Comprehensive Development Zone No. 8
Yarra Planning Scheme
VICTORIA GARDENS

URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

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NOVEMBER 1996

This a true copy of the amendment approved by the
Minister for Planning and Local Government on

21 MAY 1997

Adrian Salton
Coordinator Amendment Services
Office of Planning and Heritage
Department of Infrastructure

A.T. COCKS
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Property Consultants • Valuers • Town Planners
3.0 THE PROCESS: HOW THE URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES APPLY

Amendment L2 to the Yarra Planning Scheme which applies to the area shown on Map 1 proposes to amend the Comprehensive Development Zone No. 8.

The guidelines address the issues associated with the development of land. In considering if a development is acceptable, the Responsible Authority must assess the design against these guidelines. In addition to meeting these guidelines, any residential proposal should have regard to The Good Design Guide for Medium Density Housing 1995.

The guidelines have been divided into various design elements and precinct principles, outlining the relevant issues and design guidelines to be considered in the formulation of a design for the development of the site.

The guidelines are designed to be flexible in their approach. This document illustrates the benefits of a performance based approach. The guidelines seek to achieve a site responsive and innovative development.
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Department of Infrastructure

VICTORIA GARDENS URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

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Section One

Overview

Site Context
1.0 OVERVIEW

The purpose of this document is to establish design guidelines which will facilitate and achieve a site responsive development of the Victoria Gardens site (formerly known as the Vickers Ruvolt site, Ajax Fasteners and CUB sites). These guidelines are an Incorporated Document within the Yarra Planning Scheme.

Context

The Victoria Gardens site is approximately 12 hectares in area and is bounded by the Yarra River to the east, Victoria Street to the north, Doonside Street (in part) to the south and Burnley Street to the west.

The urban design challenge is to ensure that each land use element has its own identity and is integrated with the visual character of the total development, in a way that responds to the site’s Yarra River location and provides occupants with an attractive, convenient, quality commercial, residential and social environment. The urban design challenge for the site is that it is not just the river having an integrated design that meets social, residential, commercial objectives but also ensuring that:

- the design addresses the surrounding existing industrial and residential interfaces in a variety of ways; and
- is cognisant of the importance of the site as a strategic gateway to the inner city.

Important features of the site and its surrounds are:

- Parkland areas developed on the opposite river bank in Hawthorn;
- Office and residential developments to the north of Victoria Street (e.g. Skipping Girl development);
- The adjacent historic Victoria Bridge;
- The industrial uses around Doonside Street;
- The linear public open-space along the Yarra River which includes the bike path;
- The residential development, Yarraberg to the south;
- The river as an ecological corridor;
- The river as an important waterway link to the CBD, including Southbank;
- The site is the “Gateway to the City of Yarra”;
- The traditional general industrial activities and buildings, modest Victorian residences and narrow industrial streets which surround the site and reflect the traditional industrial and historical character of parts of inner Melbourne and Richmond;
- The Victoria and Burnley Streets intersection;
- The Yarra River and areas of steep valley escarpment;
- Views into the site from surrounding elevated areas, particularly ‘The Cutting’.

These above features form the framework for the Urban Design Guidelines.
Section Two

Planning Issues
2.0 PLANNING ISSUES

Approval of a development plan is required. As each stage of the development is submitted for approval, the development plans for that stage must show or include (in part):

- the location, height and dimensions of all buildings and works;
- the location of vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian ways;
- the location of all open space including areas open to the public;
- a detailed landscape plan;
- building materials;
- elevations and sections of the proposal; and
- roof details including plant works.

The proposed planning control also requires the approval of:

- Traffic plan;
- Management plan; and
- Landscape plan.

The Urban Design Guidelines will assist the Responsible Authority in the approval of the development plans.
Section Three

How the Guidelines Apply
3.0 THE PROCESS: HOW THE URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES APPLY

Amendment L8 to the Yarra Planning Scheme which applies to the area shown on Map 1 proposes to amend the Comprehensive Development Zone No. 8.

The guidelines address the issues associated with the development of land. In considering if a development is acceptable, the Responsible Authority must assess the design against these guidelines. In addition to meeting these guidelines, any residential proposal should have regard to The Good Design Guide for Medium Density Housing 1995.

The guidelines have been divided into various design elements and precinct principles, outlining the relevant issues and design guidelines to be considered in the formulation of a design for the development of the site.

The guidelines are designed to be flexible in their approach. This document illustrates the benefits of a performance based approach. The guidelines seek to achieve a site responsive and innovative development.
Section Four

Broad Design Principles

Design Elements

This amendment was approved by the
Minister for Planning and Local Government on

21 MAY 1997

[Signature]

Director, Planning and Heritage
Department of Infrastructure
4.0 BROAD DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Broad design principles from which the Urban Design Guidelines have been developed include:

- To create a site response which capitalises on views from the site of the Melbourne skyline, the Yarra river corridor and surrounding parklands and which is cognisant of the surrounding building form;
- To create an integrated comprehensive development with a “sense of place”;
- To encourage opportunities for recreational activities along the Yarra River; to link additional public open-space areas within the site to existing open-space along the Yarra and to ensure that public open space areas are accessible to the general public;
- To develop an architectural response to the site that reflects:
  - its importance as a strategic gateway to the inner city;
  - its residential, commercial and industrial interfaces; and
  - its frontage to the Yarra River;
- To ensure reasonable levels of privacy for the residential component of the development;
- To ensure that a high standard of pedestrian safety and security is reflected in the planning and detailing of the development and which capitalises on opportunities for natural surveillance;
- To ensure that future developments when viewed from the river or its banks and are landscaped to prevent visual dominance;
- To ensure that the development sets a design standard for future development within the general area particularly along the Yarra River escarpment;
- To improve and promote public access to the area;
- To improve the landscape quality of Public Open Space;
- To limit traffic speed and optimise pedestrian safety through carefully designed traffic access and movement arrangements;
- To progressively rehabilitate existing riparian vegetation and further enhance the river and its banks as an ecological corridor;
- To promote contemporary architecture which is complementary with the surrounding areas.

This is an accurate copy of the amendment approved by the Minister for Planning and Local Government on 21 MAY 1997.

Adrian Selman Coordinator Amendment Services
Office of Planning and Heritage
Department of Infrastructure
4.1 Design Element 1

Setbacks, Building Envelopes and Height Limits

Objectives:
- Acknowledge the value of the historic landmark “Skipping Girl” in the urban landscape
- To ensure development of the site complements and enhances the surrounding streetscape and built form;
- To integrate, where appropriate, the layout and design of the proposal with the surrounding neighbourhood and abutting uses;
- To reflect a transition of building height, scale and massing in respect to surrounding development;
- To respect the significance of the Yarra River and the valley.

Detailed Guidelines:
- A landscape buffer shall be provided to interface with the river bank/eastern boundary;
- Continuous wall lengths fronting the Yarra River, should not exceed approximately 10 metres, without a step, an offset, or a distinct break in unit length;
- Maximum height of buildings facing the Yarra River to be 3 storeys (RL25);
- No more than 50% of the eastern boundary shall be built to. At least a 2 metre setback shall be provided to the remaining 50%;
- Setbacks, building envelopes and height limits are to be in accordance with the “Building Envelope and Precint Plan”;
- Tall buildings should be restricted to the northern boundary, at a mid point on the site in accordance with the Building Envelope and Precinct Plan.
4.2 Design Element 2

**Building Form, Materials and Colour**

Objectives:
- Building design to capitalise on river corridor and city skyline views;
- To articulate strategic aspects of the site, such as the Burnley and Victoria Streets corner, the Victoria Bridge edge and the Victoria Street frontage;
- To create high levels of community safety within the site;
- To encourage a variety of architectural forms, roofscapes and facade treatments across the site which is reflective of the cultural and architectural diversity of the surrounding area.

Detailed Guidelines:
- Buildings directly fronting the Yarra River are to complement the Yarra River environs;
- Install windows along street sides of buildings for increased natural surveillance where appropriate;
- The residential component fronting the Yarra River shall not exceed three storeys;
- To limit the number of on site fences as a means of ensuring natural surveillance.

**Form**
- External walls to be appropriately articulated with a variety of details and fenestration;
- Public entrances to the site to be prominent and encourage pedestrian access to the Yarra River corridor and associated open space;
- Roofscapes to be appropriately detailed and varied in light of their prominence from surrounding higher ground. Lift over run rooms, plant equipment and other operations to be appropriately designed or concealed or housed within the roof form;
- The design of buildings should be cognisant of community safety and provide for natural surveillance. For example, encourage windows overlooking public areas and access ways of adequate width to allow for safety view lines;
- The design of development fronting the Yarra River corridor to be respectful of the waterway as a natural system and also in its role as a heavily used open space activity spine. Only low rise fences or those obscured by landscaping should be allowed;
- The strategic importance of the corner of Burnley and Victoria Streets to be emphasised through design;
- Where possible, activities fronting Victoria and Burnley Streets to be interactive with the streetscape and communicate a ‘people friendly’ response to the surroundings.
Materials and Colour

- Building materials for development fronting the Yarra River Corridor to be in harmony with the river as a natural system;
- Reflective glazing is not encouraged unless it can be demonstrated to the Responsible Authority that reflections will not have a detrimental impact on surrounding properties and existing and proposed built form within the site;
- Roof materials to be non-reflective in nature and of a colour which is in context with the surrounding built form.

External wall for residential developments: To be predominantly masonry or timber construction but other materials may be used to achieve diversity. Where concrete panels are used, these are to have a finish which is complementary with the masonry theme to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Frontages: For buildings located on the east side of the site, particular emphasis consistent with the Guidelines should be given to the facade, landscape and fencing treatment to frontages facing onto the Yarra River. All facade and material control contained in these guidelines apply equally to all building elevations.

Fences:
- Front fences for medium density housing are generally limited to a height of 1.2 metres to achieve an “open” appearance;
- 1.8 metre fence height with a “closed” appearance where appropriate, in cases where the front garden is the only available sunny open space.

Building Entrances: The following aspects are encouraged for building entrances
- entrances shall be clearly visible from the street;
- major entrances should include disabled access.

Lighting: Lighting will be encouraged to achieve the following:
- flood lighting should be restricted to “landmark” elements;
- main public open spaces should be well lit and visible at night from the main public footpath;
- the lighting of all buildings at ground level is encouraged as a public safety measure;
- lighting should not intrude on any surrounding residential areas.
4.3 Design Element 3

Orientation, Overshadowing and Overlooking

Objectives:
- To address potential overlooking from commercial buildings into dwellings at the early planning design stage of each proposal;
- To allow sun access into private open spaces of residential dwellings;
- To ensure adequate daylighting and direct sunlight to private open spaces of dwellings, public areas and outdoor commercial areas;
- To maintain reasonable sunlight penetration of the Yarra River Corridor;
- To maximise opportunities for views from the site, such as the Yarra River Corridor and the city skyline and surrounding areas;
- To orientate and locate commercial buildings to minimise overlooking of private open space;
- To orientate commercial buildings and residential dwellings to take advantage of the views of the Yarra River.

Detailed Guidelines:

Orientation and Overshadowing
- Access to Daylight and overshadowing of neighbouring dwellings and private open space shall achieve with the relevant objectives and criteria of the Good Design Guide for Medium Density Housing, July, 1995;
- Appropriate sun shade devices to be installed on north and west facing buildings where required;
- Ensure that overshadowing of the Yarra River Corridor and Main Yarra Trail between 9.00am and 3.00pm on 22 September allows for 4 hours of sunlight;
- Taller built forms within the development must be cognisant of the nature of proposed development to the south and the need for this to receive adequate sunlight.

Overlooking
- All buildings and open space should be orientated to facilitate energy conservation and passive solar access;
- Encourage innovative design or consider overlooking prevention techniques to prevent unreasonable overlooking from commercial buildings to residential dwellings;
- Orientate living room windows in residential dwellings at the east of the site to take advantage of the Yarra views where possible;
- Private open space and communal amenity and public open space are encouraged to have a northerly aspect;
- Provide windows in eastern elevations of any commercial building in the north east corner so as to take advantage of the views of the Yarra;
- The design and siting of buildings must suitably address existing and potential overlooking within the development.
4.4 Design Element 4

Streetscape and Landscape

Objectives:
- Maximising the benefit of open space through convenient access and creation of appropriate spaces and facilities to encourage use;
- To ensure a strong landscape design theme on the curtilages of the site which reflects its strategic importance;
- To ensure on site landscape design that is of a high standard and minimises hard surfaces and site runoff;
- To ensure that the Doonside and David Street frontages are adequately paved and finished and where appropriate, landscaping treatments are included;
- To ensure that the indigenous landscape character of the Yarra River corridor is progressively rehabilitated and enhanced.

Detailed Guidelines:
- Improve the landscape quality of public open space consistent with the Vegetation Management Guidelines 1989 prepared by the MMBW applying to the Yarra River and its environs;
- Landscape works on the river frontage should utilise the local indigenous flora;
- Native and exotic planting themes can be adopted away from the river edge;
- Service areas, garbage receptacle areas and parking areas should be screened to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority;
- To soften industrial interfaces as appropriate;
- Within the site and on Burnley and Victoria Street frontages, to encourage appropriate planting themes which soften the impact of the development and create pedestrian friendly environments.
4.5 Design Element 5

Views and Vistas

Objectives:
- Encourage development in keeping with the character and appearance of the area;
- Ensure that the riparian appearance of the Yarra River Corridor is maintained;
- Protect and enhance the skyline when viewed from the river or its banks, or the Yarra Boulevard, or from prominent scenic view points within the valley environs;
- Protect the areas along rivers from visual intrusion caused by the inappropriate siting or appearance of buildings or works;
- The viewline from the Barkers Road “Cutting” to the west should be reasonably maintained;
- To encourage development consistent with any concept plan approved for the area;
- To ensure views from the north and east across the site are reasonably maintained.

Detailed Guidelines:
- The ten storey height component of the development should be located to maintain reasonable west and south viewlines across the site in accordance with Building Envelope and Precinct Plan;
- To respect the existing view of the CBD from the Barkers Road “Cutting”;
- Views towards the west from surrounding residential development to the east including the CBD skyline should be respected.
4.6 Design Element 6

Car Park Access and Treatment

Objectives:
- Shared provision of car parking spaces is encouraged, where possible to minimise areas of parking;
- To ensure adequate landscaping of ground level car parking areas;
- To ensure that the appearance, location and entrances to on site car parking do not detrimentally affect streetscape amenity;
- To minimise pedestrian/vehicle conflict.

Detailed Guidelines:
- Any internal street must be provided with landscaping with street trees of an appropriate species;
- Any open lot car park should be planted with deciduous trees to provide for solar access in the winter months;
- Any open lot car park, unless screened appropriately, must be setback at least 3.0 metres from a street frontage and the setback area must be landscaped;
- Car parking access off Victoria Street must take into account the requirement for traffic signalisation;
- Pedestrian footpaths of at least 1.0 metre width shall be provided through large car parking areas.
4.7 Design Element 7

Open Space

Objectives:
- Private open space should receive adequate daylight;
- To promote the public use of the Yarra River and environs;
- To provide useable private and public open space areas of high amenity.

Detailed Guidelines:
- Dwellings should have adequate private open space areas in accordance with the requirements of the Good Design Guide for Medium Density Housing, July 1995;
- Open space abutting street frontages should create a visual connection between the building and the street;
- Provide pedestrian links from and through the site to the Yarra River for the general public.
4.8 DESIGN ELEMENT 8

Pedestrian Movement and Security

Objectives:
- Avoid dark and secluded areas internally and externally;
- Ensure a high level of visual surveillance where possible;
- Ensure safe and effective pedestrian linkages;
- Ensure safe environment for entire site;
- Through the design of buildings, clearly mark entrances to all public building frontages.

Detailed Guidelines:
- Any necessary isolated areas should be well lit;
- Clearly differentiate with landscaping and paving treatments, private space, communal space belonging to the residents of Victoria Gardens and accessible public space;
- Clearly differentiate with landscaping and paving treatments, the key vehicle movement areas, the parking areas and the key pedestrian areas;
- Create clear lines of sight between the internal and external pedestrian areas (of the shopping and entertainment areas) in an open design to assist orientation and safety;
- Create safe and effective pedestrian linkages between the retail, office component and entertainment component and the residential area;
- Develop clear, safe and direct pedestrian links with a high level of natural surveillance to the adjacent residential areas, in particular Yarraberg;
- Ensure car parks are not too expansive to minimise walking distances and maximise security surveillance;
- Ensure clear visibility at intersections within the residential precinct;
- Locate entertainment facilities in areas which are well exposed, well lit and easily accessible from car parking and tram and bus stop areas.
4.9 Design Element 9

Advertising Signs

Objectives:

- Confusion with directional and traffic signs should be avoided;
- Identify appropriate locations for advertising signs;
- Signs should complement the style, scale and character of the development;
- Signs should not obscure architectural detail;
- To ensure that advertising signs do not detrimentally impact on the viewlines to the CBD;
- To ensure that advertising signs do not impinge on the Yarra River environs;
- To respect the historic “Skipping Girl” sign;
- Visual clutter is discouraged.

Detailed Guidelines:

- Roof top signs, above parapet signs, pole signs and promotional signs are generally not encouraged unless it can be demonstrated that the sign is compatible with the appearance of the development, the streetscape and the skyline;
- Freestanding promotional signs should be avoided by placing signs on existing walls.
4.10 Design Element 10

**Interface Areas**

Detailed Guidelines:

- Encourage community interaction rather than segregation, develop the interface area between the proposed development and Yarraberg in a mutually compatible way;
- Locate service areas, delivery areas, loading docks and rubbish collection areas where they introduce minimal detriment to the streetscape and key pedestrian movement and entrance areas;
- Maintain areas around the office buildings in such a way that there are no isolated pockets;
- Maximise natural surveillance and security with respect to the siting of the housing, public open space and other activities;
- To avoid detrimental visual and noise impact, vehicle movement ramps and decks should be carefully located and respectful of adjacent uses.

**Riverside House**

- Consider the special needs of Riverside House;
- Have regard to the level of activity created immediately adjoining the rear yard of Riverside House;
- Through the design and orientation of buildings immediately adjoining the rear yard of Riverside House, be respectful of the sensitivities of the functions of Riverside House.
4.11 Design Element 11

Boat Landings

Objectives:
- Boat landings are encouraged to provide a link from the rivers edge into the site and for river uses;
- To provide an embarking/disembarking point for boat users.

Detailed Guidelines:
- Landings should be no longer than 6 metres of river frontage lengths and should not extend more than 1.5 metres over the river edge. Jetties should be designed as landings parallel to the water's edge rather than structures jutting out longitudinally into the river like a beachside pier structure. Decks should be no longer than 1 metre to 1.5 metres above average high water level.
Map 1. SITE PLAN