

TAKAPŌ | LAKE TEKAPO CHARACTER DESIGN GUIDE AND MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDE

MACKENZIE DISTRICT COUNCIL

APRIL 2023

PREPARED BY: Boffa Miskell



REVISION STATUS

STATUS: FINAL Revision/version: D Issue date: April 2023

File ref: BM220319_04_Takapō_Character_Medium_Density_Design_Guide

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MANA WHENUA

“Ka mate kāika tahi, ka ora kāika rua” – this whakatauki references the resiliency of Māori across time and space. It can be interpreted by the changing world, where a home may no longer sustain a whānau, and therefore another is to be created in its place maintaining wellbeing. Kāinga or home is an important concept supporting whānau and community development and wellbeing.

For Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua, Te Rūnanga o Waihao and Te Rūnanga o Moeraki (mana whenua), the three distinct groups that whakapapa to the Mackenzie District, there is a strong sense of belonging and connection with Te Manahuna / Mackenzie. It is the same connection that any person would feel when they visit the land where their ancestors lived hundreds or thousands of years ago. This sense of belonging and connection to one’s whānau and community is described by all rūnanga as ‘turangawaewae’, which means ‘a place to stand’, where one belongs and has a right to stand as their ancestors stood before them

To survive and thrive in the harsh conditions of the time, the mana whenua ancestors had an intimate and vast knowledge of their surroundings. They were connected through a deep understanding and spiritual link to all things which was created and reinforced through karakia (prayer), waiata (song) whakapapa (genealogy), tikanga and kawa (customs/protocols). Mātauranga (way of being and engaging in the world) was passed down through the generations. Mana whenua see Te Manahuna as their tupuna (ancestors) that are held in the highest regard.

The terms ‘kainga mahinga kai’ (Māori settlement) or ‘nohoanga’ (literally meaning a place to sit) traditionally refers to the seasonal occupation sites which were an integral part of the mobile lifestyle of mana whenua as they passed through Te Manahuna / Mackenzie, guided by their tupuna, in pursuit of food and other natural resources.

As Aotearoa explores new models of housing, it is important that we continue to recognise and maintain the relationships our people and our places share with one another. The purpose of this guide is to express the shared obligations to protect, ensure participation and encourage partnership in the development of housing for the entire Mackenzie community, upholding the values of Māori and non-Māori alike.



INTRODUCTION

A series of six design principles were developed through the Mackenzie Spatial Plan process to guide the development of each town:

- Te Taio | Environment** Protect and celebrate our valued landscapes
- Ahi kā | Character and Identity** Reinforce an authentic local character and identity
- Wāhi Toiora | Managed Growth** Manage urban form to achieve an effective and efficient pattern of development
- Awarua | Accessibility** Create convenient, legible and accessible movement networks
- Tāpoi | Housing Choice** Manage urban form to achieve an effective and efficient pattern of development
- Wakamana | Managing Infrastructure** Invest in infrastructure that is sustainable and resilient.

This design guide is intended to respond to two of them: Ahi kā | Character and Identity and Tāpoi | Housing Choice.

This design guide comprises two parts with complementary contents:

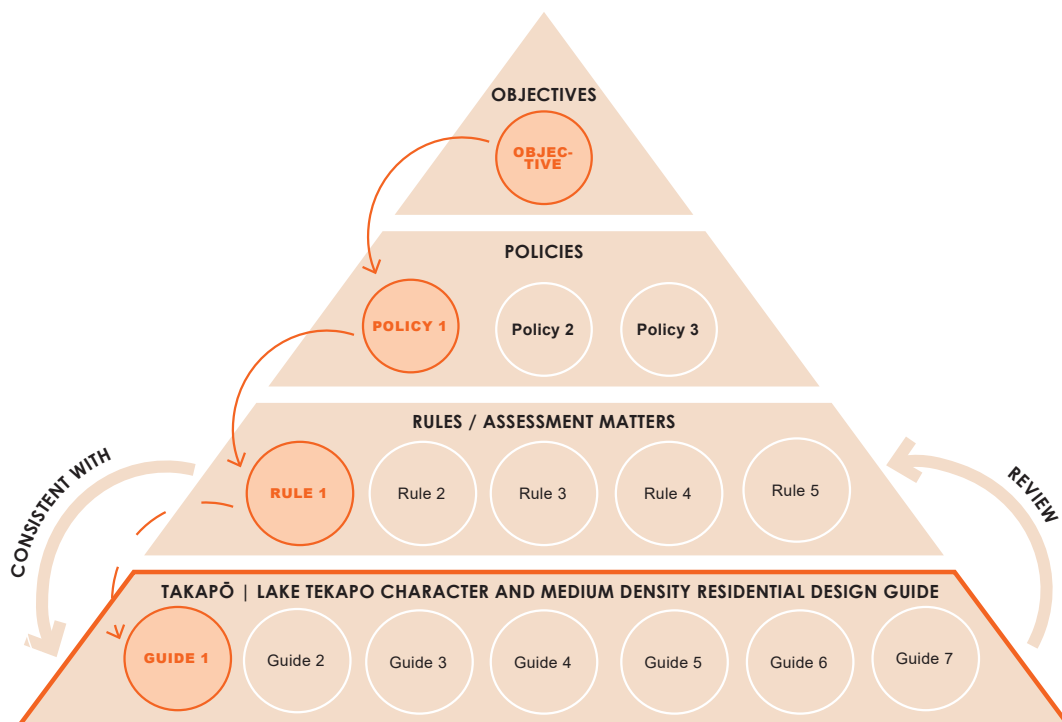
TAKAPŌ | LAKE TEKAPO CHARACTER DESIGN GUIDE:

Provides an understanding of the local character of the place with guidance for new development to make sure that the special qualities of the town are identified, maintained and enhanced.

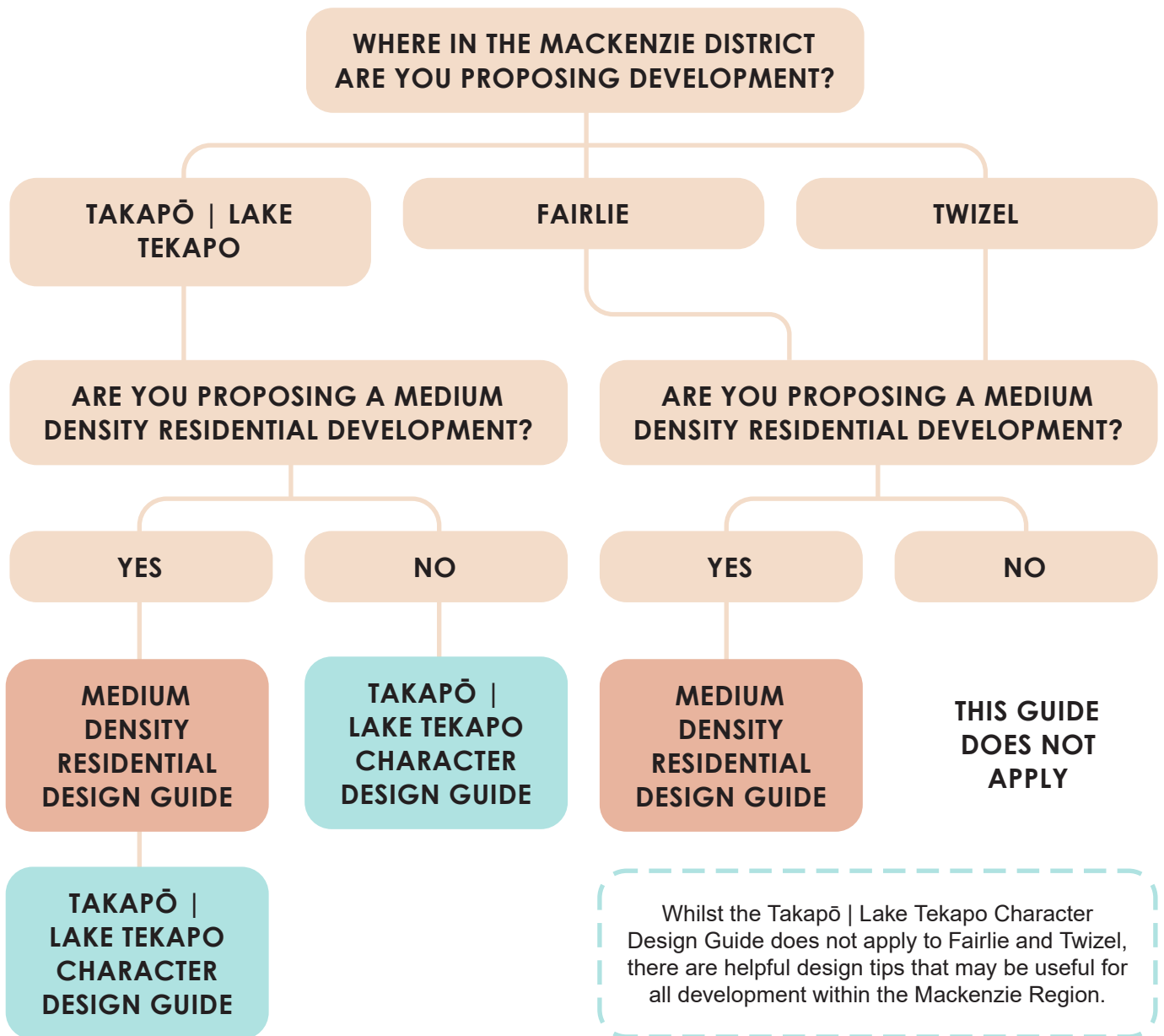
MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDE:

Provides guidance to achieve good quality living environments within more intensive housing areas that is typically more diverse and complex than other forms of residential development.

Resource consent applications for developments in Takapō | Lake Tekapo and Medium Density Residential Zones of Fairlie, Takapō | Lake Tekapo and Twizel, should assess consistency of the proposal with these design guides. Council will consider the extent to which the proposal is consistent with the design guides as part of processing resource consent applications.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE



DESIGN THEMES

The attributes of developments in Takapō | Lake Tekapo are divided across 10 themes, covering built form and landscape design.

The attributes of medium-density housing developments are divided across six themes, from understanding the context of the site through to design of buildings and landscape.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

Under each theme, key design elements are described and illustrated. Review each of these design elements to see whether they have been addressed in your development.

The design elements listed under each theme are intended to give flexibility, while ensuring the development contributes positively to the natural and built environment.



PART A

TAKAPŌ | LAKE TEKAPO CHARACTER DESIGN GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

The purpose of this design guide is to help ensure that new development in Takapō | Lake Tekapo is sympathetic to the existing character of the town; acknowledge cultural heritage and values of Mana Whenua; and recognise the importance of the Te Manahuna | Mackenzie Basin landscape setting, by giving clear guidance to developers, architects and property owners.

Understanding the local character of a place such as Takapō | Lake Tekapo is important to make sure that the special qualities of the town are identified, maintained or enhanced when people choose to develop their property. Development is to positively contribute to the experiential qualities of the town by enhancing the town as a pleasant, attractive and vibrant place for residents and visitors.

This design guide supports the character related provisions within the Mackenzie District Plan, while providing additional guidance that helps achieve a more holistic approach to the distinctive character of the town. The design guide will also be used by planners when reviewing applications for resource consent.

While this design guide has been prepared specifically for Takapō | Lake Tekapo, much of the guidance is likely to be helpful to inform the development of other towns and settlements within the Te Manahuna | Mackenzie Basin.

WHAT IS CHARACTER?

Character arises from a distinctive configuration of natural and man-made elements that establish a set of common or repetitive features which give rise to a similar overall appearance / experience. Urban character is not static and can evolve over time as a town grows or needs change.

The purpose of understanding the local character of a place is to make sure that its special qualities are identified and retained or enhanced when people choose to change or redevelop their property.

Local character is the distinctive identity of a particular place that results from the interaction of many factors - built form, landscape, history, people and their activities.

There is strong evidence that the presence of local character encourages community life and reactivates people's sense of identity with their particular neighbourhood.

The presence of distinct localities also helps to satisfy growing demands for greater choice and for diversity over standardisation. Some people are prepared to pay more to live in an area whose distinctive character they like.

Tourists and investors are also attracted by distinctiveness. Cities and entire regions can gain a valuable 'competitive edge' by virtue of their unique character.

(MFE, THE VALUE OF URBAN DESIGN)

EXTENT

There is generally good consistency in character traits across the existing Takapō | Lake Tekapo town. As more land is developed, whether as infill or across new growth areas, these traits are worthy of maintaining and enhancing. As such, this design guide is applicable to the whole town.

In this guide, most themes or design elements are intended to provide general design guidance to inform development across the whole town. Some references are more targeted at commercial / industrial or residential development. Where specific commercial guidance is provided, it is also intended to cover larger, comprehensively developed visitor accommodation. Residential guidance covers smaller visitor accommodation, such as individual holiday homes.

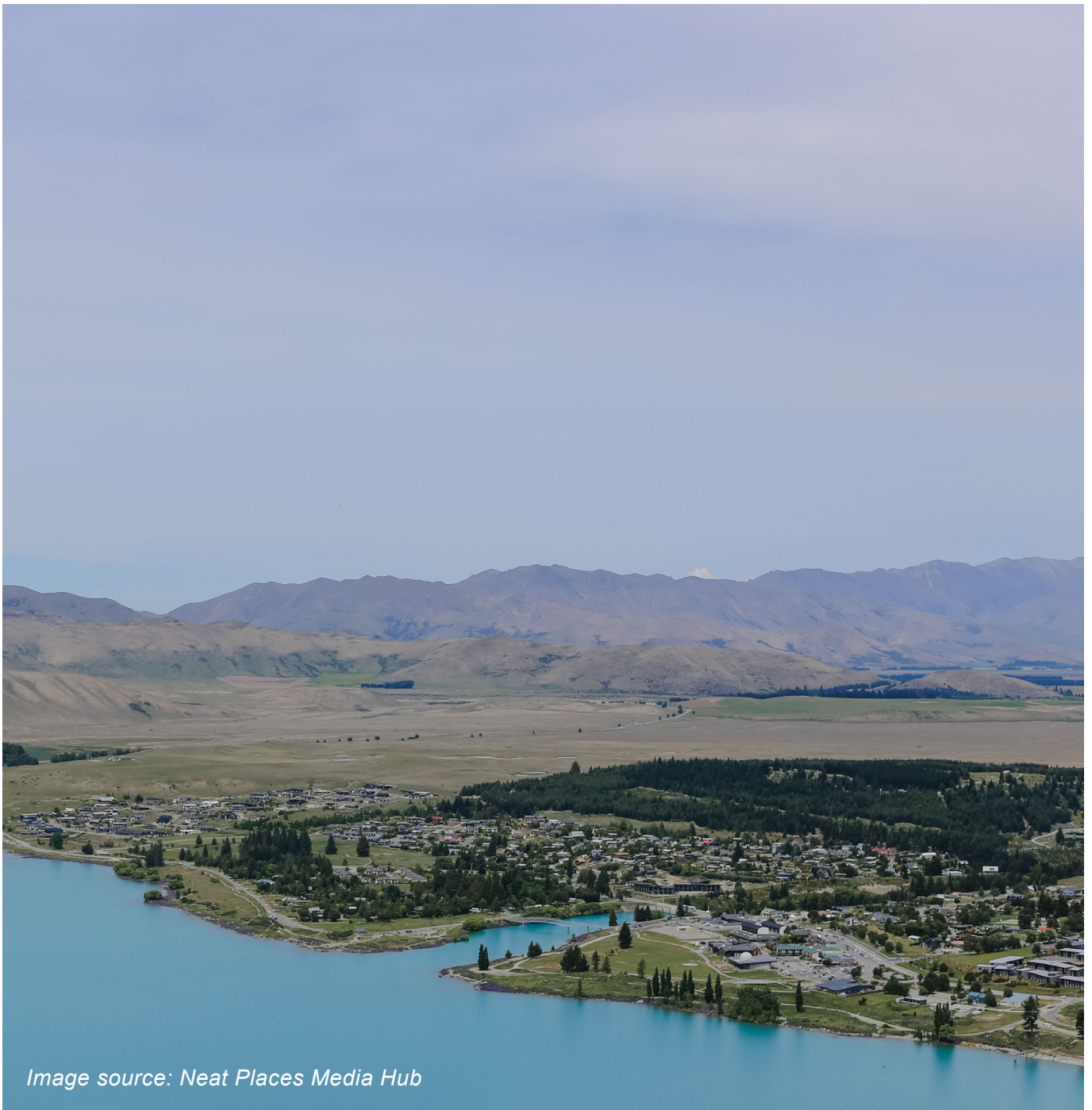


Image source: Neat Places Media Hub

EXISTING TAKAPŌ | LAKE TEKAPO CONTEXT

WIDER LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

The unique landscape and role of Takapō | Lake Tekapo as both a residential community and a hub for visitors, makes it important that the quality of the town's built environment strives to match the quality of its spectacular natural and high country environment.

Takapō | Lake Tekapo lies in the Te Manahuna | Mackenzie Basin at the southern edge of the lake by the same name. It is widely appreciated for its natural setting; a landscape carved out by glaciers with lakes enclosed by high mountain ranges and a sense of vast openness. In addition to the lake and mountains, key landscape features that contribute to the character of the area include the sculpted moraine landforms, outwash plains and terraces with both angular rocks and rounded river boulders. The Te Manahuna | Mackenzie Basin landscape is also well known for its homogeneous tussock grassland character with areas of grey shrub land that reflect the underlying landform.

The wider landscape contains a mix of man-made and natural elements with distinctive hydroelectricity development present throughout the basin, pastoral farming occurring on the basin floor and lower slopes and a largely unmodified landscape at higher elevations. The long-standing farming history is reflected in the vernacular of the built form relating to high-country stations, as well as in shelterbelt patterns and the tawny colours of extensively grazed pastures.

The alpine location means Takapō | Lake Tekapo and the Te Manahuna | Mackenzie Basin are known for a clear, dry climate with cold winters, but high sunshine hours. The town's situation, sloping gently down to the lake edge, provides it with a sheltered, northerly aspect and good opportunities for both solar gain and panoramic lake and mountain views. Equally, much of the town is highly visible from the lake and State Highway 8 that runs through the town.

Ōtehīwai | Mt John is the local landmark feature of Takapō | Lake Tekapo and is well-known for the star gazing opportunities provided.



Image source: Rachel Gillespie

BUILT FORM CHARACTERISTICS

It is important to understand the existing distinctive configuration of character traits across the town, so that these special qualities can be maintained and enhanced as the town grows.

It is also important to consider other valued features on sites, such as existing landforms, buildings, unique structures, trees and natural habitats. Having special regard for these features can help reduce the visual impact on the landscape and retain a sense of maturity for the town. For example, mature plantings can help integrate new built form into the landscape.

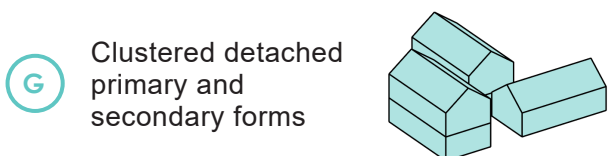
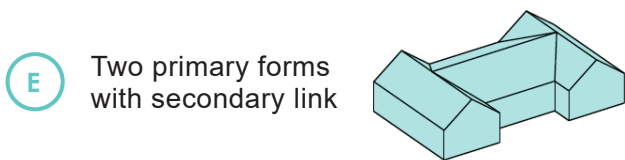
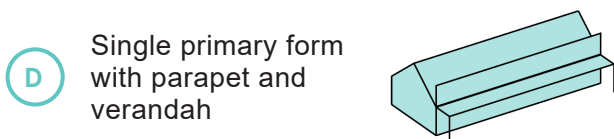
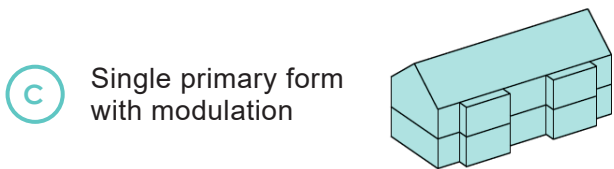
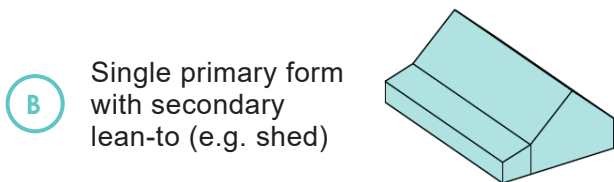
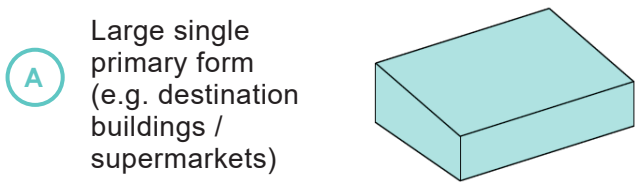
The following key characteristics represent the range of features that are evident in building forms and landscape features throughout Takapō | Lake Tekapo.



COMMERCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Key characteristics of existing commercial development in Takapō | Lake Tekapo, include:

- Diverse, yet typically broad fronted building forms, built up to the road edge and abutting internal boundaries. The appearance of bulk is typically reduced through different ways of dividing and differentiating between forms



- Large stand-alone 'destination' buildings, such as the observatory and supermarket, are limited in number and in prominent locations.
- Collectively, their highly articulated roofline is distinctive from other centres in the district.
- Common commercial architectural features are verandahs, entry porches, chimney stacks and columns.
- Many commercial buildings have floor to ceiling glass panels along ground level frontages with rear and upper level windows generally smaller in proportion.
- Signage in more recent development tends to be well integrated and complementary to the building materials and colours.
- Native planting is used to provide a buffer between the streetscape and the development but in a limited capacity.
- Landscape spaces are informal in character with predominant use of robust natural local materials and recessive neutral colour palettes to soften building edges and blend in with the natural surrounding environment.
- Materials used in external spaces are typically natural local materials with a wide use of local moraine rock and timber.
- Common landscape features are rock retaining walls, concrete and stone pathways, feature rocks and post and rail fencing,
- Common car parking areas are setback from the road and screened with planting.

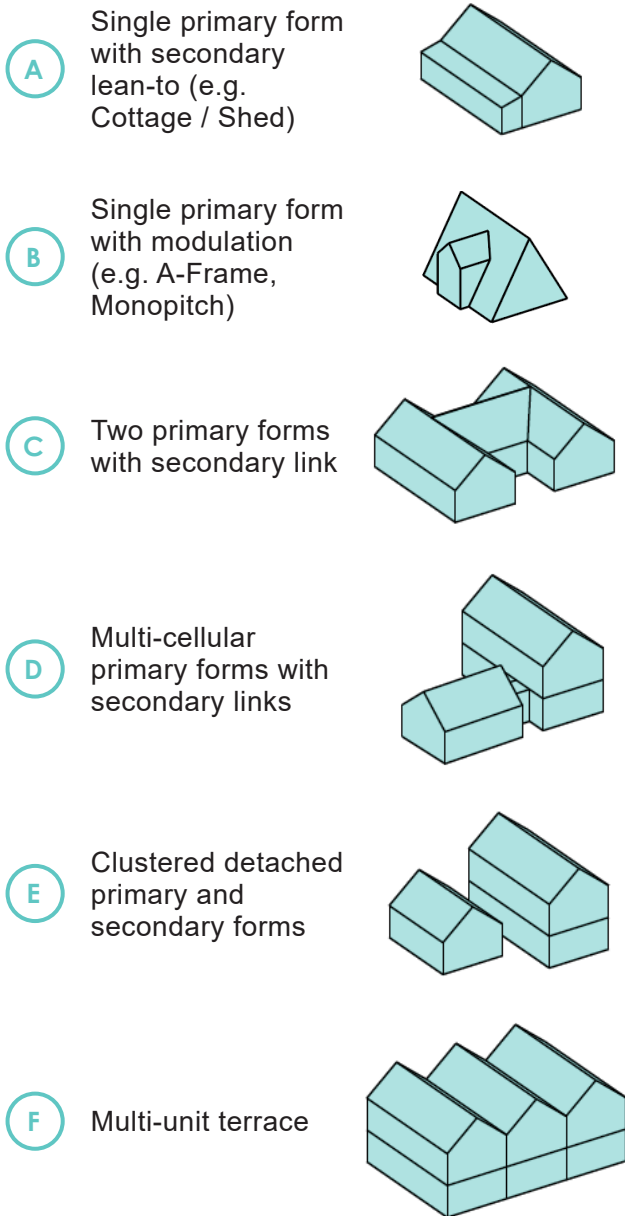


Takapō | Lake Tekapo commercial typologies

RESIDENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Key characteristics of the residential development within Takapō | Lake Tekapo, include:

- A mix of simple, small to moderate scale building forms that draw inspiration from traditional building typologies, primarily the Alpine village ‘A frame’ and the high country cottage. The appearance of bulk is typically reduced through different ways of dividing and differentiating between forms:



- Garages and accessory buildings that are cohesive with and visually recessive from primary residential building forms. These could either be detached or linked by secondary forms.
- Common architectural features consist of porches, balconies and chimney stacks. Utilities and bin storage are generally well-positioned or screened.
- Openings and window panels are generally more vertical than horizontal with a high or evenly balanced ratio of walls to windows. Window openings tend to be larger on the northern side, facing the sun and views to the lake.
- Landscape spaces are reflective of a high country character with a good level of design and workmanship. Common landscape features include rock retaining walls, post and rail fencing and timber landscape elements
- Minimal use of boundary fencing creates a sense of openness and rural character.
- Hard landscape palettes are typically natural using local vernacular materials including a wide use of local moraine rock and timber. Post and rail fencing, rock retaining walls and concrete and gravel pathways are commonly seen in the newer residential areas. Stone is a less common material in the older residential areas.



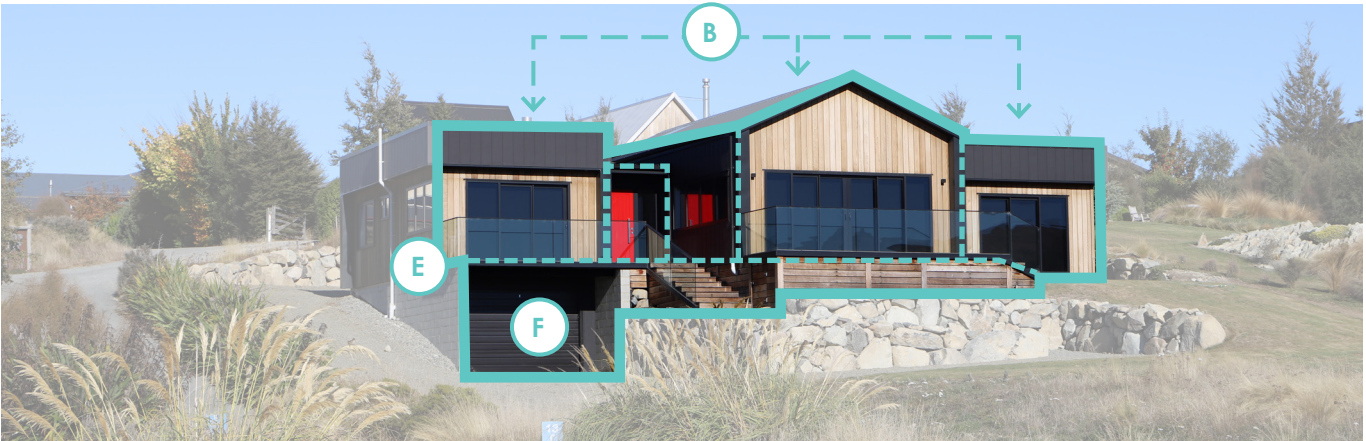
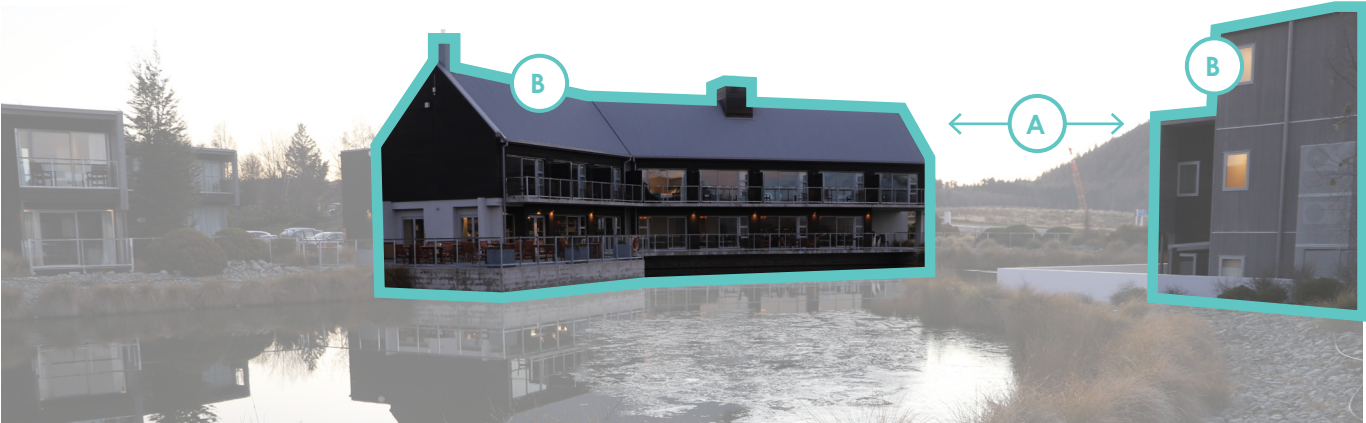
Traditional high country building typology

BUILDING SCALE

The perceived size of a building is key in determining the relationship to its site and surroundings. Many sites will be visible from the lake, State Highway 8, other public places or other properties. Managing the scale of larger commercial buildings is important to support the landscape setting of Takapō | Lake Tekapo town centre, including viewshafts that penetrate through the town centre and larger sites. Other commercial or industrial developments orientate to State Highway 8 or primary road frontages. Managing scale in these locations is also important to help create a more intimate and interesting user experience that can reinforce the town's identity. Currently, most residential building forms in Takapō | Lake Tekapo are small to moderate in scale, creating discrete profiles when viewing developments positioned on sloping areas of the town. A distinct layering of buildings is evident as a result.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

- A** Buildings are discouraged from taking up the whole site to provide the opportunity for development to create or frame views and to better settle into the landscape, softened by larger planting areas. This also maintains the layered appearance of buildings when viewed across the sloping areas of the town. Analyse the site from all angles and consider how buildings might integrate best.
- B** Larger developments are best broken down into visually distinct buildings. This can be best achieved through clustered or multicellular developments that either physically separate buildings or visually break-up larger building forms. In multi-unit developments, limit the number of units contained within each primary building form to minimise excessive visual repetition.

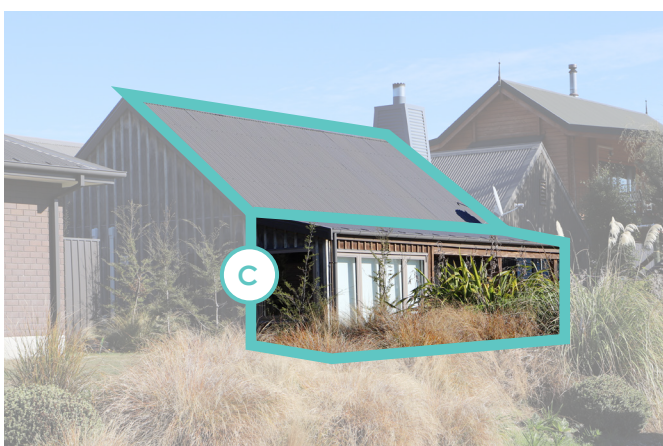


C Keep primary building forms simple and reduce their perceived scale by adding smaller, secondary forms to the side, such as a lean-to or verandah.

D Manage any long, continuous building façades on larger buildings. These can be minimised by repeating smaller primary building forms with secondary links between them or adding clear visual breaks with recessed bays.

E Apparent height can also be reduced by recessing the top storey of the building or by extending activities into the roof space. If building forms are two or more storeys, integrating them into the slope or distinguishing the base from the upper levels can also reduce their visual dominance.

F Similarly, if accessory buildings are included, such as garages and sheds, ensure they are recessive to the primary building form(s) and placed at the side or rear. A garage can be incorporated within the primary building form by adding a deeper recess off the main façade. A projecting balcony is a good way to reduce the visual dominance of a garage when it is incorporated into a two storey house.

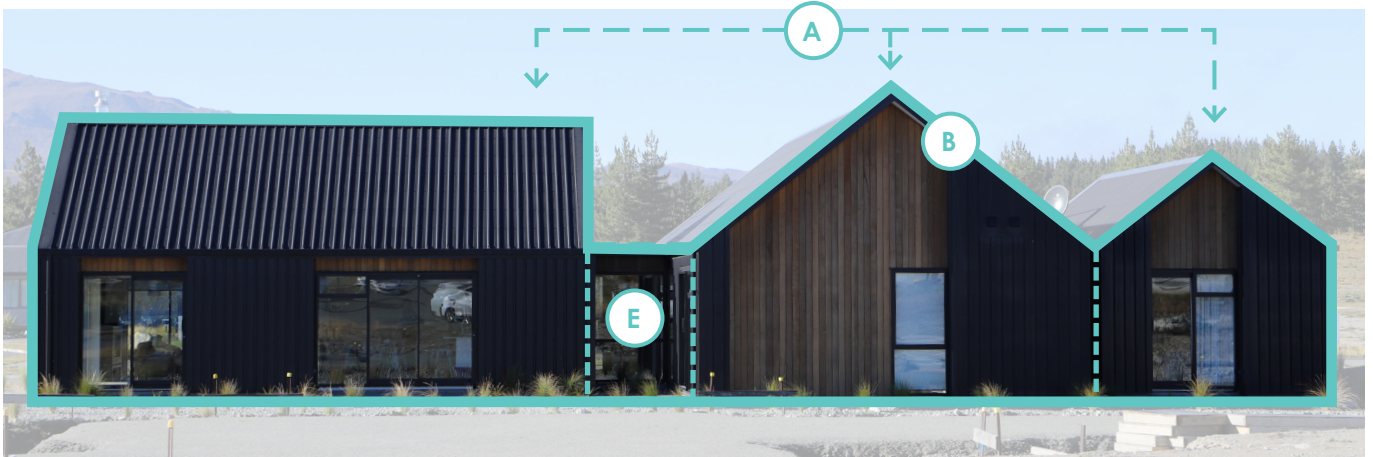


ROOF FORMS

Roof forms are highly visible in Takapō | Lake Tekapo with the way commercial buildings feature in the foreground views to the lake and mountains and residential buildings are layered across the moraine slopes. The town has a diversity of roof forms that helps provide visual interest. The variety of roof forms in the town centre distinguishes it from other centres in the Mackenzie District, in particular. A well-configured roof can complement approaches to managing the overall building scale (refer to previous themes) and is important to emphasise the simplicity of primary building forms and reduce the prominence of secondary forms. A consistent approach to each roof typology can help to unify the character of the town, such as steeper gables and shallower monopitch roofs.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

- A** Roof forms are best kept as simple structures, using basic shapes and rooflines. The scale of roofs can be managed through a single primary form, multi-cellular or clustered approaches, to help reduce the building scale. Complex roof forms such as hipped roofs, can detract from the town’s character and are generally not appropriate
- B** Gabled roofs are commonly found on buildings in the high-country or alpine areas. They are typically used for primary roof forms on flatter sites with steeper, symmetrical pitches where they can effectively shed accumulated snow in winter.



C Monopitch roof forms are most suited to sloping sites where their flatter profile better complements the layering of buildings across the moraine landscape and reduces the disruption of lake and mountain views for neighbours.

D A single roof form can be complemented with shallower pitched or smaller secondary roof forms, such as lean-tos, verandahs and dormer windows, which provide greater floor area for the building without the primary roof form appearing too large.

E Alternatively, multi-cellular or clustered approaches separate two or more roof forms from each other. This can provide opportunities to reorientate pitches in different directions to reduce the overall scale of the development. Multi-cellular roof forms are best linked together with visually recessive secondary roof forms, such as flat or shallow pitched roofs, that allow the primary roof forms to be clearly expressed. A clustered building approach achieves a similar outcome without the linking structures and is usually suited to detached self-contained accessory buildings or garages.

F All roofing details, such as gutters, downpipes and flashings, blend in the most if their materials and colours complement the roof or wall materials.



ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Simple building forms can be complemented by the careful addition of architectural features that can add simple detailing, visual depth and help provide functional benefits in the town's extreme climate. Secondary roof forms and their support columns are some of the most common architectural features, including entry porches, lean-tos and verandahs (refer to previous theme). Other features, such as deeper eaves, balconies, screens and chimney stacks, are common in developments and provide visual diversity and interest that adds to the identity of the town in combination with cladding materials and colour (refer to later theme).

DESIGN ELEMENTS

- A** Commercial building frontages are encouraged to have porches or verandahs, consistent in height with those on neighbouring properties and complementary with the building scale and roof form of the building. Parapets could be used in commercial buildings to simplify frontages and screen plant.
- B** Architectural features are best kept simple and restrained, not too ornamental. They are best distinguished from the main building, using complementary materials and proportions, to reflect their function, provide legible entrances and help break up longer building façades.



C

Balconies can provide some visual relief for taller building forms and help conceal functional elements like garage doors. However, wrap around balconies can over-emphasise the horizontal building lines where most buildings have more vertical proportions.

D

Other common utilities, such as satellite dishes, aerials, pipes, air conditioning or extraction units and stormwater retention tanks, that also need to be affixed to the exterior of the building can detract from the building's simplicity and add visual clutter. All necessary services are best to be discretely placed or screened. Consider using colours that are visually unintrusive against the backdrop, for example grey/white if set back against the skyline or the colour of the building if set back against the building.



WINDOWS AND OPENINGS

Within more traditional buildings, windows and openings are often smaller in size relative to larger wall areas with deeper reveals. These appear well-grounded in the landscape and can effectively manage the extreme climate in Takapō | Lake Tekapo, particularly on southern aspects. Balanced with this is that windows, including sliding doors, provide opportunities to reveal greater views to the mountains and lake or are required in commercial buildings to display retail offerings. Both have likely influenced the building character of the town. Takapō | Lake Tekapo is also located within the Aoraki Mackenzie International Dark Sky Reserve (AMIDSR) and it is important that windows and openings are configured to help minimise light pollution.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

- A** Buildings should include a clearly defined primary entrance which faces the street and includes direct pedestrian access between the street and front door.
- B** A high or even ratio of wall area to window openings reinforces the solidity of buildings in the landscape. In general, a combination of smaller individual windows is preferred to a large or continuous wall of glazing. If larger window openings are used, use deeper reveals to help express façade depth and ensure there is enough façade at each end to link the roof to the ground.



C The orientation of window openings is generally more vertical than horizontal. If larger window openings are used, divide the window into vertical panes, separated by heavier frames or mullions.

D Large expanses of glass can also cause problems with glare during the day (refer to later theme) or excessive light spill from inside buildings at night. These can be managed by considering the area of the glass, the angle of the windows relative to when the sun is low in the sky, minimising skylights and the provision of deeper eaves or screens. Adding blinds, curtains or drapes to each window is encouraged.

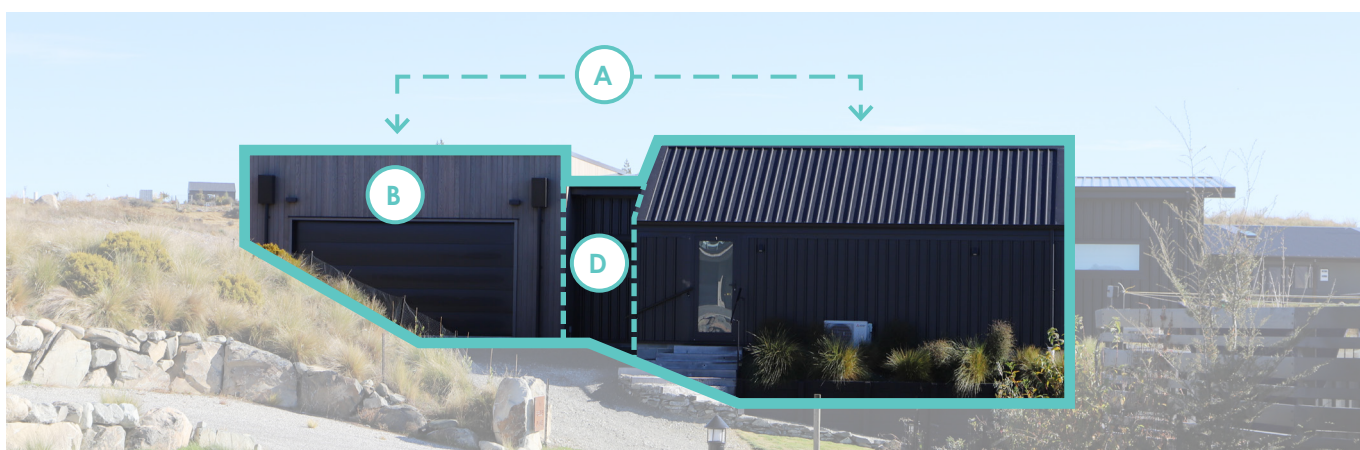


CLADDING, MATERIALS AND COLOUR

Building treatments typically reference and are well-integrated within the wider landscape setting of Takapō | Lake Tekapo. Buildings generally use a simple mix of higher quality natural materials, such as timber, steel and locally sourced stone (illustrated below). These are often left in their natural weathered state, stained or painted in a natural palette of colours with recessive tones. Use of reflective materials such as large expanses of glazing and other smooth surfaces, as well as the use of lighter colours, can cause problems with glare and compromise the experience of the landscape during the day.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

- A** Cladding materials can help break up key parts of buildings to reduce the overall building scale (refer to previous theme). Consider using a simple mix of two or three materials to emphasis different building functions or features. However, mixing the same types of material, such as different types of stone, can reduce their clarity.
- B** Materials with a textured or matt / powder finish are preferable to glossy or shiny finishes. Smooth surfaces reflect light directly, whereas textured surfaces scatter the light causing it to be less bright in any one spot. This means that smooth surfaces are more likely to cause glare than textured surfaces, regardless of the colour.



- C** Paint colours that are recessive with a Light Reflectivity Value (LRV) of between 5 - 35% and in the range of browns, greens, greys and black, complement the materials and tones found in the natural surroundings. Similarly, stains with a natural hue or dark charcoal, browns or greys, complement the landscape context more than with coloured hues, such as redwood-type stains.
- D** Darker colours that have a low LRV, are visually recessive and especially useful to visually separate primary building forms or accentuate breaks in continuous façades.



RETAINING WALLS AND LEVEL CHANGES

Much of the town, particularly the residential parts, are situated on prominent sloping sites. Buildings are generally nestled-in or set back into their sites, limiting the potential visual dominance of any large or long retaining walls when viewed from the lake front, town centre or surrounding streets.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

- A** Work with the natural characteristics of sloping sites to reduce the extent of earthworks required or integrate level changes into the building design
- B** If external level changes are needed, try using a more naturalistic design approach. Consider a combination of steeper embankments or small steps in retaining walls with planting in between to soften or hide them. This will also minimise the need for added safety railings which are not a typical feature in Takapō | Lake Tekapo.



- C** A mix of natural retaining wall materials, such as stone and timber, and densely planted embankments can help manage the visual dominance of large level changes, particularly adjacent to streets and open spaces.
- D** Utilise lighter structures, such as timber decks and balconies, to minimise the extent of less natural flat platforms and large lawn areas created on sloping sites to better blend into the rolling landscape.



FENCING AND SCREENING

Existing parts of Takapō | Lake Tekapo are largely open in character. The lack of fencing is reflective of the wider Te Manahuna | Mackenzie Basin with its extensive vistas. Front yards are often planted with native planting reinforcing this character. There is also a greater ability to appreciate other building character traits without fencing. In some instances, fencing and screening may be necessary, such as for safety / security, privacy or containing pets, and can be well-integrated into the character of the town and the wider landscape.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

- A** Consider using stepped level changes (refer to previous theme) or earth bunding as an alternative to fencing.
- B** If fencing is necessary, consider leaving frontages open and focussing on containing side and rear parts of the site. Low or visually permeable options can be considered, such as post and rail fences with finer mesh infill.
- C** For taller side fences, minimise obstructing or disrupting neighbouring views by containing fencing or screening behind the building profile.



D Fencing and screening is best coordinated with the building design, using equivalent cladding and colours, or using other natural materials, such as using timber, steel or stone.

E Screening of external utilities and bin stores with natural materials is recommended to keep the building form clean and simple, particularly where planting would restrict access or function.



PLANTING

The selection of plant species is important to help reinforce and enhance the existing indigenous vegetation patterns around the town and its setting in the Te Manahuna | Mackenzie Basin landscape. While this is generally encouraged to maintain and enhance natural character, biodiversity and cultural values of Takapō | Lake Tekapo, some parts of the town still comprise large pockets of exotic plantings, particularly in older neighbourhoods. These can offer other amenity benefits to residents, such as enjoyment from fruit trees and ornamentals.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

- A** In laying out larger developments, consider how configuration of the site can minimise the loss of, and enhance, local ecosystems and habitat.
- B** Use native species from alpine and riparian plant communities found locally. They are likely to be low maintenance plant species, stay looking good for longer, consume less water and survive frost or drought conditions. Many are taonga (treasure) species to Mana whenua, which provide mahinga kai and enhance biodiversity.



- C** The use of native plants at the frontage of developments along roads and open spaces will help achieve consistency of character throughout the town. Diversify the use of grasses with shrubs and other ground covers to add visual interest and better reflect the natural landscape.
- D** Minimise the use of taller trees between buildings to retain views for residents and neighbours to the lake and mountains. Locating taller shrubs around rear yards can help screen service areas and create privacy from neighbours while keeping with the character of the area.

- E** Exotic plantings, such as fruit trees and ornamentals, are best positioned deeper within residential lots to provide for other resident's needs. Avoid some tree species, such as *Betula pendula* (Silver Birch) allergen, *Sorbus aucuparia* (Mountain Rowan) weed species and other conifers that may cause ongoing wilding pine issues.

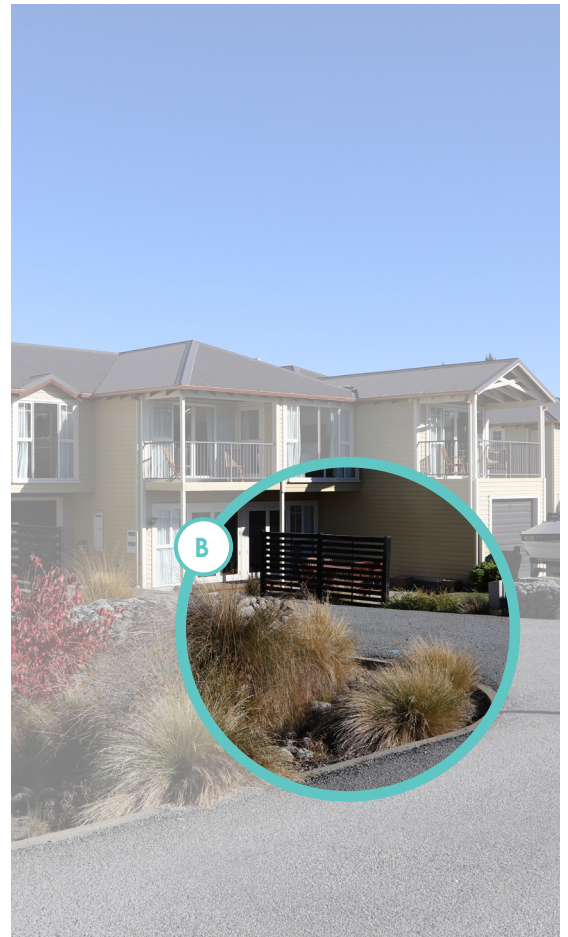


HARD LANDSCAPE

While many commercial buildings meet the street edge or abut neighbouring buildings, there are some instances where deeper entrance ways or outdoor terraces are provided between building forms or façade recesses where there are opportunities for small areas of higher quality landscape interventions. Hard landscape typically provides access to houses, car parking and service areas or is found in more intensively used outdoor living spaces, such as patios and decks. While it tends to be a more functional requirement of housing than representative of the wider natural landscape context, moraine and river stone aggregate are commonly found.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

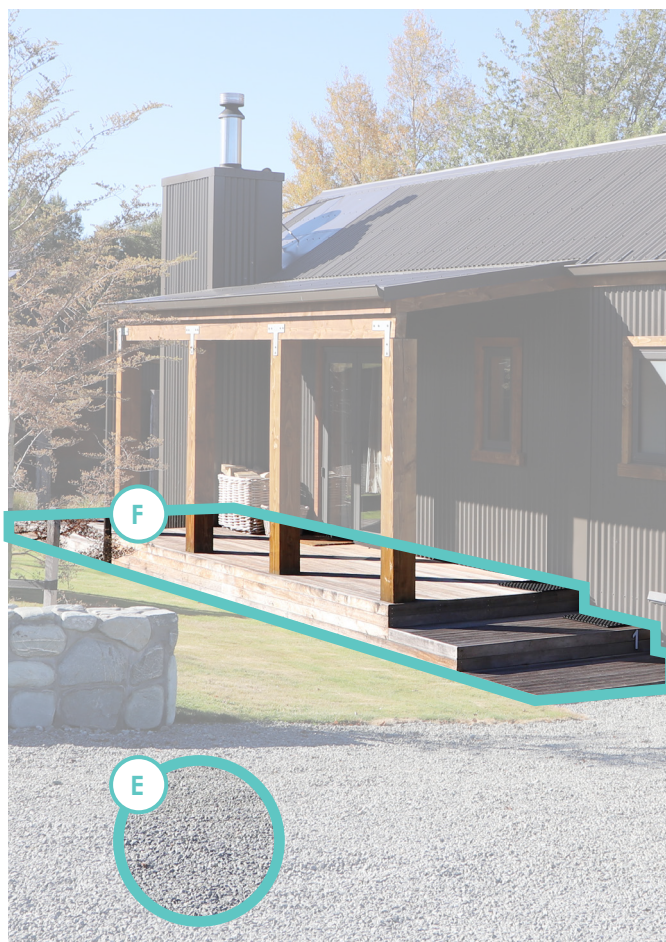
- A** Include outdoor dining or rest areas, potentially with pergola structures and wall enclosures for environmental comfort, to support visual interest at ground level and blur the boundaries between private and public areas.
- B** Minimise the expanse of hard paving or surface car parking areas by breaking-up with planting bays, including the integration of stormwater attenuation and treatment through swales and raingardens.
- C** Minimise large expanses of hard surfaces, such as paving, and earthworks to increase the potential for soft landscape on the balance of the site.



D Vehicle parking and servicing areas are best recessed behind houses and accessed by a rear or side driveway to prioritise soft landscape along the street and open space frontage.

E Accessways, such as driveways and pathways, are best constructed from local aggregates, either loose or exposed aggregate concrete. A textured finish is more in keeping with the natural landscape and can also provide slip resistance in winter. For larger surface areas, aggregate concrete could be used for banding or threshold treatments in combination with asphalt or chip seal.

F Similarly, pathways, patios and decks are best constructed from natural materials. Timber is most complementary to common building materials and can manage level changes better (refer to previous theme).



SIGNAGE

Signage is an essential part of the commercial and industrial frontages within the town and can add to its character and sense of vibrancy. If well-designed it can provide visual diversity and interest to public spaces and streets, aiding wayfinding and complementing the highly valued landscape context of the town centre.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

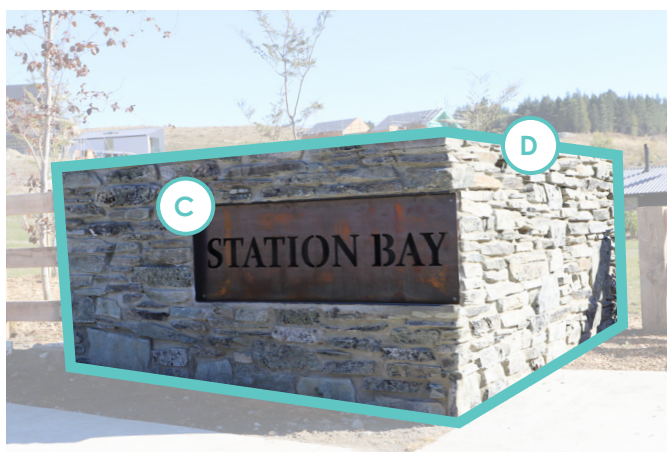
- A** A clear hierarchy and appropriate scale of signage is informed by the relationship with other developments along the street or adjacent open space characteristics. Minimise visually disrupting, obscuring or dominating the architectural features on buildings, such as windows, doors, verandahs and columns.
- B** Reduce potential for visual clutter by clustering signage together and containing it within the built form profile or skyline of the development. A cohesive 'family' of signage with consistent colour, design, size and placement can help.



C Painted, wooden and metal signs are more appropriate than plastic and highly reflective materials.

D Signs incorporating simple backgrounds, borders and text are preferable to complex graphics. If brightly coloured signs are used, enclose them with in a frame that complements the architectural features of the building.

E Minimise the illumination of signs and avoid illumination after dark to enhance the night sky experience. If illumination is used, this should be static, avoiding uncharacteristic flashing or animated signs that could become a source of annoyance for residents or distract motorists.





PART B

MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

This guide is for anyone undertaking a residential development within the Medium Density Residential zone in Mackenzie District. It will help you achieve good quality housing that respects neighbours and is well integrated into the neighbourhood.

The design guide is also intended to be a reference document for planners when reviewing applications for resource consent.

WHAT IS MEDIUM DENSITY HOUSING?

“Medium-density housing means comprehensive developments including four or more dwellings with an average density of less than 350 m² per unit. It can include stand-alone dwellings, semi-detached (or duplex) dwellings, terraced housing or apartments within a building of four storeys or less. These can be located on either single or aggregated sites, or as part of larger master-planned developments.”

- MINISTRY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Medium density housing is typically more diverse and complex than other forms of residential development. There can be many ways of achieving good quality living environments and they often require more creative design solutions that are hard to standardise.

Medium density housing is reasonably new to our District, allowing for more housing diversity to suit a range of lifestyles, needs and affordable living options for the community. Our 30-year spatial planning, developed with the community, indicates that our towns will need to progressively change over time to accommodate future growth and be more resilient to change, while protecting the other important qualities of our District. As such, more compact forms of housing will likely become a higher proportion of future new developments in our towns. It is important that this is done well, in a way that can enhance our towns and contributes positively to the community.

In addition to providing greater housing choice,

medium density housing has wider benefits for the community to:

- increase the urban vitality, maintaining community safety and bringing more life to our town centres;
- encourage more active walking and cycling, improving our health and reducing car dependency; and
- achieve efficient use of existing urban land and more cost-effective infrastructure.

This guide helps provide a starting point when establishing medium density housing within or next to our existing towns.

To recognise our strengthening bicultural relationships, the guide also draws on Kaupapa Māori design. An understanding of specific knowledge, considerations and protocols associated to kāinga (home), builds on concepts of whānau (family) and hāpori (community). As part of the recognition of Kaupapa Māori, the guide considers multi-generational housing approaches that can be more socially and culturally fit for purpose.

Applying this guide will contribute to the wellbeing of the community, including residents, and can help add value to the development. Good-quality design need not cost more, and can:

- enable developers to tackle difficult sites and add value;
- improve our liveability and wellbeing of residents;
- positively shape public perception;
- support and encourage environmental, social and cultural outcomes; and
- create places reflective of Mackenzie’s unique identity.

RELATIONSHIP TO DISTRICT PLAN

The Mackenzie District Plan sets out objectives and policies for the Medium Density Residential Zone that provide for good quality living environments within these more intensive sites.

Medium density housing is typically more diverse and complex than other forms of residential development. There can be many ways of achieving good quality living environments and they often require more creative design solutions that are hard to standardise.

Resource consent applications for developments in the Medium Density Residential Zone should assess consistency of the proposal with the Guide. Council will consider the extent to which the proposal is consistent with the Guide as part of processing resource consent applications.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide closely relates to the Medium Density Residential Zone provisions in the District Plan, particularly the matters of discretion. The key words or concepts within each matter of discretion are picked-up and explained in more depth throughout the guide.

The matters of discretion cover the various attributes of medium density housing developments. These are divided across six themes, from understanding the context of the site through to design of buildings and landscape. These are listed below:

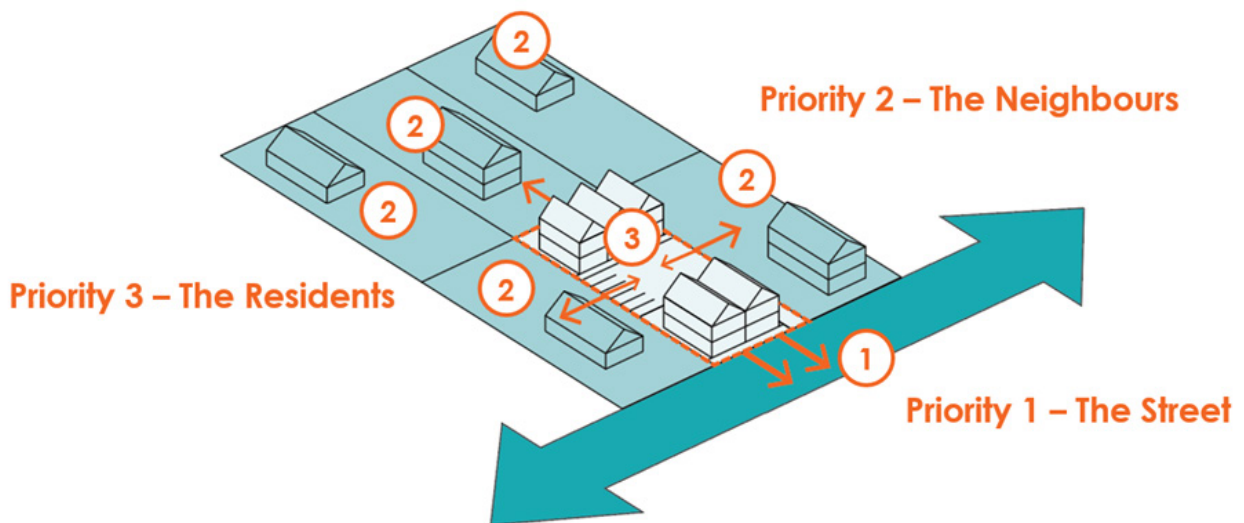
1. The site: A part of the community
2. In the front: A welcoming address
3. On the side: A good neighbour
4. The house: A well-configured building
5. Around the house: An integrated landscape
6. In the house: A liveable home.

The themes are broadly prioritised. The top priority is focused on providing a good relationship with the wider community (i.e. 1 and 2). The second priority is respecting the neighbouring properties, including their ability to develop like you in the future (i.e. 3 and 4). Priority three focuses on the residents of the development who are able to make an informed choice to live there (i.e. 5 and 6).

Under each theme, key design elements are described and illustrated. Review each of these design elements to see whether they have been addressed in your development. The guide further prioritises all or part of some design elements that will need to be considered in Council's review of resource consent applications. These are highlighted under each theme and contain terms like 'should'. Whereas others describe potential ways of achieving these or encourage other helpful considerations that may add value to the development.

The design elements listed under each theme are intended to give flexibility, while ensuring the development contributes positively to the natural and built environment. The illustrations are examples of a good design solution, but not necessarily the only one. In most developments there will be some competing or conflicting design elements. You may have to balance outcomes or trade off ideals to achieve the best design overall that addresses the various site challenges and brings the most benefits.

Each site and its context are different and will need a tailored approach to development.

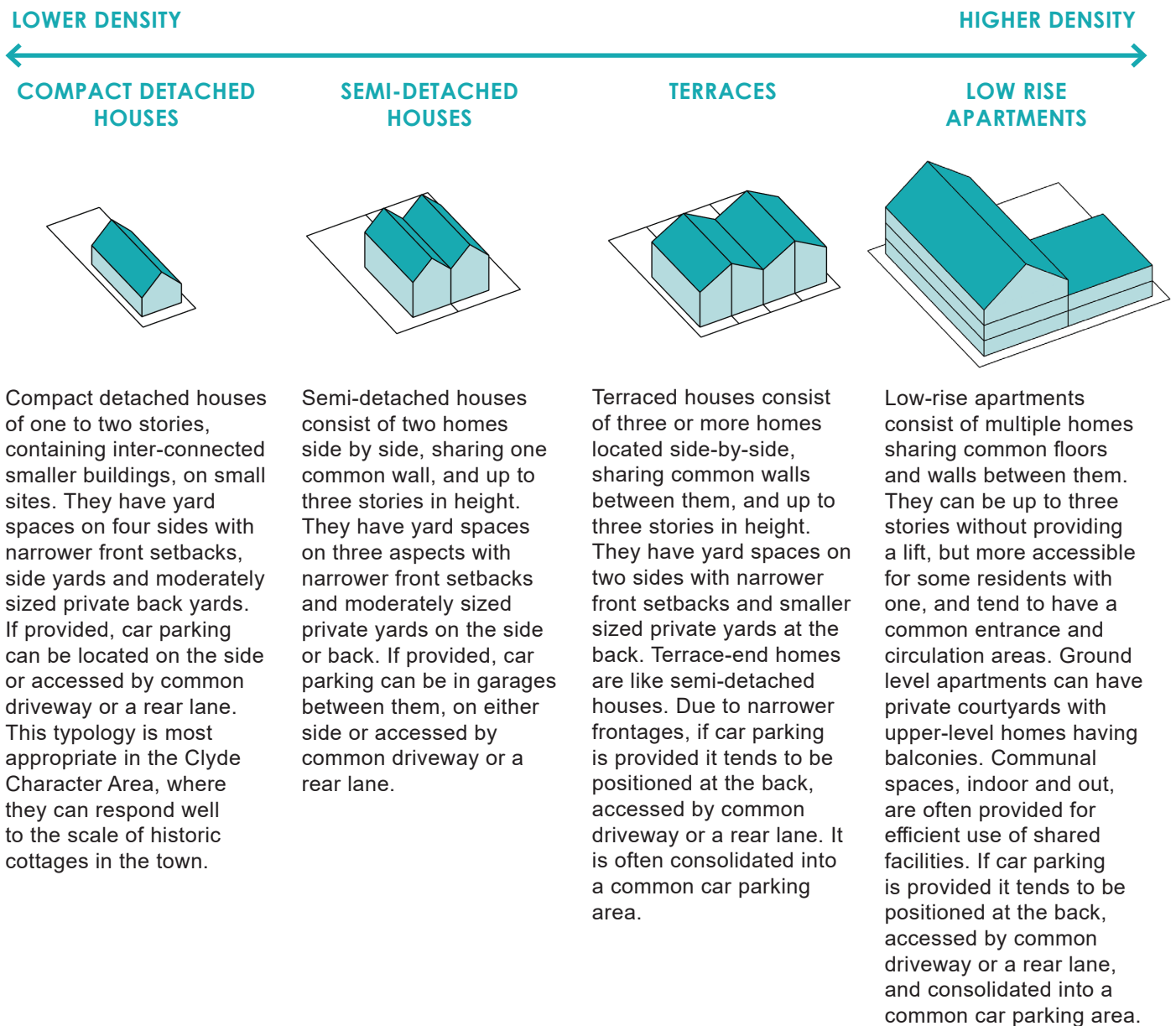


HOUSING TYPOLOGIES

The Medium Density Residential Zone is the highest density provided for in our District. Common qualities of medium density housing, include:

- Vibrant urban living with opportunities for a diversity of informal social contact;
- Proximity to town centres / neighbourhood shops, community facilities and pocket parks;
- Accommodates smaller household sizes;
- Most affordable through efficient use of land and comprehensive construction techniques;
- Lowest maintenance 'lock and leave' homes that allows most time for local recreation and social activities;
- Reduced reliance on cars with ability to walk and cycle to more destinations; and
- Limited garage and car parking spaces on site with more comprehensively managed parking in common areas or on-street.

There are four medium density housing typologies typically used in developments, being: compact detached house, semi-detached houses, terraced houses and low-rise apartments.



THE SITE:

A PART OF THE COMMUNITY

Good design contributes to the shared environment and community. It helps achieve outcomes that respond to and enhance the natural and cultural environment, people's living experiences and the unique qualities of a site. Understanding whenua (land) is central to the physical and conceptual design of a development. This means having an early, big picture understanding of how the development will fit into your neighbourhood, immediate surroundings, and the site and how these may change in the future.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

- A** Respond to important landscape features or sites of cultural significance nearby, such as unique landforms, waterways or heritage and natural features. The landscape features could help you select a development site or reveal opportunities to add value to the development. They should also identify potential constraints to resolve through the design process, such as having to manage neighbouring activities or natural hazard risks. The landscape features build on whakapapa by understanding the unique relationships and layers of people and place.
- B** Consider near and distant views to prominent natural and built features. These can enhance visual connections beyond the site and can inform the best orientation of the buildings or framing of views.



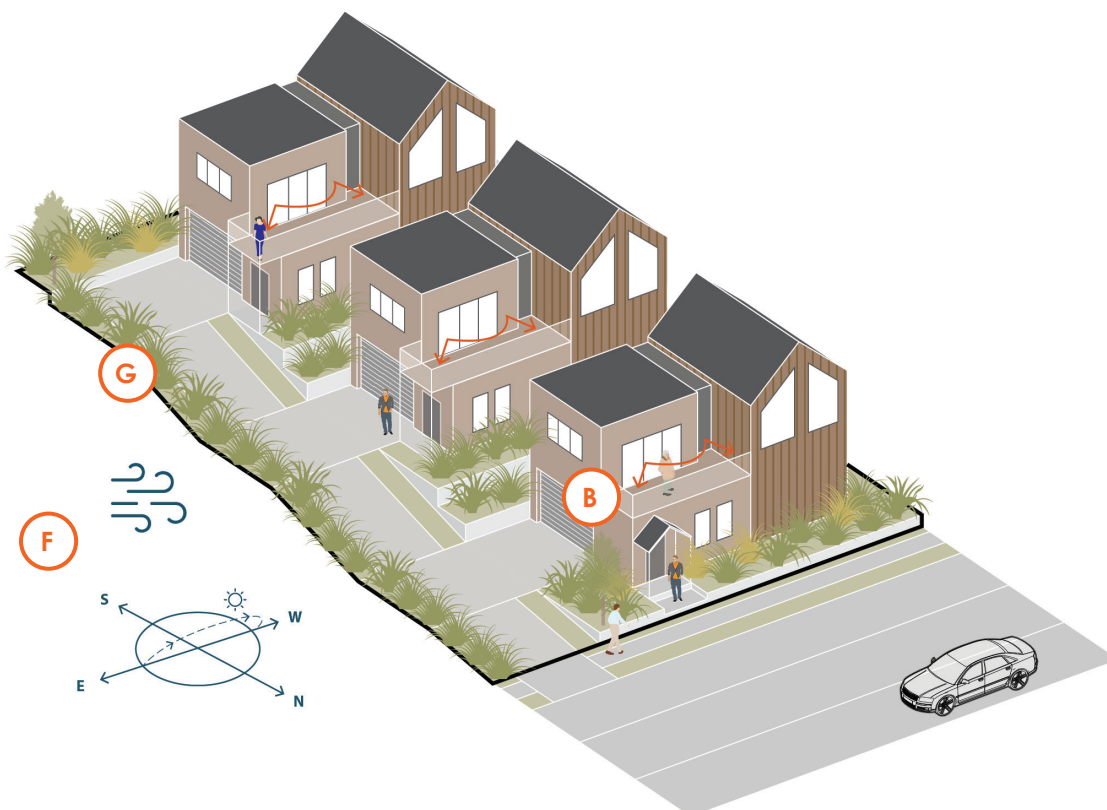
C Consider how close the development is to local centres. Cycling infrastructure can help to determine site accessibility requirements. The development should respond to current or proposed non-residential activities nearby that may also influence how the development responds, such as maximising frontages to parks or minimising noise impacts of commercial activities.

D When keeping an existing house on the site, moving the house forward or back can create a better relationship between existing and new houses and the spaces around them. Opportunities to establish shared spaces can add value to both. Maintaining the liveability of the existing house(s) for the occupants should be an important consideration as part of the design process.

E If the site is on a corner, the building and landscape features should be emphasised to assist navigation around the neighbourhood. Remember that at least two sides of the development will be visible to the community.

F Respond to the local climatic conditions, such as prevailing winds and sun aspect. This can improve residents' comfort and help save energy.

G Work with the natural characteristics of sloping sites to reduce the amount of cut and fill required; or integrate into the building design. If external level changes are needed, try to use smaller slopes, lower terracing or use planting to soften or hide retaining walls.



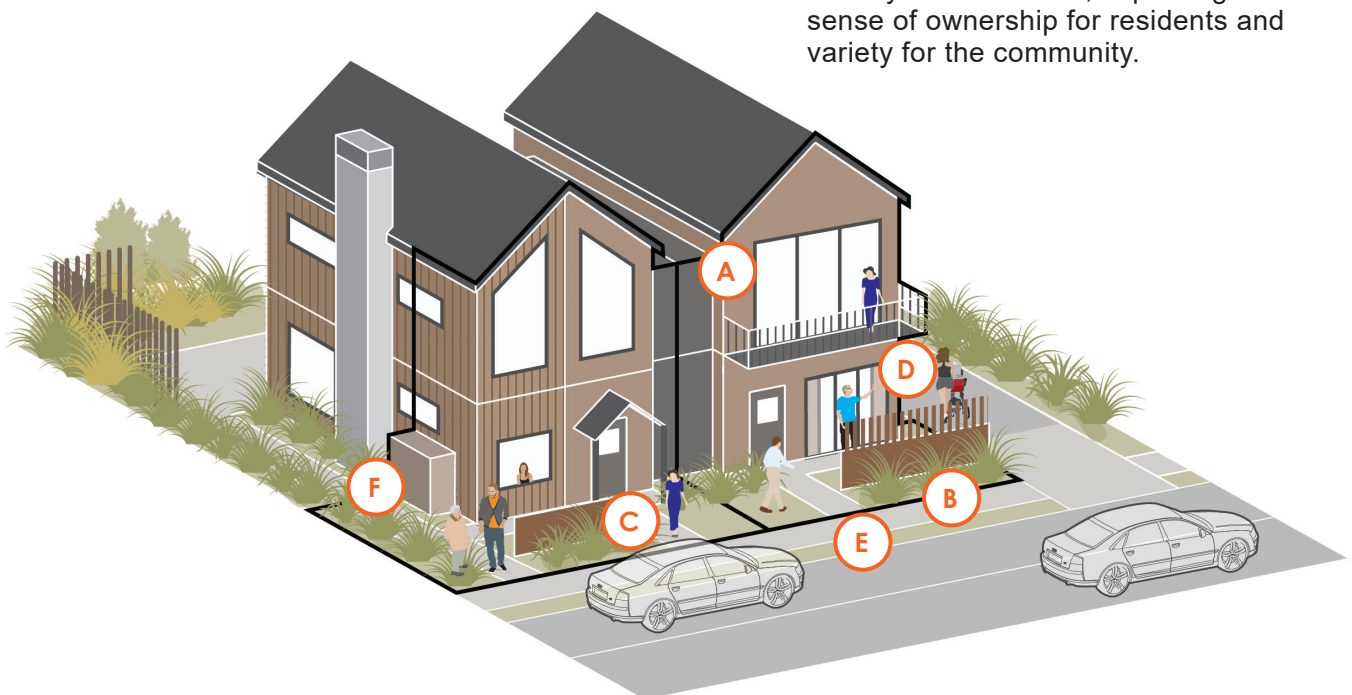
IN THE FRONT:

A WELCOMING ADDRESS

There are places in a development where those in the neighbourhood regularly pass by. This is mostly along the street or a park edge. It can also be alongside common areas within the development, such as communal open spaces, accessways and car parking areas. A well-designed house frontage can collectively benefit the public, visitors, and residents through improving community safety, providing convenient access and a place to welcome visitors. A good first impression enhances whanaungatanga (relationships) with manuhiri (visitors), creating comfortable, social and safe interactions that can help build enduring community connections.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

- A** Houses should orientate to key development frontages. Houses that front onto a street or park provide good opportunities to use public space for access and views, without having to provide them on site. This could free up other parts of the development for enhanced residential uses, such as larger outdoor living spaces.
- B** Use low planting or visually open fencing within the front yard to create an important buffer between the street or accessway and the private home that can enhance the safety and comfort of residents. It also creates a connection with the community by allowing informal interactions between residents and the public through windows and entrances.
- C** Subtle variations through planting, paving, fencing and front doors are encouraged to allow front yards to feel more personalised and provide a unique identity to each home, improving the sense of ownership for residents and variety for the community.

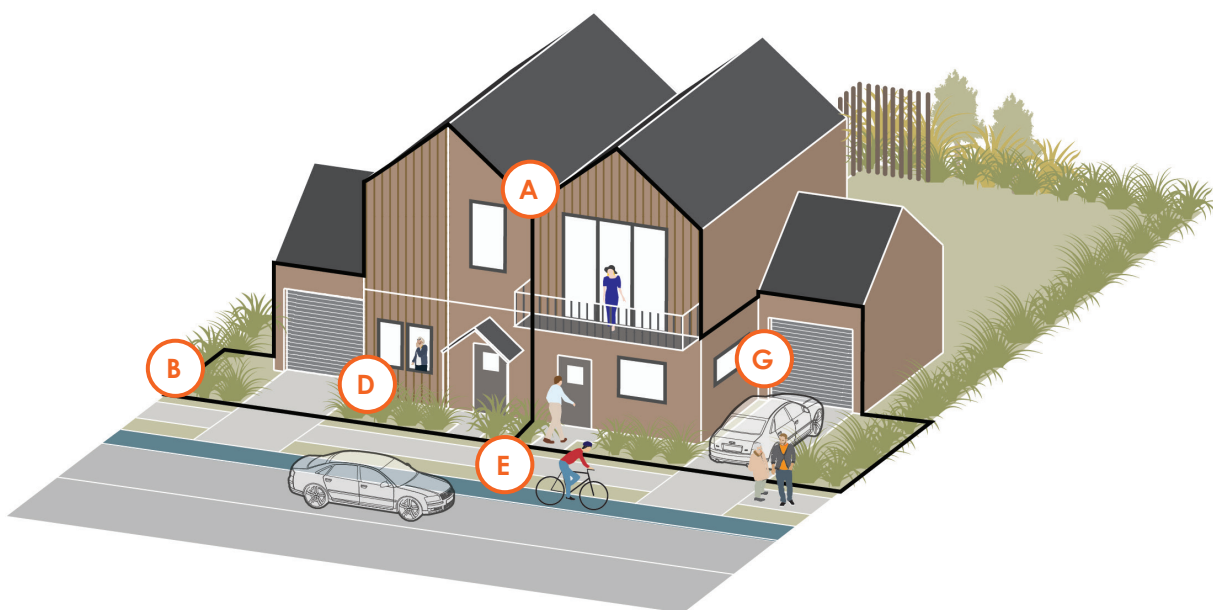


D The frontage does not stop at the front yard; it extends into the house itself. If carefully designed, house frontages can provide a good outlook for residents, sense of community, and 'eyes on the street' for community safety. **Houses should place generous windows facing the street or accessway, and locate regularly used rooms, such as kitchens or living rooms, at ground level.** Rooms that need greater privacy, such as bedrooms, can be on upper levels.

E **Have a clear and direct access from the street to the front door to help visitors understand where to go and enhance community safety.** Aim to use targeted lighting to improve the night-time arrival. When designing the front entrance, consider providing a deep porch with protection from the sun, wind and rain.

F Any front yard services, such as bin storage, need to be balanced with the quality of visitors' experience and consideration of tapu (prohibited) and noa (common) through separation, visual screening and should be appropriately sized. **Service functions are generally best located in the side or back yard if there is good access, which is clear of stairs or steep gradients.**

G **Car parking provided on-site should be located away from the front yard, while still providing good access to the street.** If necessary in the front, separate the driveway from paths and locate any garages further back from main building edge to minimise the dominance of vehicles. The distance between the building and the street boundary or accessway will need to be narrow enough to discourage vehicle parking across accessways or wide enough to fully accommodate a parked vehicle.



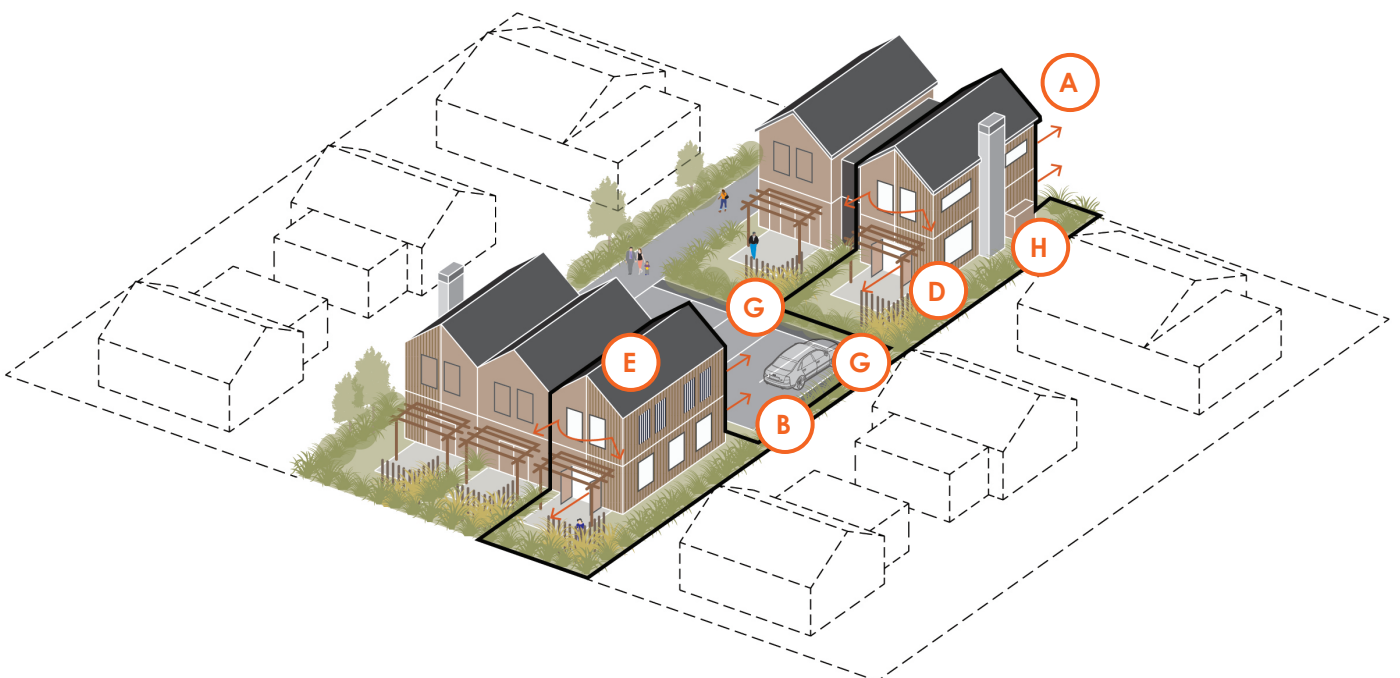
ON THE SIDE

A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

The design and use of the space between residents and neighbours, including those within the development, requires careful consideration. This is important when increasing the number of houses on smaller sites. Careful design can achieve good views and privacy and minimise the need to adapt buildings and spaces later. Well-planned use of site boundaries and internal spaces can improve sunlight access to neighbours and provide for efficient pedestrian and vehicle access. Those who own adjacent sites may also want to redevelop in the future and it is good to allow them the opportunity to respond in similar ways that can be respectful of both neighbours.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

- A** **Orientate houses or their outlook to the street and internal spaces within the development.** This is a good way to redirect or extend views, manage privacy and provide access to more sunlight.
- B** Increased separation between neighbours can be achieved by positioning outdoor living spaces, accessways, and courtyard car parking in between buildings. Landscaping can also provide screening between sites. This enhances privacy and outlook while providing gaps for ground-level sunlight access. Setting upper levels back can also help.
- C** **Keep pedestrian access between the street and each front door as direct as possible.** Providing convenient bike, scooter and pram storage close to each house also encourages them to be used more. If accessways are shared by people and cars, they should be designed for slow speeds through their width, paving and planting. This can create a more comfortable environment for residents and neighbours.



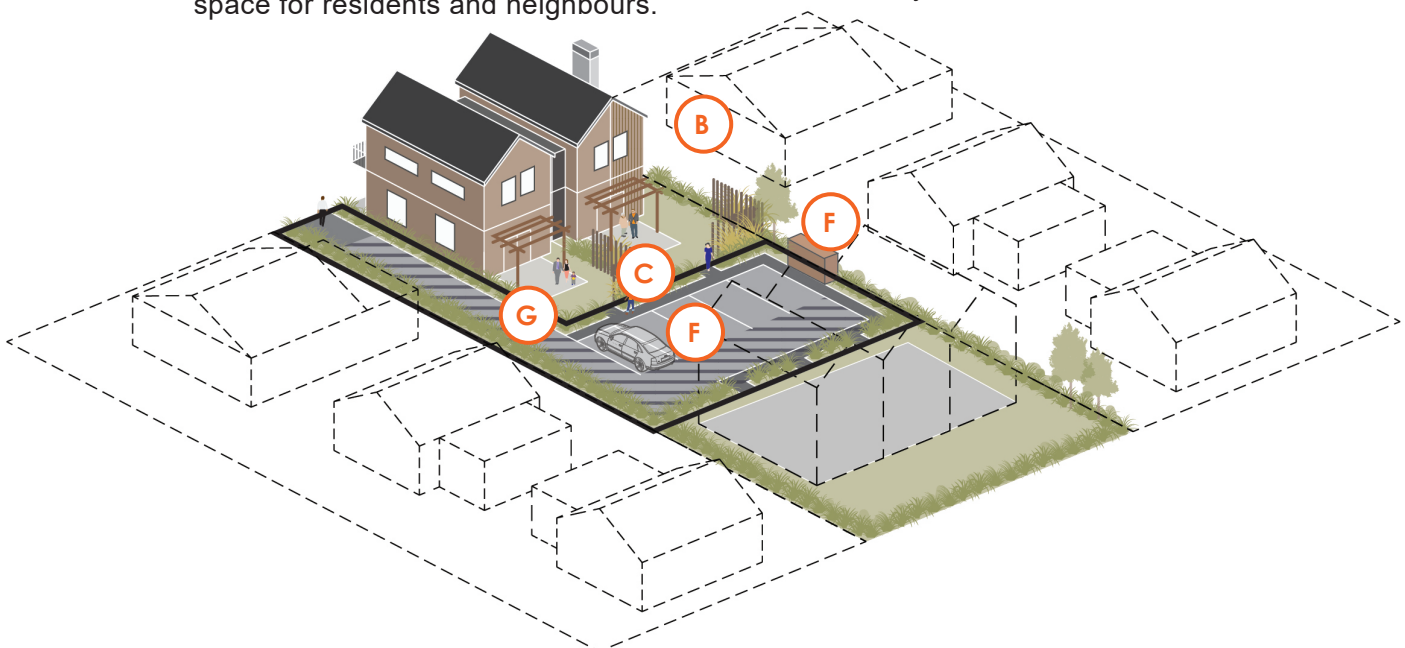
D Carefully locate key rooms to improve the outlook from indoor and outdoor spaces while balancing privacy needs. More private living rooms, can be placed at ground level to benefit from the outlook onto private outdoor living spaces and screening from trees and fence lines.

E Varying the size and position of upper-level windows or balconies within the development reduces the chance of neighbours directly facing each other and adds variety to the house designs. Check the location of existing neighbouring building windows and outdoor living spaces as a starting point. Other building features can improve privacy by helping to shorten or redirect views, such as vertical fins, louvres, screens, strip windows, or opaque glass on balcony balustrades.

F Consider a common location for car parking with clear visibility. This enables the site to be used efficiently, including providing more accessible ground level spaces for residents where garages would otherwise be. It also minimises the size of buildings within the development, allowing a greater sense of space for residents and neighbours.

G Car parking should be wrapped into the site away from the street and screened by buildings or landscape features. A common accessway should be used to reduce the number of footpath crossings and the extent of paving needed. If positioned along the southern or eastern boundary, this can move buildings centrally into the site, away from the neighbour's best aspects.

H Outdoor bin storage areas should be accessible to individual dwellings and should cater for waste and recycling bins. Generally, these should provide a minimum storage area of 2.5m² and a minimum width of 1.5m. Outdoor bin storage areas should not be within outdoor living spaces and predominant outlook areas. Screening of outdoor bin storage areas enhances amenity and reduces litter and odour for neighbours. Good access should be provided from the storage area to the street, with sufficient width available for the efficient collection of bins, that does not impede the footpath. Proposals for multiple dwellings require a Waste Management and Minimisation Plan as directed by the Mackenzie District Council Solid Waste Bylaw.



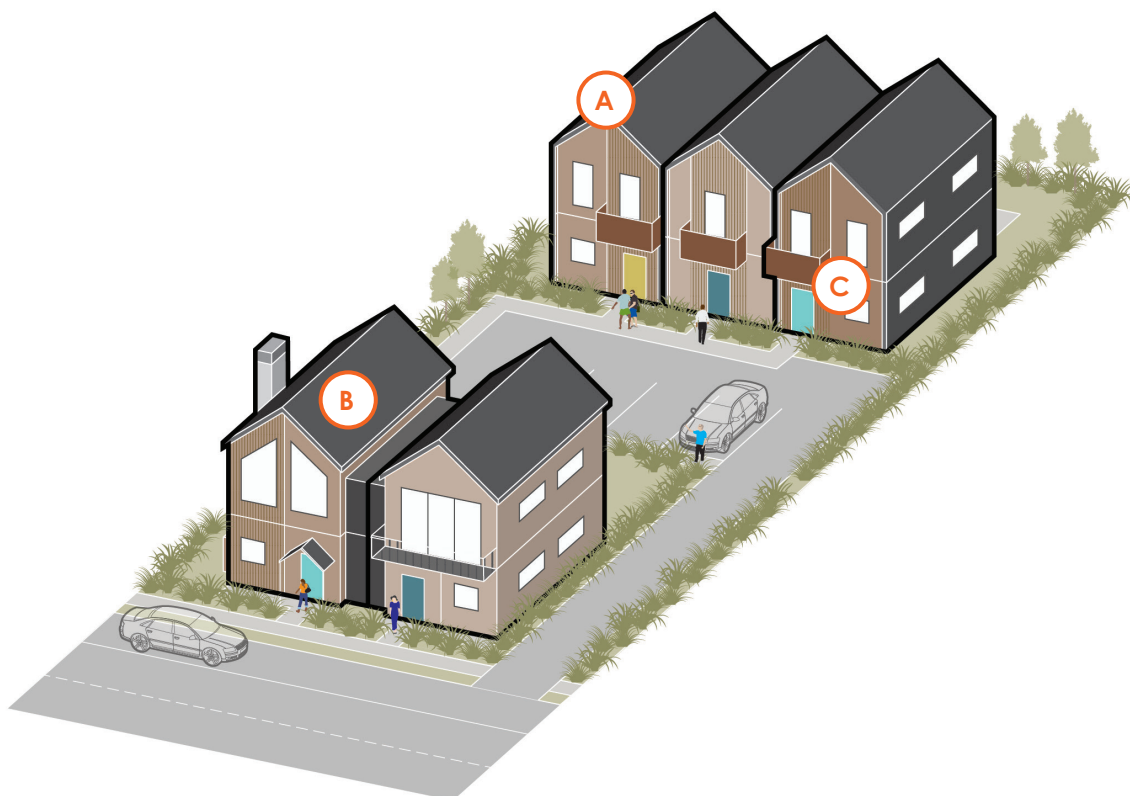
THE HOUSE

A WELL-CONFIGURED BUILDING

As the number and size of buildings on a site increase, their presence can become more noticeable. A more comfortable experience can be created by ensuring the development is more compatible with existing houses, such as by providing smaller clusters of attached houses. This can provide functional benefits by helping residents identify their individual homes, access sunlight, and improve privacy. The whare (house) concept considers multi generational living, catering to needs of kaumātua (elderly), mātua (parents), and tamariki/mokopuna (children/grandchildren).

DESIGN ELEMENTS

- A Cluster houses into smaller groups and reduce larger expanses of walls.** Stepping back or projecting building features forward to break up larger expanses of walls can create visual relief, while keeping the overall building forms simple. These may only need be shallow enough to cast a small shadow. The best use of this approach is to clearly identify individual houses or their key functional parts in a way that is logical and recognisable for visitors and residents.
- B Pitched roofs can be used to reduce the perceived height of buildings and provide visual relief, while allowing opportunities for built-in living and storage spaces.** They can also accommodate solar panels and reduce long-term maintenance that can affect flatter roofs.

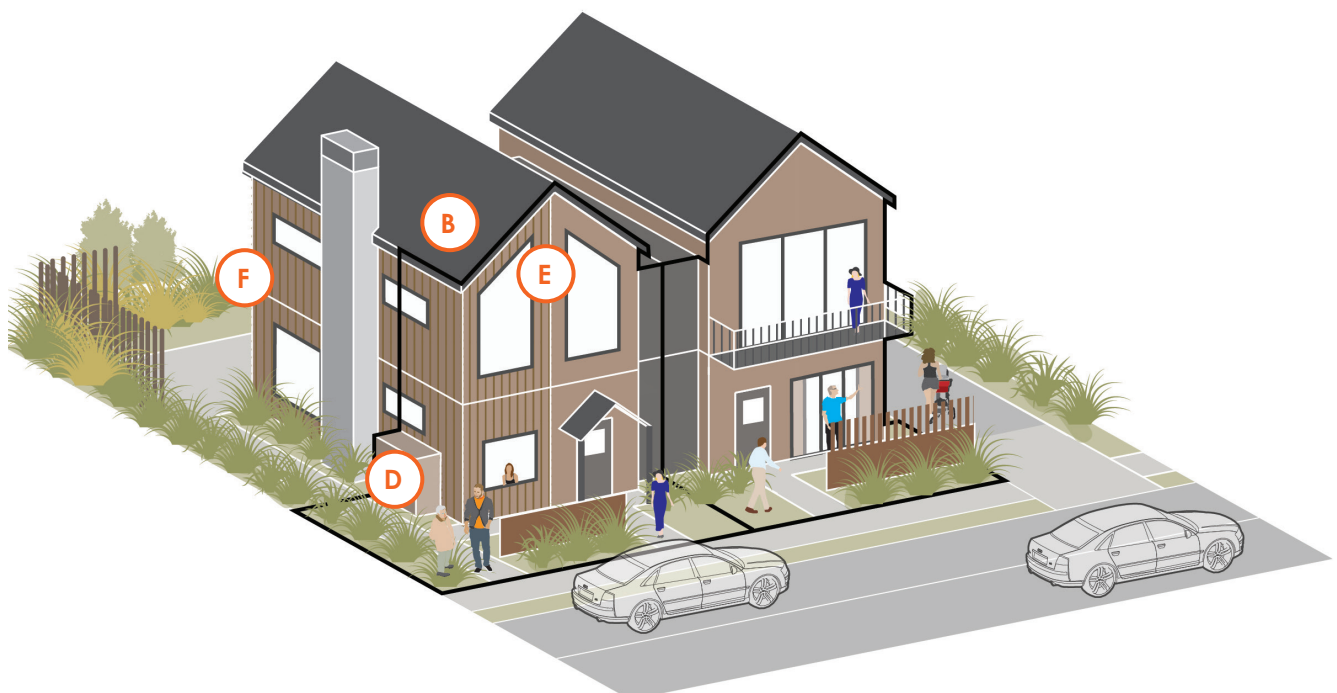


C Further break up walls through well composed building elements that provide visual relief and interest, while serving important functions. For instance, porches, balconies, and screens can offer weather protection, sun shading, help identify front doors, provide private open space, enhance community safety, and protect privacy. Careful stacking and grouping of windows and their associated outlook can benefit the perception of the building while managing privacy.

D Varying forms, features and materials is not just limited to buildings. This could apply to other larger-scale features, such as fences, storage sheds and bin storage.

E Use sympathetic or complementary colours and materials, including those that are locally sourced. Subtle differences in colours and materials can be used to distinguish individual houses and create a sense of identity for residents. Cultural and local narratives may also provide opportunities for unique design identity. In Mackenzie, use of stone, timber and galvanised corrugated iron is common. Generally, the characteristics of these materials are modest, organic, earthy, imperfect, weathered and rustic contributing strongly to the local vernacular.

F The materials you use are key to the long-term carbon impact of the building. Once built, it is hard to change. Use of low-maintenance details and robust materials can maintain their appearance and integrity and be more cost-effective and sustainable over time. Use sustainably sourced or recycled materials where possible.



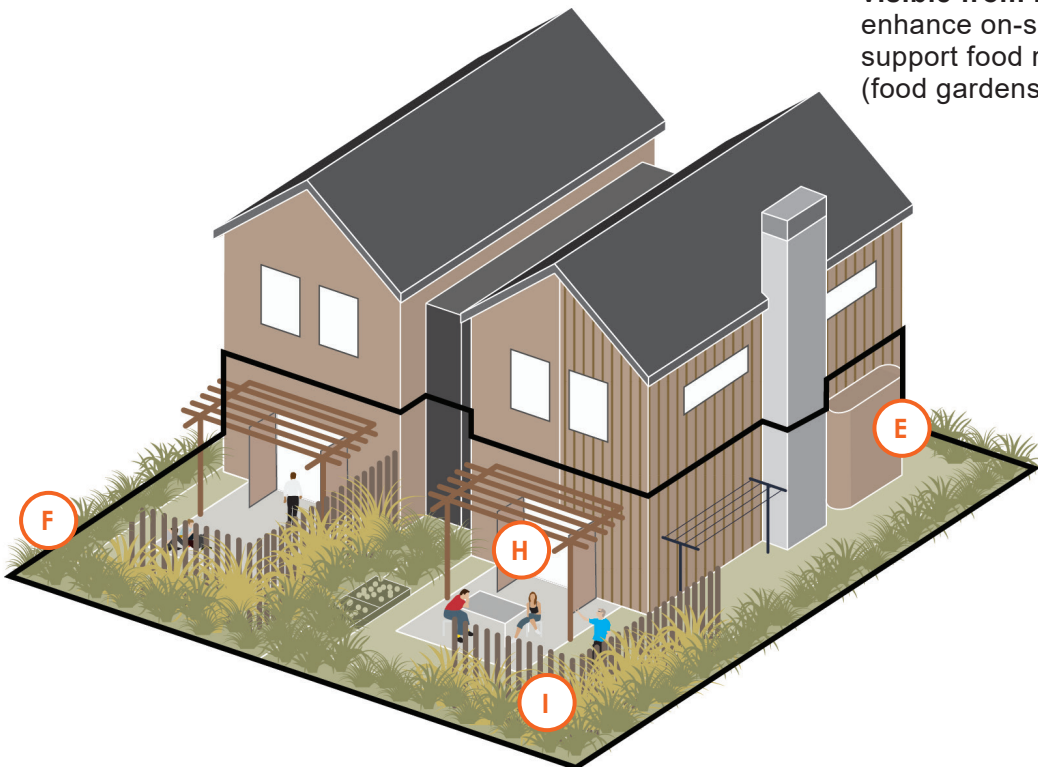
AROUND THE HOUSE

AN INTEGRATED LANDSCAPE

Once you step off the public street or park, developments typically provide residents common landscape areas and a mix of communal and private open spaces. Not all developments provide communal spaces, but a proportion of the site could be set aside for shared facilities for multi-generational living or smaller private spaces, such as balconies. Larger outdoor spaces can provide wider environmental benefits by retaining larger trees and vegetation areas for biodiversity through to stormwater management.

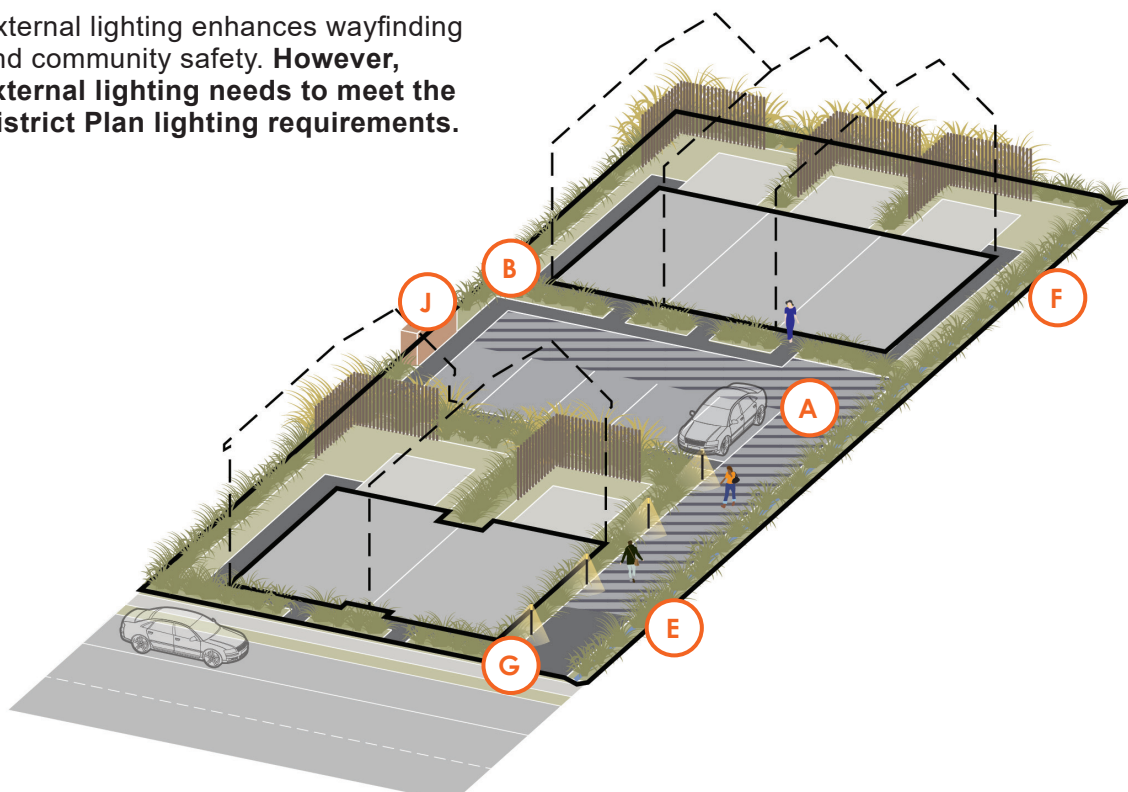
DESIGN ELEMENTS

- A** Hard landscaping typically provides access to houses, car parking, and service areas. **Consolidate into shared surfaces to increase the potential for soft landscaping and reduce heat absorption to keep the site cooler in summer.**
- B** Use softer planting in common areas to provide buffers around houses and screen private outdoor living spaces and boundary fences. Planting could even replace fencing, such as hedges. Some consolidation of landscape areas can be helpful to keep existing trees and support new ones.
- C** Provide communal spaces if private spaces are small. These can be an efficient use of space and help support more diverse communities. If well located, designed, and managed, residents can comfortably interact and play safely within the site. **To provide maximum benefit for residents, make these easily accessed and widely visible from houses.** This can also enhance on-site sustainability and support food resilience, such as māra kai (food gardens).



- D** Balconies or roof terraces can be appropriate for smaller homes and can be used in combination with communal spaces. Upper-level outdoor living spaces are most useful when they are well-configured for tables and chairs relative to the size of the house.
- E** **Capture or treat stormwater runoff to conserve water and prevent pollution of waterways.** This is best managed at the source by collecting rainwater from the roof for irrigation, using permeable paving, and integrating swales or raingardens into the landscape design.
- F** **Use low maintenance plant species, particularly in common areas, that are likely to stay looking good for longer, consume less water, and survive frost or drought conditions.** These will often be plants that are native to the area. Mana whenua may have taonga (treasure) species which could be used or encouraged by appropriate planting or retention of existing trees.
- G** External lighting enhances wayfinding and community safety. **However, external lighting needs to meet the District Plan lighting requirements.**

- H** For outdoor living spaces, direct access to well-used internal areas can make the outdoor space an extension of the home. **Ideally, these spaces have a northerly or westerly orientation for maximum sunlight and are sheltered from prevailing winds.**
- I** **Ground-level outdoor living spaces allow flexibility to configure private space for outdoor furniture, raised gardens, or other uses.** When planning outdoor living space, leave sufficient utility space, such as clothes lines and garden sheds, while also considering the concepts of tapu and noa.
- J** Future proofing for electric vehicle and bike charging points or building in charging stations at the start of a development means they will not look like an after-thought or obstruct pedestrian movement later, particularly for the visually impaired.



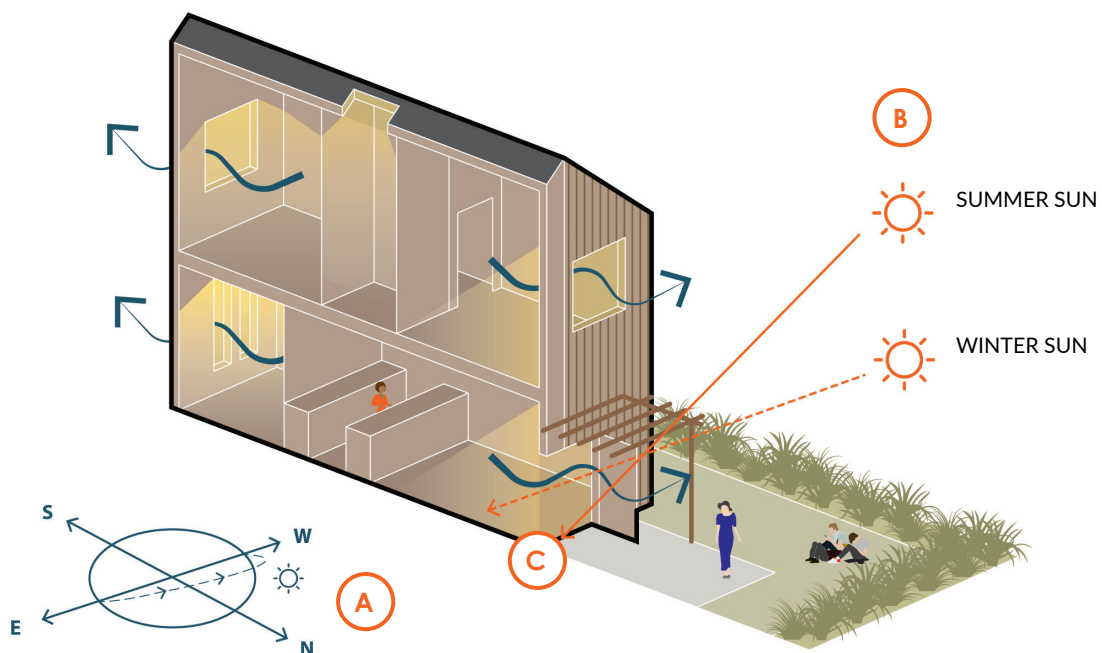
IN THE HOUSE

A LIVEABLE HOME

Designing high performing and accessible compact buildings is important to a healthy and comfortable home. A higher performing home can be achieved for little or no additional cost. Even simple approaches that allow buildings to receive heat from the sun during winter and cool naturally during summer can result in considerable cost savings for residents and a reduction on greenhouse gas emissions. Incorporating universal design principles can make homes accessible to all people of all abilities at any stage of life.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

- A** **Orient the house and key rooms for sunlight and warmth to improve energy efficiency.** This is best achieved by aligning longer façades to maximise the benefits of the sun, placing main living areas on the north or west side, and providing generous ceiling heights. Skylights, atrium's, or light wells enable sunlight to penetrate deeper into internal spaces.
- B** **Shading devices, such as deeper eaves, louvres, and balconies, help maintain indoor comfort in the summer, while still allowing sunlight to heat rooms in the winter.** This reduces the need for heaters and air conditioners.
- C** **Consider the placement of living areas and bedrooms with large opening windows on either side of the house for effective cross ventilation and passive cooling to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.** If mechanical systems are provided, like heat pumps or extractors, place these where their noise does not disturb residents or neighbours.



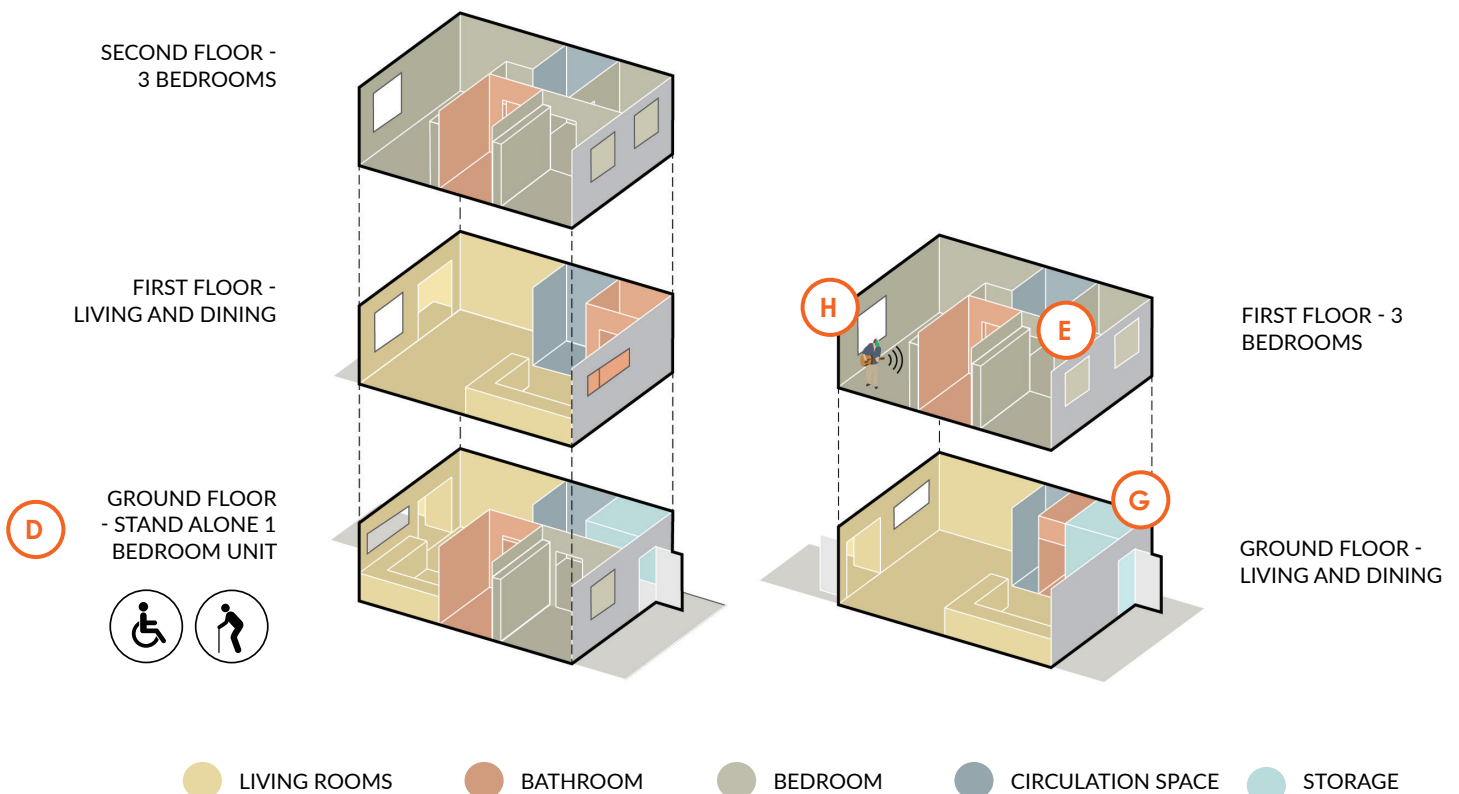
D Designing for an aging population, young children, and disabled people (universal design) makes a whole future-proofed in the long term. Accessible and inclusive design means providing level access, wider doorways, and ground-level living, or provision for stair lifts. Recognising these opportunities helps support the wellbeing of residents. Consider Lifemark Design Standards for all ground floor units.

E Think about how the design and layout can allow rooms to be used or configured in different ways. The location of load bearing walls can provide the opportunity to divide or merge rooms and buildings in the future to cater for changing needs. This will assist in the spatial arrangement and flexibility of open and enclosed spaces.

F Cultural suitability and practices should be considered in the interior layout design that relate to the concepts of tapu and noa. Spaces associated with food should be separated from bathrooms, toilets, and laundries.

G Provide sufficient storage to accommodate larger items, recreational equipment, and other items, such as prams. This can increase the efficient use of indoor space and avoid larger items spilling out onto outdoor living spaces.

H For more peaceful living, consider designing interiors with good acoustic separation from external and internal noise sources. Similar household activities can be placed either side of a common wall between houses, matching noisy areas and quiet areas side-by-side. Bathrooms, storage areas, and wardrobes can be used as noise buffers within houses.





Mackenzie
DISTRICT COUNCIL