



# Planning considerations for the Darebin Creek Catchment

The Darebin Creek and associated parklands is a vital area for recreation, public open space and acts as an important green corridor for the Councils of Yarra, Banyule, Darebin & Whittlesea. The Darebin Creek Management Committee is a referral body and provides comments to the Responsible Authority for planning applications that may have an impact on the Darebin Creek and adjacent open space. The following comments are general notes that may be used to assist applicants who wish to develop adjacent to the Darebin Creek.

## Position of Development on the Landscape

Can the building be cut into the site ensuring proper site assessments have been done? If so is there any impact from neighbouring properties, for example increased drainage flow?

Properties situated higher on creek escarpment may be more difficult to screen by landscaping and more obvious from further away. The slope of the block may limit short-term screen planting. Could it be set further down the block, allowing more opportunity for screening?

If the building is set further back or forward consider the impact on the neighbourhood and surrounding landscape.

## Landscape Values

Are there any remnant trees or shrubs on the property? Can they be retained and worked around whilst avoiding soil compaction within the canopy zone?

Is the property near a bushland reserve, which could use native species to create a habitat link?

Is the property within an identified wildlife corridor?

## Height

Does the building have to be two storey? Where two storey dwellings are desired encourage the inclusion of dormer windows to reduce overall height of the dwelling.

Can the building be stepped back to reduce the bulk?

Encourage living areas to abut the creek valley, to provide passive surveillance for park users.

## Solar Orientation

Maximise solar orientation with living areas facing north.

Eaves on north side minimise summer infiltration while maximise winter infiltration. Glare from large and small windows can be disrupting to the general public. Sensitive screen planting and external shade treatment can minimise this.

It is worth noting that a high percentage of glass windows or glass railings on verandas can cause excessive reflection into adjoining open space and create negative visual aesthetics.

Encourage the erection of transparent fencing along the shared boundary with parkland as opposed to paling fences. Landscaping can increase privacy in cases of transparent fencing.

Discourage the placement of garages or blank walls against the property boundary, as they can become targets for graffiti.

## Roof Materials and Roofline

Roofing materials should be non-reflective and neutral. Neutral or mottled colours in tiles or colourbond can best reduce the visual impact of the roofline. Period homes may be constrained with the colour selection. Consider the reflective nature of some colourbond and galvanised rooves and how their impact could be reduced or avoided.

Flat roofs with dormitory style windows, and varied pitch roofs can make a big difference in the overall impact of development.

### **Drainage**

What is the total area of the property to be covered by hard surfaces?

Minimise this as much as possible and provide areas for water run off.

Is it appropriate to hold stormwater on site and release it later?

This requires drainage engineer advice.

Is there an opportunity for the installation of slimline rainwater tanks to service garden watering? The overflow can then be piped into the stormwater system. Rain gardens can be used to slow stormwater run off and improve water quality even in small sites.

### **Earthworks and Construction**

During construction the builder should provide an enclosed rubbish receptacle to reduce material from becoming litter. Before construction commences sediment trap fences should be installed around the perimeter of the property to reduce sediment-laden run off leaving the site and entering the stormwater system. The cost of these should be borne by the contractor.

### **Landscaping**

At least 50% of landscaping species selection should be indigenous relevant to that particular plant community within the Darebin Creek Catchment. (Refer to indigenous species documents for this information). Screening using landscaping should occur on development land not on adjoining public land. Landscaping should not be used solely to reduce impact on adjoining public space as vegetation can be removed in the future or die.

### **Lighting and Noise**

Noise and lights can be disruptive to local fauna and to recreational users. The development should be designed to minimise both.



Permeable fencing with the development facing the Darebin Creek Shared Trail allows for passive surveillance



Development of buildings high on the Darebin Creek escarpment are difficult to screen.

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