

**22.65 UPPER SKENE HERITAGE PLACE**15/03/2018  
C365

This policy applies to land included in the Upper Skene Street Heritage Area shown as HO2005 on the planning scheme map.

**Policy Basis**

The Upper Skene Street Heritage Precinct, 1-63 Upper Skene Street, Newtown, has significance as a predominantly intact grouping of interwar era Bungalows, and to a lesser degree, Late Victorian and Edwardian styled dwellings. These houses reflect the evolution of the street from the late 1890s until the 1940s. Until the interwar period, the street largely remained a rural residential area, with only 11 dwellings on the south side of the street until c.1915. These houses were built from the 1850s following the broad subdivision of the area and the creation of Upper Skene Street. No fabric of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century survives. The area is primarily identified by detached, single storey, modestly-scaled dwellings on separate allotments. The majority have hipped/and or gabled roof forms, front verandahs, corrugated sheet metal roof cladding, timber weatherboard wall cladding, timber framed windows and doors, chimneys and detailing applicable to their era and style. There are a smaller number of houses with tiled roofs and brick wall construction (either face brick or with a rendered finish). The dwellings have elevated locations from the street boundaries, a consequence of the steeply-sloping topography of the area. Contributing to the significance of the place is the regular, rectangular allotment pattern, regular front setbacks with garden settings, narrower side setbacks with side driveways, and mainly recessive garaging. In 2016, the character and appearance of the streetscape is enhanced by the avenue of alternating *Lophostemon confertus* (Queensland Brush Box) and *Corymbia ficifolia* (West Australian Flowering Gum street trees. While planted in the c.1960s (being outside the significant era of development for the area), they reflect the evolution of change in tree plantings, with Upper Skene Street having been characterised by an avenue of trees since the interwar period.

**Objectives**

- To retain and enhance the mix of significant Late Victorian, Federation and interwar era dwellings as identified in the Newtown West Heritage Review, Volume 3 (2016) (the demolition of these dwellings is therefore discouraged);
- To retain an avenue of street trees;
- To retain the existing front garden settings defined by contextually generous front setbacks at 3-5, 9 and 19-31 Upper Skene Street, and slightly shallower existing front setbacks to the remainder of the properties;
- To retain the rectangular allotment configurations;
- To retain the regular narrow side setbacks to the dwellings;
- To retain the predominantly single storey building height;
- To encourage additions to existing significant dwellings to be located at the rear;
- To encourage the innovative interpretation of traditional residential design within the street for additions and new dwellings;
- To encourage the use of traditional construction materials;
- To encourage the construction of fence types, designs, locations and heights that are applicable to the era, construction and scale of the dwelling;
- To encourage the appropriate development, form, scale and rear locations for garages and/or carports;

**Policy**

Where a permit is required for a proposal, it is policy to:

- Encourage culturally significant Late Victorian, Federation and interwar era dwellings to be retained (demolition of dwellings identified as having local or contributory significance in the Newtown West Heritage Review 2016 is discouraged);
- Encourage the accurate reconstruction of missing architectural details to existing significant dwellings where historic photographic and/or physical evidence survives;
- Encourage the retention of the landscaped settings in the front setbacks;
- Encourage the retention of existing rectangular allotment configurations;
- Promote new dwellings & additions to existing dwellings that are contemporary in appearance and incorporate the following design characteristics:
  - Architectural characteristics that have drawn on the traditional designs of the area in an innovative way;
  - Detached, single or double fronted compositions;
  - Hipped and/or gabled roofs with a pitch between 25 to 35 degrees as the principal design elements;
  - Narrow or wide eaves;
  - Front, side or return verandahs;
  - Rectangular timber framed windows (that are vertically oriented singularly, or as a horizontal bank if grouped);
  - Traditional wall construction, including horizontal timber weatherboard cladding, pressed face brick wall construction, and smooth-rendered wall finishes. Consideration may be given to more contemporary materials that are non-reflective and where they will have no visual prominence when viewed from the public realm;
  - Galvanised corrugated steel or tiled roof cladding, the choice of roof cladding being dependent on the significant roofs that predominate in that part of the street;
- Encourage additions to existing dwellings to be located at the rear. The visual prominence and integrity of existing roof forms should be maintained in the design of additions, by being highly recessive and of subservient proportions;
- For new dwellings, encourage:
  - Front setbacks that are equivalent to the setback of neighbouring buildings, or if these are different, the setback may be between the setbacks of neighbouring buildings;
  - Side setbacks that are equivalent to neighbouring buildings;
  - Side vehicular access and driveways that follow the traditional pattern in that part of the street
- Encourage building heights to be one and two storey, with consideration given to the following for new dwellings & additions to existing dwellings visible to public view:
  - The highest point of the roof should not be greater than the highest adjacent significant building, whereby the height of the roof should not be greater than the main (overall), adjacent ridge line;
  - The proportion of building roof should not be greater than the proportion of roof to walls of the buildings visually connected to it;
  - For new dwellings, the wall heights as viewed from the public realm should be equivalent to the wall heights of the neighbouring significant dwellings that predominate in that part of the street;
  - The springing height of the roof should be equivalent to neighbouring buildings, or if these are different, the springing height may be between those of neighbouring buildings;

- The principal roof form and massing of the new work be drawn from the significant neighbouring buildings visually connected to it in a contemporary and/or innovative manner, especially where visible to public view;
- Encourage new front fences to be visually permeable and reflective of the era, construction and scale of the dwelling and the streetscape. Fences no higher than immediately neighbouring front fences and no higher than 1500 mm high are encouraged. At the eastern end of Upper Skene Street (between Shannon Avenue and Ruthven Street), front fences may also include low retaining walls. Fence designs reflective of the era and construction of the dwelling are encouraged. The reconstruction of early fence designs where historic evidence survives is also encouraged;
- Encourage the appropriate development, form, scale and location of garages and/or carports. Rear locations are especially encouraged. Highly recessive side locations for single vehicle garages and/or carports may be considered;
- Buildings and works should comply with the City of Greater Geelong Heritage and Design Guidelines 1997, which is an incorporated document.

### **References**

*Newtown West Heritage Review, Volumes 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5* prepared by Dr David Rowe, Authentic Heritage Services Pty Ltd and Wendy Jacobs, Architect and Heritage Consultant (October 2016).

*City of Greater Geelong Heritage and Design Guidelines*, prepared by Helen Lardner for the City of Greater Geelong (1997).