

DARLINGTON VILLAGE

Precinct Plan



JULY 1998



Shire of Mundaring

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	(i)
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	(ii)-(vi)
BACKGROUND TO PRECINCT PLAN	(vii)-(viii)
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
2.0 THE PRECINCT AREA	2
3.0 PRECINCT CHARACTER	3
4.0 AIM & OBJECTIVES	4
4.1 Aim	4
4.2 Objectives	4
5.0 GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES	5
5.1 Residential Land	5
5.1.1 Fencing	5
5.1.2 Building Setbacks	6
5.1.3 Fill & Excavation	7
5.1.4 Driveways & Drainage	8
5.1.5 Tree Preservation	8
5.1.6 Building Appearance	9
5.1.7 Land Use	10
5.1.8 Fire Safety	11
5.1.9 Public Education	11
5.2 Commercial Land	12
5.2.1 Commercial Size	12
5.2.2 Building Appearance	12
5.2.3 Car Parking Areas	13
5.2.4 Signage & Lighting	13
5.3 Public Spaces	14
5.3.1 Recreation Reserves	14
5.3.2 Road Reserves	14
5.3.3 Appearance of Public Open Space	16

FIGURES

- Figure 1: Plan A – The Darlington Village Precinct Area.
- Figure 2: Minimum Visible Street Fencing.
- Figure 3: Complementary Fencing.
- Figure 4: Large Building Setbacks.
- Figure 5: Landscape Screen Planting.
- Figure 6: Impact of Tree Preservation.
- Figure 7: Variety of Building Materials.
- Figure 8: Distinctive Building Features.
- Figure 9: Signage & Lighting.
- Figure 10: Plan B – Streetscape Improvements.

APPENDIX

Precinct Area incorporating streets and lot configurations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Darlington Village Precinct Plan took almost three years to prepare and could not have been produced without the leadership, dedication and patience of the Darlington Precinct Advisory Committee (DPAC). The valuable contributions made into the preparation and formulation of this Plan by the following members of the Committee are gratefully acknowledged:

- Miss Gemma Basley;
- Mr Bruce Callow (retired from DPAC in May 1996);
- Miss Sascha Crawford;
- Mr Peter Day;
- Mr Thornton Hick;
- Ms Pauline Jagoe;
- Mrs Monika Jolly; and
- Mrs Kim Noonan (Chairperson)
- Councillor John Ellery; and
- Councillor Colin James (Deputy to Councillor Ellery);

The contributions made by the Shire's former Deputy Principal Planner Mr Simon O'Hara who acted as technical adviser to DPAC is also gratefully acknowledged.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of the Darlington Village Precinct Plan is to:

"Preserve and enhance the existing character and amenity of the Precinct, and in so doing maintain it as a unique, identifiable and special place within the hills"

To facilitate this, the following objectives have been derived from the results of a land use analysis of the Precinct's character and the common issues and desires identified by the local community in the public consultation process:

- (i) All development to complement natural landform;
- (ii) The built environment should not dominate the landscape;
- (iii) To achieve a strong sense of place and community focus on the historic and social significance of the village centre;
- (iv) To maintain low building density;
- (v) To encourage rehabilitation of degraded areas and sites;
- (vi) To encourage a high standard of maintenance of landscape and the built environment;
- (vii) To encourage and maintain diversity and variety in the landscape and the built environment;
- (viii) To use all available means to minimise noise and environmental pollution;
- (ix) To encourage an open and accessible community where motor vehicle movements do not dominate; and
- (x) To maintain public accessibility to public open spaces and reserves.

To achieve these objectives, the following 31 strategies have been developed. These strategies are either designated "Action" or "Passive". Action strategies require some form of specific response or immediate follow-up by Council. Whilst passive strategies are to be used by Council for the assessment of development proposals or are to be implemented when it undertakes upgrading of infrastructure such as roads or footpaths. The responsible Shire Department/s for implementing these strategies is indicated at the end of each one.

PASSIVE STRATEGIES

- RESIDENTIAL

- R1:** Fences in the front setback to be discouraged (*Building*).
- R2:** Any overheight fences in the front setback to be of open construction (*Building*).
- R3:** Supersix type fences on any boundary to be discouraged (*Building*).
- R4:** That front building setback relaxations not be supported. In cases where an alternative to the standard setback is deemed appropriate due to extenuating circumstances, an increased setback rather than a reduced setback should be imposed (*Building*).
- R5:** The excavation and filling of land shall be kept to a minimum in order to preserve the natural form of land and the native vegetation. To this end, sand pads for a residence or outbuilding in excess of 1.5m at its maximum depth are not supported (*Building*).
- R6:** General site modifications, including landscaping, in relation to cut and fill shall be limited to no greater than 1.5m at its maximum depth (*Building*).
- R7:** Access drives to battle-axe lots to be paved in red/brown bitumen or concrete and kerbed, where required, with low mountable or flush kerbing and hard brush finished (*Engineering*).
- R8:** Solutions to stormwater drainage to complement the natural environment (*Engineering*).
- R9:** That landowners within the Darlington Village Precinct be encouraged to meet the provisions of the Town Planning Scheme No. 3 Clauses 5.1 to 5.4 relating to Tree Preservation (*Planning*).
- R10:** Extensions to existing residences and outbuildings to be constructed in a manner sympathetic to the existing buildings on site (*Building*).
- R11:** Outbuildings which are over the maximum area specified in Town Planning Scheme No. 3 shall be generally not supported (*Building*).

R12: In considering applications for the use of land within the Precinct, notwithstanding the permissibility of uses shown in the Scheme Zoning Table for the Residential zone as IP, AA or SA, Council shall generally not support applications for the following uses:

- (a) Advertisement;
- (b) Catering Business;
- (c) Cattery;
- (d) Child Day Care Centre;
- (e) Communications Installation - Small Scale Commercial;
- (f) Convenience Store;
- (g) Display Home;
- (h) Educational Establishment;
- (i) Grouped Dwelling (unless Council is satisfied that the Grouped Dwelling and its setback has no greater impact than a single residential development regardless of the applicable "R" Code);
- (j) Medical Clinic;
- (k) Residential Building;
- (l) Restaurant;
- (m) Stable;
- (n) Transport Depot; and
- (o) Veterinary Clinic.

(Planning)

R13: Specific consideration to be given to the disturbance of the amenity of the locality in the determination of home occupations *(Planning)*.

R14: Residents are to be encouraged to install firebreaks that are sensitive to the local environment *(Rangers)*.

R15: Residents are to be encouraged to plant fire resistant vegetation in landscaped areas close to houses and to ensure trees overhanging homes are pruned to reduce fire risk *(Rangers)*.

• COMMERCIAL

C1: Council's Strategies for Darlington contained in its 1992 Local Commercial Strategy be supported *(Planning)*.

C2: Building character and materials for commercial buildings to be sympathetic with residential development *(Planning)*.

C3: Large unbroken areas of car parking should be avoided *(Planning)*.

C4: Car parking should not dominate the amenity of the area and should be softened by the incorporation of landscaping *(Planning)*.

C5: Commercial signage and lighting should be integrated with the building fabric and design and to be environmentally sensitive *(Planning)*.

- **PUBLIC OPEN SPACE**

P1: That the road pavements in community focus areas including around schools, churches, shops, Darlington Hall and the Post Office as identified on Plan B (refer Figure 10), be paved in red/brown bitumen as and when re-surfacing is required (*Engineering*).

P2: Footpaths throughout the Precinct to be natural or paved according to the specific terrain and usage (*Engineering*).

P3: Road kerbing, where required, to be of a low mountable profile or flush and hard brush finished (*Engineering*).

ACTION STRATEGIES

- **RESIDENTIAL**

AS1: That an explanatory document relating to the Precinct Plan be developed by Council and made available to all prospective home-builders and designers within the Precinct (*Building/Engineering/Planning*).

- **PUBLIC OPEN SPACE**

AS2: That the Darlington lower oval and adjacent reserve be upgraded to make it suitable for passive and informal recreation (*Engineering*).

AS3: That Council prepare and adopt a Management Plan for the old rail reserve, consistent with the objectives of the Precinct Plan, with priority attention being given to the area between Owen and Glen Roads (*Engineering/Planning*).

AS4: That Council investigate the installation of subtle traffic calming devices at the following locations:

- Owen Road between Beenong and Brook Roads;
- Glen Road outside the Darlington Primary School;
- Darlington Road at the Coulston Road intersection; and
- Ryecroft Road outside Helena Primary School. (*Engineering*)

AS5: That Council request Western Power to replace all low voltage open wire powerlines with aerial bundled conductors (*Engineering*).

AS6: That Council assess the existing and potential pedestrian links within the Precinct and prepare a development and maintenance plan for an effective pedestrian network (*Engineering/Planning*).

AS7: That Council commission the preparation of a street furniture (including signage)/public art study for the central community and commercial area, including a street furniture inventory, consistent with the objectives of the Precinct Plan (*Community/Engineering/Planning*).

AS8: That Council prepare a landscape and maintenance plan for public spaces (*Engineering*).

BACKGROUND TO THE PRECINCT PLAN

Land use and development within the Shire of Mundaring is controlled by the Shire of Mundaring Town Planning Scheme No. 3.

Whilst Town Planning Scheme No. 3 applies land use and development standards across the entire municipality, it does not in itself address the particular, and perhaps unique, forms of land use and patterns of development that characterise or are proposed for specific areas or precincts within the district. The Scheme, however, contains provision for the making of Town Planning Scheme Codes in order to ensure that unique attributes that characterise specific areas or development standards proposed for such areas are protected, enhanced or implemented as the case may be.

Clause 8.14 of Town Planning Scheme No. 3 provides that:

"The Council may make Town Planning Scheme Codes relating to the whole or any part of the Scheme Area which:

- (a) define planning principles for giving effect to the objectives of the Scheme and, in particular, setting standards for the maintenance and enhancement of the character of the District;*
- (b) designate planning precincts and set out the detailed conditions of planning, design and development and the priorities in the carrying out of such planning design and development in those precincts; or*
- (c) set out special requirements relating to one or more aspects of the control of development and land use."*

The establishment of Town Planning Scheme Codes for specific precincts enables the community to develop localised standards and guidelines for land use and development, within the parameters set by the Town Planning Scheme. In this way the local community can identify, protect and enhance those attributes which contribute to the character, function and identity of their local precinct.

In July 1994, Council resolved to prepare a Town Planning Scheme Code for Darlington through the preparation of a Precinct Plan. The intention of this was twofold, to review the existing Darlington Village Precinct Plan that was prepared in 1987 and to formalise such a plan with the statutory requirements of the then new Scheme (March 1994).

To prepare the Precinct Plan, Council at its meeting held in September 1994 appointed a Darlington Precinct Advisory Committee that comprised of ten members. This consisted of eight representatives from the local community and two Councillors.

Over the following two years during which land use survey's, informal community consultation and numerous Committee meetings were conducted, a draft Precinct Plan was prepared and presented to Council in February 1997. After thorough consideration, Council resolved to invite public discussion and comment on the plan prior to formally determining its suitability for the Darlington community.

Subsequently, the Plan was exhibited for public comment for a period of 28 days concluding on the 5th May 1997. This consultation process included: notification of all landowners in the precinct with an invitation to comment; advertising the draft Precinct Plan in a local newspaper; and referral to the Darlington residents and Ratepayers Association, WA Planning Commission and Western Power.

On the 24th June 1997, Council considered all the submissions received and resolved to modify the Plan to reflect the concerns of the Darlington community. Subject to these modifications, Council further resolved to adopt the plan as a Town Planning Scheme Code pursuant to Clause 8.14 of the Shire of Mundaring Town Planning Scheme No. 3.

The Code will be used as a basis to determine the future form and composition of this Darlington Village Precinct by providing strategic guidelines to assist Council and the local community in making appropriate decisions regarding its development and upgrading.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Residents of the Darlington community have long held that the Darlington "village" atmosphere is unique and warrants preservation and enhancement. This led to a community driven initiative that resulted in the preparation of "The Darlington Village Precinct Plan" in October 1987. The 1987 Plan identified characteristics of the area and guidelines for any future development.

With the gazettal of Town Planning Scheme No. 3 on 18th March 1994, the opportunity arose for the development of a new Precinct Plan which could be adopted as a Town Planning Scheme Code and thereby become formalised as a supplementary document to the Scheme.

At its meeting on 27th September 1994 Council appointed the members of the Darlington Precinct Advisory Committee (DPAC). The purpose of the Committee was to advise Council on:

- (a) the designation of a Planning Precinct for Darlington;
- (b) the preparation of a Precinct Plan for Darlington which sets out:
 - (i) detailed conditions of planning, design and development within the Precinct; and
 - (ii) special requirements for the control of development and land use within the Precinct.

2.0 THE PRECINCT AREA

The first task undertaken by the DPAC was the establishment of a Precinct area. It was determined that the 1987 area should be expanded from the traditional village or social heart of Darlington, containing the shops and recreation areas on Owen Road and Pine Terrace, to incorporate the immediately surrounding environs.

A number of options on what areas to include were considered. These ranged from the inclusion of those areas visible from the central commercial/recreation area of Darlington together with all access roads and trails leading into it, to the whole suburb. Ultimately, the area chosen was based on the inclusion of landmarks that were considered significant to the local community such as:

- Darlington Primary School;
- the Commercial Areas;
- Helena Primary School;
- Treetops Montessori School;
- the Heritage Walking Trail (old railway reserve);
- Binbrook Park;
- Darlington Oval/Recreational Grounds;
- Dalry Road;
- Darlington Hall; and
- entry roads such as Darlington, Ryecroft and Coulston Roads.

This resulted in the adoption of a Precinct area as shown on Plan A (refer Figure 1). It was determined that this would form a manageable area and that other sites of specific heritage value would be considered under Council's Municipal Inventory.

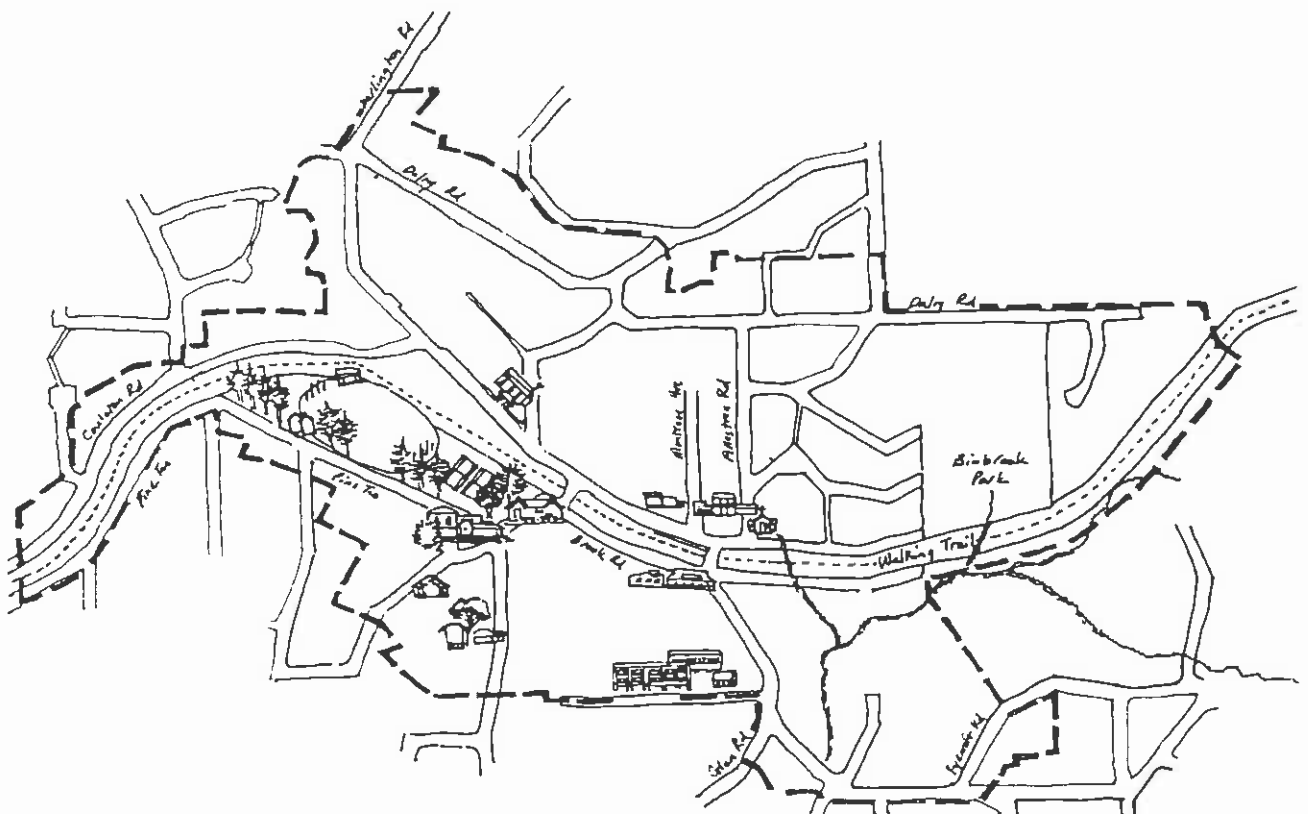


Figure 1: Plan A - The Darlington Village Precinct Area.

3.0 PRECINCT CHARACTER

As a prerequisite to the preparation of development guidelines and strategies for the Precinct, its land use characteristics were identified. This was accomplished through a property survey, where all the buildings and site features of the Precinct were assessed. This resulted in the compiling of the following list of characteristics that are considered to be the essence of Darlington:

- rich diversity of vegetation and wildlife (lack of orderliness);
- unobtrusive buildings;
- landform is dominant;
- variety of building materials;
- non-suburban/low density;
- lack of defined boundaries and fences;
- streetscapes:
 - well treed;
 - narrow pavements;
 - lack of kerbing;
 - lack of signage;
 - lack of road markings;
 - follows natural topography; and
 - minimal street lighting;
- village atmosphere:
 - reserve/oval (tennis courts, playground, grassed areas);
 - low-key commercial buildings;
 - "Landmark" buildings (e.g. Hall, Pines); and
 - railway reserve/bridle trail;
- people oriented/user friendly;
- tranquillity;
- sense of space; and
- views and vistas.

Of specific interest in the results is the degree of variety in built form within the Precinct. Building materials such as timber and iron are more dominant than brick and tile. This may be a reflection of the age of the buildings with over half of all houses being estimated to be over 35 years. It may also be attributable to the common sense principle of using frame construction on the clay soils and sloping sites that are common throughout the area.

Another notable feature is the lack of visible boundary fencing. Where fences are used they are usually out of sight or of an open nature and therefore do not influence the streetscape. This is complemented by the lack of "formal" gardens in the Precinct and the retention of bush and other natural features on many properties.

4.0 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 Aim

To preserve and enhance the existing character and amenity of the Precinct, and in so doing maintain it as a unique, identifiable and special place within the hills.

4.2 Objectives

- (i) All development to complement natural landform;
- (ii) The built environment should not dominate the landscape;
- (iii) To achieve a strong sense of place and community focus on the historic and social significance of the village centre;
- (iv) To maintain low building density;
- (v) To encourage rehabilitation of degraded areas and sites;
- (vi) To encourage a high standard of maintenance of landscape and the built environment;
- (vii) To encourage and maintain diversity and variety in the landscape and the built environment;
- (viii) To use all available means to minimise noise and environmental pollution;
- (ix) To encourage an open and accessible community where motor vehicle movements do not dominate; and
- (x) To maintain public accessibility to public open spaces and reserves.

5.0 GUIDELINES & STRATEGIES

In order to guide development within the Precinct that is consistent with the Aim and Objectives of this plan, Guidelines and Strategies have been prepared. These are divided into three groups:

- Residential;
- Commercial; and
- Public Spaces.

The Guidelines and Strategies are designated either as "Action" or "Passive". Action strategies require some form of specific response or immediate follow-up by Council. Whilst passive strategies are to be used by Council for the assessment of development proposals or are to be implemented when it undertakes upgrading of infrastructure such as roads or footpaths. Each Strategy is complemented by an explanatory guideline.

5.1 Residential Land

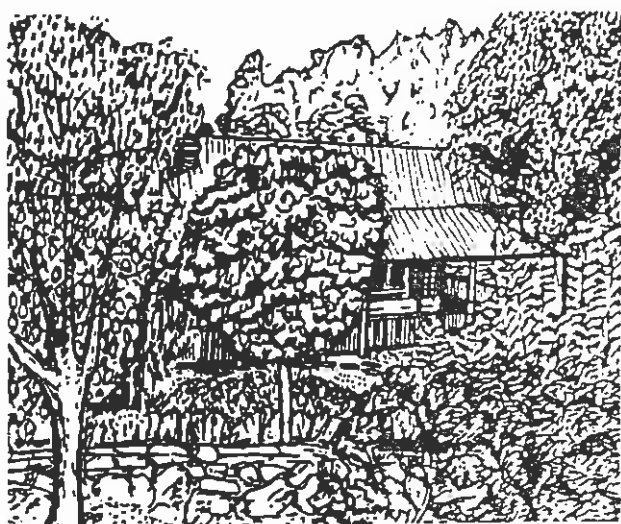
5.1.1 Fencing

Fencing, particularly in the front setback area, has a significant impact on the streetscape. In order to retain the open feeling and allow the natural elements of the landscape to remain a significant feature of the Precinct, it is essential that certain types of fences be discouraged. If fencing is required, other more sympathetic types should be promoted.

Most properties do not have fences or walls on the street and only light wire fencing is used to demarcate other boundary lines. Tall indigenous trees and scrub are maintained throughout the property right to the street edge for bush and streetscape continuity. Planting with exotics to create landscape detail is limited to the area immediately surrounding the house, but also to avoid invasion of these plants into the bush.



Figure 2: Minimum Visible Street Fencing.



The older village centre of Darlington tends to have similar gardens that are more country cottage like, with occasional fencing. Complementary fencing that reflects the character of adjacent or nearby fencing is important, particularly with regard to materials, form and height (up to a maximum of 0.8m). Trees and shrubbery are used to soften the appearance of fencing and screen housing from the street.

Figure 3: Complementary Fencing.

Strategy R1: *Fences in the front setback to be discouraged.*

Strategy R2: *Any overheight fences in the front setback to be of open construction.*

Strategy R3: *Supersix type fences on any boundary to be discouraged.*

5.1.2 Building Setbacks

Another aspect that enhances the open feeling of the Precinct is the achievement of setbacks greater than the minimum permissible standard. Town Planning Scheme No. 3 requires a minimum setback of 12m, which is 4.5m greater than the setback required under the previous Scheme, Town Planning Scheme No. 1. This increased setback is supported and should be maintained as a minimum, unless an application for relaxation can demonstrate that it will not compromise the visual amenity of the area and meets with the objectives for that zone.

Strategy R4: *That front building setback relaxations not be supported. In cases where an alternative to the standard setback is deemed appropriate due to extenuating circumstances, an increased setback rather than a reduced setback should be imposed.*

Appropriate location and design of buildings, driveways and landscaping is important in maintaining Darlington's attractive bush setting, environmental quality, lifestyle opportunities and privacy.

Large building setbacks achieve space for substantial bushland to be maintained around buildings, and together with a continuous tree canopy, this ensures that buildings are discretely integrated into the landscape.



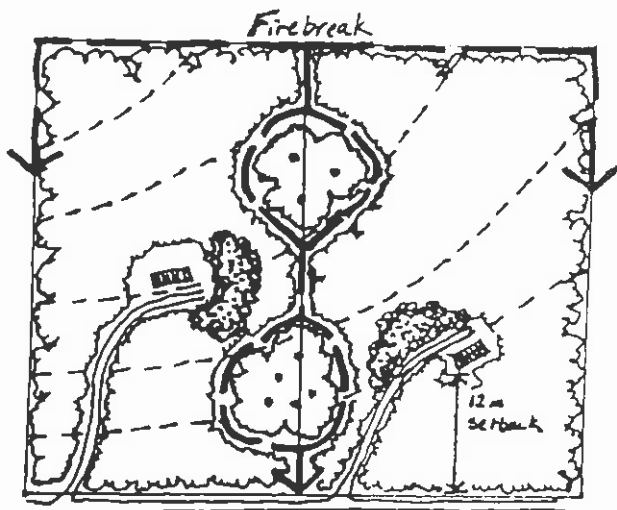
Figure 4: Large Building Setbacks.

5.1.3 Fill & Excavation

Due to the natural slopes of many lots in the Precinct, opportunities exist for innovative building and landscaping design. Unfortunately, in some instances these opportunities are overlooked and inappropriate designs are proposed which result in buildings and gardens being constructed that are not in context with the natural landform and have a detrimental effect on existing natural vegetation.

Strategy R5: *The excavation and filling of land shall be kept to a minimum in order to preserve the natural form of land and the native vegetation. To this end, sandpads for a residence or outbuilding in excess of 1.5m at its maximum depth are not supported.*

Strategy R6: *General site modifications, including landscaping, in relation to cut and fill shall be limited to no greater than 1.5m at its maximum depth.*



Building design which best responds to Darlington's landform and minimises impact upon the site's ecology and soil stability, are of the frame construction type. Winding single driveways, in conjunction with landscaping, screen buildings and parked cars from the street.

Landscape screen planting between buildings of adjoining properties achieves privacy, while some views from houses to the street provide opportunity for passive surveillance and supports a sense of community.

Figure 5: Landscape Screen Planting.

5.1.4 Driveways & Drainage

Driveways invariably create an impact on the streetscape. To achieve their designed purpose, they must be cleared and trafficable. In view of the steepness of some sites they also create drainage problems. A variety of construction materials have been used for driveways in the Precinct. Some particularly long driveways are created as a result of battle-axe subdivisions and warrant special treatment.

Strategy R7: *Access drives to battle-axe lots to be paved in red/brown bitumen or concrete and kerbed, where required, with low mountable or flush kerbing and hard brush finished*

Strategy R8: *Solutions to stormwater drainage to complement the natural environment.*

5.1.5 Tree Preservation

Trees form an integral part of the character of the Precinct. Town Planning Scheme No. 3 provides for tree preservation in the Shire by virtue of Clauses 5.1 to 5.4. These provisions, however, do not apply to lots that are under 4000m² as these are considered to be residential in nature given that there is a community expectation that a residence, outbuildings, driveways, lawns, leach drains, clothes lines, firebreaks and outdoor entertaining areas, take up the bulk of this area.

It is suggested that the residents of the Precinct feel that the preservation of trees should take precedence over the more usual residential usages and that the tree preservation provisions contained within the Scheme should be applied to all residential lots within this area.

The trees and landform create a distinctive sense of place within Darlington. Conservation of native vegetation has ensured a diverse and rich living environment. In particular, mature trees create focus within the landscape and reinforce a sense of the historical, well establish character of Darlington Village.



Figure 6: Impact of Tree Preservation.

Strategy R9: *That landowners within the Darlington Village Precinct be encouraged to meet the provisions of the Town Planning Scheme No.3 Clauses 5.1 to 5.4 (Tree Preservation)*

5.1.6 Building Appearance

Whilst a variety of architectural styles has contributed to the character of Darlington, the use of some materials in certain circumstances can be disruptive to the amenity of the area. Overly large outbuildings can have the same impact.

Strategy R10: *Extensions to existing residences and outbuildings to be constructed in a manner sympathetic to the existing buildings on site.*

Strategy R11: *Outbuildings which are over the maximum area specified in Town Planning Scheme No. 3 shall be generally not supported.*

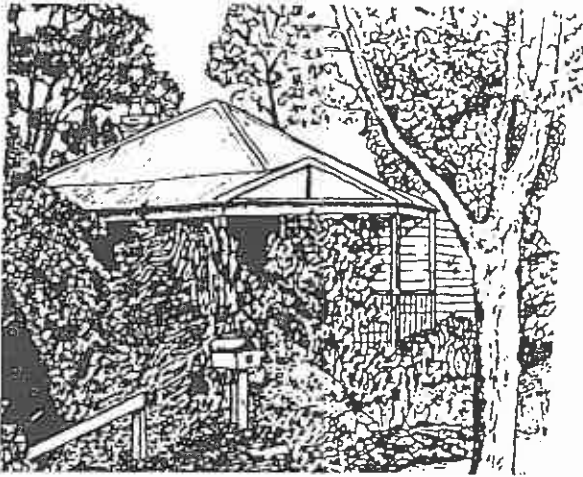


Figure 7: Variety of Building Materials.

Darlington's buildings are typically constructed in timber, local stone and rubble, or in a variety of materials that are complementary in colour and texture. Building forms tend to be more horizontal for better fit within the landform, often up to two storeys high. Roof forms and colours tend to be designed for discrete integration of buildings into the landscape that ensures amenable views of Darlington from higher ground, while verandahs contribute to a finer, smaller scale of buildings.

5.1.7 Land Use

A variety of land uses are available for the Residential zone under Town Planning Scheme No. 3. These range from Catteries and Convenience Stores to Home Occupations of many types. In order to preserve the single residential nature of the Precinct, some of the discretionary uses are not supported.

Strategy R12: In considering applications for the use of land within the Precinct, notwithstanding the permissibility of uses shown in the Scheme Zoning Table for the Residential zone as IP, AA or SA, Council shall generally not support applications for the following uses:

- (a) Advertisement;
- (b) Catering Business;
- (c) Cattery;
- (d) Child Day Care Centre;
- (e) Communications Installation - Small Scale Commercial;
- (f) Convenience Store;
- (g) Display Home;
- (h) Educational Establishment;
- (i) Grouped Dwelling (unless Council is satisfied that the Grouped Dwelling and its setback have no greater impact than a single residential development regardless of the applicable "R" Code);
- (j) Medical Clinic;
- (k) Residential Building;
- (l) Restaurant;
- (m) Stable;
- (n) Transport Depot; and
- (o) Veterinary Clinic.

Strategy R13: *Specific consideration to be given to the disturbance of the amenity of the locality in the determination of home occupations.*

5.1.8 Fire Safety

In recognition of the constant fire risk that applies to the escarpment, it is essential that firebreaks be installed on all properties within the Precinct to meet the requirements of the Bushfires Act. Consideration should be given, however, to alternative forms of firebreaks rather than the "easiest" option of a ploughed 3m strip around the perimeter of each property.

Strategy R14: *Residents are to be encouraged to install firebreaks that are sensitive to the local environment.*

Strategy R15: *Residents are to be encouraged to plant fire resistant vegetation in landscaped areas close to houses and to ensure trees overhanging homes are pruned to reduce fire risk*

5.1.9 Public Education

Many of the concerns that have arisen in the past in relation to site works and constructions in Darlington may have been avoided if information on desirable practices was readily available to new landowners and builders who are unfamiliar with construction and design principles in the hills. The adoption of a Precinct Plan will provide a guide to such people. It may, however, be unattractive to the casual reader due to its length. In order to establish an interest in the target audience, it would be helpful if an easy to read information brochure was produced based on the principles of the Precinct Plan.

Action Strategy 1: *That an explanatory document relating to the Precinct Plan be developed by Council and made available to all prospective homebuilders and designers within the Precinct.*

5.2 Commercial Land

5.2.1 Commercial Size

The existing commercial area of Darlington is broken into two separate locations that are in close proximity of each other. These are at Owen Road and Montrose Avenue respectively. Council's Local Commercial Strategy (1992) recognises that these two small centres linked by an open space system "... combine to provide a village type town centre having a strong sense of identity and character". It goes on to recommend that these centres be retained essentially at their current floorspace levels with any upgrading and/or extensions to be of a minor nature.

Strategy C1: Council's Strategies for Darlington contained in its Local Commercial Strategy (1992) be supported.

5.2.2 Building Appearance

Because of the village type nature of the Precinct, particularly the commercial and social centre of Darlington around Owen Road/Pine Terrace, it is important to ensure the commercial buildings do not dominate. In order to achieve this they should reflect the residential type of construction in terms of building materials, scale and impact on the site. They should have surfaces that are of a low light reflective nature and be of natural colours so as to be unobtrusive, blend in with the landscape quality of the site and locality, and minimise visual intrusion.

Strategy C2: Building character and materials for commercial buildings to be sympathetic with residential development.



Beside some older commercial and civic buildings that are distinctive features within the streetscape, commercial buildings tend to be more residential like in appearance. Discrete location and landscape screening of functional areas, such as storage and car parking, are important to the amenity of the streetscape and surrounding areas.

Figure 8: Distinctive Building Features.

5.2.3 Car Parking Areas

The wide expanses of bitumen often associated with commercial areas would be out of character with the village atmosphere of the Darlington commercial area.

Strategy C3: *Large unbroken areas of car parking should be avoided.*

Strategy C4 *Car parking should not dominate the amenity of the area and should be softened by the incorporation of landscaping.*

5.2.4 Signage and Lighting

Commercial areas are characterised by signage and lighting. This is accepted as necessary. However, different forms of signage and lighting can be utilised to soften the intrusion this has on surrounding areas whilst still achieving the "shopkeepers" need to advertise their presence. It is difficult to be overly prescriptive in these situations without prejudicing the commercial operator, other than acknowledging compliance with Council's standard signage requirements. Nevertheless, it is considered appropriate that some general guidance be provided in order to promote uniformity.

Strategy C5: *Commercial signage and lighting should be integrated with the building fabric and design and to be environmentally sensitive.*



Figure 9: Signage and Lighting

The general presentation, signage and lighting make this small commercial cluster in Brook Road attractive and interesting. Signage design and location tends to reflect the historic character, scale and architecture of the buildings, and collectively they create a consistent signage theme. Facilities (such as seating) are provided to promote the amenity.

5.3 Public Spaces

5.3.1 Recreation Reserves

The central heart of Darlington along Owen Road and Pine Terrace has established recreation facilities that are predominantly well developed and used. Some portions, however, are in need of upgrading. In some instances, uses, whether passive, active, formal or informal should be defined. In these instances a sense of security is achieved for the users of that facility.

Action Strategy 2: *That the Darlington lower oval and adjacent reserve be upgraded to make it suitable for passive and informal recreation.*

Action Strategy 3: *That Council prepare and adopt a Management Plan for the old rail reserve, consistent with the objectives of the Precinct Plan, with priority attention being given to the area between Owen and Glen Roads.*

5.3.2 Road Reserves

Roads are the main form of access into Darlington, as they are in all localities. Their impact due to their colour, width, starkness, effect as pedestrian barriers, drainage implications and edge effect, is significant in any community. It is important that they be treated sensitively to enable them to blend into the environment with as little impact as possible. This can be achieved to some degree by use of coloured pavements, traffic calming, unobtrusive and integrated drainage, edge/kerb treatments, landscaping and sensitive utility provision (refer Figure 10).

Strategy P1: *That the road pavements in community focus areas including around schools, churches, shops, Darlington Hall and the Post Office as identified on Plan B (refer Figure 10), be paved in red/brown bitumen as and when re-surfacing is done.*

Strategy P2: *Footpaths throughout the Precinct to be natural or paved according to the specific terrain and usage.*

Strategy P3: *Road kerbing, where required, to be of a low mountable profile or flush and hard brush finished.*

Action Strategy 4: That Council investigate the installation of subtle traffic calming devices at the following locations:

- Owen Road between Beenong and Brook Roads,
- Glen Road outside the Darlington Primary School,
- Darlington Road at the Goulston Road intersection, and
- Ryecroft Road outside Helena Primary School.

Action Strategy 5: That Council request Western Power to replace all low voltage open wire powerlines with aerial bundled conductors.

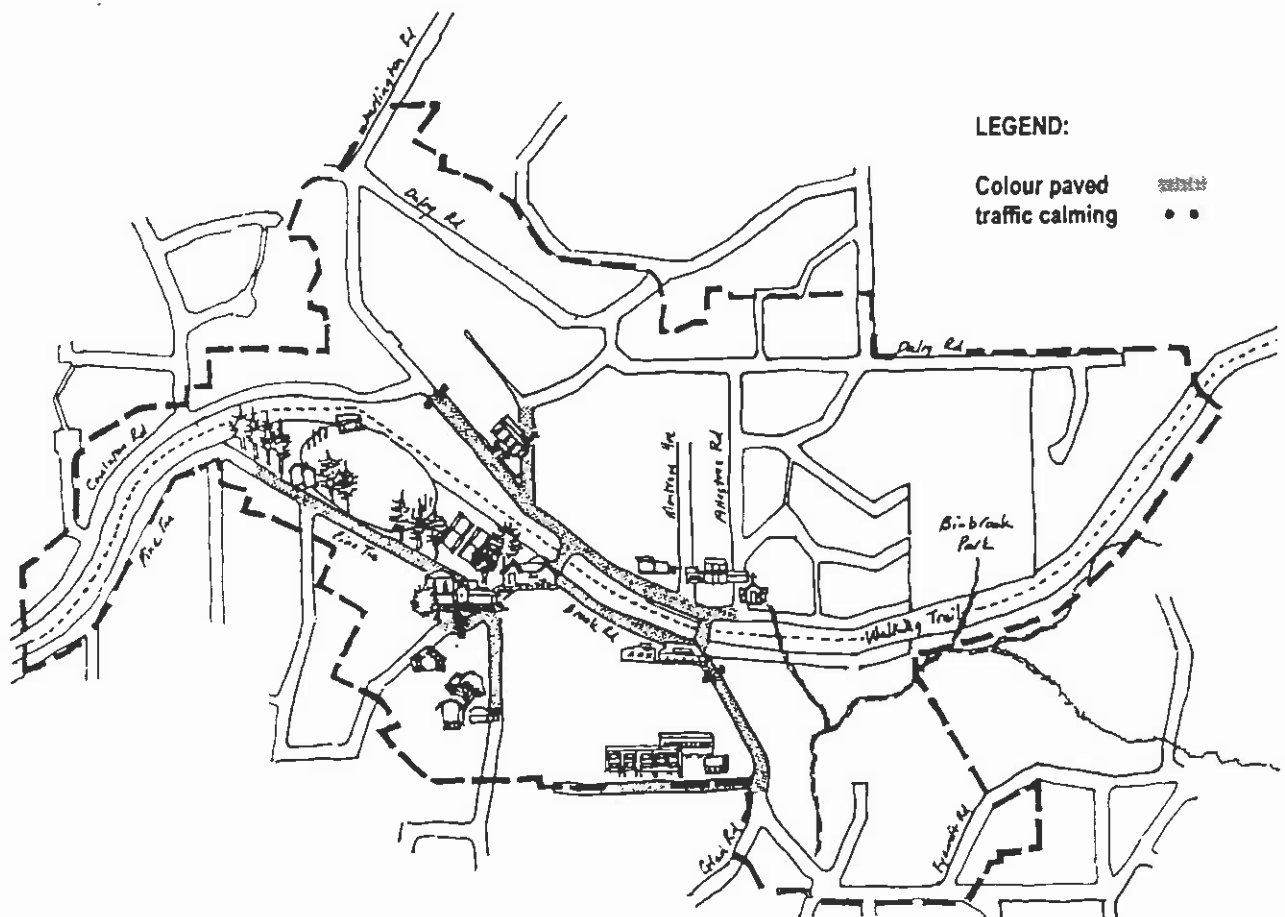


Figure 10: Plan B - Streetscape Improvements

5.3.3 Appearance of Public Spaces

Public spaces can impart a particular feel or atmosphere by a combination of factors including roads, vegetation, street furniture, street signs and the like. A consistent theme that complements the natural and built environment assists in improving the appearance of an area and developing an identifiable character. In Darlington it is important to encourage a relaxed "people-oriented" village atmosphere.

Action Strategy 6: *That Council assess the existing and potential pedestrian links within the Precinct and prepare a development and maintenance plan for an effective pedestrian network.*

Action Strategy 7: *That Council commission the preparation of a street furniture (including signage)/public art study for the central community and commercial area, including a street furniture inventory, consistent with the objectives of the Precinct Plan.*

Action Strategy 8: *That Council prepare a landscape and maintenance plan for public spaces.*



