or along discrete habitat corridors, or no mature vegetation at all. New tree planting for amenity values such as shade, urban heat mitigation and visual amenity are important and cannot always be achieved through existing tree retention alone.

It has been observed in some of the development applications reviewed that street trees are not always being provided or are not always surviving past the subdivision construction phase.

Laneways in the development applications reviewed were typically dominated by hardstand, with limited landscaping or tree planting, and garage doors facing. Street tree planting is supported in laneways in the Integrated design planning scheme policy but is identified as optional rather than a requirement.

Recommendations

R4

A new requirement for subdivision layouts to include breaks between narrow housing lots (i.e. frontages of 15m or less) at regular intervals along the street. These could include larger lot types (i.e. frontages of 15m or greater that already have larger side setback requirements), laneways or mid-block pedestrian breaks if providing a meaningful connection. This will positively contribute to built form relief and landscaped open space opportunities.

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Good example

Generous mid-block pedestrian break provided in this Newport subdivision layout (spanning 5 blocks), which supports landscaping and offers visual relief along the street.

Poor example

No street trees provided to laneways in this Narangba subdivision result in a dominance of hardstand and garages, which negatively impact amenity.

Recommendations

R5

A new requirement for tree planting to occur throughout subdivision layouts for visual amenity and shade. Planting can occur either in mid-block breaks, laneways and other open space areas.

This will recognise the values provided by mature vegetation (e.g. shade, visual amenity, urban heat reduction).

R6

Strengthen policy for street trees (as distinct from generic street design and construction standards) to reinforce the purpose of providing street trees in new development.

R7

A new requirement for street tree planting in laneways is recommended to better support amenity and greenspace outcomes and help mitigate urban heat. The recommended requirement is at least one street tree per 15m on at least one side of a new laneway dedicated as new road reserve.

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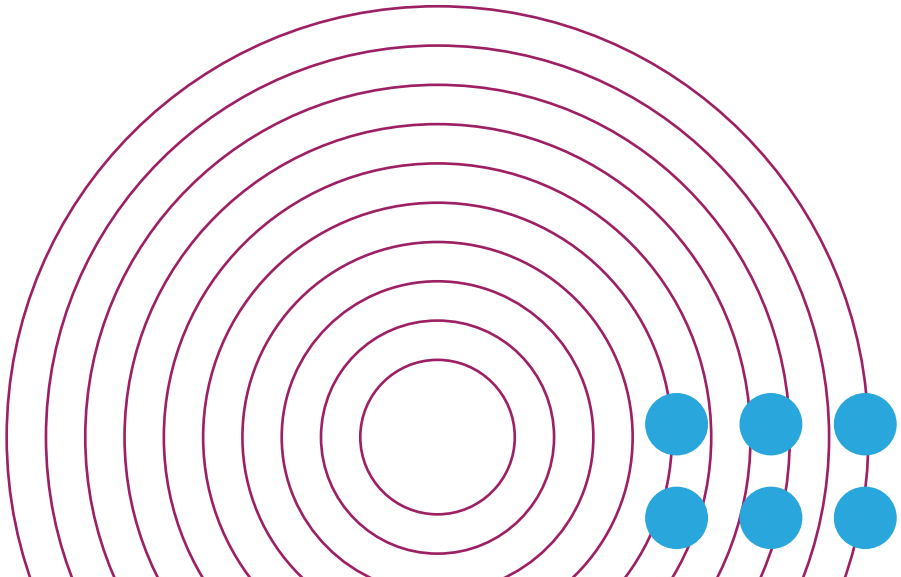

Figure 1

Higher density lot layout scenario (within walkable catchment)

New tree planting

Lots for greater mix of housing forms

Regular breaks between narrow lots (e.g. laneways, lots >15m frontages)

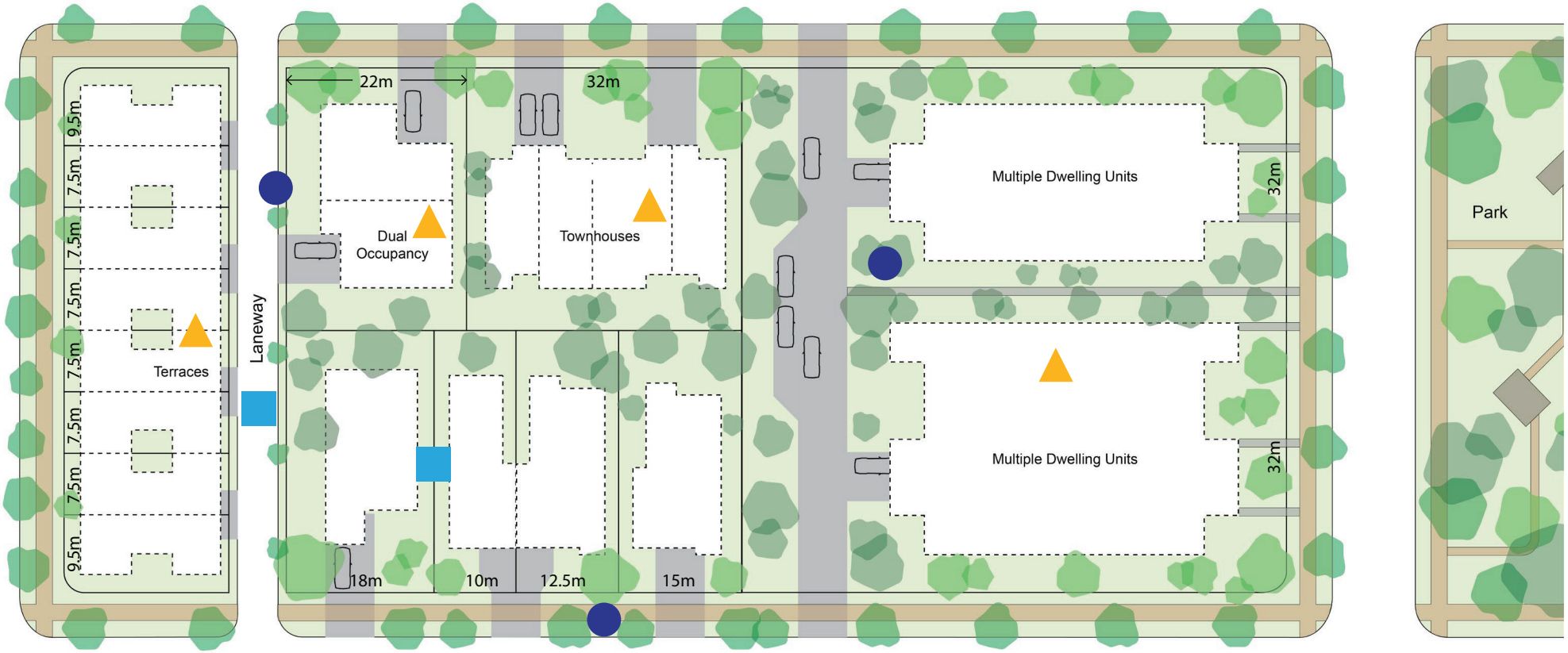

Figure 2

Lower density lot layout scenario (outside walkable catchment)

- New tree planting
- Selective lots for higher density housing (i.e. more dispersed)
- Regular breaks between narrow lots (e.g. mid-block, lots >15m frontages)
- Buffer to lower density zones (e.g. parks, tree-lined roads, larger lots)

3.2.2 Dual occupancy and Multiple dwelling developments

The key outcomes of recommendations improving streetscapes and increasing green open space to Dual occupancy and Multiple dwelling development are illustrated in Figure 3 and detailed further below. Proposed changes are highlighted for communal open space, front setback and street tree standards. Existing private open space, deep planting and frontage landscaping standards are illustrated to contextualise the proposed changes.

Rationale

The absence of a communal open space requirement for Multiple dwellings in the MBRC Planning Scheme is resulting in the appearance of overdevelopment with buildings and hardstand dominating. Communal open space helps provide visual relief from built form, breaks up hardstand areas for improved urban heat mitigation and provides passive and active recreation opportunities on-site for larger Multiple dwellings.

Private open space within Multiple dwelling (townhouse) development is important in providing landscaped open space, built form relief, resident utility and amenity. The review of development applications has identified the minimum private open space dimension (typically 2.4m) is commonly being compromised in favour of increased site cover and reduced boundary setbacks. Strengthening outcomes for private open space will provide additional support to better manage and deliver improved built form outcomes.

The review of development applications also identified deep planting outcomes were often being compromised to support increased building envelopes and hardstand areas, as the outcomes sought are unclear in the MBRC Planning Scheme. Clearer direction about the outcomes such as shade and amenity will strengthen the importance and delivery of deep planting outcomes.

Street tree provision is an opportunity to supplement on-site planting with less competition from buildings and hardstand areas. Street trees will support shaded pathways and better streetscape outcomes in areas where density is increasing.

Recommendations

R8

A new requirement for a minimum (consolidated) open space area with a minimum size of 40m^2 or 5% of the site area (whichever is greater) for Multiple dwellings involving 10 or more dwellings.

This seeks to achieve breaks in the built form, tree planting for amenity and reduction of hardstand/heat island effects.

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Poor example

No usable communal open space to this 38 Multiple dwelling (townhouse) development in Albany Creek.

Poor example

Townhouse development (10 dwellings) in Woody Point has no communal open space and private open spaces (to side boundaries) have been compromised by the building envelope and hardstand.

Recommendations

R9

Strengthen policy for private open space to reinforce the important role of ground level private open space in Multiple dwelling developments, so the useability of these spaces is less likely to be compromised to allow for increased building envelopes.

R10

Strengthen policy for landscaped open space and deep planting areas to provide breaks in the built form, reduce hardstand and heat island effects and provide quality private and communal open space opportunities. Deep planting is critical to support mature tree planting that provides these and many other benefits (e.g. shade and amenity, softening built form).

R11

A new requirement to provide street trees is recommended for higher density housing forms including Dual occupancy and Multiple dwellings in accordance with the planting rate for the street type in the Integrated design planning scheme policy. The walkable neighbourhood assessment benchmarks for subdivision in the *Planning Regulation 2017* apply to ensure the planting rate is at least one tree per 15m of street frontage.

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Poor example

Front setback space to Multiple dwellings in Albany Creek is unable to accommodate adequate landscaping and mature planting.

Rationale

In some development applications reviewed, the width of landscaping at the development frontage was being reduced in order to accommodate service functions such as bin storage. In these cases, this resulted in insufficient space for deep planting at the full 2m width. This is the basis for recommended increases to frontage landscaping and setback requirements.
Garage design, locations and driveway widths were commonly observed in the development applications reviewed to be visually dominant due to insufficient separation between double garages and expansive driveways, especially in the Dual occupancy development applications reviewed. Identifying an outcome dealing with separation will support opportunities for open space and landscaping.

Recommendations

R12

Increase the existing requirement for setbacks from the street to the front wall from 3m to 4m for Multiple dwellings and Dual occupancy and strengthen requirements for frontage landscaping and street trees.

Strengthening policy statements for frontage landscaping will deliver better deep planting outcomes in areas that can accommodate large shade trees and are not compromised by bin storage, services or parking.

R13

Strengthen and clarify policy for Multiple dwellings and Dual occupancy development to support a limited area of the frontage containing garages/car parking with appropriate separation of driveways and garages (at street frontages), providing opportunities for landscaped open space and tree planting.

More specific outcomes are required for double garages and driveway widths at the street frontage including the provision of appropriate separation between multiple driveways/garages:

- A new maximum 50% of the lot width at the frontage will be parking/garage entrances.
- Existing requirements also identify a minimum 6m separation between driveways to support street tree planting and allow on-street parking.

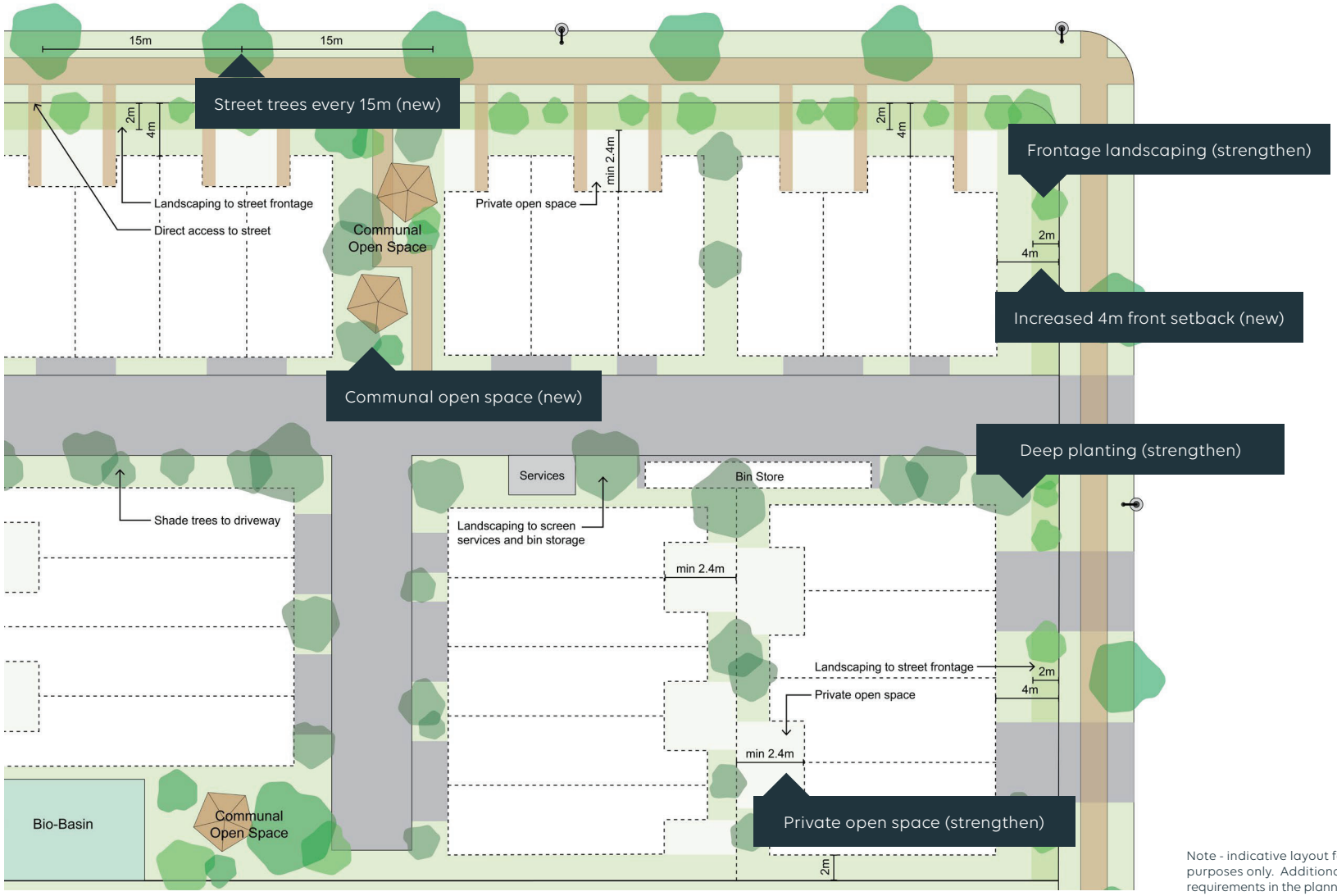
Multi-storey apartment buildings separately require parking located behind dwellings or in basements.

Good example

The driveway to this Multiple dwelling in Scarborough uses less of the frontage and parking/garages are concealed. This increases landscaping and street tree planting opportunities and separation to adjoining driveways.

Figure 3

Next generation neighbourhood outcomes—Multiple dwellings and Dual occupancy (walk-up scale development)



Note - indicative layout for communication purposes only. Additional standards and requirements in the planning scheme apply.

3.3 Resolving impacts of overdevelopment from Dwelling houses on small lots

Rationale

The review of development applications where Council has been a concurrence agency for assessing siting variations for Dwelling houses has identified the performance outcomes in the Dwelling house code could be strengthened to help prevent an increased building envelope occurring at the expense of open space (i.e. a backyard) and building separation. The recommendation to amend the Dwelling house code will give more weight to consideration of these outcomes.

The effect of creating backyard spaces on several adjoining lots is the perception of larger consolidated open spaces providing visual relief in the built form.

A frontage to a laneway is not treated as a rear boundary in the planning scheme. A 0.5m setback applies to a frontage to a laneway rather than the rear setback standards.

An increased rear setback standard for dwelling houses on lots without laneway access will encourage laneway access for smaller terrace house lots in order to take advantage of the reduced setback and increased site cover in the dwelling house code. Alternatively, a reduced site cover is likely on lots with only one street frontage where the increased rear setback applies. This will support better streetscape outcomes for lots with rear lane access or support lots with an increased rear setback for private open space and amenity where only having one street frontage.

Note: Brisbane and Gold Coast vary rear setback requirements from the Queensland Development Code (QDC) supporting outcomes for a backyard and resident amenity.

Recommendations

R14

A new minimum rear setback requirement for Dwelling houses, which supports larger backyards and more room for small tree plantings, a place for children (and adults) to play and other opportunities —such as veggie gardens and home composting to help our local environment:

- 5m where the lot depth is greater than 25m; or
- 3m where the lot depth is 25m or less.

It is proposed to strengthen policy statements for setbacks to more clearly identify the desired outcomes for separation between dwellings and opportunities for landscaped open space for both current and future residents to support improved amenity and on-site private recreation opportunities.

Good example

Generous rear setback achieved on small lot Dwelling houses in Woody Point for backyard recreation, planting and consolidated open space areas between dwellings.

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3.3 Resolving impacts of overdevelopment from Dwelling houses on small lots *continued*

Rationale

Reducing site cover consistent with an increased rear setback requirement will help address overdevelopment and enhance the appearance of separation and open space between and around dwellings.

Recommendations

R15

A reduction of maximum site cover to 60% for Dwelling houses on lots 400m² or less (excluding terrace houses with rear laneway access addressed in R16).

Table 1 compares existing and recommended reduced site cover requirements in the Dwelling house code and zone codes for the relevant lot sizes.

Table 1 Recommended site cover standards

	Lot size		
Site cover (for height of wall up to 8.5m)	300m² or less*	301 – 400m²	> 400m²
Existing standard	75%	70%	60%
Recommended standard	**60%**	**60%**	**60% (same)**

**Note—this category excludes terrace lots with rear laneway access.*

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Poor example

Dwelling houses on small lots with high site cover contribute to the feeling of overdevelopment and limited separation between homes in this Strathpine street.

Poor example

High site cover on small lot Dwelling houses (which include Secondary dwellings) in Morayfield, with walls built to both side boundaries and no laneway access provided.

Rationale

Site cover can be higher on smaller lots where this encourages rear lane access and a reduced 0.5m setback to the laneway applies. A rear lane provides a break in the built form and a better primary frontage and streetscape free from parking and driveways.

Recommendations

R16

Identify new site cover standards for Dwelling houses located on terrace lots that encourage rear laneway access and improved streetscapes for these forms.

Terrace housing forms that are built up to both side boundaries are typically located on lots 300m² or smaller and less than 10m wide. Accordingly, terrace outcomes will be supported on lots up to 9.5m (increased from 7.5m) to provide additional housing options than anticipated by the current planning scheme.

Table 2 compares existing and recommended site cover requirements in the Dwelling house code and zone codes for the relevant lot sizes.

Table 2 Recommended terrace site cover standards

	Lot size—300m² or less		
	Laneway access		No laneway access
Site cover (for height of wall up to 8.5m)	<7.5m wide*	7.5–9.5m wide	Any frontage width**
Existing standard	75%	75%	75%
Recommended standard	**80%**	**75%**	**60%**

** Note—lots less than 7.5m wide are only supported in the 800m walkable catchments of train stations and higher order and district centres.*

*** Note—terrace Dwelling house outcomes built up to both side boundaries are only supported on lots up to 9.5m wide.*

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Good examples

A higher site cover is appropriate for these terrace Dwelling houses in Newport that have rear laneway access, which improves their street appearance (free of parking and driveways). These terraces are between 7.5m–9m wide on lots less than 300m².

3.3 Resolving impacts of overdevelopment from Dwelling houses on small lots *continued*

Poor example

Dwelling houses in this Albany Creek street block were subject to bulk siting variations for side setbacks, losing open space, landscaping and separation to the building envelope.

Rationale

The review of development applications identified existing policy statements do not provide enough guidance or clarity about the intended outcomes for site cover and boundary setbacks. Stronger policy statements assist Council's role as a concurrence agency for siting variations where development for a Dwelling house does not meet the standards for setbacks and site cover.

Recommendations

R17

Strengthened policy statements in the Dwelling house code for setbacks and site cover to ensure siting variations referred to Council do not compromise appropriate building separation, amenity outcomes or reduce backyard and planting space.

Policy statements need to address visual relief between buildings, landscaping, open space outcomes and functions, including a 'backyard', and resident utility so these spaces are not compromised by an increased building envelope.

Continued on next page

Good example

Terrace Dwelling houses in Newport provide generous rear setbacks for backyards and separation, visual breaks and open space for landscaping around the group of dwellings.

3.3 Resolving impacts of overdevelopment from Dwelling houses on small lots *continued*

Rationale

Feedback from Council's Development Services Department has been that siting variations are commonly being lodged for outcomes that are supported by Council, including:

- Allowing standard overhanging eaves for weather protection and sun shading within side boundary setback spaces; and
- Allowing reduced separation of driveways (less than 3m) to existing street trees where this supports optimal positioning of driveways on the western side of dwellings or provides consistent driveway spacing with other dwellings in the street.

Adjusting setback standards for Dwelling houses to better accommodate outcomes that enhance liveability will help reduce the unnecessary administrative burden, time delays and cost of development.

Recommendations

R18

Revised setback requirements for Dwelling houses are recommended to encourage the provision of roofs with eaves and make it easier to position driveways relative to street trees, including:

- Overriding the Queensland Development Code (QDC) for Dwelling houses to measure side boundary setbacks to the wall instead of the outermost projection (OMP) with a minimum setback of 1m that increases for wider lots in accordance with the QDC. This means the planning scheme will support eaves within the setback space but still maintain a minimum distance of 500mm between eaves and the boundary. This will support shade to habitable room windows and living spaces and better suited design outcomes for our Moreton Bay climate.
- New reduced minimum separation distance from a street tree to a driveway of 2 metres (from the current 3 metres) and supporting requirement to install a root barrier where the separation is less than 2.5m.

These matters were an identified way forward in discussions with industry stakeholders.

Good example

Well-positioned street tree relative to driveways in Strathpine to reduce issues with separation distances between the two.

Poor example

Several Dwelling houses in this Morayfield street do not include eaves to side boundaries for better climate comfort and shade.

3.4 Neighbourhoods that are sensitively integrated with existing communities

Rationale

Some parts of the precinct adjoin lower intensity residential areas in other precincts or zones (e.g. the Suburban neighbourhood precinct or Rural and Rural residential zones). These areas are not intended to be developed at a similar density or intensity to the precinct, and their interface can be marked by a sharp contrast in development outcomes and character.

This recommendation seeks to address change of character concerns being expressed to Council by the community, including instances where there can be a strong contrast between the development outcomes and intensity supported in the precinct compared to the Rural or Rural residential zones.

Outcomes for the more common interface between the precinct and the Suburban neighbourhood precinct of the General residential zone are supported by previously addressed recommendations, including:

- managing the intensity of the development, where higher density uses such as Dual occupancy and Multiple dwellings are focused around train stations and centres—away from lower density settings;
- provisions supporting increased building separation and landscaped open spaces around and between dwellings; and
- design and housing diversity in the precinct, particularly on larger townhouse development sites.

Recommendations

R19

New requirements to provide transitions between existing communities in the Rural or Rural residential zone and new development occurring in the precinct. This will be via a 'buffer' that can comprise either, or a combination of:

- parks and open space (e.g. contributions located at the interface of these zones);
- tree-lined perimeter roads (e.g. arranging the road network to separate different zones with planted road verges); and
- larger lot sizes (e.g. to transition in development intensity at the interface).

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Good example

Park/ open space located at the interface of this Transition precinct neighbourhood in Narangba and the Rural residential zone opposite.

Poor example

No design diversity and extensive repetition across this large Multiple dwelling development in Everton Hills.

Rationale

The planning scheme currently identifies outcomes for neighbourhood integration on residential development sites larger than 6,000m^2. However, it does not sufficiently deal with streetscape or housing diversity to meet the community's needs and a number of "cookie cutter" outcomes have emerged.

Recommendations

R20

A new requirement to provide design and housing diversity for Multiple dwellings (e.g. townhouse developments) on larger sites of 6,000m^2 or greater (typically supporting 20 or more dwellings) to:

- reduce "cookie cutter" design repetition over large areas; and
- provide a greater mix of dwelling sizes with different numbers of bedrooms to suit a range of household sizes and life stages.

Strengthen policy for dwelling design diversity within larger Multiple dwelling developments to create visual interest in the streetscape, help differentiate individual dwellings and promote improved neighbourhood character and amenity.

Good example

High level of design variation to this Multiple dwelling development in Scarborough, which integrates with its surrounds and the street and adds visual interest.

Moreton Bay Regional Council

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