

### INTRODUCTION

#### ***What is the purpose of the Character Guidelines?***

The City of Kingston is made up of many diverse residential areas, each with its own set of distinct characteristics. These characteristics generate neighbourhood character which is often valued due to the sense of local identity it provides.

Recent changes in housing demand and the consequent introduction of new housing types and styles has placed this valued character under threat. Therefore, these Character Guidelines have been prepared to assist people designing residential development to respond appropriately to the neighbourhood character of each area.

In particular, they are intended to guide applicants in responding to ResCode Standards A1 and B1 ('Neighbourhood Character') of the Kingston Planning Scheme by providing assistance with the site analysis and design response process.

They in no way diminish any requirement for applicants to comply with the other objectives of clause 54 or clause 55 of the Planning Scheme.

#### ***What is the scope of the Character Guidelines?***

Neighbourhood character is what makes an area distinctive. It is a product of a complex combination of factors, including physical elements such as house types and styles, subdivision patterns, trees, gardens and fences, and other socio-cultural elements such as the people who live in the area and their network of social contacts.

However, since the purpose of these guidelines is to guide the design of residential development, they focus on the contribution to neighbourhood character made by the physical elements of houses and their gardens.

#### ***How have the Guidelines been developed?***

A detailed survey was made of the physical characteristics of the houses and gardens in all the residential areas of Kingston. This allowed these areas to be divided into 85 different 'Character Areas', each of which displays a different set of physical house and garden characteristics.

The characteristics were then recorded in separate 'Character Profiles' for each area and confirmed by extensive consultation with the community. As some characteristics make a greater contribution to neighbourhood character than others, the community was also consulted on the relative importance of each characteristics in their area.

**What do the Guidelines consist of?**

The subsequent pages of the Character Guidelines comprise the following components:

*Page 1*

1. A **Character Area** map identifying the area covered by these Guidelines. Council can help you identify which Character Area your site lies in by reference to the overall Character Area map.
2. A **step-by-step** guide to using the Guidelines.

*Page 2*

3. Annotated drawings indicating the **typical characteristics** found in this Character Area.  
  
*(Note that these characteristics may vary in the immediate vicinity of your site, so an individual site investigation must still be made as part of the site analysis. However, the characteristics given here can be used as a guide to the elements of neighbourhood character that must be considered.)*

4. An indication of the **relative importance** of the characteristics. Those considered to make a **major contribution** to neighbourhood character are denoted by a single asterisk (\*) and are expected to be maintained by new development unless alternative design responses can be justified. Those considered to be **critical** to neighbourhood character are denoted by two asterisks (\*\*) and must be retained and enhanced where possible. The combinations of important characteristics also indicate **relationships** that are important to neighbourhood character.

*Pages 3 and 4*

5. A **Design Response Form**, which should be used to explain how your proposal addresses neighbourhood character.

Applicants may find Council's publication on *'Designing Contextual Housing* of assistance when preparing their design.

For further information, contact Council's Planning Department at:

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Or

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