NORTH COAST URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The North Coast region boasts a thriving diversified economy supported largely by agriculture and tourism. Ecological and cultural diversity, natural wilderness and pristine coastline are increasingly attracting newcomers in search of a more relaxed lifestyle in a beautiful unspoilt landscape.

Significant future growth is anticipated for the region, with a projected population increase of more than 150 000 people over the next 25 years along with an advance in the median age to approximately 53 years. The region needs to embrace this inevitable growth and lead the process of change to accommodate it.

These guidelines have been prepared to support the Far North Coast and Mid North Coast Regional Strategies developed by the NSW Department of Planning, and to manage this change, maintaining a prosperous economy and protecting the unique North Coast environment through good planning and urban design.

Councils, as part of their responsibilities under the Far North Coast and Mid North Coast Regional Strategies are required to prepare a Local Growth Management Strategy for their local government area.

The North Coast Urban Design Guidelines are designed to assist with this process.

This document has been prepared in two parts.

Part One of these guidelines is designed to assist councils in undertaking an assessment of the existing positive attributes of their own settlements to determine what planning responses may be required to maintain the character of the settlement through future settlement growth opportunities.

Part Two outlines the principles and strategies for managing environmentally, economically and socially sustainable settlement growth. It addresses growth management in three typical planning scenarios and at three scale levels.

Growth and development must be properly planned and designed at all scales - regionally, locally, settlement by settlement, street by street and block by block - in order to properly preserve the existing natural and built character.

A clear understanding of and respect for the region's character is fundamental to its ongoing appeal and success. The guidelines are an additional tool in advancing quality urban design.

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PART ONE: UNDERSTANDING EXISTING URBAN DESIGN CHARACTER

01   INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1.0   INTRODUCTION

The NSW North Coast is well known for its relaxed lifestyle, with a mild climate and a string of settlements that are set in a distinctive landscape. This landscape is fundamental to understanding the structure and form of North Coast settlements. The ocean, the dunes, the rugged mountains, gently undulating agricultural land, naturally vegetated hinterland and pockets of dense rainforest are memorable. The sun and afternoon breezes provide comfort. People gather at the shops on the main street or on the beaches and waterways for recreation. The agricultural and forestry lands provide an important regional industry.

The Department of Planning's vision for urban design on the North Coast is to create and encourage sustainable development as well as innovative and imaginative design. The vision recognises that the built environment should address the character of the region. It sees that the design quality of built form and public domain both contribute to the North Coast's sense of place.

These guidelines have been prepared by HASSELL on behalf of the NSW Department of Planning to assist in achieving this vision for the North Coast. The aim of these guidelines is to enhance and maintain the unique natural and urban character of settlements throughout the North Coast Region, while sustaining increasing population and managing development pressure.

The guidelines are based on a broad analysis of the existing urban design character of the various settlement types of the North Coast of NSW to understand what makes this region unique and valuable. The document seeks to provide design strategies and guidance that may inform the layout of future settlements, the expansion of existing settlement, and the design of new built form in order to maintain and improve the positive urban design characteristics of the region.

The classification of settlement used throughout the guidelines is based on existing definitions in the Far North Coast and Mid North Coast Regional Strategies. That is, Regional Centre, Major Town, Town, Coastal Village and Inland Village. These classifications are described in section three.

The examples used throughout the document are based loosely on specific settlements of the North Coast. However, they are not meant to be an accurate reflection of these existing towns, rather they illustrate a methodology for studying and analysing urban design character in existing settlements.

1.1   USING THESE GUIDELINES

These guidelines have been developed to provide a region wide response to the existing urban design character and various settlement types. The guidelines will supplement the Coastal Design Guidelines previously released by the Coastal Council and will provide a broader response to design outcomes across the varying landscapes within the region. They should be used in conjunction with these and other design publications.

The Regional Strategies seek to improve urban design outcomes across the region by requiring the built form of new development to reflect the existing positive design and character, streetscape and landscape setting of settlements. This will be achieved through the development of character statements for localities and consideration of design outcomes through preparation of new planning controls and development assessment.

These guidelines are designed to assist councils in the preparation of their Character Statements and Development Control Plans to achieve positive design outcomes. The guidelines will also assist in the design, consideration and assessment of future development proposals.

Part One of these guidelines may be used to guide councils, planners, developers and local communities in Local Government Areas of the North Coast in undertaking an assessment of the existing positive attributes of their own settlements in order to maintain the character of the settlement throughout future settlement growth.

Part Two outlines the principles and strategies for managing environmentally, economically and socially sustainable settlement growth. It addresses growth management in three typical scenarios: growth through consolidation, growth at the fringe and growth in new release or 'greenfield' locations. The guidelines address urban design issues at the whole of settlement, street and block, and individual building scale.

LEGEND

◎	Regional Centres	▬ National Parks	─── Rivers
●	Major Towns	▬ State Forests	─── Major roads
●	Towns		─── Secondary Roads
·	Inland Villages		┼┼┼┼ Rail
·	Coastal Villages		▬ ▬ North Coast Region

02   INTRODUCTION AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

2.0   THE NORTH COAST REGIONAL CONTEXT

The NSW North Coast, for the purposes of this study, is a region that extends from south of Foster/Tuncurry to the Queensland border and west inland to Dorrigo and the Richmond Ranges. The North Coast Region comprises fourteen Local Government Areas including:

Far North Coast	**Mid North Coast**
Ballina Shire Council	Bellingen Shire Council
Byron Shire Council	Clarence Valley Council
Kyogle Council	Coffs Harbour City Council
Lismore City Council	Great Lakes Council
Richmond Valley Council	Greater Taree Council
Tweed Shire Council	Kempsey Shire Council
	Nambucca Shire Council
	Port Macquarie – Hastings Shire Council

The NSW North Coast has many different landscapes ranging from long beaches, rolling countryside and hills and valleys of the hinterland to more rugged forested areas and rainforests. The region is defined by its distinctive climate, a blend of sub tropical to warm temperate. It contains many national parks including world heritage areas, nature reserves and state conservation areas and has one of the richest biodiversities in Australia. The coastline, waterways, rural and naturally vegetated areas of the region are of immense environmental, social and economic value.

The numerous villages, towns, major towns and regional centres share this regional character and context, although the landscape settings of the settlements vary considerably within the region. The distinctive character and edges of each settlement are often separated and defined by natural areas such as waterways, ridgelines or rainforest.

The diversity of environments and landscapes in the North Coast can be characterised in two distinct groups - beaches, headlands and coastal plains, and rural hinterland.

Beaches, Headlands and Coastal Plains

The coastal fringe is characterised by beaches, dunal systems, headlands, and coastal plains with heathlands, wetlands, estuaries, lakes, mangroves and tidal flats.

These areas have historically been developed for commercial fishing and occasionally whaling. They often served as ports for shipping, as well as supporting timber getting, dairy, sugar cane and banana production.

Tourism has more recently emerged as a major local industry.

Rural Hinterland

The rural hinterland is characterised by rolling hills, mountains, wide valleys and tall open forests. There are rainforests in more sheltered areas in the hinterland. The hinterland includes the backdrop of Mount Warning and the mountain ranges of the caldera rim to the north.

The rural hinterland supports forestry, cropping, dairy, pasture and horticulture, and here settlements have often developed to support these industries.

03   NORTH COAST SETTLEMENT TYPOLOGIES

3.0   SETTLEMENT TYPOLOGY

The distinctive regional context of the North Coast also sets the scene for a range of settlement types, sizes and formats, offering a range of housing choice, affordability and services, and promotes settlement patterns that protect and enhance environmental values and natural resources. A discussion of the broad characteristics of each settlement type follows.

The settlement typology used in this study is:

— Coastal Villages

— Inland Villages

— Towns

— Major Towns

— Regional Centres

3.1   COASTAL VILLAGES

Coastal villages typically have a strong sense of community, are generally of walkable size, with possibly a public school, community hall, local shops and parks. Often the coastal location and moderate climate makes the settlement attractive to holiday makers and 'sea changers' seeking a more relaxed lifestyle. This can lead to significant development pressure and population growth. Care needs to be taken to ensure settlement growth is sustainable and of a desirable character.

3.2   INLAND VILLAGES

Inland villages similarly have a strong sense of community and are compact and well-defined with an obvious centre and community focus - a general store or hotel. Faced with similar pressures to coastal villages, as a result of their recent popularity as lifestyle areas, inland villages must consider their future carefully to ensure long-term social and environmental sustainability. The settlement pattern and character of new development can contribute significantly to this sustainability.

3.3   TOWNS

Towns exhibit many of the characteristics of villages but with an increase in scale, population and the range of services on offer. They will have a clearly identifiable commercial/retail/community centre, can support a wider range of housing types and generally the streetscapes will be more structured and formalised. A town's character is often imparted by its street pattern and relationship to the immediate landscape setting whether it be coastal, riparian, agricultural or naturally vegetated. Towns typically provide a greater range of services to the community including hospitals, schools, and possibly police station and the like.

3.4   MAJOR TOWNS

Major towns are typically those settlements which have benefitted from long term incremental growth linked to a strong, often diverse, industrial or agricultural base. They necessarily provide a higher order of services - schools, a hospital, main street and industry - offering stable employment and sufficient cultural facilities (art galleries, sports grounds, theatres) to sustain its immediate and surrounding populations. Status as a major town implies an increased range of housing types and some pockets of increased density - flats, shop-top housing and the like. They are typically able to sustain high quality parks and open spaces, are strategically sited with good access to transport infrastructure, have mature street plantings and a clear, identifiable character related to their landscape setting. Major towns are a civic and cultural focus for a network of surrounding smaller settlement types.

3.5   REGIONAL CENTRES

Regional centres typically benefit from a particularly favourable strategic siting on a coastal or river port and major transport infrastructure. They perform an essential role as a regional hub for numerous disconnected urban areas and exhibit the highest order of civic, cultural, recreational, retail and residential uses including, for example, tertiary educational facilities, regional shopping centres and government agency offices. Regional centres face the challenges of significant growth and increasing population. Sound planning and urban design strategies are essential to meeting these challenges. Regional centres are able to sustain a high quality public domain including streets and parks.

04   COASTAL VILLAGES

4.0   COASTAL VILLAGES - KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Coastal Villages are scattered along the NSW North Coast. They are typically established near a headland, beach or river mouth. Coastal villages were usually established as commercial fishing settlements and, more recently, cater for tourism.

Settlement patterns within coastal villages established near headlands typically respond to the topography of the headland and coastal edge. The streets along the coast and headlands offer a strong visual connection to the coast.

Coastal villages established on rivers, creeks and lakes are built on or behind dunes, are low set and typically focus on the waterways. The surrounding floodplain and river are enriched with mangroves, swampy vegetation and scrubby woodlands.

Coastal villages are typically modest in scale and tightly defined within their natural landscape, often with a single, mixed-use 'main' street. Built form largely comprises detached dwellings with the occasional small scale apartment building or dual occupancy accommodation.

4.1   COASTAL VILLAGE ONE - AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

This coastal village is sited on the flat alluvial plain beside a river estuary where there is good access to water frontage and is set in a densely vegetated coastal forest.
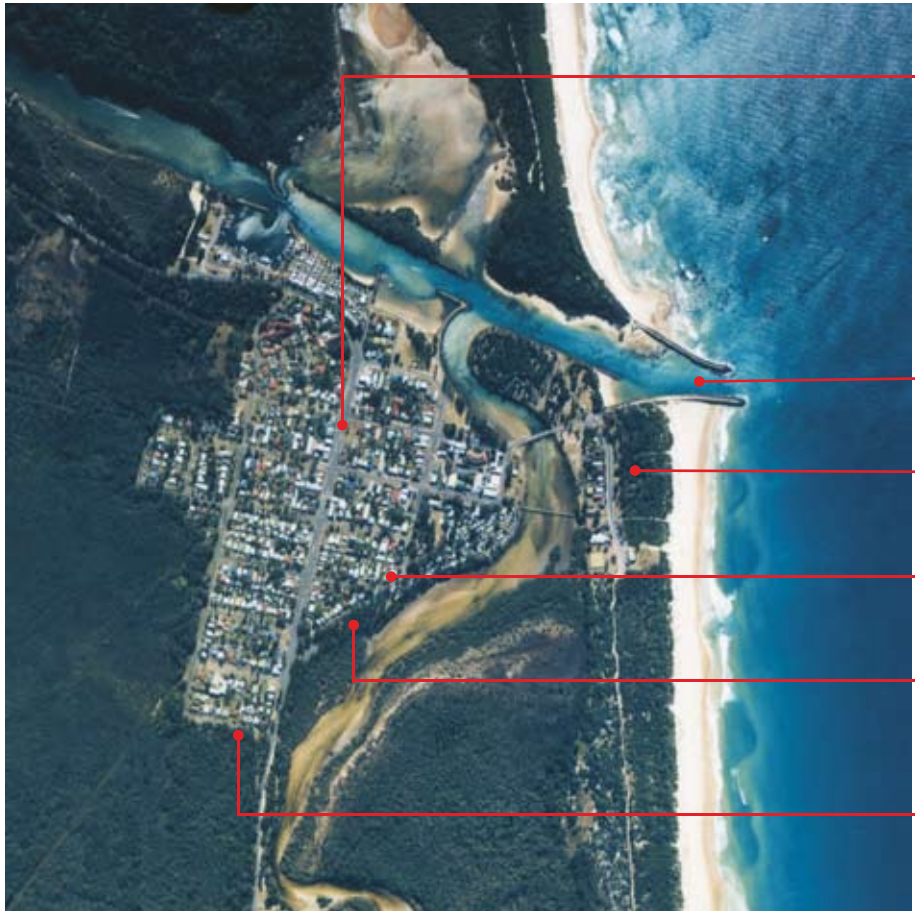
Formal street grid is generated by a wide main road running north south and residential blocks oriented east west; the east west blocks provide good opportunity for solar access to residential blocks; this formal grid creates view corridors to the surrounding natural environment

Breakwater provides access to ocean for commerical and recreational boats

Remnant vegetation protects fore-dunes and shields village from harsh on-shore winds

Street pattern is influenced by the meandering river where the formality of the grid relaxes

Public open space and edge road mediate between residential dwellings and the surrounding natural features

Village settlement is generally uniform in density and its extent very distinctly defined by surrounding natural vegetation

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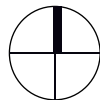
4.2   COASTAL VILLAGE ONE - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

This coastal village is low lying and has been established on flat topography behind the front sand dunes. Although a coastal location, this village is set some distance back from the coast and is generally focused towards the banks of the river. The flat topography and formal street grid provide distant views of the surrounding area.

This coastal village has generous public open space and recreation areas fringing the water's edge.

Key positive landscape elements of a coastal village include:

— Settlement is set back from sensitive natural environments

— A mix of exotic and mature native street trees and well established gardens characterise the urban environment; street tree planting is informal

— Parks with lawns and specimen trees (palms, figs, Norfolk Island pines)

— Panoramic views to the hinterland and river are provided by the formal grid patterns and level topography of the streets

The river landscape and gentle topography are clearly evident from many vantage points within the settlement

Public open space at the river forms an edge to the settlement

The river setting defines the landscape of this coastal village

A mix of exotic (for example Norfolk Island pine) and indigenous (for example melaleuca) planting throughout the village characterises the relationship between the natural and urban landscapes

4.3   COASTAL VILLAGE ONE - STREETSCAPE

This coastal village has a main commercial street and residential streets of varying widths. The streets are arranged in a formal grid pattern. There are a limited number of streets that disturb the formal grid pattern in response to natural features such as the river.

The consistent grid pattern, building alignments, setback and low scale building forms create a strong connection between the natural and urban landscapes.

Key positive streetscape elements within a coastal village include:

— Irregular street tree planting that compliments the scale of the built form and creates view corridors to the natural surroundings

— The streets of the settlement centre are generally two way carriageways with parallel on-street car parking to both sides

— The main commercial street has wide paved pedestrian footpaths providing opportunities for on-street dining

— Formal landscaped public spaces are evident within the town centre and along the river edge

— Residential street edges vary from grassed verge with drainage swales to formed kerb and gutter with grassed verges and concrete pedestrian footpaths. In some instances the street is made up of inconsistent edge treatments, creating an informal character

— Built form comprises a concentrated, low scale commercial centre with awnings and informal planting

Wide pedestrian footpaths at the commercial centre of the settlement establish opportunities for outdoor dining

Generous informal road reserve with a relatively narrow carriageway and grassed verges with mature planting

Grassed verges and an unformed carriageway result in an informal character

Main street with wide carriageway, formed kerbs, footpath and semi-formal planting of Norfolk Island pines; the formal street grid provides distant landscape views and is addressed by mixed use development

4.4   COASTAL VILLAGE ONE - BUILDINGS

Buildings in this coastal village respond to the topography of the area. Built form is mainly set back from the waterways and foreshores, although it is oriented towards the water for ocean and river views.

Buildings on the commercial and residential streets are low rise, typically one to two storeys in height. There are one or two distinctive traditional buildings in the village that provide landmarks in the settlement.

Residential buildings, regardless of their age, have consistent alignments and setbacks. Residential buildings range from older, modest beach 'shacks' and bungalows to contemporary one to two storey houses often with balconies and double garages.

Key positive elements of buildings within a coastal village include:

— Commercial buildings are typically one to two storey parapet buildings, mostly of masonry construction with consistent street alignment and awnings for pedestrian shelter

— Residential buildings have a consistent front and side setback

— Many residences do not define their boundary with fencing, giving an open, informal character

— The style of housing is varied and has developed incrementally over time - typically, houses are one and two levels, elevated, lightweight, beach houses and holiday flats

This distinctive public building provides a landmark within the village

The main street is characterised by retail buildings which follow a consistent alignment with generous footpaths and awnings for pedestrian amenity

Traditional elevated double level fibro 'flats' built to a consistent setback and building height with internal verandahs and under-croft parking

Internal verandah to lightweight building, some newer buildings are masonry construction over two levels, no fences define residential boundaries

Lightweight, elevated dwelling with strong simple roof from and generous verandah

4.5 COASTAL VILLAGE ONE - SUMMARY

Bollards to define public open space

Extensive mature planting

Detached garage to rear of lot

Informal driveway

Unformed gravel shoulder

Attached garage/car port setback from street

Natural vegetation to river edge

Residential Park Edge Street

Approx. 19m
Road reserve

Zero setback
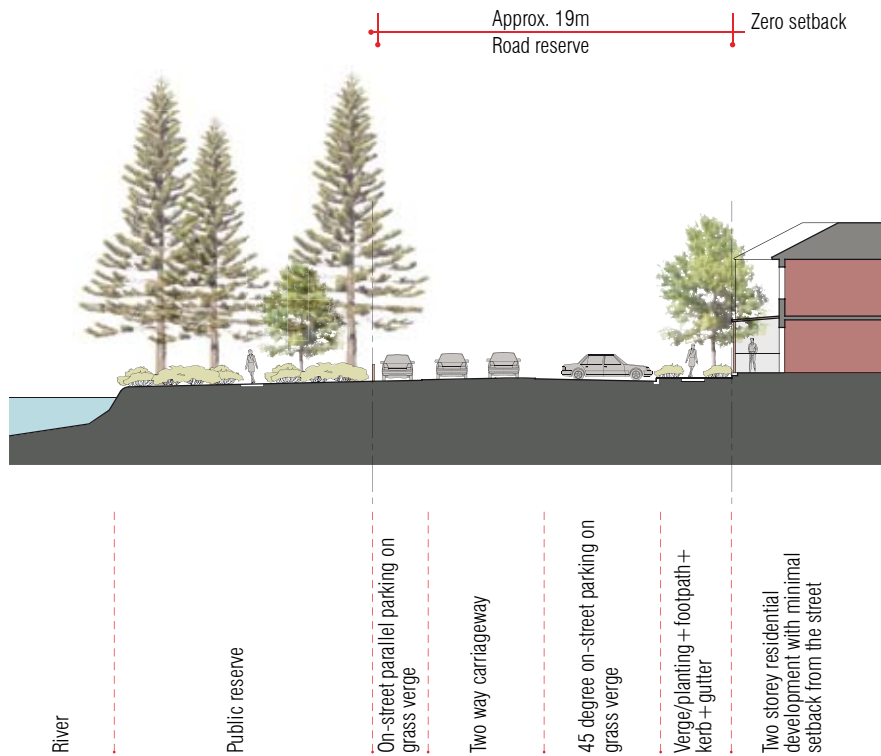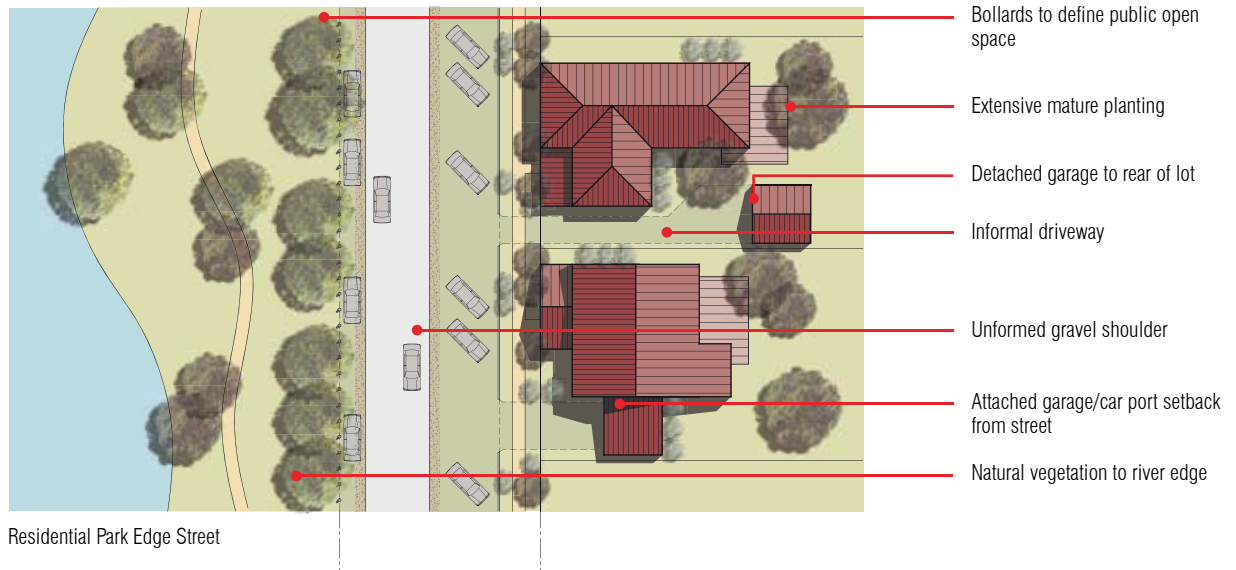
Extensive mature planting reinforces the unique landscape character of the settlement

This village has a clear mediating zone between the built and natural environments

Built form is modest in scale

The informal nature of the street enhances the character of this small village settlement

River

Public reserve

On-street parallel parking on grass verge

Two way carriageway

45 degree on-street parking on grass verge

Verge/planting + footpath + kerb + gutter

Two storey residential development with minimal setback from the street

4.6 COASTAL VILLAGE TWO - AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

This coastal village is sited on a headland overlooking a north facing beach. This protects it from harsh south-easterly breezes and provides exposure to more amiable north-easterly breezes. The village is set within a naturally vegetated forest cleared in some parts for agriculture.

Village settlement is typically uniform in density; the edges of the development are irregular but clearly defined, revealing a close relationship between topography and settlement pattern

A loose grid pattern responds to the topography of the headland and results in diverse orientations for residential lots

Generally, public space and streets mediate between the coastline and urban settlement

Legibility of street pattern is reduced by curvilinear streets but is compensated for by a strong reading of topography and views from elevated headlands

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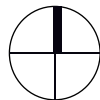
4.7   COASTAL VILLAGE TWO - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

This coastal village is located between two headlands with beach access. The urban settlement is generally set back from both the headland and beach edges. The topography has influenced a relatively loose, curvilinear street grid, providing views towards the ocean around the coastal edge.The majority of residences toward the centre of the village have a more introverted aspect.

The natural landscape generally mediates between the settlement and the wider natural surroundings. There is little evidence of planned public space between the coastline and the settlement.

Key positive landscape elements of a coastal village include:

— Buildings are mostly setback from the coastal edge and are one to two storeys in height

— Expansive areas of hardy, indigenous vegetation characterise the coastal edges, punctuated by rows of significantly larger trees such as Norfolk Island pines

— Residential gardens are comprised generally of indigenous coastal habitat, low lying plants with exotic palms, conifers and few larger mature trees

— Views to the ocean are accessible from properties on elevated sites; many residences located on lower lying land have introspective 'valley' views only

— Natural landscape of hinterland is largely intact

Extensive natural landscapes are visible from vantage points along the headland and from other elevated sites within the village settlement

In the lee of the headlands the landscape character of the settlements changes considerably and is defined by mature open coastal vegetation such as melaleucas

The naturally vegetated dunes and long beaches provide a distinctive landscape setting to this coastal village

On the prominent headlands the landscape character changes to a predominantly windswept heath, punctuated by mature Norfolk Island pines

4.8   COASTAL VILLAGE TWO - STREETSCAPE

There is little street hierarchy within this village. The loose street grid radiates from the coastline and is responsive to the local topography, generally providing a north south aspect to residential lots and an east west aspect for the streets.

The original streets form a loose, permeable grid pattern with consistent building setbacks and one to two storey building heights. However, newer developments are characterised by curvilinear street patterns with less consistent building forms and setbacks. Some houses are located along the coastal edge, which is inconsistent with the typical patterns of settlement in the village, crossing the road boundary between the urban settlement and coastal vegetation.

The loose grid pattern and low scale building forms create streetscapes where the landscape and vegetation are clearly evident.

Key positive streetscape elements within a coastal village include:

— Low level coastal planting (with a few larger trees) is typical throughout residential streets

— Views to the coast and surrounding landscape are limited to the coastal edge and elevated areas within the village

— The original streets in the village have wider road reserves than the newer streets - typically, streets are symmetrical with grass verges, formed kerb and gutter treatments, and few pedestrian footpaths

— There is little street hierarchy distinguishing commercial activity from residential streets

— Both fences and planting are used to define site boundaries although many dwellings have no fence to the street

Houses are oriented to maximise views to the ocean whilst the lower lying residences experience an introspective aspect; private landscaping generally consists of low lying coastal habitat planting with some introduced subtropical planting

Typically a street separates development from the coastal edge. However in some instances a single row of dwellings occupies this edge

Formal carriageway with formed kerb and gutter treatment and well groomed grassed verges, consistent building setbacks, low level coastal planting and gardens without front fences

Asymmetrical, wide carriageway with formed kerb and gutter, angle parking to one side of the street and parallel parking to the other side, accommodating low key commercial activity within a residential street

4.9   COASTAL VILLAGE TWO - BUILDINGS

This settlement consists primarily of residential buildings of lightweight or masonry construction. The building heights are consistently one to two storeys throughout the village. The older parts of the village are built to a consistent setback and height, while newer areas maintain less formal setbacks.

Typically, there is a range of forms and materials evident throughout the village. Masonry and lightweight one to two storey conventional building forms are common throughout the village. Many houses are elevated to accommodate the undulating topography of the village. Houses are oriented to access views to the ocean where possible. Generally, the residential buildings incorporate garages.

The commercial buildings are located near the beach access and within the caravan park. These commercial buildings are isolated and single storey without a distinct commercial character. Parking for customers is provided on street, either parallel or perpendicular to the carriageway.

Key positive building elements of a coastal village include:

— Commercial buildings concentrated close to the beach, typically of single storey, lightweight or masonry construction and without a distinct commercial character

— Residential buildings are elevated and positioned to take advantage of the views and sea breezes; these buildings are often irregularly sited, with inconsistent but generous side setbacks

— Residential buildings in the lower and flatter parts of the landscape have a more regular and consistent siting and setback

— There is an eclectic mix of housing styles throughout the village providing a richer overall character

— Eaves, verandahs, profiled steel roofs, timber cladding types are all common elements

This elevated, lightweight two level dwelling is responsive to the coastal environment maximising views, cross ventilation and passive solar design principals

A traditional holiday dwelling of simple form and modest scale is important to the character of the village

Masonry and lightweight dwelling with generous deck responds to site topography and ocean views

Elevated lightweight dwelling responding to the topography of the village and maximising views to the ocean

4.10   COASTAL VILLAGE 2 - SUMMARY

Carriageway following topography

Extensive mature planting

Detached garage to rear of lot

Ample planting to front gardens

Attached garage/car port setback from street

Formed kerb and gutter

Residential Street

6m
Setback

Approx. 15m
Road reserve

6m
Setback

Elevated lightweight one to two storey detached dwelling

Generous setback + driveway

Grass verge

Generous two way carriageway

Grass verge

Generous setback + driveway

One to two storey detached dwelling with garage under house

Extensive mature planting reinforces the landscape character of the settlement

Built form is modest in scale and responds to climate and topography – typically lightweight and elevated

Streets are consistent throughout the village with no clear hierarchy

05   INLAND VILLAGES

5.0   INLAND VILLAGES - KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Inland villages of the North Coast region lie both within the coastal hinterland and beyond. Inland villages were traditionally established to provide essential facilities and services for the surrounding rural holdings and are often located in close proximity to a waterway or on a major highway or rail line.

Typically they are well defined, displaying informal edges that mediate between the village and the surrounding natural or rural landscape.

Inland villages are typically small and compact, with small scale buildings that provide essential goods and services to the local community.

Residences are typically detached houses with generous setbacks on generous sites. The main streets may have attached commercial buildings providing a continuous row of shops along the street.

Generally, the lower density and compact nature of these inland villages makes for a reduced impact on the landscape they occupy.

5.1   INLAND VILLAGE ONE - AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

This inland village traditionally served the surrounding farming community. Situated alongside both rail and road infrastructure and within a relatively steep valley, the settlement is now enjoying a resurgence as a popular 'tree change' destination.

The old highway, creek, topography, railway and main street together generate the urban settlement pattern; the linear nature of the settlement along the valley floor permits views to the natural landscape to the east and west

Newer residential development is separated from the original settlement by a significant green space; farming is also evident and defines the edges of the settlement

The flatter land to the village centre allows for a more formal grid while the surrounding residential streets respond more to topography

The railway passes through the village from the south and divides the village centre from more recent residential development

Surrounding hilltops are not developed and consequently the rural landscape setting is strong

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5.2   INLAND VILLAGE ONE - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

This inland village is located within fairly close proximity to the coast in a lush rural valley and is surrounded by farmland and nearby national parks. The climate is subtropical.

Mature vegetation and gardens are evident within the compact original village settlement. Indigenous vegetation lining the creek provides an important contribution to the natural landscape experienced within the village. The newer areas of the village have younger, emerging gardens that appear less dense than the early parts of the village.

Key positive landscape elements of an inland village include:

— Character influenced by the dense natural vegetation along the creek within the settlement

— The settlement has developed without affecting the tree canopy substantially

— Views to the surrounding hinterland and farmland are available from many different vantage points throughout the village

— Public open space is evident within the village centre and along the creek

— The surrounding rural hills are readily visible from within the village and cradle the settlement along the valley floor

Steeper topography provides opportunities for views to the surrounding environment; by generally keeping below the ridgeline and treelines, development does not visually dominate the landscape

High quality public space mediates between the commercial and residential areas of the village

Views to the landscape setting are common throughout the village; the church and village centre are visible in the foreground with surrounding rural hills beyond

Dense foliage and lush planting is evident throughout the village

5.3   INLAND VILLAGE ONE - STREETSCAPE

The village centre has a formal north south street grid intersecting with an old highway, which forms the main street of this inland village and runs east west. Its alignment influences the resulting settlement pattern. The flatter topography in the village centre has contributed to the formal grid. There is a consistent building height of one to two storeys throughout the village centre. Building setbacks are generally consistent within this area.

The newer residential areas are located beyond the centre with a street pattern that responds to the hilly topography. These newer street patterns are less formal than the original streets.

Key positive streetscape elements within an inland village include:

— The main street is a formal, two way carriageway with formed kerb and gutter, and parallel parking to either side; commercial developments provide awnings and posted verandahs for shelter

— Clusters of trees along the main street conceal the built form and allow a greater connection with the landscape and views beyond the village

— Newer residential streets provide formal road carriageways with concrete kerbs and gutter to either side of the road, while the older residential streets vary with asymmetric roadways

— Building setbacks to both residential and commercial areas are consistent, providing a very clearly defined built edge

— Building scale is consistently one to two storeys

— Awnings on commercial streets and verandahs to residential streets are common

— Streets act as view corridors to the surrounding landscape, allowing strong visual connections with the environmental setting

A strong connection between the natural creek landscape and commercial street is evident

Formal main street with parallel parking either side; awnings extend intermittently along kerb edge with a consistent building setback; buildings without awnings provide opportunity for planting along wide footpaths

Residential street with informal character, formed kerb and footpath with grassed verge to the lower side of the road; two way carriageway with parking and unformed kerb treatment to the higher side of the road

Mature vegetation along residential streets screens buildings very effectively; streets have generous carriageway widths, formed kerbs and gutters and grassed verges

5.4   INLAND VILLAGE ONE - BUILDINGS

The buildings in an inland village relate to the subtropical hinterland location. One to two storey buildings line the main street, have relatively narrow frontages and, typically, posted awnings to the kerb. The buildings on the main street are a mixture of well maintained early twentieth century buildings together with newer parapet-based buildings with awnings and verandahs to the kerb edge. The upper floors of many of these buildings are residential, with a verandah to address the street. Commercial buildings to the outer edges of the village centre are setback from the street allowing for planting and breaking down the built edge.

Residential buildings maintain a consistent building setback and are typically single detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings and 'flats' above shops in the village centre. The buildings are generally lightweight in construction, one to two storeys in height and are elevated on steeper sites.

Key positive elements of buildings within an inland village include:

— A well defined commercial street with low scale 'Queenslander' style and parapet-based buildings which contribute to the strong character of the village and are appropriate to the local climate

— Commercial buildings are primarily located in the main street, with a few other commercial buildings, such as a service station, located at the entry points to the village

— Typically, houses in the original village and the newer areas are lightweight and elevated in response to the hilly terrain and subtropical climatic conditions

Single storey parapet building and two storey 'Queenslander' style building with awnings to kerb edge; planting is evident along footpaths where awnings do not extend to kerb

A contemporary double level, elevated, lightweight dwelling with under-croft garage
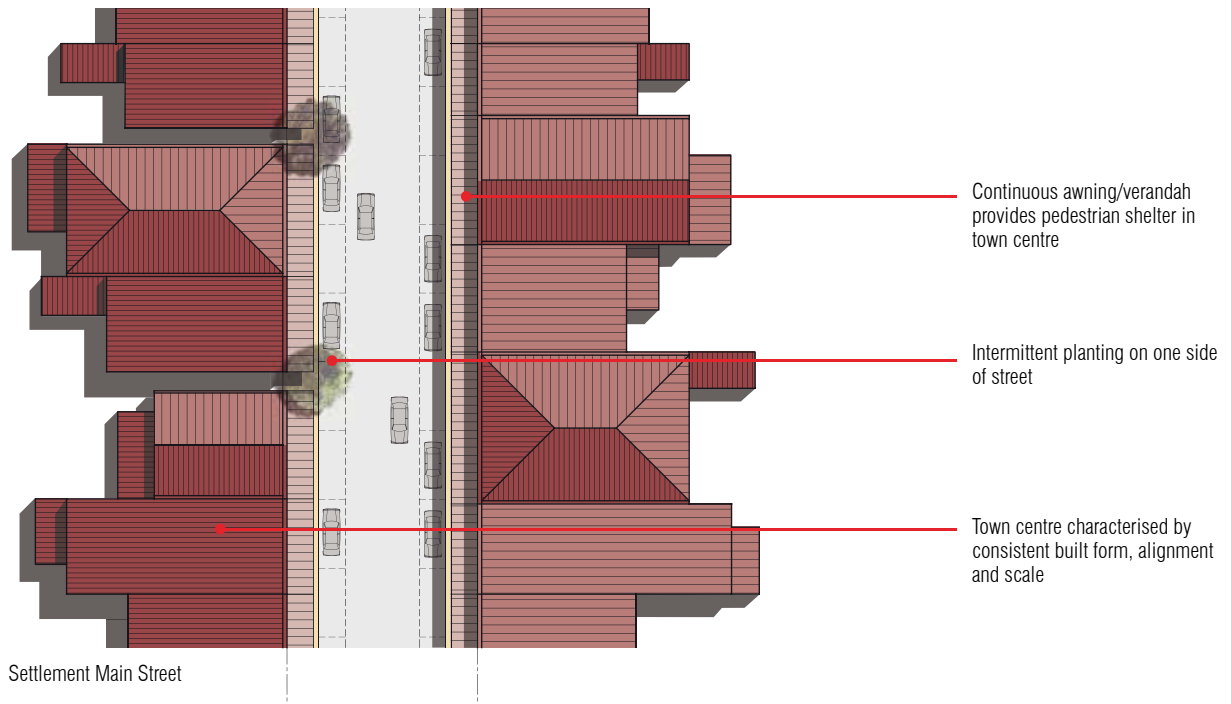

Two and three storey, parapet-based commercial buildings, some with residences over; posted awnings to kerb provide a consistent covered way along the main street of the village

Traditional single level, detached, lightweight housing with separate garage is common

5.5   INLAND VILLAGE ONE - SUMMARY

Continuous awning/verandah provides pedestrian shelter in town centre

Intermittent planting on one side of street

Town centre characterised by consistent built form, alignment and scale

Settlement Main Street

Zero setback

Approx. 18m
Road reserve

Zero setback

Continuous strip of retail/commercial buildings with residential on top

Footpath + awning + kerb + gutter

On-street parallel parking

Two way carriageway

On-street parallel parking

Footpath + verandah + kerb + gutter

Continuous strip of retail/commercial buildings with residential on top

Higher density buildings distinguish the commercial centre from residential areas surrounding

Streets are consistent throughout the village with no clear hierarchy

A continuous covered way provides pedestrian protection in the village centre

The consistent scale and proportion of buildings are influenced by a slightly undulating topography, providing unique character to a consistent built form

5.6   INLAND VILLAGE TWO - AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

This inland village was established as a base for timber production then later served as a focus for agriculture. The construction of the railway has given a stronger basis for the settlement. Set in an agricultural valley with vegetated mountains to the east and west, the village has a strong sense of its landscape setting.

The informal settlement pattern is generated by the topography; housing developed on northern aspect in response to cooler inland winters

The main road and rail line pass through the village and provide an address for commercial activity - otherwise road hierarchy and settlement pattern are informal

The river, highway and rail line mediate between the main residential settlement and more recent residential development along the main through road

Boundaries of the urban development are defined by the river, rural land and surrounding naturally vegetated mountains

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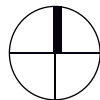
5.7   INLAND VILLAGE TWO - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

This inland village is established in a vegetated valley. The village is sited well inland from the coast and has definite boundaries formed by the river, railway line, the highway and surrounding rural land with vegetated ridges beyond.

Key positive landscape elements of an inland village include:

— A linear settlement pattern following river, road and valley floor

— The village is defined by cleared farmland and naturally vegetated mountains that rise above the settlement

— Distant views are accessible from many vantage points in the village

— The settlement is compact and does not encroach significantly upon the surrounding landscape

The settlement derives a strong character from its surrounding landscape - nestling into the valley floor, immediately surrounded by agricultural land with naturally vegetated mountains beyond

The river divides two parts of the village forming a strong natural focus along its axis

The village is characterised by a strong sense of landscape within and surrounding the settlement; mature vegetation is a common feature

The extent of the village is well defined by the surrounding rural landscape; views to and from the village are frequent

5.8   INLAND VILLAGE TWO - STREETSCAPE

The surrounding residential streets extend just one or two blocks from the main street. A simple street hierarchy is produced by the highway alignment. The loose grid pattern within the residential streets is also responsive to the topography of the valley and river.

Key positive streetscape elements within an inland village include:

— Dense native and exotic planting throughout the village creating an informal character

— In residential areas the building setbacks are generous, generally consistent with fenced or planted boundaries and informal driveway access

— The main street displays formal kerb and gutter treatments and wide, grassed verges

— Secondary streets commonly have grassed swales between the property boundary and unformed carriageways; formed kerb and gutter with grass verges occur frequently as well

The main street alignment reveals views to the surrounding mountains and includes formed kerb and gutters with footpaths to support commercial uses

A residential street with narrow unformed carriageway and grassed swales; the river at the bottom of the street gives a strong natural focus to the settlement

The alignment of the streets follows the contours of the valley topography; informal planting, grassed verges and swales dominate the streetscape

Residential street alignments are also influenced by the proximity of the river; again, mature indigenous and exotic planting and informal carriageways and verges give a strong landscape character

5.9   INLAND VILLAGE TWO - BUILDINGS

Generally, the buildings in this inland village are of a low scale and density. The few commercial buildings sit comfortably alongside residential buildings and there is minimal distinction of scale or form between the two.

Commercial buildings are single level, detached and with awnings extending to the kerb edge.

Residential buildings are almost all detached, modest houses of lightweight or masonry construction. The lightweight materials establish a traditional precedent throughout the village. There are also several recently built houses that have maintained the low density and small scale building character.

Key positive elements of buildings within an inland village include:

— Commercial buildings are located on one side of a single main street and are all one storey

— Building setbacks to the main street are inconsistent, but typically allow a strong sense of landscape

— Residential buildings are typically lightweight, one or two level, detached dwellings on modest allotments; they are generally characterised by internal verandahs, hipped roofs and simple forms

— Building setbacks are consistent and generous along residential streets, often with a low height fence or landscaped edge

— Verandahs are common and serve to temper the climate and mediate with the streetscape

These traditional dwellings line the main street, sited close to the front property boundary, are simple in form and modest in scale; generally lightweight and elevated slightly above ground level; each addresses the street with a verandah or porch

A more contemporary dwelling sited on more difficult topography; it demonstrates a more generous front setback but maintains a lightweight, elevated character
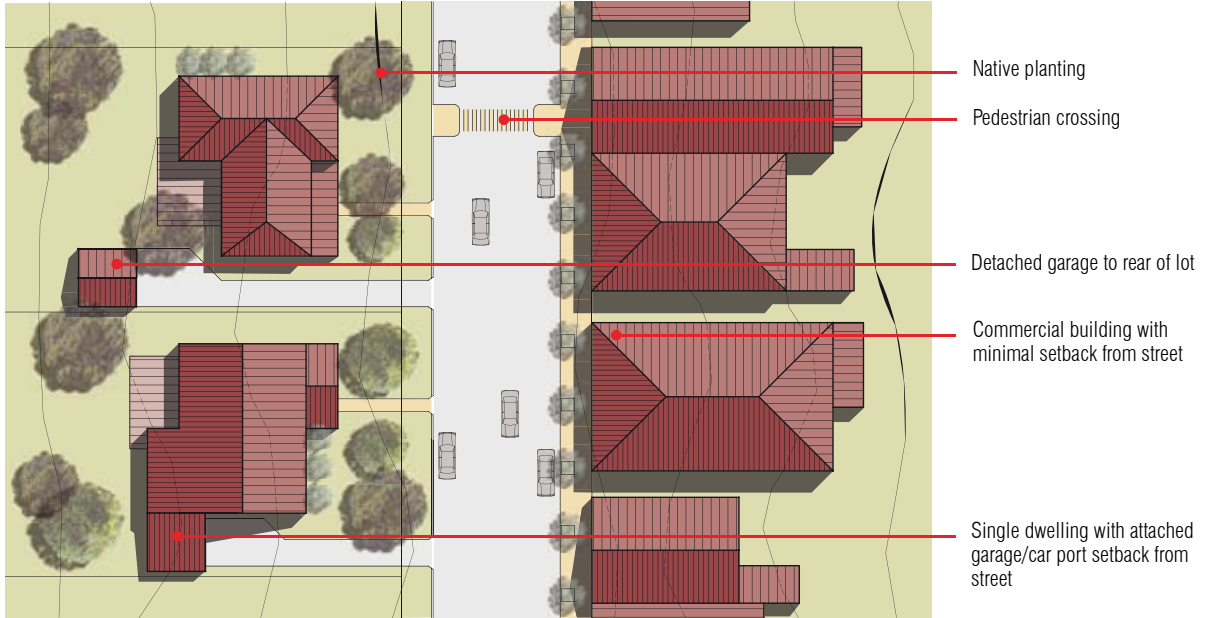

A series of traditional dwellings with well defined front fences, all of a reasonably consistent alignment, materials and scale; dwellings of this nature are important to establishing the character of the village
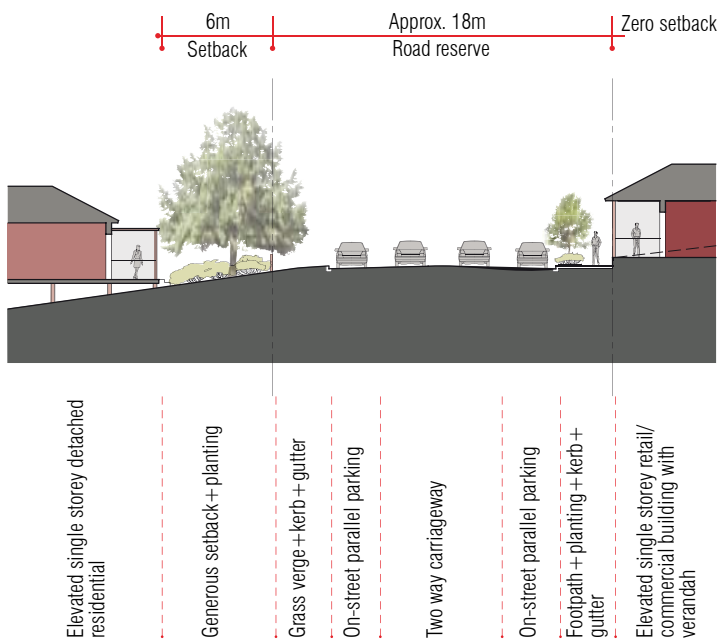

Another contemporary dwelling on a large lot with extensive vegetation screening it from the street; elevated, lightweight with under-croft garage and large verandahs

5.10   INLAND VILLAGE TWO - SUMMARY

Native planting

Pedestrian crossing

Detached garage to rear of lot

Commercial building with minimal setback from street

Single dwelling with attached garage/car port setback from street

Settlement Main Street - Mixed Residential/Commercial

6m
Setback

Approx. 18m
Road reserve

Zero setback

Elevated single storey detached residential

Generous setback+planting

Grass verge+kerb+gutter

On-street parallel parking

Two way carriageway

On-street parallel parking

Footpath+planting+kerb+gutter

Elevated single storey retail/ commercial building with verandah

There is no distinction in scale between commercial and residential built form

Buildings respond to topography and climate and are modest in scale and character

Mature dense planting is evident throughout the village streets, providing strong connections to the surrounding natural landscape

The wide carriageway of the main road provides a setting for commercial activity and street hierarchy within this village

The commercial zone in this villlage is informal in character as a result of streetscape and built form

6.0   TOWNS - KEY CHARACTERISTICS
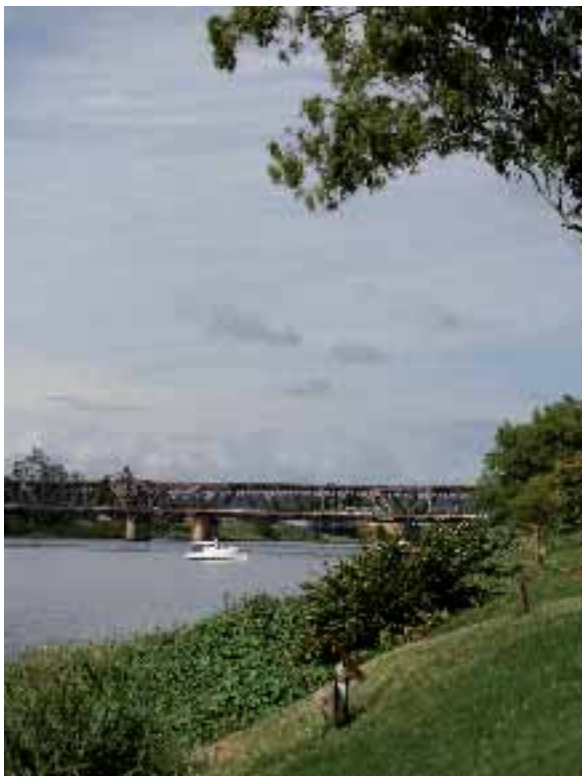
Towns are scattered throughout the North Coast region and are commonly sited on major highways, railways, or on rivers within both inland and coastal locations.

Although larger than villages in population and geographical size, towns still maintain a strong relationship with the surrounding natural landscape. Towns typically offer substantial areas of public open space, parks and sports fields.

Towns provide facilities and services to support the surrounding rural communities. They can also provide a historical focus and relevance for tourism and the local community.

The streets in the town centres are typically characterised by a formal grid pattern with central and convenient access to the facilities, services and public places. As the settlement extends beyond the centre, the grid often becomes less formal, responding to natural features, transport infrastructure and surrounding farmland.

Buildings in town centres typically reflect an historical and environmental response to the region in which they are settled. The character of the buildings within the town can be influenced by climate, traditional industry, farming needs, density of surrounding villages and employment opportunities.

6.1   TOWN ONE - AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

This town was settled on an alluvial plain against the meander of a river. As it has grown, the town has crossed the river and rail corridor and pushed into surrounding agricultural land.

Settlement is generally setback from the river edge to minimise impacts from flooding, providing public open space and riparian vegetation along the river banks

Wide main street links rail station with the river, formal street pattern radiates outward influenced by the river and rail alignments

There is a clear distinction between the grain of the town centre and surrounding residential development

Grid settlement pattern loosens at the outer edges, becoming influenced by the river, farmland and topography of the land

Railway corridor through town influences settlement form

Remnant subtropical vegetation is evident in the landscape setting

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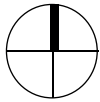
6.2   TOWN ONE - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

This town sits low within a subtropical hinterland characterised by distinctive caldera topography. A river runs through the town with tributaries also branching off into the town. Over time the settlement has grown by crossing the river.

The river and its tributaries provide green spaces in and around the town, and are crossed by two bridges for access to disconnected urban and rural settlements.

The settlement rests in a striking landscape of rugged naturally vegetated mountains and rural land. Dense subtropical vegetation is evident throughout the town.

Key landscape elements of this town include:

— The river and its tributaries are an integral element of the settlement

— Settlement is setback from the river edges providing informal green public spaces and riparian vegetation

— A dense mixture of indigenous and imported subtropical plant species characterise the township

— Distant mountain views are evident from many vantage points throughout the town

Dense subtropical vegetation of both formal and informal public open space exists throughout the town

The town is sited in rural land and set in a dramatic caldera landscape

Dense imported and local vegetation is found throughout the commercial centre of town; buildings are often screened by vegetation

The edge of the town is defined by surrounding agricultural land and in this is case the rail line; the dramatic landscape of the caldera is visible throughout the town

6.3   TOWN ONE - STREETSCAPE

The town is characterised by a formal grid pattern with a clear street hierarchy distinguishing between commercial and residential streets. The grid in the town centre runs north south along the railway. The river breaks the grid to the west and the street patterns to the north-west are less formal in character reflecting the steeper topography. Streets to the east and west lie on flatter land and are very similar to the north south grid patterns evident in the town centre.

The combination of wide straight streets and the flat topography of the river flood plain provides views to the surrounding landscape along many streets.

Key streetscape elements within this town include:

— Informal carriageway treatments characterise the residential streets with grass swales, mature trees to verge, informal driveway access to garages underneath the houses or at the rear

— Streets provide views to distant landscape setting

— Streets in town centre typically have wide carriageways with parking to both sides, formed kerb and gutter treatments with planting to footpaths and defined car park bays

— Streets in town centre also have generous concrete footpaths, with awnings to kerb, and street planting, providing opportunities for on-street dining

The town's main street is characterised by high quality commercial buildings providing pedestrian shelter, a wide road reserve, subtropical planting and well defined parking bays

Wide road reserves with generous grassed verges and narrow carriageways combined with mature informal street tree planting impart a distinctive streetscape character

Generous grassed verges with swale drains and defined crossings for vehicles and pedestrian footpaths contribute to a strong streetscape character

This street leading to the river displays a strong landscape quality that is informal; unformed edges, grass swales and mature subtropical trees all contribute to this character

6.4   TOWN ONE - BUILDINGS

Buildings in the town centre reflect traditional styles and respond to the subtropical climate. The commercial buildings are typically traditional shop fronts with awnings extending to the kerb often with posted verandahs. Residential buildings are typically elevated, lightweight freestanding homes with large eaves, verandahs and metal roofs. There are also shop-top houses, semi-detached houses and some blocks of flats.

Key elements of buildings within this town include:

— Commercial buildings are diverse in style but with consistent street alignment and consistent height of one to two storeys

— Typically, commercial buildings provide an awning or verandah over footpath providing a covered pedestrian path along the shop fronts

— There are a variety of housing types throughout the town with higher densities towards the town centre; shop-top housing, flats, semi-detached and freestanding dwellings all contribute to the character of the town

— Housing is typically of lightweight construction and is often modest in style and scale

Two storey lightweight commercial building with verandah over footpath, providing a covered pedestrian way

High quality commercial and public buildings are common within the town centre and reflect the role and importance of the settlement
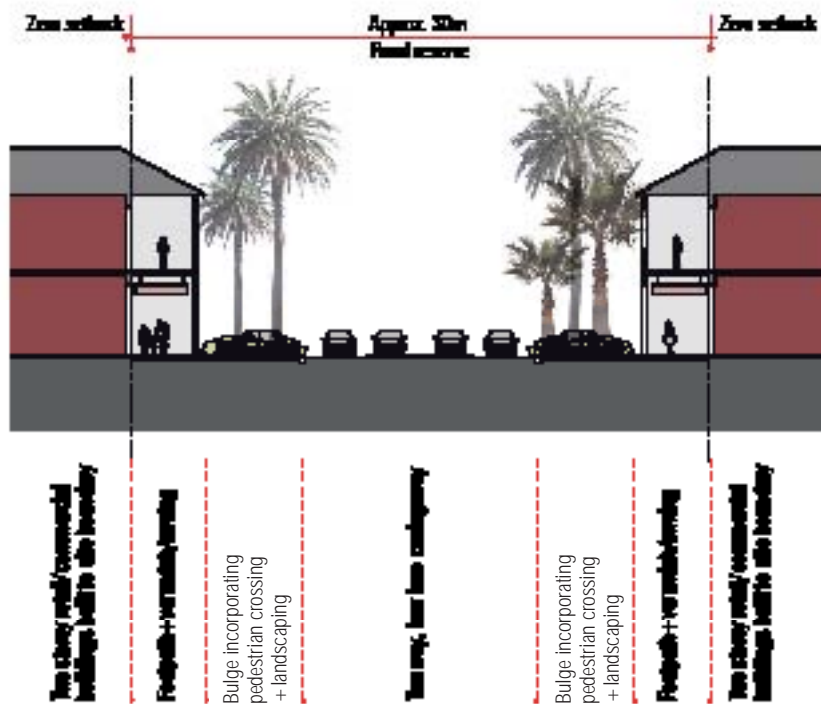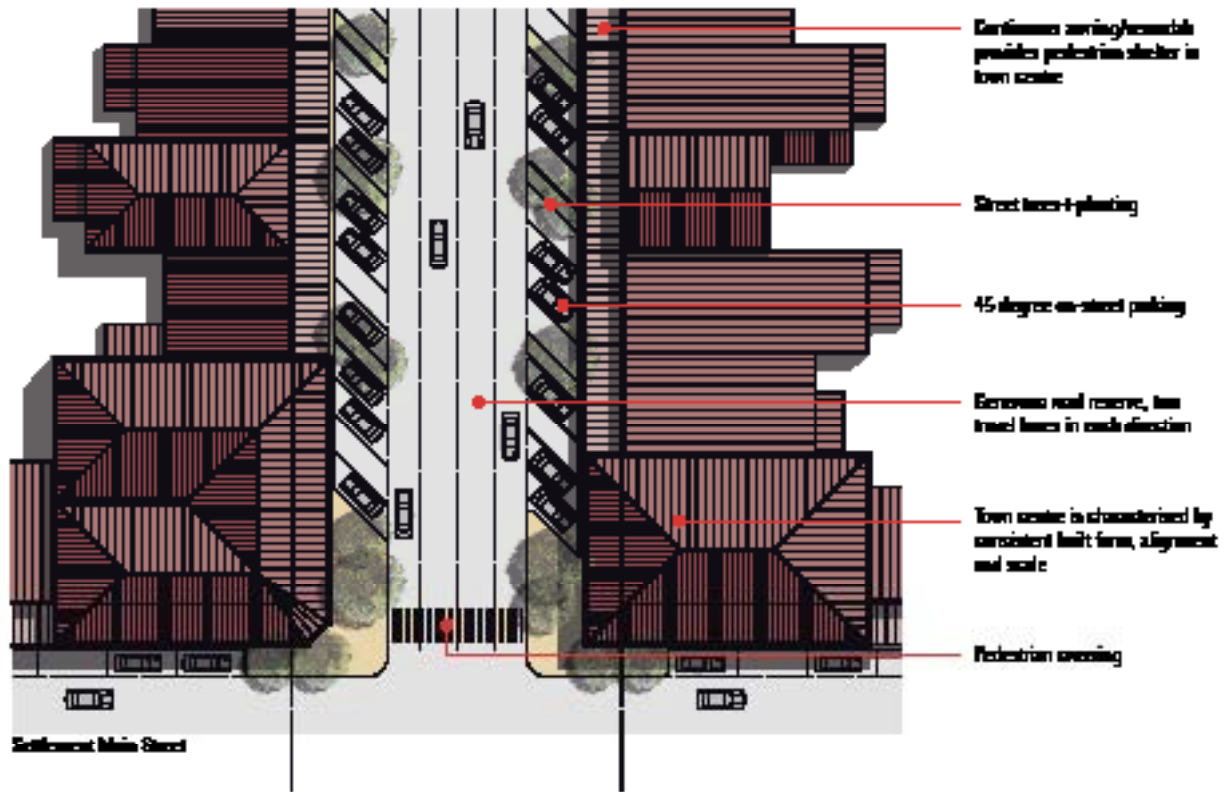

Traditional dwellings with consistent setbacks to front and side boundaries, each with a simple form, built of lightweight materials, elevated slightly above the ground and incorporating a front verandah; all contributing to the character of the town

An elegant traditional dwelling of lightweight and masonry materials, more complex room forms and set back from the boundary with an established garden; such dwellings occur frequently in the settlement and are important to the character of the town

6.5   TOWN ONE - SUMMARY

Settlement Main Street

Bulge incorporating pedestrian crossing + landscaping

Bulge incorporating pedestrian crossing + landscaping

6.6   TOWN TWO - AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

This town is sited well inland, originally as a timber-getting settlement, on the banks of a river. Over time the settlement has grown beyond the flat land at the river's edge and into surrounding steeper topography.

Township boundaries defined by the river and rural land

Township based on regular grid at river edge

Through street alignment follows a gentle ridge line and climbs up to the west

Very distinctive main street with a median of mature trees provides memorable character

Town centre located close to intersection of main street and rail line and is distinct from surrounding residential development

More recent growth has followed ridge line and is influenced by topography

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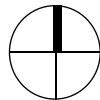
6.7   TOWN TWO - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

This inland town is set on the banks of a river. Farmland and open forests form the landscape setting. The town centre is located close to the river at the intersection of the main street and the rail line. Residential areas are located mostly to the west and south of the town centre.

As the township has grown it has pushed into the surrounding hills. Beyond the settlement are naturally vegetated mountains.

Dense vegetation lines the river edge providing relatively informal public space along the river. Dense planting is also found throughout the town's streets. There are many public open spaces throughout the town centre and residential areas.

Key landscape elements of the town include:

— The town was traditionally sited on the river plain and has climbed into the adjacent hills; it is bounded by forests, the river and low lying farmland

— A mix of mature indigenous and exotic temperate vegetation is evident throughout the town

— The town has many large areas of open space for recreation, including a golf course to the south, separating the residential areas from the town centre

— A bridge connects farmland to the north of the river with the town

— Some significant formal landscaping is evident throughout the town centre; a street of mature figs is particularly memorable

Significant mature median planting to residential street

Rising from the alluvial plain, as the town has grown it has followed a gentle ridge that offers views to distant ranges

Settlement is set back from the relatively informal river edge

The flat topography of the alluvial flood plain and mature established trees set a strong landscape character within the town

6.8   TOWN TWO - STREETSCAPE

There is a formal street grid to the town centre where it lies on the river edge. The grid pattern to the south is less rigid as it follows the ridge line into gently rising topography to the south west. The golf course to the south of the town centre tends to divide the centre and newer residential areas.

The streets are typically characterised by more formal carriageway treatments with large trees and low height planting a common feature

Key streetscape elements within this town include:

— Wide streets to the town centre, some with significant mature trees planted on a central median with a particularly memorable character

— Typically, town centre streets are characterised by formal wide carriageways with a formed kerb, gutter and footpaths with parking to either side

— Residential streets are typically more informal with sometimes asymmetric, kerb, gutter and grassed verge treatments

Divided carriageway with parking either side, mature fig trees as well as additional parking to central median in main street

Asymmetric street separating river from residential development; formed kerb and gutter with well maintained grass verge on one side, and grassed swale to the other

Formal road treatments to streets within town centre including awnings for pedestrian shelter, defined parking, formal kerb, gutter and footpaths

Wide residential streets with generous grassed verges and dwellings of a consistent alignment and setback determine the character of the streetscape

6.9   TOWN TWO - BUILDINGS

The character of the buildings in the town is influenced by its close proximity to a regional centre and prominent local industry. There is a robust and simple character to buildings.

Buildings in the town centre are characterised by masonry or lightweight parapets, many with awnings extending to the kerb. They are generally one to two storeys in height. Public buildings are often of masonry construction and located on prominent sites within the town.

The original residential buildings are typically modest detached houses with a mix of lightweight and masonry construction. There are several instances of higher density such as aged care accommodation.

Key elements of buildings within this town include:

— Commercial buildings are found along the main road entrance to the town as well as along other main commercial streets

— Commercial buildings are characterised by a range of styles, many parapet buildings with awnings provide a continuous covered walkway

— The town has predominantly detached houses with either enclosed or exposed verandahs to the perimeter

Public buildings are typically high quality, robust and do much to establish the character of the town

Commercial buildings of one to two storeys with consistent set backs and some with awnings to kerb; a mix of lightweight and predominantly masonry construction characterise the town centre
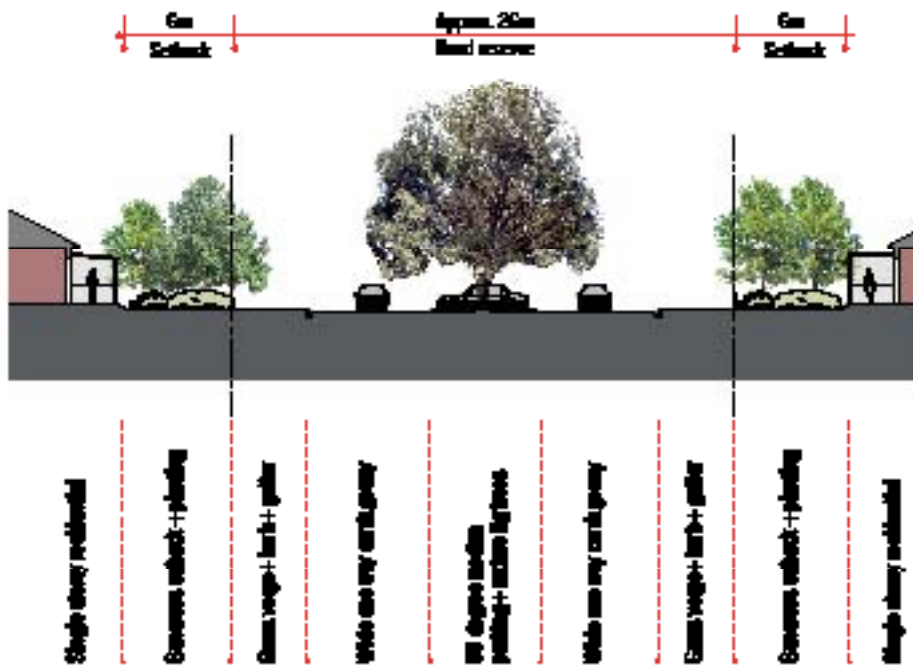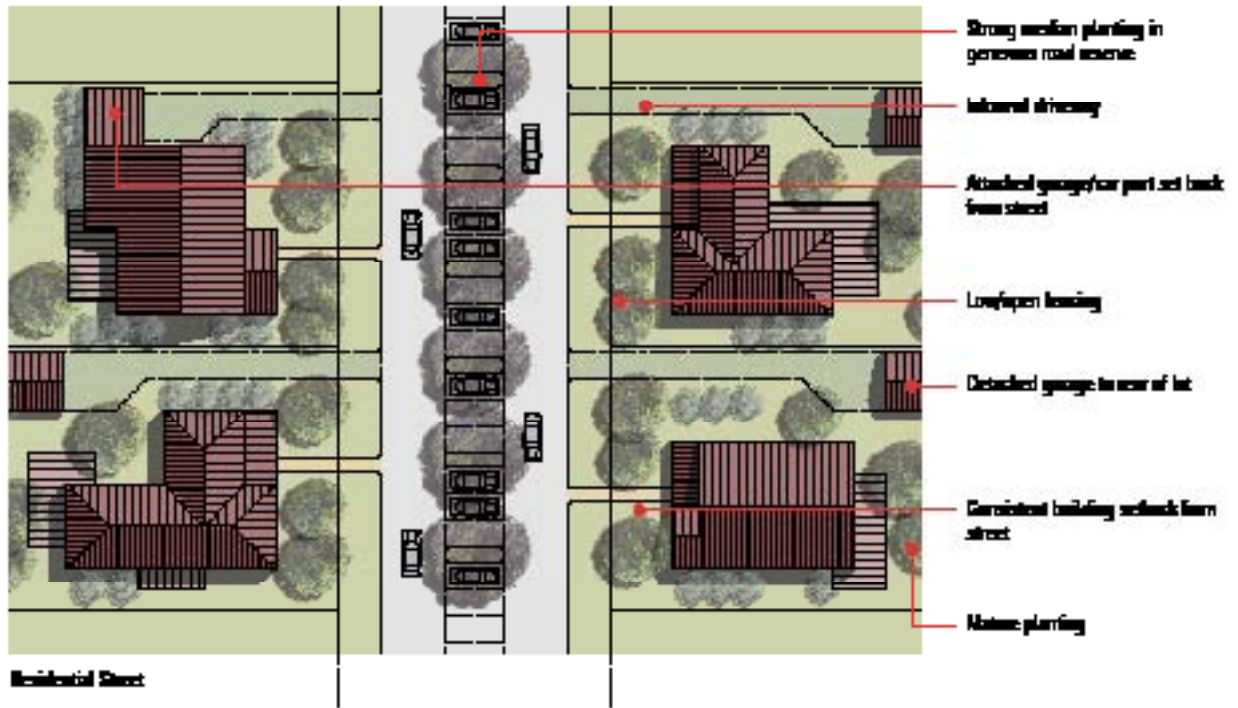

Traditional housing is typically elevated, single level, lightweight, modest detached dwellings with simple roof forms, a consistent alignment to the street and a front porch or verandah

Various building styles characterise the town centre; awnings extending to kerb provide a covered pedestrian path along shop fronts

6.10   TOWN TWO - SUMMARY

Strong median planting in generous road reserve

Informal driveway

Attached garage/car port set back from street

Low/open fencing

Detached garage to rear of lot

Consistent building setback from street

Mature planting

Residential Street

Generous formal road reserve and building setbacks to residential streets

Residential buildings are modest in scale and character using simple forms and light weight materials

Provision of parking to rear of lots enhances the character of the street

07   MAJOR TOWNS

7.0   MAJOR TOWNS - KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Typically, major towns were established along a river or on the coast as ports. Often they were sited within a striking landscape visible from many different points throughout the town. These urban settlements are usually more dense than smaller towns and villages and the natural environment is not as prominent within the urban structure. Typically farming or a major industry has supported the growth of the settlement.

Major towns often service a number of smaller, disconnected urban areas and so have developed a significant commercial core. This town centre is supplemented by other smaller commercial points which service outlying residential areas.

A greater number and variety of public buildings including public administration buildings such as council chambers or law courts characterise the urban centre.

Regional community services such as sport and recreation facilities are evident and there is a greater choice of accommodation types including flats, semi-detached houses and terraces.

Typically, residential accommodation is characterised by detached dwellings with some higher density accommodation towards the town centre.

7.1   MAJOR TOWN ONE - AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

This major town lies in a broad agricultural valley within a caldera landscape. Sited on the banks of a coastal river the town also features an isolated hill close to its centre. Farming is an important local industry that sustains the settlements.
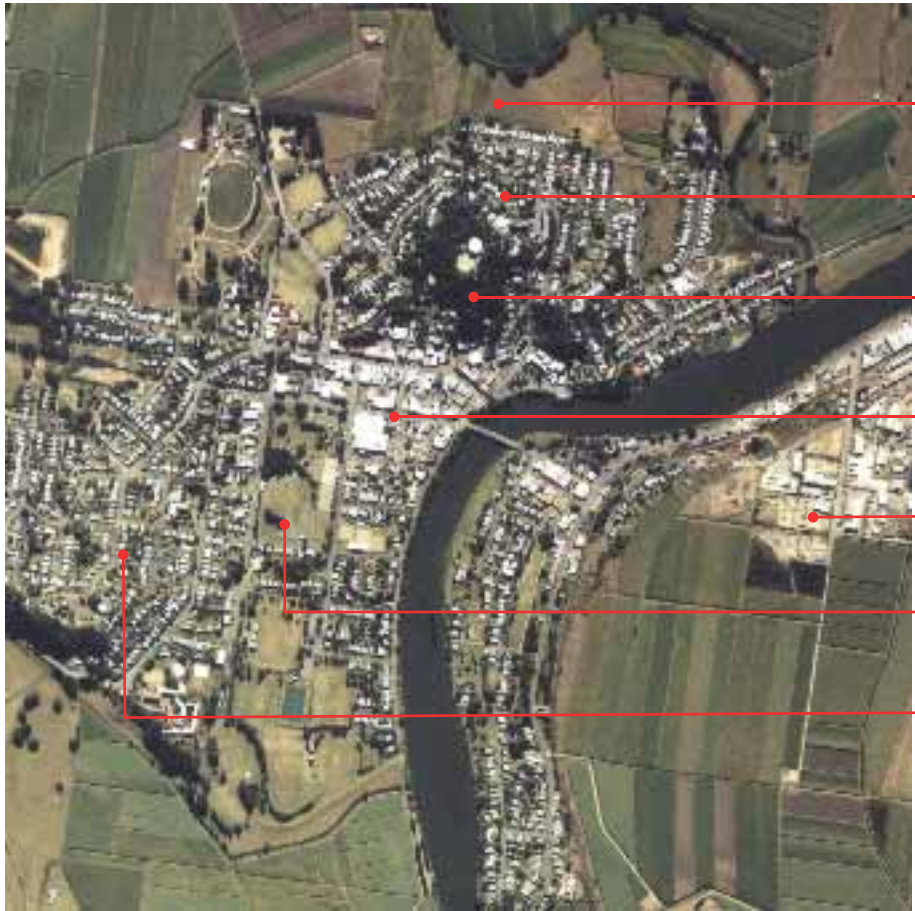
Settlement edge defined by rural land, hilly topography and the river

Curvilinear residential street patterns influenced by topography and the river edge

A naturally vegetated hill marks the centre of the township and forms a dramatic backdrop to the main street

The town centre and main street are very clearly defined and comprise denser built form

A second, well-defined industrial centre is evident to the east of the river

Generous green public space separating town centre and residential areas

Formal grid corresponds with flat topography on alluvial flood plain

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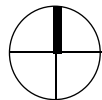
7.2   MAJOR TOWN ONE - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

This major town is established along a coastal river and is surrounded by low lying farmland and a caldera landscape beyond. The town centre is established on flat land while some residential areas are influenced by the hilly topography.

There are many generous green spaces providing recreational facilities for local residents and those from surrounding smaller settlements.

Key landscape elements of this major town include:

— The caldera rim and its dense native vegetation is visible from many points within the township

— A small hill, naturally vegetated, sits dramatically within the town centre forming a striking landscape setting for development

— The settlement has developed on flat and low lying land with strong connections to the river and has then grown into surrounding foothills

— Dense established gardens and foliage are evident throughout the town

— There are numerous open spaces and recreation facilities within the town, including large multi-purpose facilities and formal parks

— A bridge connects disconnected urban areas to the east of the river

Distant views of the caldera rim and low lying farmland are accessible from higher vantage points in the township

A small naturally vegetated hill within the settlement imparts a strong landscape character

The dwellings of the settlement site within dense tropical vegetation against a backdrop of sugar cane fields and the dramatic caldera rim

Fertile flood plains of surrounding farmland

7.3   MAJOR TOWN ONE - STREETSCAPE

The underlying topography and the course of the river have influenced the street layout of this major town and there is a clear street hierarchy. The street grids in commercial and industrial centres are a formal north south orientation, revealing the flat topography in these areas. The residential streets are less formal as they are influenced by the hilly landscape evident further from the river.

Stretches of awnings extend to the kerb throughout most of the town centre providing opportunities for outdoor dining and cafes. On-street car parking is available with both parallel and angle parking in the town centre.

The original residential streets continue in a formal grid pattern close to the centre and become less formal in the outlying areas. The residential streets typically have two way carriageways with formed kerb and gutters and a well maintained, landscaped verge. The highway and the natural landscape has informed the settlement patterns in this town. These streets sit in a loose intersecting grid pattern.

Key elements of the streets in this major town include:

— There is a clear hierarchy of streets defining commercial, industrial and residential areas

— Some streets provide visual connections to the surrounding farm lands and hinterland; visual access to the river is hindered by the levy banks

— Residential streets are typically formal two way carriageways with formed kerb and gutter and grassed verge

— The streets to the centre are typically two way carriageways with parallel or angle parking to either side; the streets are not typically symmetrical

— Some buildings in the town centre are setback from the street providing a formal courtyard space within the street

— Residential streets near the town centre are formal and become informal with grass swales in the outskirts of the town

Commercial centre street with formal carriageway and angle parking with parallel parking to opposite side, some street planting and intermittently covered footpaths

Residential street with formed kerb and gutter and grass verge; consistent building setbacks with low height fencing or mature planting define boundaries

Wide residential streets, with the surrounding landscape visible, have a distinctly North Coast character

A series of mature tropical trees give a rich streetscape character to a river-edge street

7.4   MAJOR TOWN ONE - BUILDINGS

The character of buildings within the town centre is a reflection of the role of the town as a major service centre for the surrounding rural communities and smaller settlements.

The town centre reflects a range of architectural styles responding to the civic and commercial services provided. Buildings are predominantly masonry revealing the importance of the major town and the investment in high quality built form. Retail buildings of low scale are also evident within the residential areas.

Traditional residences in this major town are predominantly of lightweight construction. Many of the houses are elevated, particularly in close proximity to the river and on steeper topography. There is a uniform style of housing throughout the town of detached single dwellings with some more dense forms of housing close to the town centre.

Key building elements of this major town include:

— A well-defined town centre with buildings of two to three storeys in height and varying materials and styles, which reflect their diverse civic and commercial functions

— Traditional dwellings, commonly built of lightweight materials and elevated above the ground in response to the hot subtropical climate

— The detached elevated houses have approximately six metre setbacks with carports commonly located under the house

— Medium density residential buildings are emerging as infill development within the established areas of the town

Traditional elevated dwelling of lightweight materials and simple roof form; the verandah is an important extension of internal living space

A series of dwellings of consistent form, materials, scale and alignment typical of this major town
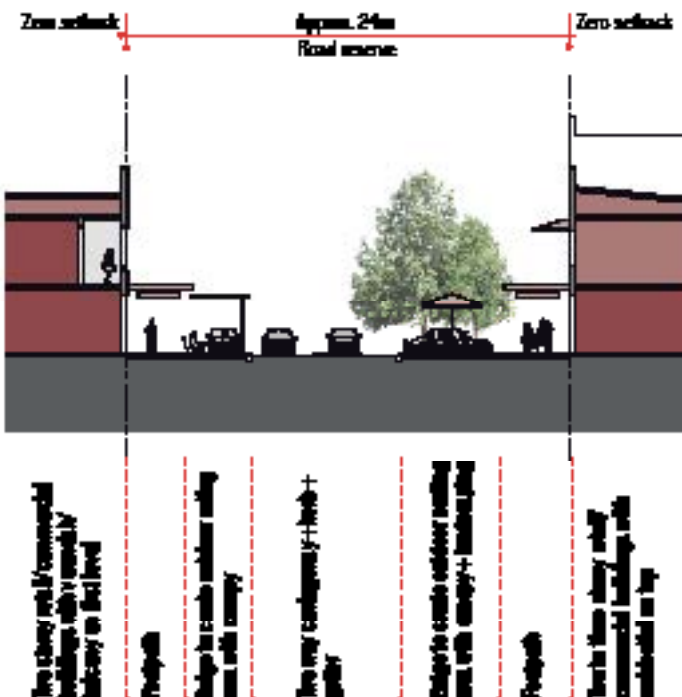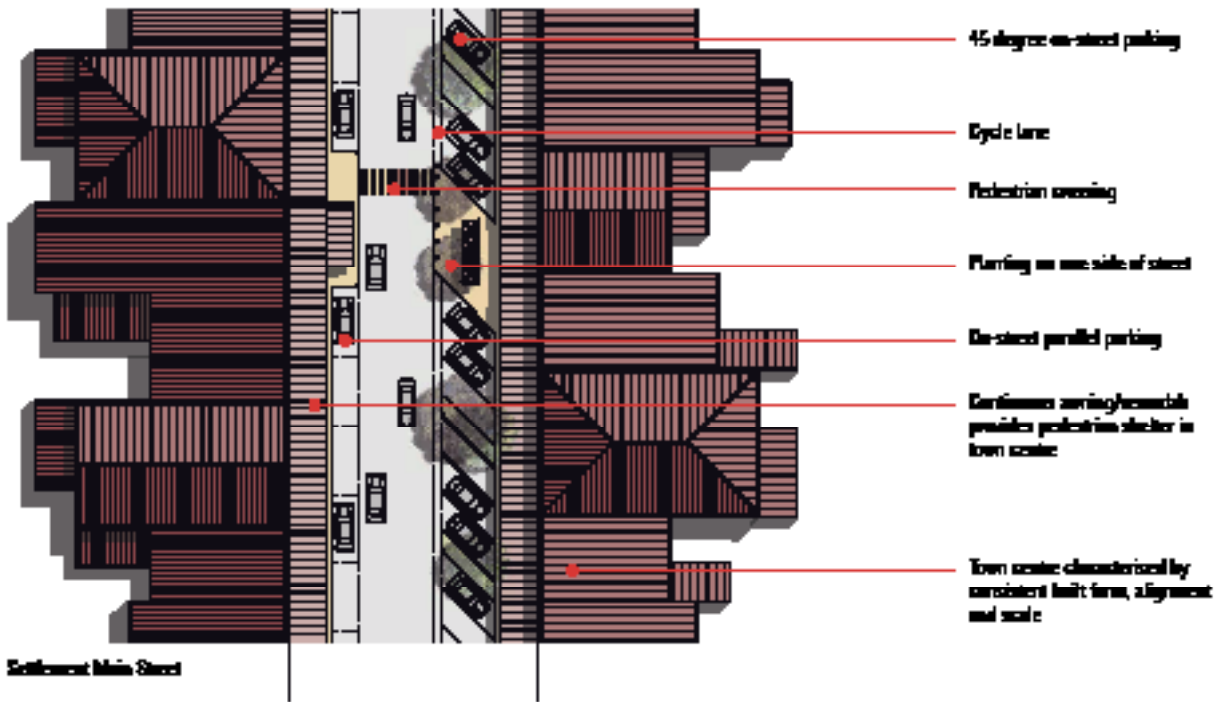

High quality public buildings, often of masonry, are evident in the town centre

Traditional dwellings of lightweight materials, elevated with internal verandahs and parking; the buildings are aligned consistently along the street

7.5   MAJOR TOWN ONE - SUMMARY

7.6   MAJOR TOWN TWO - AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

This major town lies at the intersection of a major highway and a coastal river. Originally settled as a river port the commercial core of the town is immediately adjacent to the riverbank. Over time the settlement has expanded crossing the river and its creeks in several directions.

Outlying disconnected residential development further along river edge

Well defined commercial centre and main street on river bank

Generous green public spaces, parks and sporting fields are evident across the town

The traditional township has been laid out in a semi-formal grid which is modified by important local roads

As the settlement pushes into the low foothills, the street pattern becomes curvilinear responding to steeper topography

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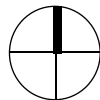
7.7   MAJOR TOWN TWO - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

This major town is located inland, on the banks of a coastal river and set within a broad valley used extensively for agriculture. Naturally vegetated mountains form the landscape setting. The settlement of this major town has been influenced by the river and is framed by the surrounding farmland. Visual connections to the river and surrounding hinterland are evident from within the urban settlement.

Key landscape elements of the major town include:

— The close relationship of the settlement to the river, particularly the traditional main street

— The influence exerted by the river and the topography on the form of the major town and structure of its streets

— Views to distant vegetated mountains from many vantage points within the settlement

The river with its distinctive vegetation provides a natural focus for the settlement and is important to the landscape character of this major town

The bridge is set in a striking river landscape where the naturally vegetated coastal ranges are visible in the distance

As the settlement climbs into the low valley foothills the township's relationship to its landscape setting becomes clear

Areas within the settlements have a distinctly lower density with almost rural character including small farm lots set in a river valley landscape

7.8   MAJOR TOWN TWO - STREETSCAPE

The street pattern in this major town responds to the alluvial plain topography and river edge. The town centre is characterised by a formal north south grid, and bound by the river and its creeks. The more informal grid to the residential areas is influenced by the hilly topography and major highways through the settlement.

Key elements of the streets in this major town include:

— A defined street hierarchy within the commercial and residential areas

— The streets in the town centre have formal carriageways with formed kerb and gutter treatments and are characterised by formal tree planting and on-street car parking

— The streets to the elevated residential areas offer views to the surrounding farmlands

— The settlement pattern includes streets that address the river edge, separating development from the waterfront

The commercial main street predominantly consists of masonry buildings built to a consistent street alignment each providing an awning or posted verandah

Where residential streets follow the alignment of the river they tend to allow public access to the water's edge

Similarly, where commercial streets address the river a positive relationship and good public access to the river edge is achieved

Residential street with generous width and a focus on public open space at its end; formed kerbs and gutters with grassed verges create a modest, informal character

7.9   MAJOR TOWN TWO - BUILDINGS

There are many well-maintained traditional buildings within the town centre, which include masonry buildings with detailed façades. The town centre is scattered with more commercial developments of various styles but with consistent alignment and form.

Two storey buildings dominate the main street in the town centre, with scale decreasing at either end of the street. The commercial/retail frontages are typically narrow with awnings to the kerb edge or verandahs addressing the street. More recent developments often have wider frontages.

The residential buildings are commonly a mix of both masonry and lightweight construction. The roofs are tiled or metal with garages often to the rear. Housing sites in the lower lying areas are typically elevated and of lightweight construction with the garage often located under the house.

Key building elements in the major town include:

— A prominent town centre with commercial and public buildings of high quality

— Commercial buildings ranging in character from narrow fronted parapet buildings with awning to kerb to grand civic buildings with a verandah addressing the street; typically buildings are one to two storeys high

— Residential buildings range in form depending on their position in the landscape; many buildings are of lightweight construction and elevated on lower lying sites

— Residential buildings are typically freestanding, detached dwellings, although semi-detached housing, small scale blocks of flats and shop-top housing is also evident closer to the town centre

High quality masonry two storey commercial building with a positive address to the street

Commercial buildings in town centre typically have a narrow shop front, with awning to the kerb, and utilise parapet forms of consistent alignment
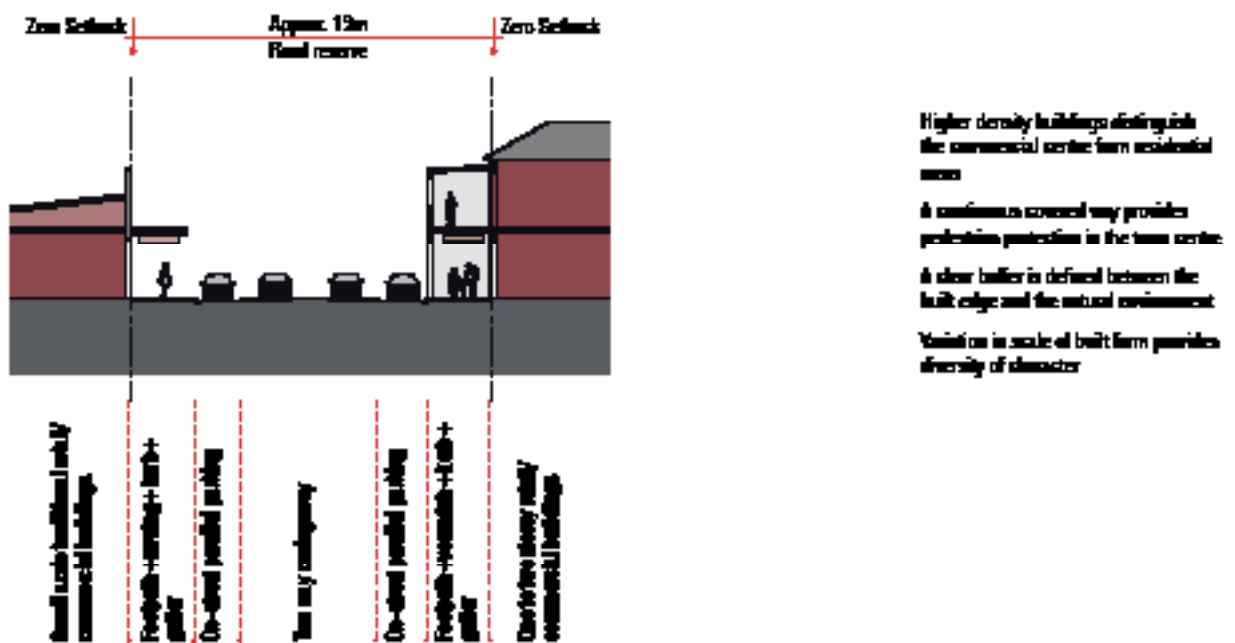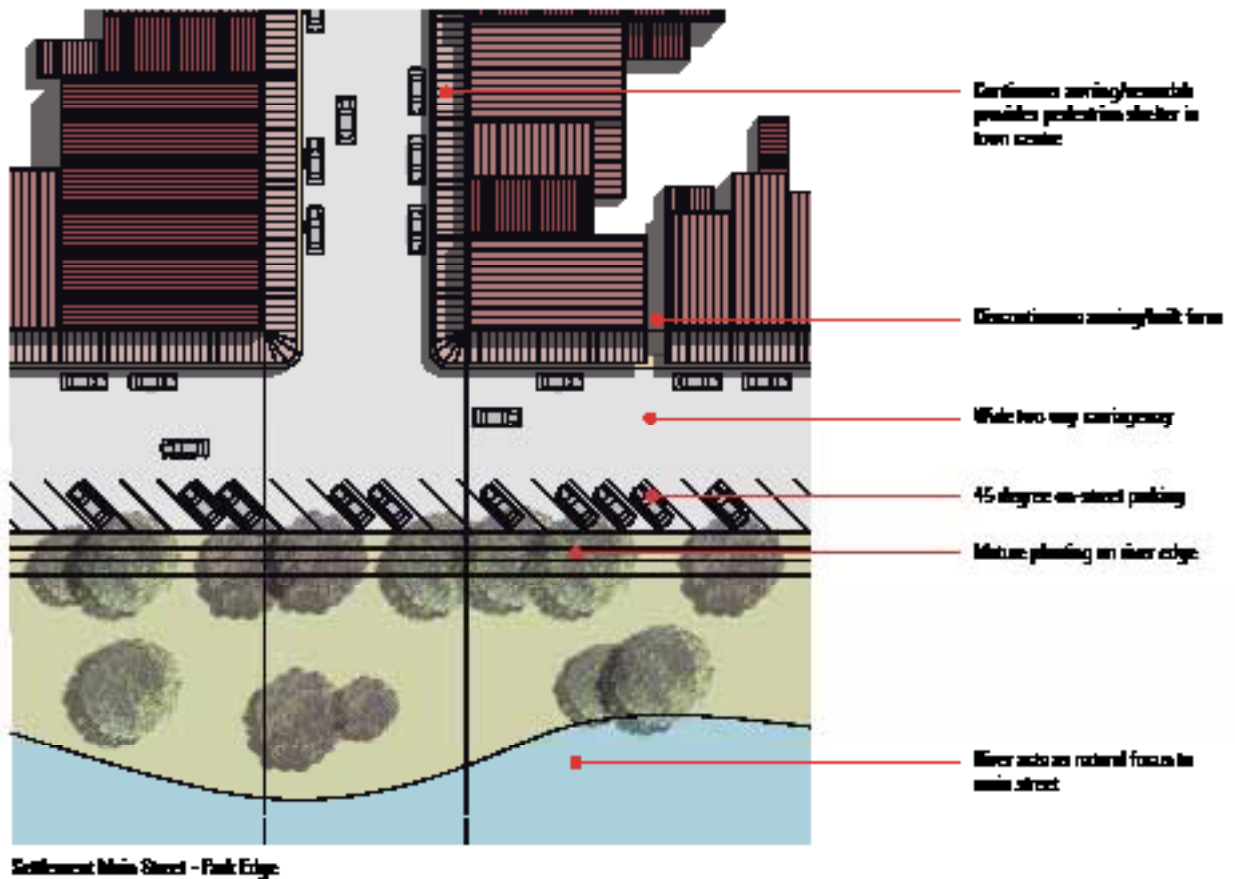

Traditional residential dwelling, elevated and of mixed masonry and lightweight construction with an external verandah

The local police station utilises a traditional masonry dwelling, well landscaped, set back from the street and bounded by a low front fence

7.10   MAJOR TOWN TWO - SUMMARY

Continuous awning/arcade provides pedestrian shelter in town centre

Discontinuous zoning/built form

Wide two-way carriageway

45 degree on-street parking

Mature planting on river edge

River acts as natural focus to main street

Settlement Main Street - Park Edge

Zero Setback

Approx. 19m Road reserve

Zero Setback

Higher density buildings distinguish the commercial centre form residential area

A continuous covered way provides pedestrian protection in the town centre

A clear buffer is defined between the built edge and the natural environment

Variation in scale of built form provides diversity of character

08 REGIONAL CENTRES

8.0   REGIONAL CENTRES - KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Throughout the NSW North Coast, regional centres are located in coastal and inland settings. Whilst their physical characteristics may differ, there are other aspects that are consistent between regional centre settlements.

These centres provide goods, services and employment to people from surrounding settlements as well as to their own growing populations.

Regional centres on the North Coast also provide infrastructure for tourism, tertiary education, medical facilities, entertainment and industries not otherwise supported in the smaller settlements of the region.

The evolving density and extent of development in regional centres illustrate growth and increasing population.

This growth creates a need for well-planned transport infrastructure, public open space and high quality buildings to support the needs of existing and future residents.

8.1   REGIONAL CENTRE ONE - AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

This regional centre is sited on the alluvial flood plain at the confluence of a coastal river and its tributary. The settlement serves the surrounding agricultural settlements of the North Coast hinterland. It was established to support the timber-getting and dairy industries which relied on the surrounding temperate forests and rich alluvial soil.


Formal north-east south-west grid pattern to the town centre, extending into the surrounding residential streets

The large well defined town centre is evident at the heart of the settlement distinct from the surrounding residential blocks

The major through road intersects the formal grid at an oblique angle creating an unusual street pattern and intersections

The settlement has crossed the river creating a series of connected but distinct suburbs

0km   1km
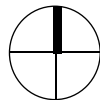
8.2   REGIONAL CENTRE ONE - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

This major regional centre is located within the flood plain valley of a coastal river, inland from the coast, with much of the settlement on low lying, flood prone land. Dense forests, the foothills of the surrounding mountains and the river define the boundaries of this settlement.

Within the regional centre there is an extensive green band along the river edge that is largely not visually accessible from the town. Many formal public open spaces provide sport and recreational facilities for the community.

Key landscape elements of the major regional centre include:

— The river as an important landscape focus for the settlement

— Extensive public open space and well established private gardens; the surrounding landscape is visible throughout the town

— The sense of a valley landscape is strongly conveyed from many vantage points within the settlement

Buildings are generally set back from the river edge with an address to the river, which is a natural focus to the settlement

Many high quality formal public open spaces are evident throughout the centre

The valley landscape setting is visible at the end of many streets within the settlement

Well established residential gardens of local and imported species contribute to the landscape character of the regional centre

8.3   REGIONAL CENTRE ONE - STREETSCAPE

The street hierarchy in this major regional centre is well defined. Within the commercial centre, the streetscape is formally treated with wide streets, formed kerbs and gutters, central parking medians, formal landscaping and consistent building setbacks. The development of the town has resulted in varied streetscapes.

Residential streets are also diverse in character, ranging from more formal kerb and gutters and pedestrian paths to the verge, to informal with grassed verges and drainage swales. Residential streets that are adjacent to formal recreational facilities generally offer formal road, stormwater and footpath treatments.

The key elements of the streetscapes in the major regional centre include:

— Straight, gridded streets on flat topography, which reveal views to surrounding mountains

— Mature street planting to the town centre and throughout the residential streets

— Main streets that provide space for outdoor dining

— Some less formal residential streets with unformed edges, grassed verges and drainage swales with mature planting

— Typically wide main streets with parallel or angle parking to either side often with a centrally landscaped median

A more formal main street with formed kerb and gutter, footpaths, mature street planting in median and consistent building alignments

A wide, mixed use street dense with street planting

Wide footpaths and high quality public domain encourage outdoor dining

Informal residential street with grassed verge, drainage swale and mature street planting; private residential gardens with mature local and imported planting

8.4   REGIONAL CENTRE ONE - BUILDINGS

The range of buildings in the central business district reflects the role of this regional centre. Building types such as cathedrals, commercial offices, hospitals, public administration, cultural facilities and tertiary education institutions are all evident within the settlement.

Buildings within the commercial centre are typically between one and three storeys. Buildings are generally of high quality masonry construction and vary in architectural style according to purpose. Otherwise, the original commercial centre includes shop top developments with awnings to kerb, providing a continuous covered pedestrian path along the street. Some commercial buildings are separate from the town centre and scattered throughout the urban settlement serving residential areas.

The residential buildings reflect the warm temperate climatic conditions of the area. There is a mix of lightweight and masonry construction. The temperate climate allows for many varied building types although elevated lightweight housing is common in the older areas. The density of housing decreases away from the commercial centre.

Key building elements in the major regional centre include:

— A diverse range of building typologies in this centre illustrates the role and importance of this regional centre

— Buildings are high quality, built to last, reflecting the investment made in a regional centre

— A diverse range of housing with original residences typically lightweight, elevated and often with a garage underneath

Regional centres are a setting for high quality buildings and the highest order of cultural facilities

High quality building with cultural use

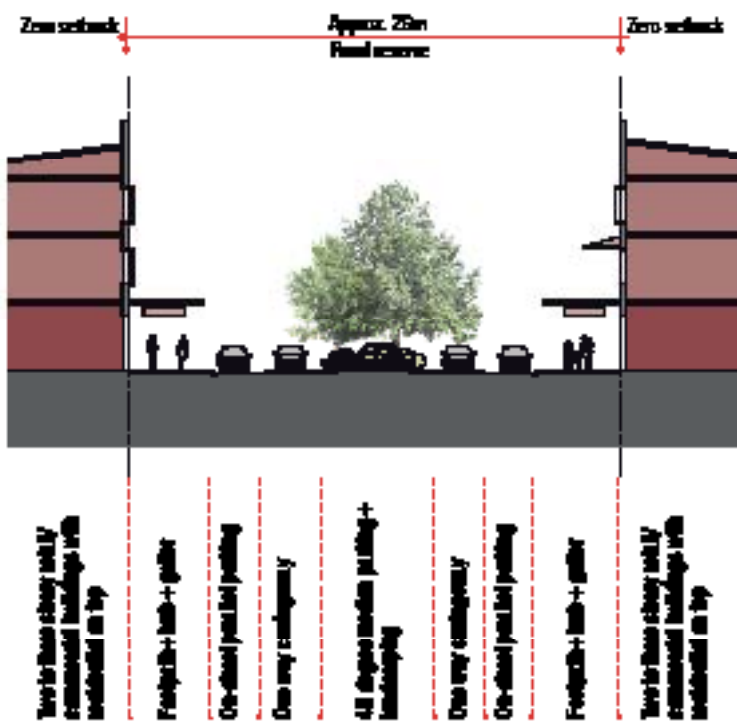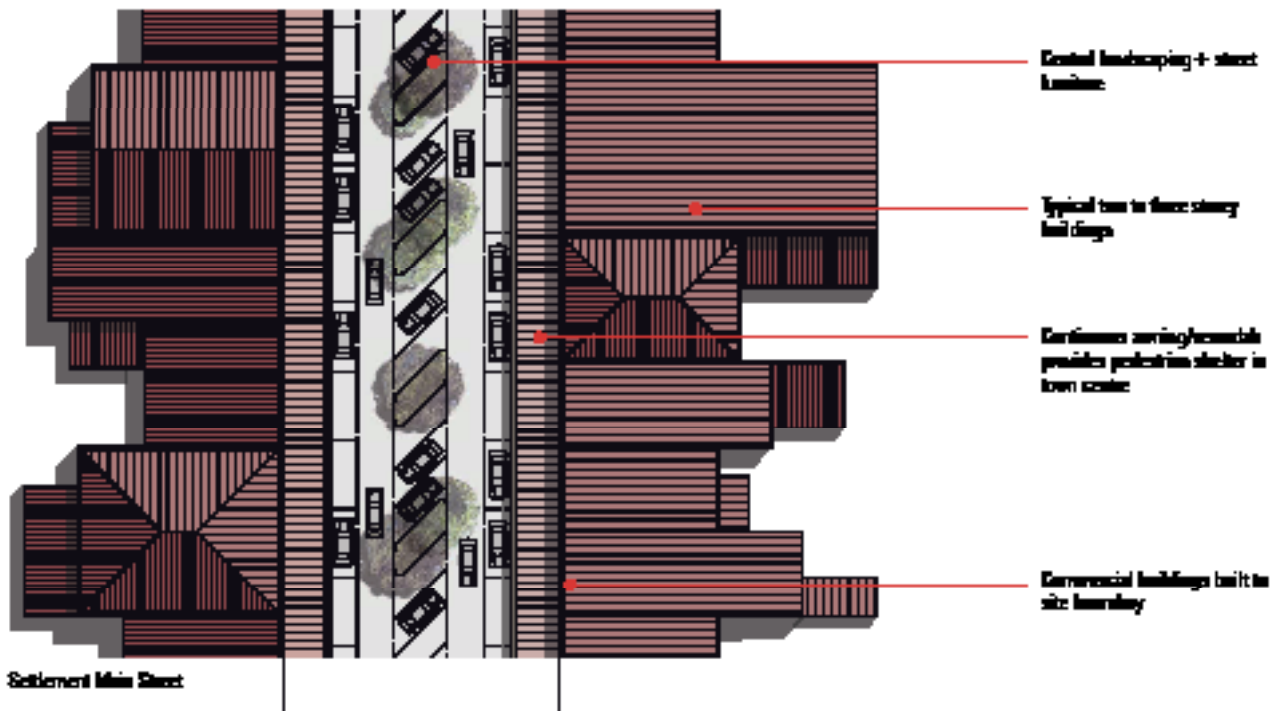Two storey masonry public buildings

Traditional lightweight elevated housing with garage underneath

Traditional dwellings constructed of lightweight materials and elevated to avoid flooding are important to the character of this settlement

8.5   REGIONAL CENTRE ONE - SUMMARY

Settlement Main Street

- Central landscaping + street furniture
- Typical two to three storey buildings
- Continuous awning/verandah provides pedestrian shelter in town centre
- Commercial buildings built to site boundary

Zero setback   Approx. 25m   Zero setback
                      Road reserve

Higher density buildings distinguish the commercial centre from residential areas

A continuous covered way provides pedestrian protection in the town centre

Higher density buildings provide opportunity for a more diverse range of residential and commercial accommodation

Wide road reserve and avenue planting reflect the importance of the main street within a regional centre

8.6   REGIONAL CENTRE TWO - AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

Situated on the coast at the mouth of a river, this regional centre was established early in the history of NSW as a penal colony and over time has developed as a river port supporting forestry, agriculture and more recently tourism.

Generous public open space exists along the foreshore and throughout the centre

Recent higher density development is concentrated along the coast line

There is a distinctive commercial centre in this settlement with formal north south grid; this grid is bounded by natural features

Residential development maintains the north south grid as in the town centre

The settlement has developed around natural features such as creeks and mangroves which are still evident within the township

0km   1km
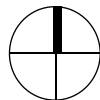
8.7   REGIONAL CENTRE TWO - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

This major regional centre is situated on the coast at the mouth of a coastal river. The surrounding natural environment is characterised by rocky headlands and beaches along the coast and mangroves near the river.

The regional centre has pockets of remnant vegetation which are linked by green corridors along ridgelines, creeks and headlands. The urban environment is set back from the coastal edge and separated by a main perimeter road and formal public space.

Key landscape elements of the major regional centre include:

— Extensive natural reserves in pockets and corridors traversing the settlement

— Strong visual connections to both the river and the coastline

— Local and imported planting throughout, with distinctive Norfolk Island pines along the coastal edge

— Formal and informal public open space to coastal and river edges

— Buildings are generally set back from the coastline with a main road and public space defining the edge of the settlement

The regional centre is sited along beaches, over headlands and into the surrounding hinterland; the coast is a critical landscape feature

Pockets of indigenous vegetation within the settlement contribute to character

As the settlement rises over headlands and into surrounding foothills, views of the ocean give a strong sense of the landscape

Formal planting of palms in key commercial streets creates a distinctive sense of place

8.8   REGIONAL CENTRE TWO - STREETSCAPE

There is a complex, well defined street hierarchy within this regional centre. The commercial centre has a formal north south grid pattern bounded by the river and the harbour. The outlying residential street grid is less formal, responding to hilly topography, the coastline, river and creeks.

The commercial centre has formalised two way carriageways with defined parking to either side, formed kerbs and gutters, landscaping and central medians. Building setbacks are generally consistent with most buildings providing covered footpaths with awnings to kerb.

The majority of residential streets have formal carriageway treatments, with kerbs and gutters and reasonably consistent building setbacks incorporating generous landscaping. The more informal layout of these streets provides the opportunity for dwellings to take advantage of view corridors to the hinterland beyond, the coastline and the rivers. The streets have mature, dense planting often screening the built form.

Key elements of the streets in the major regional centre include:

— Formal grid pattern in town centre providing view corridors to the surrounding natural landscape

— Typically wide main streets with parking either side and often a central landscaped median

— Street grids and hilly topography providing views to the mountains, coast and river

— Typically, mature exotic and indigenous planting in residential and commercial areas

A wide main street with high quality public domain improvements including formalised planting beds, defined parking bays and a median incorporating significant palm trees

Commercial street with central parking and mature indigenous planting in median

The effect of a gridded street pattern as it runs over undulating topography is to reveal the land form and views

Informal residential street with varying treatments to either side, formed kerb and gutter, footpaths and grassed verges; generous building setbacks and mature vegetation create a streetscape dominated by trees

8.9   REGIONAL CENTRE TWO - BUILDINGS

There are a wide variety of buildings in this major regional centre, illustrating the successive phases of development of the settlement and its regional supportive role. Civic and cultural buildings and medium to high density accommodation characterises the town centre and some other key areas of the settlement.

The buildings on commercial streets range in size, typically, from one to three storeys. These range in form from traditional shop-top attached buildings to freestanding masonry civic and cultural buildings. Several high end and medium density apartment buildings, some with active ground floor access, also exist along the coastline and within the town centre.

The outskirts of the regional centre display other smaller neighbourhood retail centres. There are also several schools and a regional hospital supporting the regional centre.

The residential density is highest near the coast, with a range of multi-storey residential apartment buildings overlooking the beach. Residential buildings reduce in density and scale further away from the town centre and coast. Despite the scale and density of buildings in the regional centre, the settlement has a close connection to the natural environment.

Key building elements in the major regional centre include:

— Commercial buildings in the regional centre are typically one to three storeys in height; some masonry and attached, others of lightweight construction with awnings to the kerb edge

— High and medium density residential apartment buildings are prominent within the commercial centre and along the coastline

— Other residential housing is varied in construction and style but includes both masonry and lightweight materials

— Many well maintained, traditional and heritage buildings are evident throughout this regional centre

A modest traditional dwelling of simple form and lightweight materials illustrating the diversity of built form in regional centres

High density residential apartments are a feature of this regional centre. They are typically sited overlooking public open space at the coastal edge
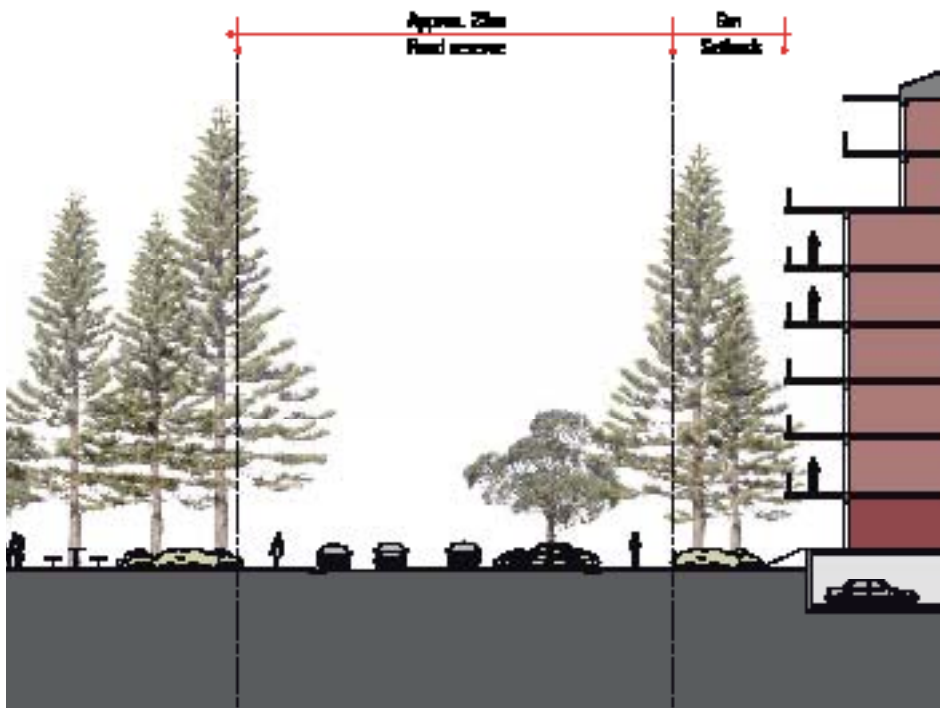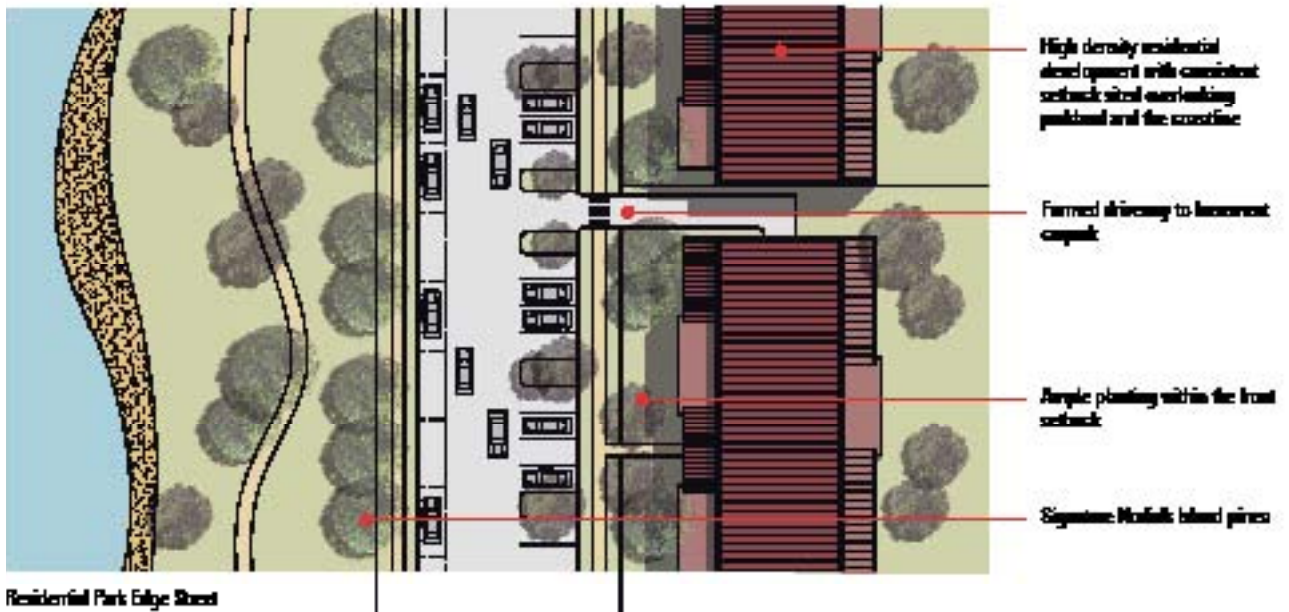

A high quality commercial building in the commercial centre that contributes greatly to the character of the settlement

Five level residential apartment building adjacent to extensive public open space

8.10   REGIONAL CENTRE TWO - SUMMARY

Residential Park Edge Street

PART TWO: URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

09   INTRODUCTION TO URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

9.0   INTRODUCTION

The purpose of Part Two is to provide design guidance and examples for future development of the settlement types discussed in Part One of this document.

Part Two is divided into three sections:

Section A identifies the principles of growth management for a whole of settlement. The principles are illustrated by a series of examples. Firstly, an example of growth by consolidation is provided for each of the previously cited typologies by way of overlay. Then an illustration of expansion in a fictitious settlement is provided and lastly, an example of the desirable qualities of growth on a greenfields site.

Section B identifies the principles of growth management at the streetscape level. The principles are illustrated by examples of positive streetscape and block design for a major town, a regional centre, a fringe expansion of an existing settlement and a new greenfields settlement.

Section C identifies the principles for the management of settlement at the building design level. It provides examples for six key housing typologies. The drawn examples typify the positive attributes of designing for housing on the North Coast; these are reinforced by photographic precedents.

10   SECTION A: SETTLEMENT GROWTH GUIDELINES

10 SECTION A: SETTLEMENT GROWTH GUIDELINES

10.0 SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLES

These principles outline issues to be considered in the planning and development of North Coast settlements to enable environmentally and socially sustainable growth. Guiding development to reinforce the character of settlements and to minimise impact on the natural environment is critical to the future success of this region.

Acknowledging that growth may occur by consolidation of the existing settlement, by expansion of its boundaries or by new development on 'greenfield' sites, principles for each direction have been established.

Examples of three settlements of the region illustrate these principles applied to a variety of settlement scales in different contexts.

Principles to apply to all future development

- Maintain and protect the key natural features throughout and around the settlement (coastal environment, river landscape, forested areas) to ensure the unique character they provide for the town is retained

- Prevent future growth in areas of high environmental or natural resource value and areas prone to flooding, erosion and inundation.

- Maintain public open space and public access along foreshores, reserves and bushland and set development back from areas of high ecological value

- Encourage plant species which are compatible with the local climate, topography and natural vegetation

- Prevent privatisation of foreshore and riparian edges

- Ensure interconnectivity of parks, public spaces, main streets, services, infrastructure and natural features

- Ensure development responds sensitively to the density and scale of the existing settlement

- Ensure planning and development respond to the local topography and climate

- Ensure provision of commercial and community services

Principles for Consolidated Growth

- Define boundaries around settlement to limit further outward expansion

- Use existing transport infrastructure to inform an urban boundary and minimise outward growth

- Consolidate disconnected urban areas and maintain the character of each before expanding main settlement boundaries

- Reconnect existing disconnected urban areas by consolidating the large scale public spaces that isolate them from the settlement centre

- Enhance connections between disconnected urban areas and the town centre

- Concentrate new development and increased heights and densities in town centres and in areas of greatest public amenity/services/infrastructure that have already been influenced by urban development

Principles for growth by expansion at the fringe or new 'greenfield' development

- Encourage new development on existing unconstrained land to minimise impact on natural environment and resources

- Maintain the character of the formal street grid to reinforce visual and physical connections to the natural landscape

- continue grid with expanding development

10.1   SETTLEMENT CONSOLIDATION - COASTAL VILLAGE

Maintain the strong character
of the formal street grid to
reinforce visual and physical
connections to the coast and
water bodies

Maintain and protect the
natural coastal environment;
prevent any further growth
in areas of unstable coastal
conditions

Concentrate new development
in the town core in preference
to outward expansion

Define boundaries around the
settlement to limit outward
expansion

Maintain public open space
and public access along
waterways; set development
back from environmentally
sensitive areas; prevent
privatisation of foreshore

0km   1km

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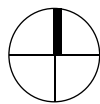
10.2   SETTLEMENT CONSOLIDATION - INLAND VILLAGE

Maintain and protect the natural forests and rivers throughout and around the village

Enhance, protect and maintain landscaped rail corridor

Maintain the strong character of the formal street grid to reinforce visual and physical connections to the natural river landscape
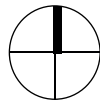
Concentrate new development in the town core in preference to outward expansion

Maintain public open space and public access along waterways and set development back from environmentally sensitive areas

If minor expansion of the town boundary is necessary, new development should be located on unconstrained land nearby to minimise servicing costs and impacts on the natural landscape

Reinforce boundaries around the settlement to limit outward expansion

0km   1km

10.3   SETTLEMENT CONSOLIDATION - TOWN

Infill areas already influenced by urban development before expanding town boundaries

Maintain the strong character of the formal street grid

Enhance and maintain planting to rail corridor using local species to reinforce the character of the town
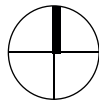
Concentrate new development in the town core in preference to outward expansion

Maintain public open space and public access along waterways and set development back from environmentally sensitive areas

Define boundaries around the settlement to limit outward expansion

Maintain and protect the natural vegetation and rivers throughout and around the town

0km   1km

10.4   SETTLEMENT CONSOLIDATION - MAJOR TOWN

Maintain and protect the natural vegetation and foreshores throughout and around the town

New development should maintain the formal grid pattern where possible

Concentrate new development in the town core in preference to outward expansion

Maintain public open space along the waterways and set development back from environmentally sensitive areas

Define boundaries around the settlement to limit outward expansion

Enhance and maintain continuous planting to rail corridor using local species to enhance the character of the town

Infill disconnected urban areas before expanding town boundaries, whilst minimising impact on the natural landscape

0km   1km
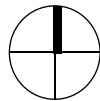
10.5   SETTLEMENT CONSOLIDATION - REGIONAL CENTRE

Maintain public open space and public access along waterways and set development back from environmentally sensitive areas; prevent privatisation of foreshore
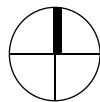
Avoid extensive open car parking, fronting main town core streets.

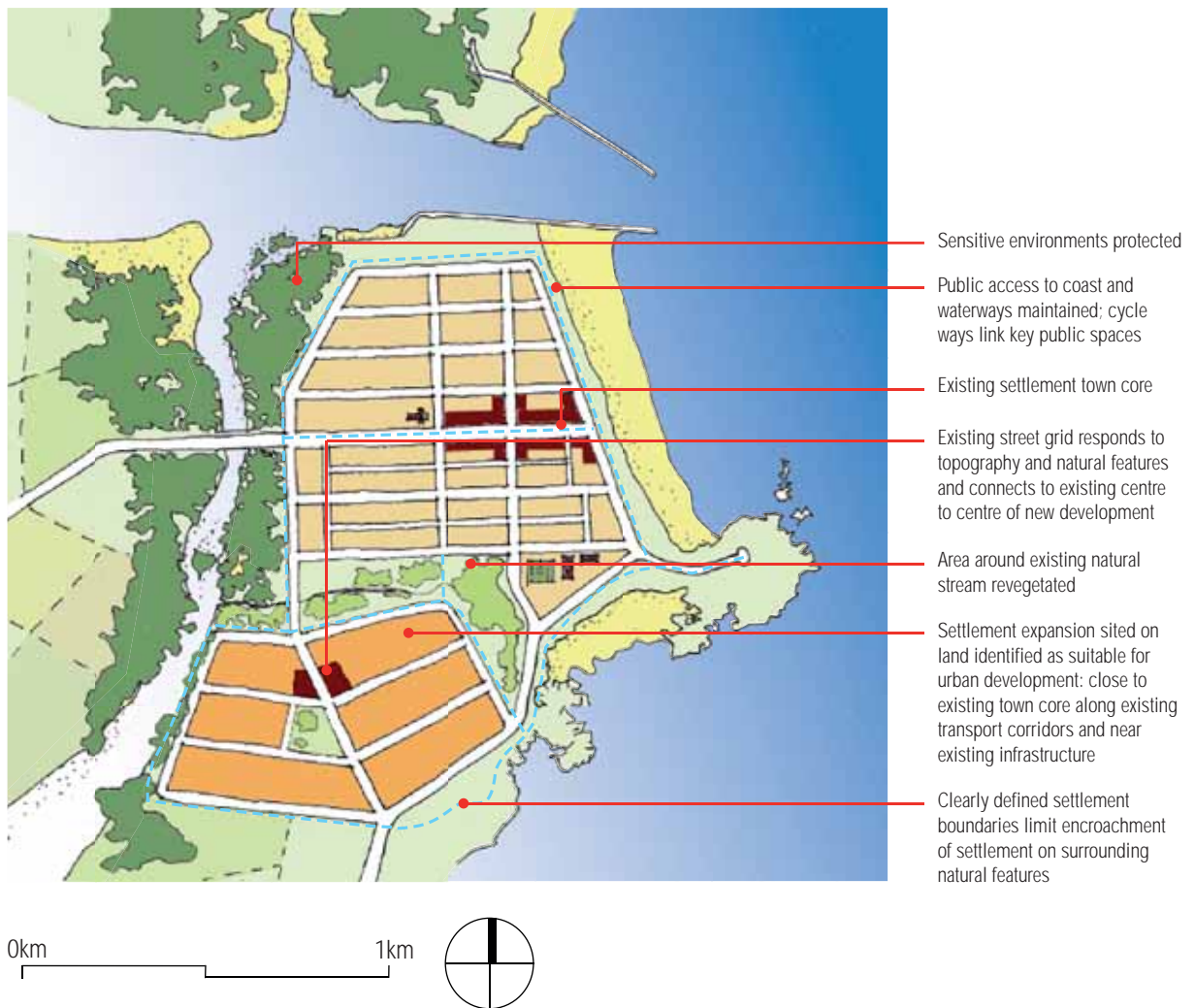Locate public facilities in town core in coastal locations

Concentrate new development and increased heights/ densities in the town core

Reinforce visual and physical connections to the coast and water bodies

0km   1km

10.6   SETTLEMENT EXPANSION - EXISTING TOWN

Sensitive environments protected

Public access to coast and waterways maintained; cycle ways link key public spaces

Existing settlement town core

Existing street grid responds to topography and natural features and connects to existing centre to centre of new development

Area around existing natural stream revegetated

Settlement expansion sited on land identified as suitable for urban development: close to existing town core along existing transport corridors and near existing infrastructure

Clearly defined settlement boundaries limit encroachment of settlement on surrounding natural features

0km   1km

10.7   NEW SETTLEMENT - 'GREENFIELD SITES'
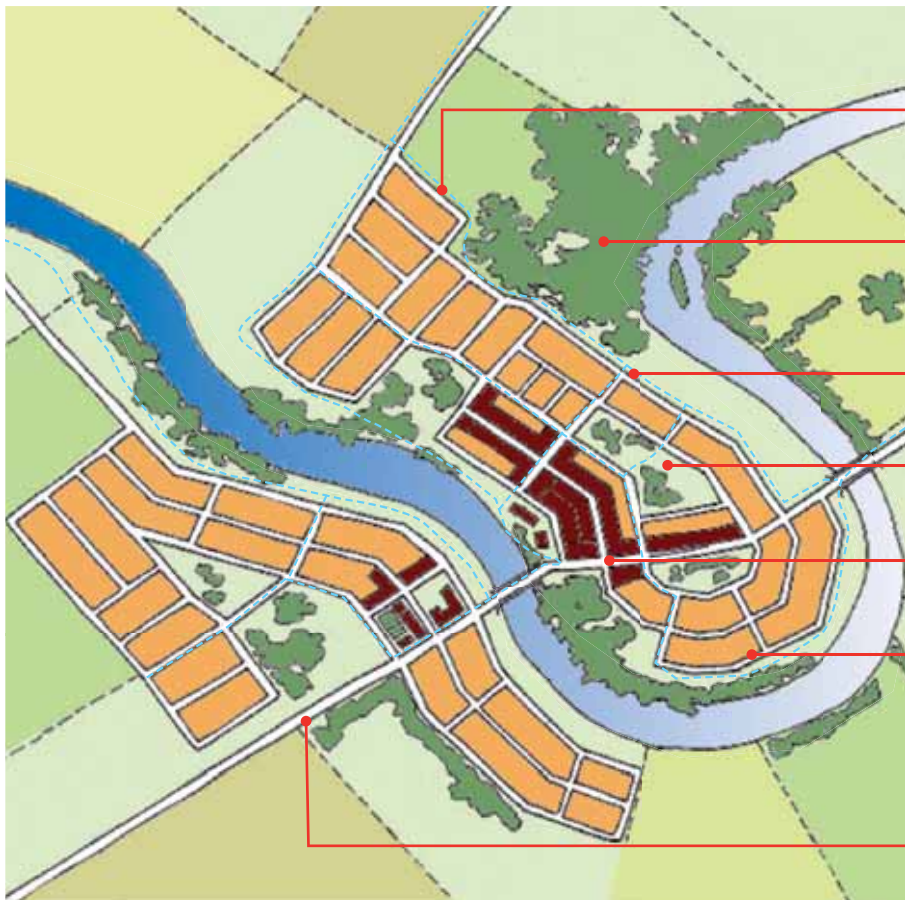
Clear settlement boundaries and consolidated footprint limit impact on surrounding agricultural land

Development imposes minimum threat on existing ecosystem, natural forests and river edges preserved

Network of cycleways throughout the town

Generous public open space provided throughout settlement

Clear street hierarchy, town centre and major through route

Street pattern and settlement structure respond to the river and surrounding topography

New settlement sited on existing road

0km   1km
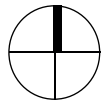
11   SECTION B: STREETSCAPE GUIDELINES
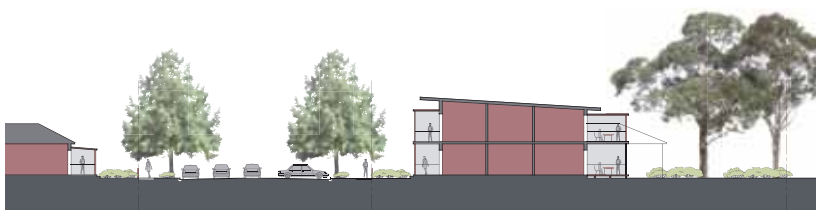
11.0   SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLES

The strategies below detail a number of methods for implementing the principles of settlement growth at streetscape level and are applicable in all locations of settlement growth. Annotated diagrams in this section detail their application to the settlement typologies identified in Part One.

Principles to apply to all future development

- Ensure local and regional transport connectivity

- Street hierarchy developed in accordance with required size and function; topography and natural features determine lot and street layouts

- Plan services and infrastructure to accommodate future growth strategies and ensure development is located for cost effective service provision

- Establish a development scale and density which is supportive of public transport, cyclist and pedestrian use; provide pedestrian and cycle routes that connect key community facilities, parks and open spaces

- In new subdivisions, continue the established city grid and maintain direct physical and visual connections, avoid car-dependent, cul-de-sac development

- Ensure that street patterns provide maximum physical and visual connectivity, offer a choice of routes and allow for double sided blocks such that development is oriented towards the street frontage

- In multi-dwelling development, provide a street entry for each dwelling, avoid battle-axe, villa-style development and design appropriately to topography, climate and aspect

- Reinforce original subdivision patterns and streetscapes that characterise the settlement, maintain consistent setbacks from front and rear of lots in low density areas and continuous street and awning edges along core streets/perimeters of major blocks

- Encourage deep soil zones to centre of blocks to allow the cultivation of large trees with large canopies and to permit infiltration of rainwater to the watertable

- Maintain axes with views and vistas towards watercourses and surrounding natural landscape, enhance and maintain river, coastal and landscape edge treatments, whilst minimising risk of flooding

- Maintain and protect any local heritage, natural or manmade, of physical, social or cultural significance in the community to establish an understanding of the collective past

- Define public open spaces and parks with consistent carriageway treatment and landscaping along the urban/ natural edge
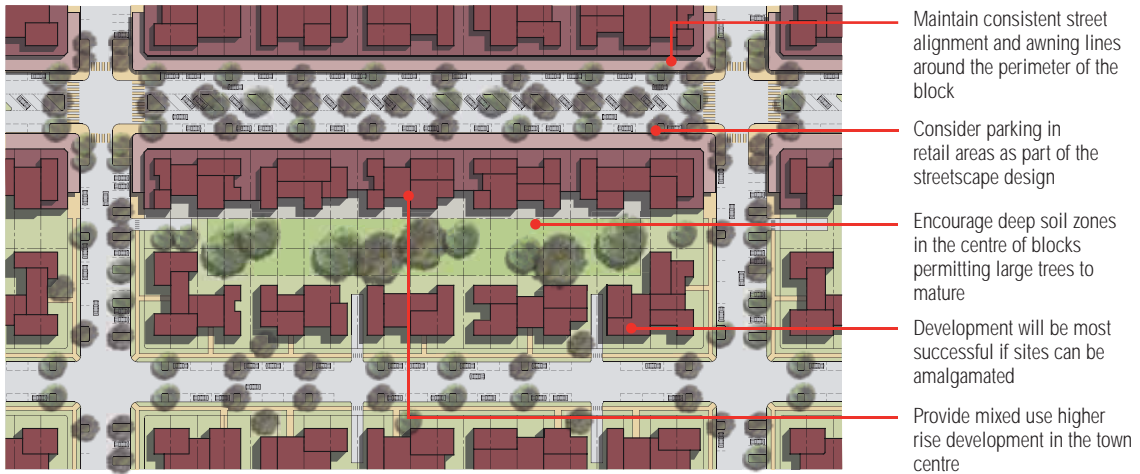
11.1   STREETSCAPE - MAJOR TOWN

This Major Town is undergoing settlement growth by consolidation. The positive streetscape features identified below contribute to maintaining the character and improving the amenity of the existing settlement. The streetscape below shows a moderate density residential block, with new semi-detached houses amongst the existing traditional dwellings.

Maintain existing heritage buildings

Allow for on-street parking, parallel or 45°

Encourage deep soil zones in the centre of blocks permitting large trees to mature

Maintain street planting, formed footpaths, kerbs and guttering

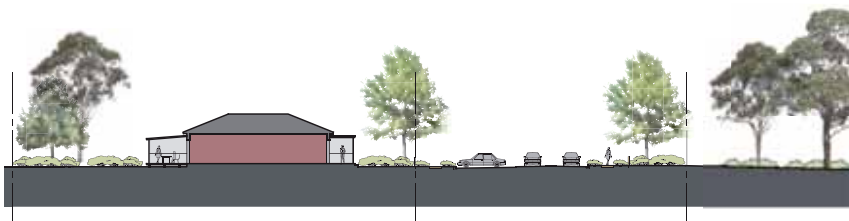Maintain consistent setback around the block

11.2   STREETSCAPE - REGIONAL CENTRE

This Regional Centre is undergoing settlement growth by consolidation. The positive streetscape features identified below contribute to maintaining the character and improving the amenity of the existing settlement. The diagram shows desirable increased density and mixed use development in the settlement centre and main street.

Maintain consistent street alignment and awning lines around the perimeter of the block

Consider parking in retail areas as part of the streetscape design

Encourage deep soil zones in the centre of blocks permitting large trees to mature

Development will be most successful if sites can be amalgamated

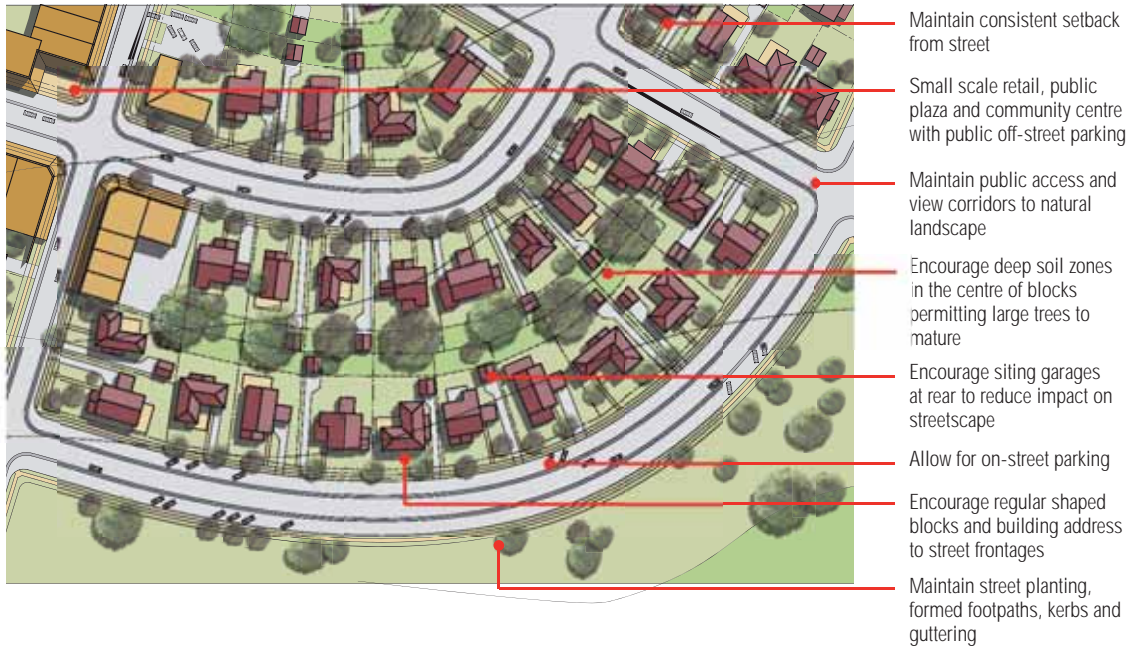Provide mixed use higher rise development in the town centre

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11.3   STREETSCAPE - SETTLEMENT EXPANSION

This Town is undergoing settlement growth by expansion. The positive streetscape features identified below contribute to a consistency of character with the existing settlement. The streetscape below shows a new, lower density residential block, serviced by a small retail precinct and community facilities.

Maintain consistent setback from street

Maintain public access and view corridors to surrounding natural landscape

Small scale retail, school and church with public off-street parking

Encourage deep soil zones in the centre of blocks permitting large trees to mature

Allow for on-street parking

Adopt street dimensions and grid consistent with traditional settlement

Consider siting garages to rear to reduce impact on streetscape

11.4   STREETSCAPE - GREENFIELD

This streetscape illustrates positive features to be considered in the planning and design of a new development on a greenfield site. The streetscape below shows a lower density residential block, serviced by a small retail/commercial precinct and community centre.

Maintain consistent setback from street

Small scale retail, public plaza and community centre with public off-street parking

Maintain public access and view corridors to natural landscape

Encourage deep soil zones in the centre of blocks permitting large trees to mature

Encourage siting garages at rear to reduce impact on streetscape

Allow for on-street parking

Encourage regular shaped blocks and building address to street frontages

Maintain street planting, formed footpaths, kerbs and guttering

12   SECTION C: BUILT FORM - URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

12.0   SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLES

These guidelines identify key aspects of built form that contribute and respond to the local and regional character of North Coast settlements. These aspects should be encouraged in future development. They guide the provision of amenity for residents and pedestrians, and ensure the development of a variety of residential types, including mixed use developments, which contribute to the vibrancy and economic sustainability of the area.

Principles to apply to all housing types

- Encourage elevated, lightweight construction in response to climate and breezes

- Provide flexible sun-shading devices, louvres and natural ventilation systems to allow passive environmental control

- Provide semi-sheltered outdoor spaces of usable dimensions to mediate between indoors and outdoors

- Establish building orientation towards streetfront in keeping with the local settlement pattern with consistent scale, materials and setbacks, whilst maintaining built form diversity and contributing to the settlement character

- Allow for wide gutters to handle heavy rainfall

- Ensure building elements are integrated into the design of the façade and overall form

- Amalgamation and subdivision of lots may be necessary to accommodate a desired change in density of development

- Allow zones for street-side planting to provide shade for pedestrians and parked cars and provide screening and enhanced privacy of residential lots

- Maintain generous footpaths separated from street by a grassed or landscaped median strip

- Install services in a discreet way; place major cables underground in preference to overhead wires in areas of higher density

12.1   ONE TO TWO-STOREY DETACHED HOUSE
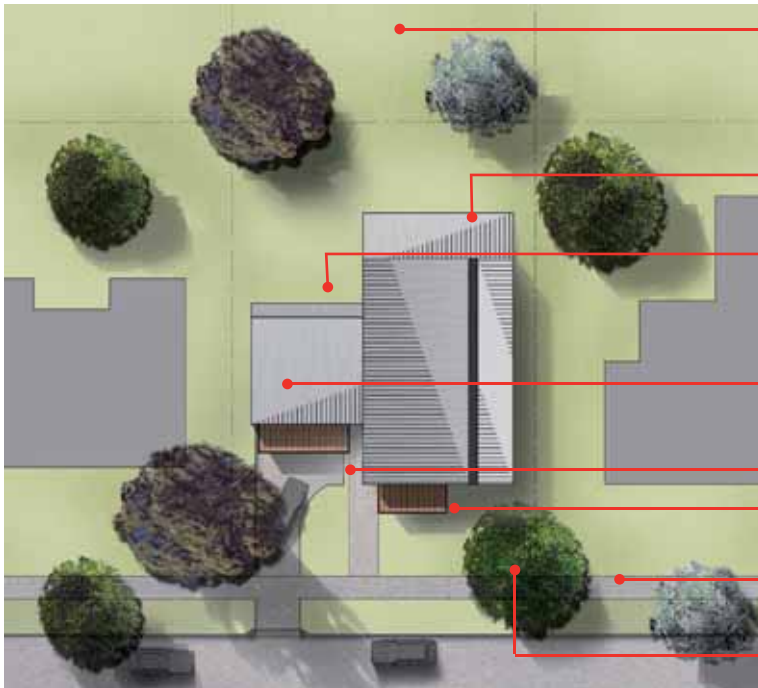
Consolidate deep soil area at the rear of site permitting large trees to mature

Low maintenance, climate appropriate native planting

Rear balconies provide sheltered outdoor living space, mediating between indoors and outdoors

House openings orient to front and rear of site preserving privacy of occupants and next door neighbours

Garage set back from street reduces impact upon streetscape; incorporated garage maximises site use

Steps and footpath signify front entrance

Building set back from street in line with neighbouring houses

Maintained footpaths separated from road by a grassed or landscaped median strip

More dense planting provides privacy for residence and shaded on-street parking
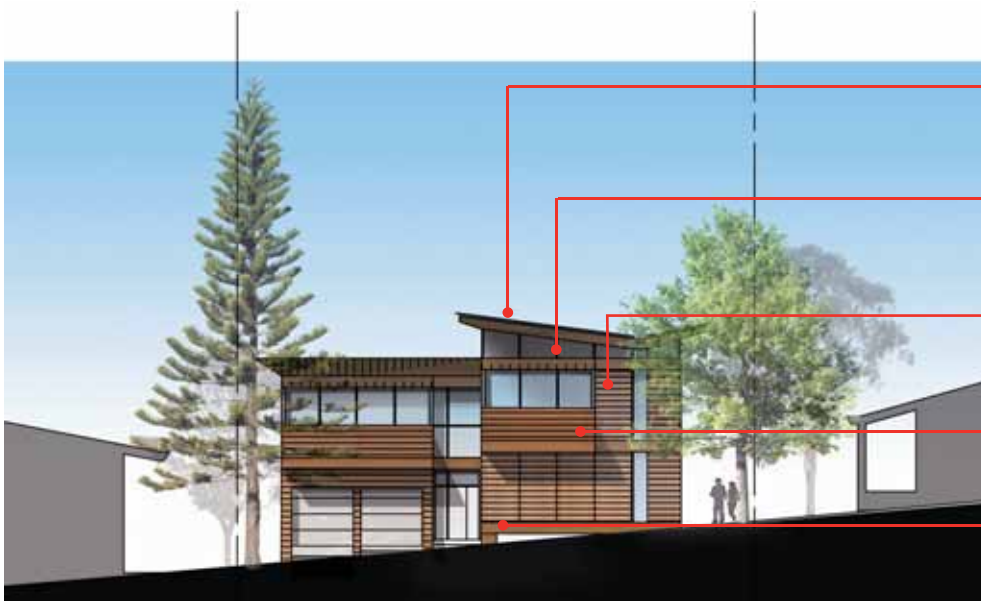
Butterfly skillion roof and box gutter - strong functional elements dominate simple composition

Roof allows indirect light in through clerestorey; high ceilings improve air circulation

Louvres offer natural ventilation, maintaining security and restricting direct solar access

Weatherboards in keeping with traditional local housing materials

Simple lightweight structure sits on top of site, rather than cut and fill, allows cooling effects of breezes

Reinforce local character with continued lightweight material and form

Raised, lightweight structure allows for undercroft parking; clerestory allows sunlight from the east and view to the coast

Large eaves and louvred screens shade outdoor living spaces and walls of house, reducing solar gain

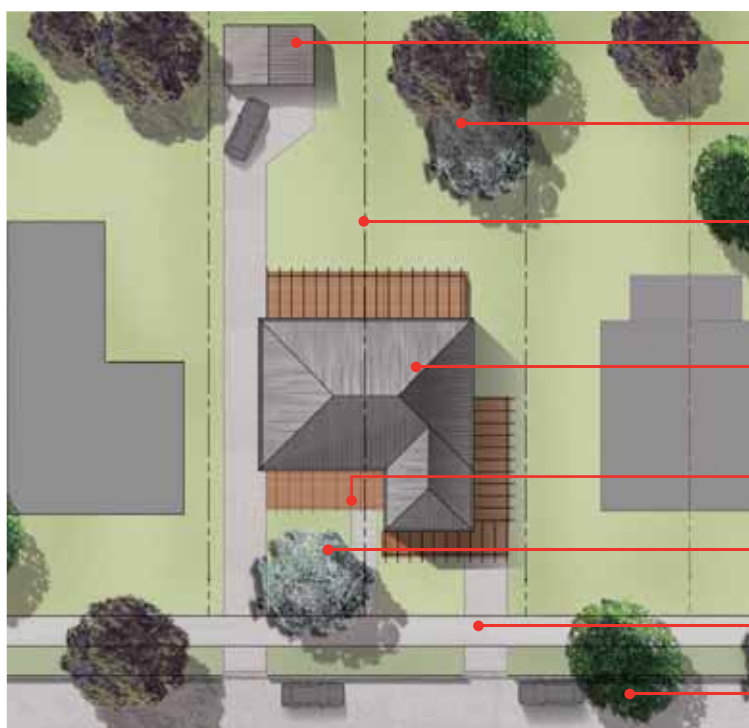Well articulated two storey house with landscape softening impact upon streetscape

Traditional dwelling with shaded windows, defined street address and setback garage


Native landscaping screens houses from streetfront and filters direct sunlight

12.2   TWO TO THREE-STOREY TOWNHOUSES

Encourage detached garages and carports to reduce impact upon streetscape and building volumes

Consolidate deep soil area at the rear of site permitting large trees to mature

Split larger sites to create two units reading as one large house, improving image of locality whilst increasing density

Maintain street character with simple hipped roof form

Maintain consistent front and rear setbacks around the block

Verandah, front yard and foliage mediates between the public street and private house

Consistent footpaths - pedestrians have priority over vehicles

Establish street planting to create a green streetscape providing shade for pedestrians and on-street parking
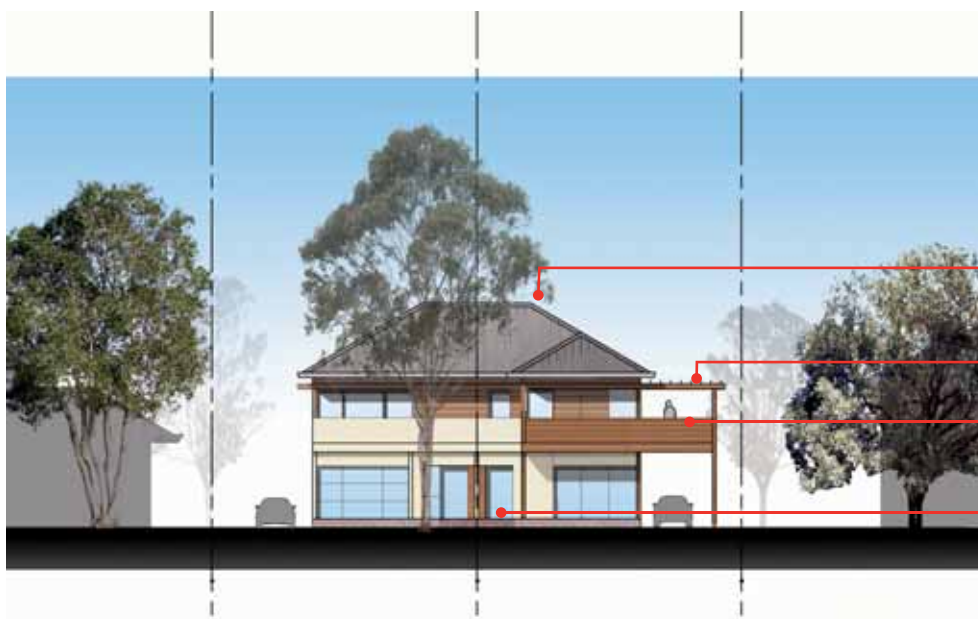
Building height consistent with scale of surrounding development

Employ sun-shading devices to aid passive climate control

Extended indoor/outdoor living space to capitalise on temperate climate

Ensure separate entrance to each dwelling

Two lightweight, elevated dwellings composed as a single, well articulated structure

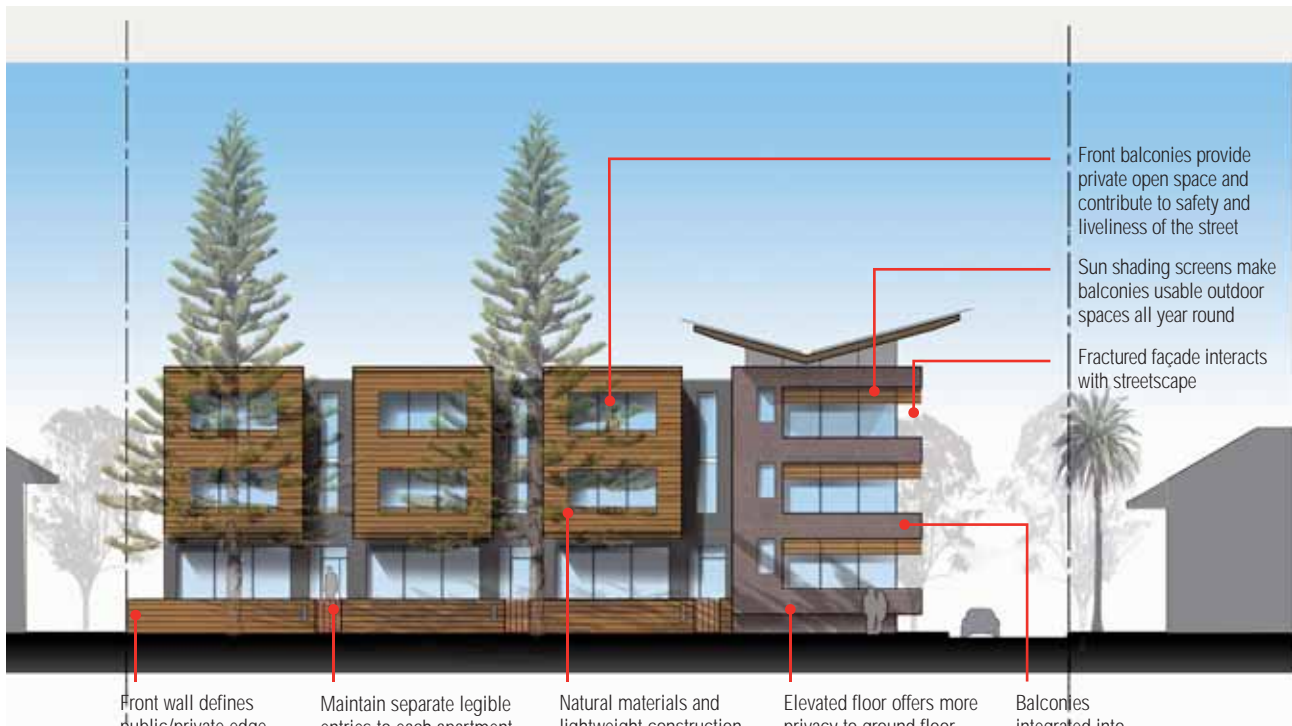Townhouse with two dwellings designed as a single 'big house'

Modern masonry construction; fragmented composition reduces impact of scale on streetscape

12.3   THREE-STOREY APARTMENT BLOCKS

Large communal garden with deep soil zone enabling large trees to mature

Amalgamation of three sites to enable development

Rear balconies provide surveillance over rear garden, improving site security and enhancing apartment connection to a private outdoor landscape

Off-street, basement parking within building footprint

Narrow building allows cross ventilation and greater solar access to all apartments

Front courtyard gardens provide open space and continue setback street pattern

Street planting provides privacy screening

Front balconies provide private open space and contribute to safety and liveliness of the street

Sun shading screens make balconies usable outdoor spaces all year round

Fractured façade interacts with streetscape

Front wall defines public/private edge without imposing on public domain

Maintain separate legible entries to each apartment stack, minimising internal circulation and reinforcing streetscape presence

Natural materials and lightweight construction elements offset dominant masonry volume

Elevated floor offers more privacy to ground floor apartments

Balconies integrated into design of built form

This three storey development with set back and sheltered balconies, echoes the existing rhythms of the streetscape rather than imitating existing built form


A three storey, mixed development with cafes and retail on the ground floor, residential above; contrasting materials break up the façade, reducing the impact of the volume on the streetscape; easy access to roadside parking is provided

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12.4   FOUR TO EIGHT-STOREY MIXED USE BLOCKS
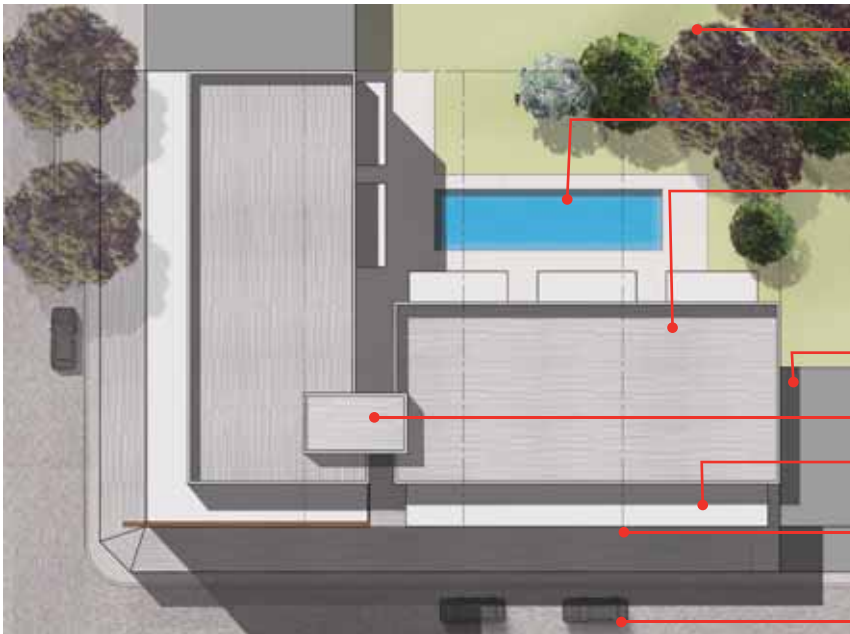
Four lots amalgamated into one corner lot to allow large scale development with deep soil zone allowing large trees to mature

Communal leisure facilities in private gardens to rear of building

Gently sloping roofs behind parapet reduce building height and impact on streetscape

Building maintains a narrow footprint to allow for cross ventilation and solar access to all apartments

Underground, garaged parking beneath footprint of building

Central circulation and service core

Balconies overlooking street contribute to a lively streetscape, enhancing neighbourhood security

Continuous awning at street level announces commercial use and shelters pedestrians and shoppers

On-street parking
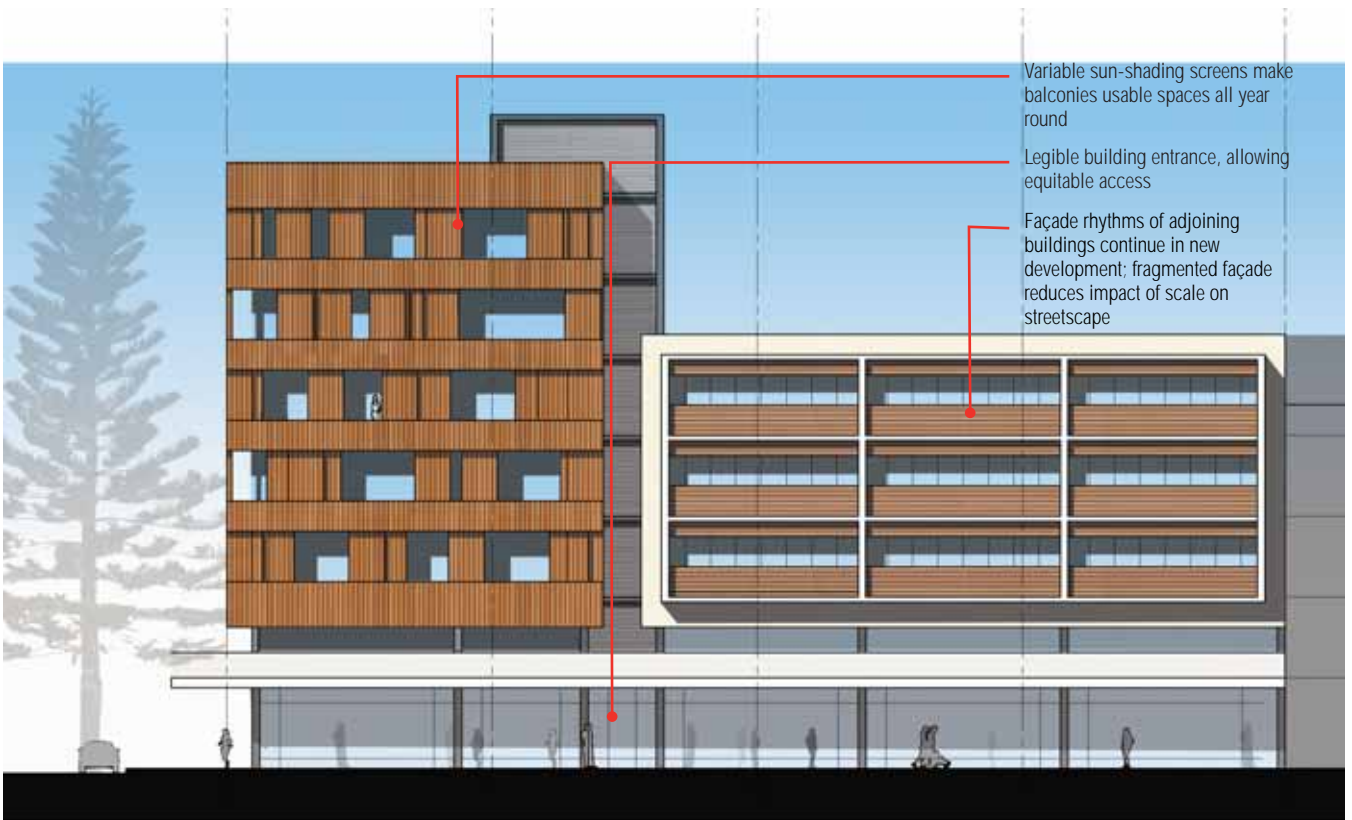
Variable sun-shading screens make balconies usable spaces all year round

Legible building entrance, allowing equitable access

Façade rhythms of adjoining buildings continue in new development; fragmented façade reduces impact of scale on streetscape

Seven storey mixed-use residential development with commercial ground floor
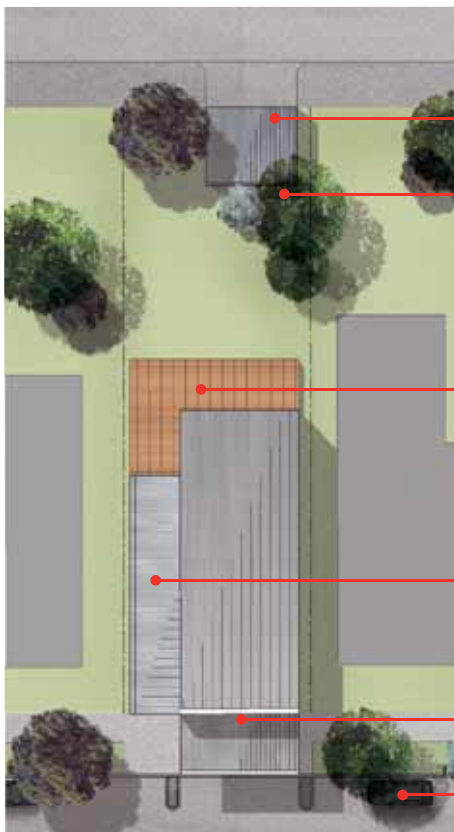

Five storey residential development with strong, component based composition featuring street-side balconies and single service core

Curved building form allows some shelter from harsh southerly winds

12.5   SINGLE-STOREY COMMERCIAL

Vehicle access from rear lane and garaged parking

Rear garden with deep soil zone separates building from street and allows planting of large trees

Rear verandah with pergola provides private, semi-sheltered outdoor living space

Wing allows maximal use of block size, increasing private living space without affecting shop size

Awning projects over public path, set forward from the other buildings

On-street parking provided for customers
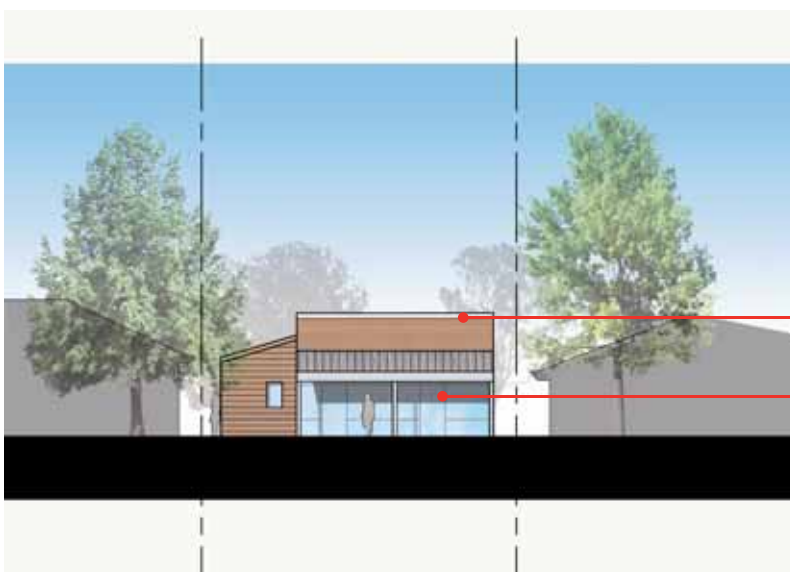
Parapet defines public and private threshold

Double shop front with expansive awning offers possibilities for on-street dining
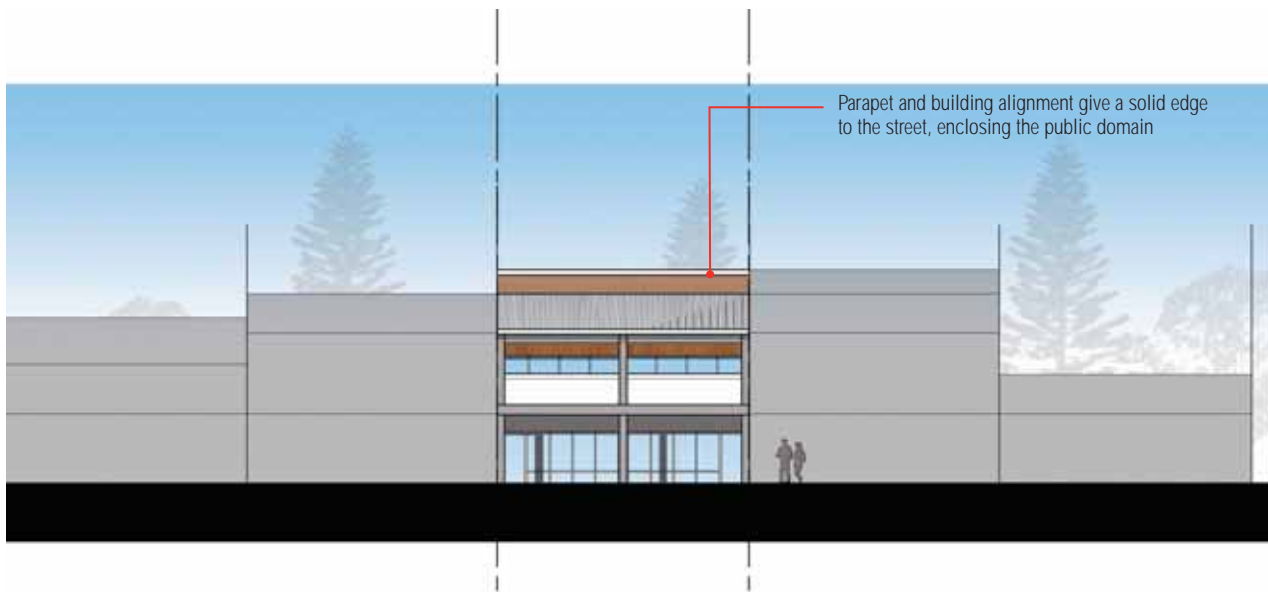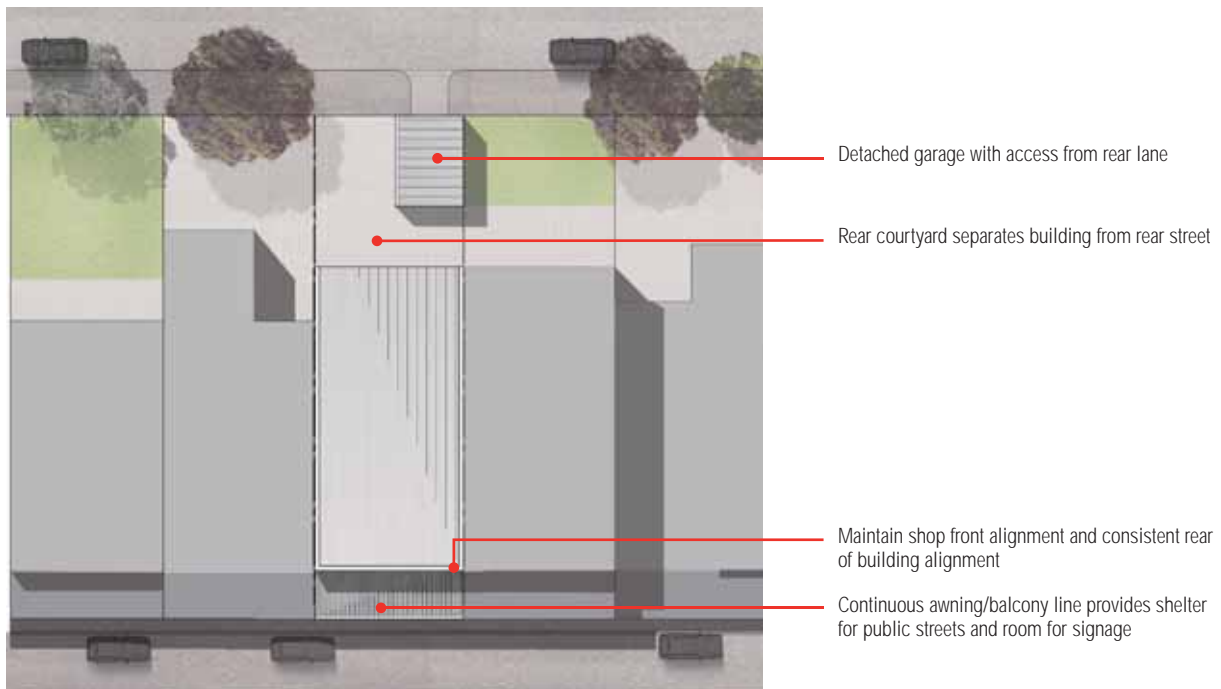
Small isolated specialist store close to the village centre but amidst residential development; parapet hides residence to rear and widened footpath and crossing make pedestrian access easier

Small strip of shops providing daily essentials to local inhabitants; awning to curb and wide footpaths announce retail facility

12.6   TWO-STOREY SHOP WITH 'SHOP TOP' DWELLING

Detached garage with access from rear lane

Rear courtyard separates building from rear street

Maintain shop front alignment and consistent rear of building alignment

Continuous awning/balcony line provides shelter for public streets and room for signage

Parapet and building alignment give a solid edge to the street, enclosing the public domain

This commercial centre has many unique awnings of an eclectic mix of colours and designs that define the character of the main street; planting beds separate the footpath from the street with insets providing street parking with easy access to facilities

Larger scale shop-top apartment housing in major town; awning lines are consistent with streetscape

13.   REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

13.0   REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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Further information