Before Waipa District Council

In the Matter	of the Resource Management Act 1991 (**Act**)
And	
In the Matter	of an application for resource consent to for a Terraced Housing Development and concurrent subdivision at 109 Taylor Street, Cambridge.
Council Reference	Resource consent – SP/0028/21 & LU/0040/21

Evidence of Christopher Beer on behalf of Wendy & Warren Hodges

Dated 5 August 2021

Introduction

1. My full name is Christopher Robert Beer. I am a Director and Architect at Christopher Beer Architect Limited (**CBA**), an architect practice located in Cambridge.

2. CBA has been engaged by WJ and WD Hodges to provide architectural design services for the development at 109 Taylor Street.

3. I have prepared this statement of evidence at the request of WJ and WD Hodges, in support of the application for subdivision and land-use consent at 109 Taylor Street.

4. In preparing this evidence I have reviewed the following:

    a. The Council's notification report prepared by Mr Tim Wilson;
    b. The Council's regulatory hearing report prepared by Mr Tim Wilson;
    c. Comments from Council's Urban Design Consultant, Mr Sam Foster;
    d. The assessment of environmental effects and statutory analysis prepared by Gareth Moran of B&A;
    e. Submissions made with respect to the Application.

Qualifications and Experience

6. I hold the Degree of Bachelor of Architecture (Hons) from UNITEC, Auckland and a Diploma in Architectural Studies from WINTEC, Hamilton, these obtained in 2007 and 2002, respectively. I am registered with the NZ Registered Architects Board as a Registered Architect (NZRAB 4882) and am an Architect Member of the NZ Institute of Architects (NZIA 20103).

7. I have 14 years' experience in the architecture industry, having worked in Auckland and Cambridge, NZ and London, U.K., designing residential dwellings, multi-unit dwellings, commercial buildings and residential sub-division and compact-housing developments. I formed CBA in 2013 and work predominantly on designing detached dwellings, multi-unit dwelling developments and compact housing developments—notably designing areas of the 'compact housing' and 'character areas' in the Cambridge Park development (west of the greenbelt in Leamington).

8. I've obtained design awards at the local and national level, including a national award from the NZIA in the housing category and the 2017 NZ Home of the Year award from Home Magazine.

Code of Conduct

9. I have been provided with a copy of the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the Environment Court's 2014 Practice Note. I have read and agree to comply with that Code. This evidence is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I rely upon the evidence of other expert witness' as presented to this hearing. I have not to my knowledge omitted to consider any material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed.

Scope of Evidence

10. In my evidence I will:

    a. Outline the design brief for the project;

    b. Describe the site and neighbourhood context;

    c. Describe the site layout

    d. Describe the building design;

    e. Provide a response to the issues raised in submissions in relation to loss of privacy;

    f. Provide my conclusions.

Summary of Evidence

11. We have designed the development in a comprehensive manner. It is a high-quality development where building and landscaping are integrated, where the scale of driveways are minimised and where buildings are contained within the relevant residential development restrictions of the District Plan.

12. The proposed development comprises five dwellings. Each dwelling has

living areas and an outdoor living courtyard on the ground floor and bedrooms on the upper floor. The upper level of the dwellings is typically set back further from the site boundaries than the lower level.

13. The building design and site layout endeavours to set a good example for future compact housing developments within the policy overlay area on Taylor Street.

14. I agree with all comments provided by Mr Sam Foster in relation to urban design.

Project Design Brief

15. To design a medium-density residential development on the site, consisting of 5 dwellings (with a mix of 2 and 3 bedrooms) with a shared driveway. Dwellings to be two-storied and with a floor area of approximately 120m^2–150m^2 (including single garage).

16. Buildings to be contained within the allowable height recession plane and boundary setback requirements on all boundaries.

17. The development was aimed to appeal to homeowners wanting the following:

    a. A low-maintenance home and garden of a more compact size than most properties available in Cambridge;

    b. A property within walking and cycling distance of the town centre;

    c. A property of a high-quality finish with a contemporary architectural appearance.

Site Context

18. The surrounding residential properties along this stretch of Taylor Street consist of a mix of 1 and 2-storied dwellings on sites of 400–1,000m^2.

19. The appearance of existing dwellings varies from original bungalows (e.g. No. 105) to contemporary (e.g. No. 111, next door).

20. The site is opposite the town greenbelt. The site is flat with a few small trees; surrounding properties and the green belt have larger trees.

21. The site and the surrounding sites on Taylor Street are zoned residential with a compact housing overlay.

Figure 1

22. The dwelling at no. 107 is located close to the common boundary with no. 109 (approximately 1m), it has a large area of outdoor space in front of the dwelling and also behind the dwelling.

23. The dwelling at no. 111 is located close to the common boundary with no. 109 (approximately 1m), it has a large area of outdoor space in front of the dwelling and a smaller area behind the dwelling.

24. The dwelling at no. 111a is located near the common boundary with no. 109

(approximately 2m), it has a large area of outdoor space in front of the dwelling and a smaller area against the boundary and behind the dwelling.

Site Layout

25. The development has been designed to ensure to following:

    a. Sufficient space surrounds the dwellings to enable vehicle access to the site and into garages and adequate space for extensive landscaping and planting;

    b. The driveway and footpath crossing do not dominate the site (i.e. they are as narrow as possible);

    c. Dwellings have sufficient outdoor living areas and service areas (for bins, washing lines, etc.) and that these areas are private;

    d. Services can be provided to the dwellings;

    e. Dwellings and their outdoor living areas have good solar access and passive heating potential.

26. All dwellings have a single garage, a driveway runs down the eastern boundary to the rear dwellings. The driveway is a shared vehicle/pedestrian space.

27. Outdoor living areas are provided to each dwelling on the north, east or west side, providing good solar access. These areas are screened from other dwellings on the site.

28. The front dwelling has an extensively landscaped area in front of it, softening its appearance from the street. The front dwelling has a good amount of glazing (30% of wall area) facing the street, providing passive surveillance.

29. A mixture of high and low garden walls/fences and planting provide privacy between dwellings on the site.

30. The site layout has been designed to avoid a common development style where a single wide driveway (e.g. 6m) runs along one boundary and the dwellings are arranged in a single terrace next to the driveway. Refer to

to figure 2 below.

Figure 2 – common multi-dwelling development outcome

31. The site arrangement and dwelling massing closely follows a best-practice example prepared by Auckland Council for the Auckland Design Manual for a 20m wide site. The example document is appended to this evidence. This example has a density of 1 dwelling per 200m^2 of site area.

32. As the site doesn't comply with the 2,000m^2 minimum size requirement it has been designed on a pro-rata building density of 50%; i.e. if the site was twice as wide 10 dwellings would have likely been proposed with a central shared driveway.

33. I consider 1 dwelling per 200m^2 of site area a suitable density for 2-storey attached dwellings of a compact housing type in this location. I consider this density adequate to achieve the levels of intensification sought by District Plan Policy 2.3.4.1 and the NPS-UD 2020.

34. In relation to the above, we would note that the proposed 5 dwellings provides a smaller development (in overall size and in number of dwellings) than would likely otherwise be proposed were the development to occupy 2,000m^2 of land.

Building Design

35. The development has been designed to ensure to following:

    a. The appearance of the buildings and landscaping is cohesive and overall the development presents a similar form to two freestanding dwellings, which is consistent with development in the area;

    b. Massing of the buildings is varied and buildings have a relationship to each other and the street/footpath;

    c. Overlooking to the outdoor living areas of properties to the east, west and south is minimised as far as possible;

    d. Overall building heights are as low as possible.

36. The maximum building height allowed in the District Plan is 9m. The proposed dwellings are approximately 2/3 that height. This minimises the bulk of the development and its shading potential to adjacent properties.

37. As 2-storied dwellings, they have potential to overlook neighbouring properties' outdoor living areas from the first floor. Consideration of this informed the building design.

38. The District Plan Policy Objective 2.3.3.1 and 2.3.3.2 describes that buildings should be positioned to *provide for the privacy of adjoining properties and to not overly dominate outdoor living areas on adjoining sites*. Rules 2.4.2.4 - Minimum Building Setback and 2.4.2.10 - Daylight Control defines the performance standards required for buildings, and the buildings were positioned to comply with both rules.

Response to the issues raised in submissions

39. This evidence will not address the issues in relation to shading, compliance with District Plan provisions, permeable surfaces or amenity values. Refer to the evidence of Gareth Moran of Barker & Associates Limited.

Response to issues relating to overlooking/loss of privacy

40. Locations and numbers of windows on the dwellings was considered during the design process in relation to overlooking. They were positioned to reduce any negative overlooking effects—as far as was possible.

41. The points below are our opinion of the overlooking potential of the development. Figures on the following page illustrate the points below.

42. Overlooking to the front yard of no. 107 from clear-glazed first floor windows is possible from 2 windows in dwelling 1 and to the rear yard from 1 window in dwelling 3 (at an angle) and 2 windows in dwelling 4. These windows are from bedrooms/studies/hallways so have a lesser impact than a kitchen or living area window or a living room balcony. During the design process we considered this number of windows would be similar to the number of windows that might occur as a permitted development. We would note that existing trees on the eastern boundary of no. 107 near the front and rear of that property will obscure many of the window noted above (refer Figure 1 for the location of trees), though note these could be removed in the future.

43. Overlooking to the front yard of no. 111a from clear-glazed first floor windows is possible from one window in dwelling 3 and 1 window and the balcony in dwelling 5. The balcony is small and opens from a study (rather than a main living area), so was deemed of minimal impact.

44. Overlooking to the yards of no. 111 is not discussed here as the buildings are located away from that property.

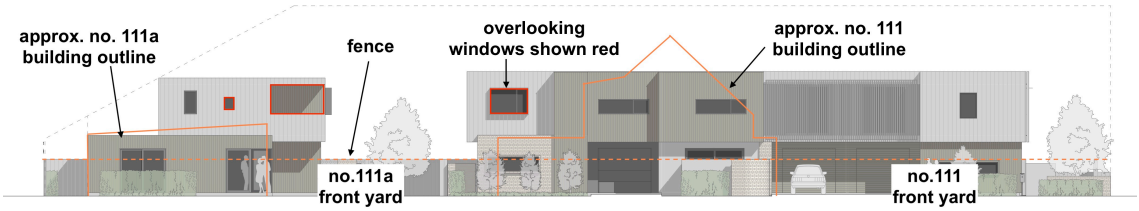


Figure 3 - East Elevation (dwelling 5 on left, dwelling 1 on right)

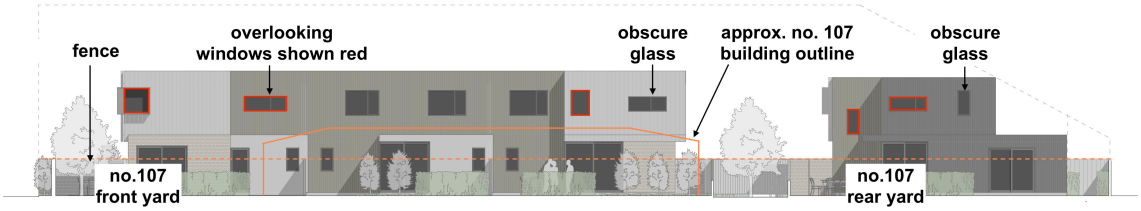


Figure 4 - West Elevation (dwelling 1 on left, dwelling 4 on right)

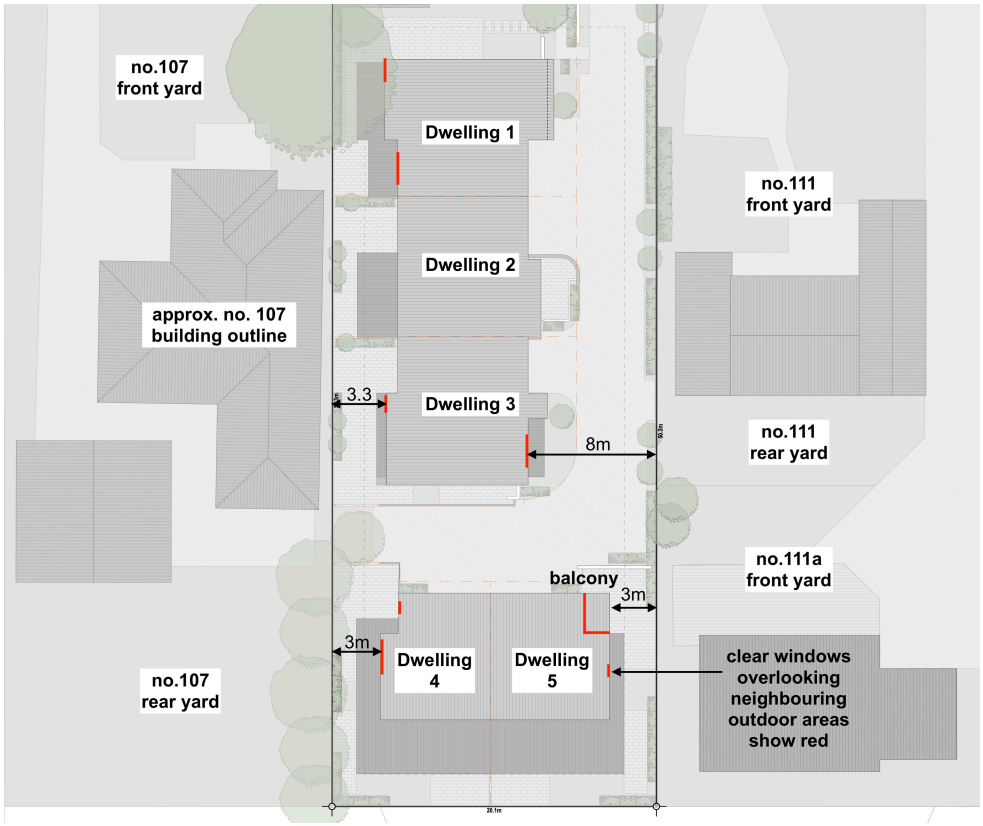


Figure 5 - Site Plan

Conclusions

45. The development is comprehensively designed. It is located in the compact housing area overlay and the number of dwellings, their scale and architectural design is consistent with the outcomes sought under Objective 2.3.5. The design and positions on the site are consistent with the relevant

Residential Zone Rules 2.4.2.1–2.4.2.19.

46. The arrangement of the dwellings (terrace and a duplex) into two buildings forms is consistent with the existing development typology of the area—i.e. commonly 2 buildings per 1,000m^2 of land area.

47. I consider 1 dwelling per 200m^2 of site area a suitable density for 2-storey attached dwellings of a compact housing type in this location.

48. Overlooking potential of the dwellings into adjacent properties is equivalent to what a complying development might provide. The opinion of Mr Sam Foster is that two storey development is anticipated in the area and is not uncommon. I agree with this opinion.

49. The density of development on the site will increase. The opinion of Mr Tim Wilson is that increase of density is anticipated by the compact housing area overlay and the resulting effects align with the outcomes sought by the overlay. I agree with this opinion.

Christopher Beer
5 August 2020

EXAMPLE DESIGN 2

TEN TERRACE HOMES

20m wide site
Mixed housing suburban zone

Note: this document is included to illustrate a best-practice example of residential development at an intensity (dwelling density) equivalent to what is proposed at 109 Taylor Street

Note: irrelevent pages have been removed from this document, the full document is available at http://content.aucklanddesignmanual.co.nz/resources/example-designs/Documents/Example%20Design%202%20-%2010%20Terrace%20Homes.pdf

AUCKLAND DESIGN MANUAL

context Architects

Auckland Council

Introduction

Your guide to designing good quality terrace housing on a 20m wide site.

Designing terrace housing for Auckland's narrow suburban sites can be challenging. Achieving good design outcomes while also delivering a profitable development is not always easy.

This example design demonstrates how to create low cost, high yield development that supports a good quality of life for residents and contributes to creating safe, green neighbourhoods.

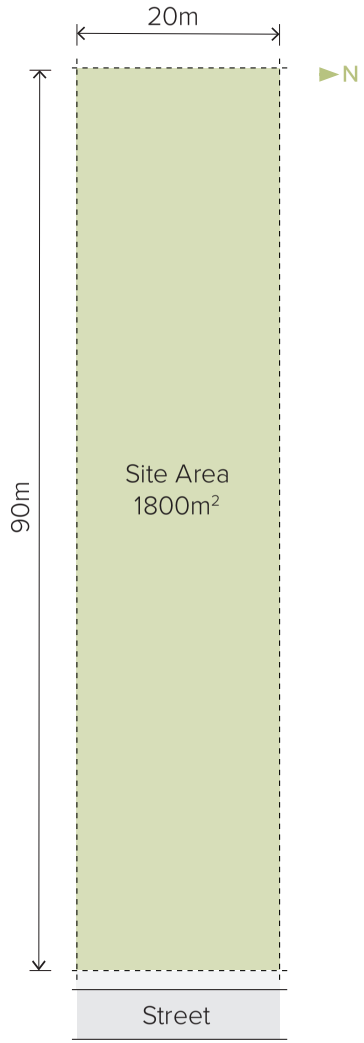
This design guide is one of a series developed in conjunction with Context Architects.

Find more example designs at
aucklanddesignmanual.co.nz/example-designs

This example design features

- ✓ **Full compliance with the planning rules**
  Meets all the standards & assessment criteria of the Auckland Unitary Plan.
- ✓ **Maximum development yield**
  Maximises the number of homes built on the site.
- ✓ **Good urban design outcomes**
  Delivers functional, liveable homes & supports safe & green neighbourhoods.
- ✓ **Simple building design**
  Helps keep building costs low while still delivering minimum standards of good design.

Development Brief



Specifications

Unitary Plan Zone
Mixed Housing Suburban

Development Yield
Minimum of 10 terrace homes
(10x 3 bedroom)

Parking
1 car park per dwelling

Topography
Flat

Price Bracket
Affordable homes

Additional Requirements
Best practice urban design
Full planning rule compliance

A Note on Context
This design is conceptual and has been created without regard to a context. Any real development will need to consider and respond to its surrounding context.

Important Planning Standards

Maximum Building Coverage
40%

Minimum Landscape Coverage
40%

Yard Setbacks
3m front + 1m side & rear boundary setbacks

Principal Outlook Space
6m deep x 4m wide

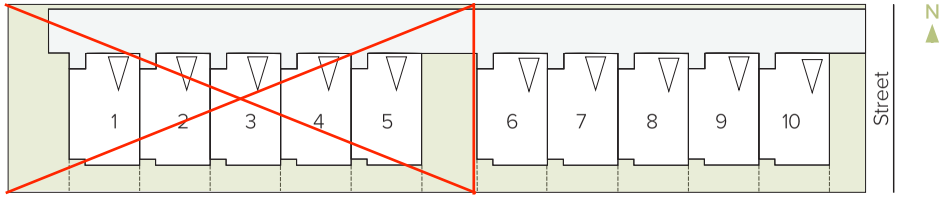
Outdoor Living Space
20m² per dwelling

Site Layout Options

~~**Option 1**~~

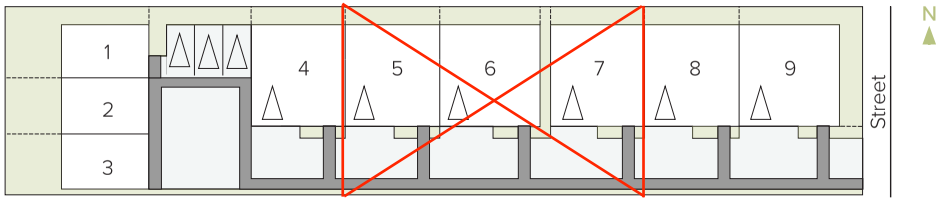
- ✓ High development yield
- ✗ Front dwelling isn't designed to face the street
- ✗ Private outdoor spaces are small and located to the south
- ✗ Northern views from dwellings are over driveway area
- ✗ Doesn't meet all the planning standards

Note: lines added to comparative site area



~~**Option 2**~~

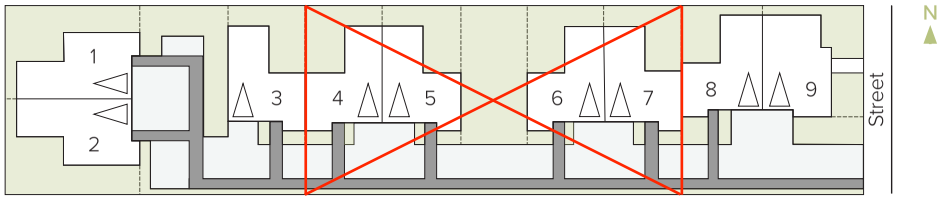
- ✓ Clear pedestrian access & well landscaped driveway area
- ✓ Wider dwellings may create good internal spaces
- ✗ Small, unusable private outdoor spaces
- ✗ Northern views from dwellings limited by small outdoor area
- ✗ Doesn't meet all the planning standards



Option 3

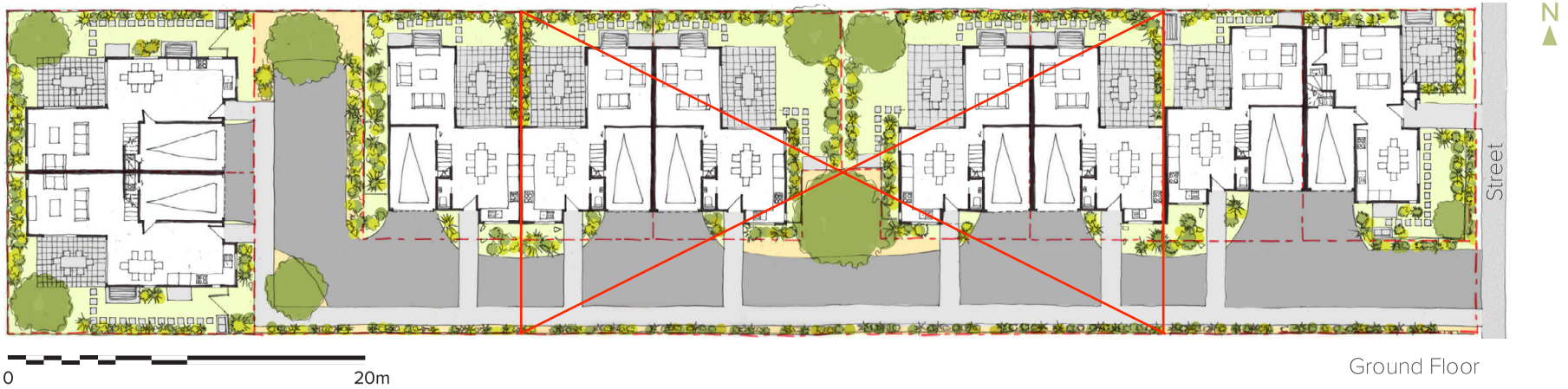
Note: Option 3 is similar to the proposed site layout at 109 Taylor Street

- ✓ Front dwelling faces & is directly accessible from the street
- ✓ Clear pedestrian access & well landscaped driveway
- ✓ Larger northern facing private outdoor spaces
- ✓ Good views & connections from dwellings to outdoor spaces
- ✗ Ground floor area of dwellings split by internal garaging

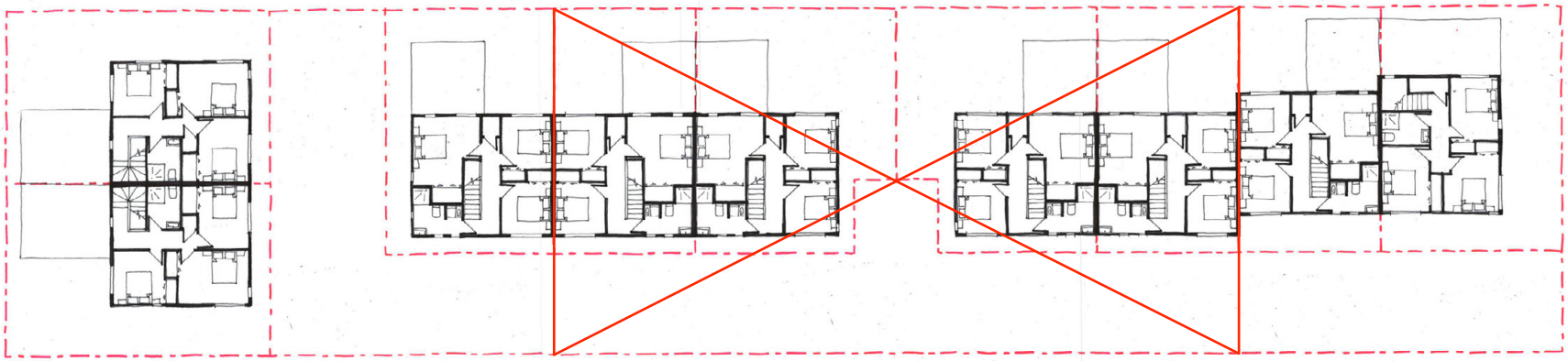


Note: property at 109 Taylor Street is 56% of the size of this example property, so the equivalent dwelling yield (56%) is 5 dwellings

Preferred Site Layout (Option 3)



Ground Floor



First Floor

Site Design

1 A home is located at the front of the site & faces the street.

This home has windows and a front door that face onto the street and an attractively landscaped front yard. This contributes to a safe and attractive neighbourhood.

2 Long, featureless building elevations are avoided

Breaks between buildings, articulation of facades and attractive landscaping help the development avoid creating a long, monotonous building elevation along the driveway. This is especially important for elevations with extensive garaging.

3 Frequently used, less privacy sensitive rooms have views over public & communal areas.

Residents using these rooms keep “an eye out” every time they look out their window, helping create a safer neighbourhood.

4 Homes have a sunny, easily accessible private outdoor area.

This area connects directly to a ground floor living area, creating a strong indoor/outdoor flow. Outdoor living areas should be collocated with the principal outlook planning control to create a sense of spaciousness.

5 Dwellings have well dimensioned rooms and provide for residents’ daily needs.

Rooms are compact, but still sized, to create pleasant, functional spaces. Less privacy sensitive rooms (such as kitchen, dining & living rooms) are located in more publicly visible areas.

6 Everyday needs are designed into the development.

This includes storage spaces, waste bin storage & washing lines.

Access & Parking Areas

Long driveways should share many of the same features as a safe and attractive street. This includes safe and clear pedestrian access, quality landscaping with trees and buildings that are designed to actively face the driveway area.

1. **Homes have clearly defined entrances & views over driveway areas.**
   This helps create a safe & attractive development. Residents naturally "keep an eye out" for trouble when well-used, less privacy sensitive ground floor rooms have views over the driveway area.

2. **Safe and clear pedestrian paths.**
   These connect homes to the street. They should be clearly distinguished from driveways through differences in colour and/or materials. For safety and security they should have clear lines of sight and be highly visible from surrounding homes.

3. **Attractive landscaping.**
   Landscaping improves the look of the development and is used to provide some physical separation between homes and driveway areas. Where practical include larger trees.

4. **Waste removal requirements are designed into the driveway area.**
   Larger developments may require on-site waste collection. Consider waste truck access requirements and where bins will be placed on collection days.

5. **Garage doors are recessed back from the front of building elevations.**
   This helps to minimise the visual dominance of large, featureless garage doors, creating more attractive and welcoming development.