

# Dwellings within the Residential Character Zone

## *Design Guidelines*

If you are looking at putting a new dwelling or dwellings on your land, this guide will help you to determine what sort of development may be possible and outlines design considerations for the zone.

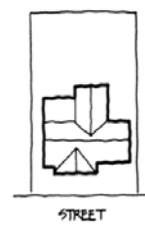
**Instructions:** Before you use this guide, you will need to know the dimensions and zone and precinct area of your property. The zone and policy area can be searched for and determined on [Council's Website – Development & Infrastructure – Zone and Policy Map](#).

This guide is made up of two sections: Tables for each dwelling type which outline density controls and design guidelines; and Further Design Guidelines.

### Definitions:

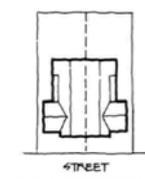
A **detached dwelling** is:

a building comprising of one dwelling on a site that is held exclusively with that dwelling and has a frontage to a public road or to a road proposed in a land division that is the subject of a current development authorisation.



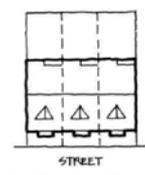
A **semi-detached dwelling** is a dwelling:

- a. Occupying a site that is held exclusively with that dwelling and has a frontage to a public road or a road proposed in a plan of land division that is the subject of a current planning authorisation; and
- b. Comprising one of two dwellings erected side by side, joined together and forming, a single building.

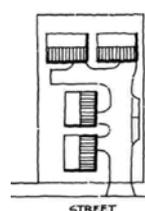


A **row dwelling** is a dwelling:

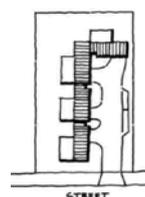
- a. Occupying a site that is held exclusively with that land dwelling and has frontage to a public road to a road proposed in a plan of land division that is the subject of a current development authorisation; and
- b. Comprising one of three or more dwellings erected side by side, joined together and forming, by themselves, a single building.



A **group dwelling** is one of a group of two or more detached buildings, each of which is used as a dwelling and one of more which has a site without a frontage to a public road or to a road proposed in a plan of land division that is the subject of a current development authorisation.



A **residential flat building (RFB)** means a single building in which there are two or more dwellings, but does not include a semi-detached dwelling, a row dwelling or a group dwelling.



## What is a Residential Character Zone?

The Residential Character Zone (RCZ) is made up of areas of character housing from the Victorian, pre-World War I and inter-war eras. In order to retain the character of these areas, specific controls on design apply in the Residential Character Zone. Individual Precincts within the zone have been identified which reflect differing age and character of the area.

In this zone, individual buildings which contribute to the historic character are identified as contributory places, and further attention is paid to retaining and maintaining the character of these buildings.

## How does it differ from other Residential Zones?

The RCZ requires more attention to be given to scale relationships to existing built form, and design detail such as window sizes, gutter lines, roof pitch and materials and finishes, which, over time, will maintain the valued character of an area. Other key elements in the controls are frontage width, design and form of housing and land division patterns, density and ancillary streetscape issues such as design and placement of fences, carports and garages.

It is not intended to create new buildings which look old. New building design should be complementary to the heritage character of adjoining buildings and the surrounding area by relating sympathetically to the established character of the street.

## Can I demolish an existing house (or part of an existing house) if it is in the Residential Character Zone?

**Yes** - However the demolition of a building, front fence or other structure that contributes to the historic character (i.e. a contributory item) may only occur where:

- the integrity or prominence of the contributory item (when viewed from a public street or place) would not be affected
- their condition is seriously unsound and cannot reasonably be rehabilitated
- a replacement development can be erected which does not diminish the level of contribution to the historic character of the locality and the replacement has been approved, or is concurrently approved, by the planning authority.

***The demolition of any dwelling is assessed on its merits and will not be automatically approved.***

The replacement building/addition must be assessed by Council prior to or concurrently with the demolition application.

## **Do I need Development Approval to build a dwelling?**

**Yes** - All new dwellings require Development Approval which includes both Development Plan Consent and Building Rules Consent.

Additional dwelling(s) on sites within the Residential Character Zone may be appropriate in limited circumstances.

Hammerhead type development (a new dwelling or dwellings behind an existing building) and/or group dwellings are not supported except in limited circumstances.

## **What are the Guidelines for New Residential Development within the Residential Character Zone?**

It is not necessary to create new buildings which look old in the Precinct Areas of the Residential Character Zone. Modern designs which pick up the essential character of the area are preferable to reproduction designs which mimic traditional detailing elements but have the wrong scale, proportioning, materials and façade treatment for the era of the Precinct to which they relate.

### **How high can my ceilings be?**

The height of eaves of the ground floor level of a dwelling should be similar to the height of the eaves of any adjoining dwellings that contribute to the desired character of the street.

### **Can I build a two storey dwelling?**

Two-storey dwellings may be appropriate if elements of the form, scale and building height of the new building are compatible with existing two storey dwellings. Alternatively, upper levels could be contained within the roof space or setback well into the site to reduce their visual prominence.

### **Are there restrictions on the materials that can be used?**

Materials of a traditional kind, such as stone, red brick and rendered masonry should be used to complement the materials used in buildings. The use of imitation cast iron decorative elements, or stone or slate veneer used to resemble stone, is not appropriate.

### **Siting and setback**

The set-back of a dwelling from a street and side boundaries should be consistent with the adjoining buildings and take into account the existing streetscape.

### **What considerations should be given to windows and door locations?**

The proportions and spacing of door and window openings should be similar to those of adjacent Contributory (or heritage) buildings.

Materials used for framing openings should be of traditional or complementary materials. In masonry buildings, simple rendered surrounds of windows and doors are preferable to elaborate projecting quoins.

Large areas of reflective glass are generally not appropriate in the Residential Character Zone.

**Can I include a front verandah?**

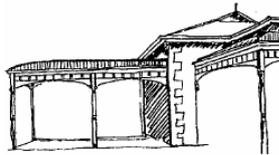
If front verandahs are a predominant element in the character of the locality and Precinct then they should be incorporated into the design of the new dwelling.

**What type of roof would be suitable?**

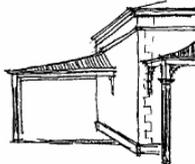
Corrugated iron roofing, which may be pre-painted in an appropriate colour, and terracotta tiles should be used in preference to concrete or metal tiles. New tiling may be used if the type is carefully selected to harmonise with nearby roofing. The predominant pitch of roofs in the area, on buildings which contribute significantly to the historic character of the area should be repeated. This will generally be between 27 and 45 degrees, and new development should reflect the appropriate pitch.

**Can I incorporate a garage or carport into the house design?**

Any carport attached to the side of a house should be carefully sited in order not to obscure the front elevation and verandah form of the residence. A flat-roofed carport near to or in front of the façade of a dwelling is not appropriate.



*Single and double side carports suitable for Victorian and Edwardian houses*

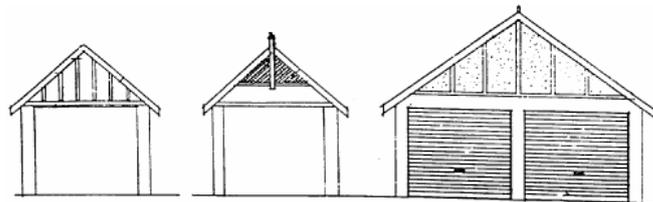


A freestanding garage should generally be located to the rear of the existing dwelling, with access past the side of the house or by a rear lane.

Front verandahs that extend to form carports and garages are inappropriate.

Double garages under the main roof of the dwelling are generally inappropriate. These may be considered where they are split into separate roof forms and do not dominate the façade of the associated dwelling and it fits with the pattern of built form in the streetscape.

Garages should not be developed in an under-croft format.



*Drawings show design options for freestanding carports & garages*

**Can I build a front fence?**

Development Approval is required for the construction or demolition of a front fence. For side and rear fencing please refer to Council's Fences and Retaining Walls Information Guide.

Original fences and gates should be retained and reinstated where possible. Where evidence regarding the original fence is not available, a fence sympathetic to the style of the dwelling on the site should be erected. The erection of high solid walling in concrete, masonry or timber is not appropriate (except on the frontage to an arterial road).

Relatively low and open fencing is appropriate to enable visually attractive detailing of the design of a dwelling to remain visible from a road. Typical traditional types of fences for housing periods are listed in the Charles Sturt (City) Development Plan under Table 4 – Development Guidelines for Residential Character Zone and Local Heritage Places.

**How much private open space (backyard) do I have to provide?**

Council will generally only consider private open space which is located to the side or rear of the dwelling (excluding driveways and carparking areas).

Side and rear yard space should meet the requirements set out below:

Site area per dwelling (square metres)	Minimum area excluding any area at ground level at the front of the dwelling (square metres)	Minimum dimension (metres)	Minimum area to be provided at the rear or side of the dwelling, and be directly accessible from a habitable room (square metres)
>500	80, of which 10 may comprise balconies, roof patios and the like, provided they have a minimum dimension of 2 metres	4	24
300-500	60, of which 10 may comprise balconies, roof patios and the like, provided they have a minimum dimension of 2 metres	4	16
<300	24	4	16
<200 or within Integrated Medium Density Policy Area 20	8, where the dwelling has 1 bedroom or comprises a studio (where there is no separate bedroom)	2	8
	11, where the dwelling has 2 bedrooms	2	11
	15, where the dwelling has 3 or more bedrooms	2	15

## How many car parks do I need to provide?

Detached and semi-detached dwellings should be provided with two on-site parking spaces, one of which is covered (the second space can be tandem).

Residential Flat buildings, Group dwellings and Row Dwellings should be provided with carparking in accordance with the following table:

Dwelling size or number of bedrooms		Average spaces per dwelling	
		1 km radius from a District Centre or <200 m radius from a railway station or bus stop	Any other circumstances
Large	3+ bedrooms or floor area >130 m <sup>2</sup>	1.25	2
Medium	2 bedrooms or floor area of 75 m <sup>2</sup> to 130 m <sup>2</sup>	1	1.5
Small	1 bedroom or floor area <75 m <sup>2</sup>	0.75	1
Add for visitors per dwelling (not applicable to row dwellings)		0.25	0.25

## How wide does the driveway to the rear dwelling/s need to be?

Vehicle access needs to comply with relevant Australian Standards (AS2890.1)

**Dwellings that have an individual driveway** should have a minimum driveway width of 3 metres (provided the driveway is not adjacent to a barrier higher than 150mm). Additional driveway widths above 3 metres are considered on merit with consideration to available on-street carparking.

Dwellings that have a **shared driveway** should generally have a minimum driveway width of 5 metres (which should include substantial landscaping to provide a buffer between the existing/proposed structures). The landscaping buffer reduces the impact of the driveway and any additional vehicle movements generated by the proposed rear dwellings to the adjoining properties. A landscaping plan should be provided as part of the application to show the selection of plant species chosen for this driveway area.

When a new crossover is proposed, it must be a minimum of 1 metre away from a stobie pole and minimum of 2 metre away from a Council street tree. A driveway crossover permit is required to install a new driveway crossover, unless it forms part of a development application and permit forms can be found on Council's website.

## Can vehicles from the rear dwelling/s reverse down the driveway?

**No** - Sufficient manoeuvring areas should be provided adjacent to the garage/s of dwellings to avoid vehicles needing to reverse along vast distances of driveway. Manoeuvring areas should not comprise of any area designated for visitor parking.

## **Does one of the houses in a group or residential flat dwelling configuration need to front the street?**

**Yes** - As this will help maintain a safe and defined community. Dwellings should be designed to:

- overlook public streets, communal spaces or public reserves in order to provide casual surveillance
- include doorways or windows facing the street
- enable the front door to be clearly visible so visitors can easily identify a particular dwelling
- reduce the visual dominance of the garage doors and blank walls.

## **Do upper level windows need to be obscured (frosted)?**

Direct overlooking from upper level windows and external balconies, terraces and decks into useable private open spaces and/or windows of adjacent dwellings should be minimised.

Suggestions to minimise direct overlooking from windows and direct views from balconies, terraces and decks are:

- Upper storey windows should have a minimum 1.5 metre high sill height above the finished floor level or have translucent glass/film to a minimum height of 1.5 metres. The translucent glass/film windows shall be fixed or be provided with awning sashes that do not exceed an open distance of 125mm
- permanently fixed external screens, including wing walls and solid or translucent panels, of a minimum height of 1.5 m above finished floor level
- permanently fixed external perforated panels or trellises which have a maximum of 25% openings (subject to design).

## **Do I need to install a smoke detector(s)?**

**Yes** - New homes and additions/alterations to dwellings are required to fit a 240 volt mains powered smoke alarm(s). Note: Depending on the layout of your home, it may be necessary to install more than one smoke alarm to provide sufficient warning. (they must be interconnected).

- It is important that your smoke alarm is installed correctly and in an appropriate location.
- If you need to obtain more information on this topic please refer to the Location of Smoke Detectors information guide.

### Information required for Development Approval:

- Development Application Form \*
- Powerline Declaration Form \* (included in the online Development Application Form)
- Current copy Certificate of Title (issued within the last 12 months)
- Site plan to a minimum scale of 1:200
- Floor plan/plan view to a minimum scale of 1:100
- Elevations to a minimum scale of 1:100
- Site survey undertaken by an independent licenced surveyor
- Stormwater and drainage plan to a minimum scale of 1:200

### Additional documents required for Building Rules Consent:

- Copy of Indemnity Insurance Certificate
- Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) Levy receipt
- Sections to scale
- Structural engineer's report
- Roof, wall, floor and framing details to scale
- Wet area specifications
- Energy efficiency assessment
- Truss calculations
- General specification
- Manufacturers details
- Location of smoke detectors on a scaled plan (can be shown on the floor plan)
- Protection of buildings exposed to brush fences
- Water efficiency – water tanks
- Stair and balustrade construction details

\* Applications can be lodged electronically via the [Development Forms and Checklists](#) page on Council's [website](#).

Additional information can be found within the below [Information Guides](#):

- The Development Approval Process
- Information required for Development Approval

Further advice or hard copy forms can be obtained from the Duty Planning/Building Officer at Council or by phoning 8408 1111.