



DANDENONG ROAD URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK (TOORONGA ROAD TO BATES STREET)

*Prepared for
Stonnington City Council
December 2012*

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1.0 Introduction

The Waverley Road Urban Design Framework Plan (UDF) was prepared by Planisphere in March 2008. It contains a series of design guidelines, many of which were included in the Stonnington Planning Scheme via Amendment C75. The Panel which considered the Amendment recommended that it be adopted in part, subject to a number of changes. However, it found that the proposed controls for Precinct 1, the area between Tooronga Road and Bates Street, were unnecessary. The Panel stated that Precinct 1 had an “*insufficient relationship*” to the Waverley Road Activity Centre with regard to built form controls and, instead an “*important relationship to the Dandenong Road corridor and Caulfield Activity Centre*”.

Since this time, three permit applications for 6-7 storey buildings in Precinct 1 have been determined by VCAT (833-843, 857 and 875-879 Dandenong Road). In all cases, Council sought to have the application refused partly on the basis of visual bulk to the residential properties to the rear (north). In all cases, VCAT directed the issue of a permit, although in the case of 857 Dandenong Road, this was on the basis of amended plans with increased northern setbacks. Further development is anticipated.

DLA was engaged to review the guidelines for Precinct 1 in order to provide clear guidance in relation to the appropriate form of development. This report outlines the work undertaken as part of this review. It concludes with a set of urban design guidelines for this precinct, developed in collaboration with Council officers.

For the purpose of this review, Precinct 1 has been divided into two parts due to their differing characteristics. Sub-Precinct A, Tooronga Road to Boardman Street, is a large, generally triangular area that contains two unusually large properties, has a direct interface with two residential streets and lies across Dandenong Road from a railway embankment.

Sub-Precinct B, Boardman Street to Bates Street, contains a series of narrower blocks that have a more direct interface with residential properties generally across a narrow lane, and lies across Dandenong Road from commercial properties forming part of the Caulfield Activity Centre.

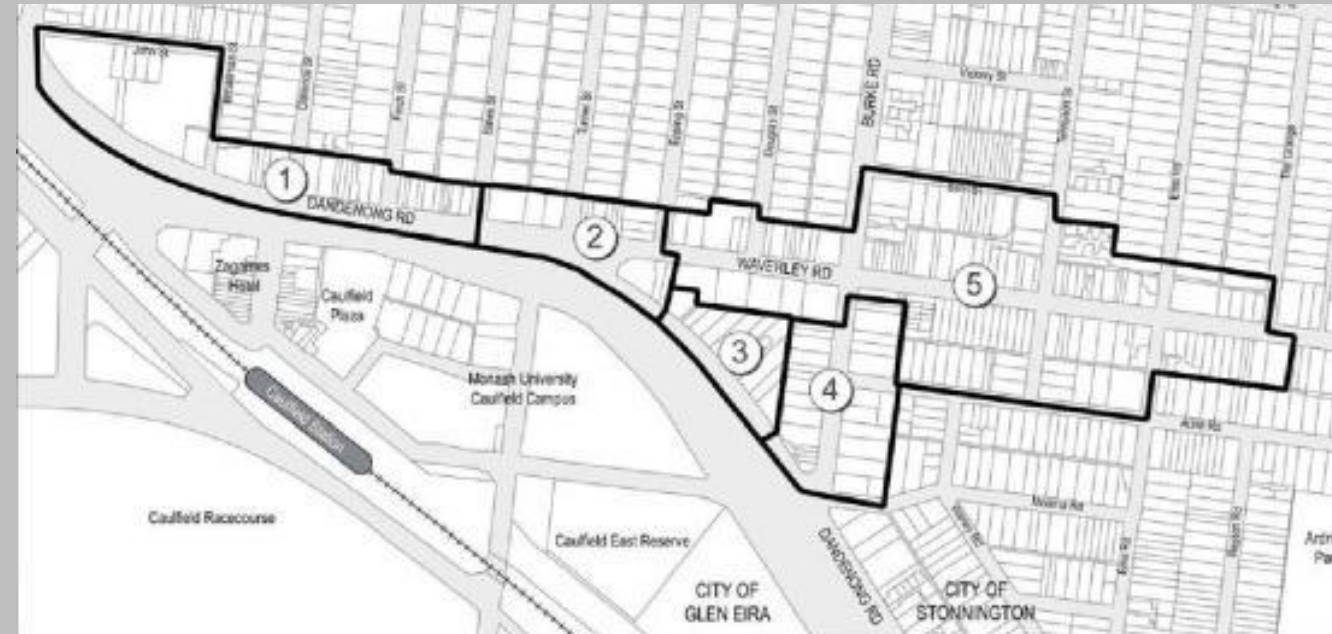


Figure 1.1: Waverley Road UDF Precincts Plan



Figure 1.2: Sub-Precincts A and B

2.0 Strategic Context

The precinct is located on Dandenong Road, within the City of Stonnington. Key aspects of the strategic context include:

- It is located approximately 11km from Melbourne CBD.
- It benefits from good public transport accessibility including a tram line which runs adjacent the eastern part of the precinct and Caulfield Station, located approximately 200m from the precinct.
- Dandenong Road is a primary arterial road within the Metropolitan network.
- It lies directly across Dandenong Road from the Caulfield Major Activity Centre and one block (approximately 150m) from the Waverley Road Neighbourhood Activity Centre.
- It is within walking distance of a number of major recreational and educational attractions including Caulfield Racecourse and Monash University.
- It abuts a residential neighbourhood to the north, including the Gascoigne Estate which includes land in Finch and Bates Streets, and is protected by Schedule 133 to the Heritage Overlay. A Neighbourhood Character Overlay (NCO) is proposed to be introduced to the remainder of the abutting residential area.
- Dandenong Road acts as a significant barrier to movement within the area.

The Strategic Framework Plan at Clause 21.01 of the Stonnington Planning Scheme indicates that Precinct 1 is a Neighbourhood Activity Centre. This reflects its primarily commercial land uses and Business 2 zoning. Were it not for the municipal boundary along Dandenong Road, it might have been considered part of the Caulfield Major Activity Centre immediately to the south side. Indeed, the Panel which considered Amendment C75 found that it “can be viewed more as the periphery of the Caulfield Major Activity Centre than as a separate neighbourhood activity centre as suggested by the MSS”.

East of Bates Street, the land use and zoning reverts to residential, and fronts Waverley Road rather than Dandenong Road with the service road merging into a wider Waverley Road. This separates Precinct 1 from the rest of the original Waverley Road UDF study area. This distinction was commented upon by both the Planning Panel for Amendment C75 and VCAT in relation to the permit application for 857 Dandenong Road.

The Panel Report for Amendment C75 stated that Precinct 1 “has insufficient relationship to the Waverley Road Neighbourhood Activity Centre to warrant restrictions in building height. In contrast, we find it has an important relationship to the Dandenong Road corridor and Caulfield Activity Centre where higher built form should be encouraged”.

In *Nelrup Pty Ltd & Ors v Stonnington CC & Ors* (2010) VCAT commented in relation to Precinct 1 that “were it not for the municipal boundaries, the western section of the amendment area would have been addressed as part of the Caulfield Activity Centre planning. With this in mind we consider the western area affected by the amendment needs to consider a different design response from that of the eastern part of the amendment area”.

State and local policy supports urban consolidation in activity centres to accommodate housing growth in a sustainable manner.

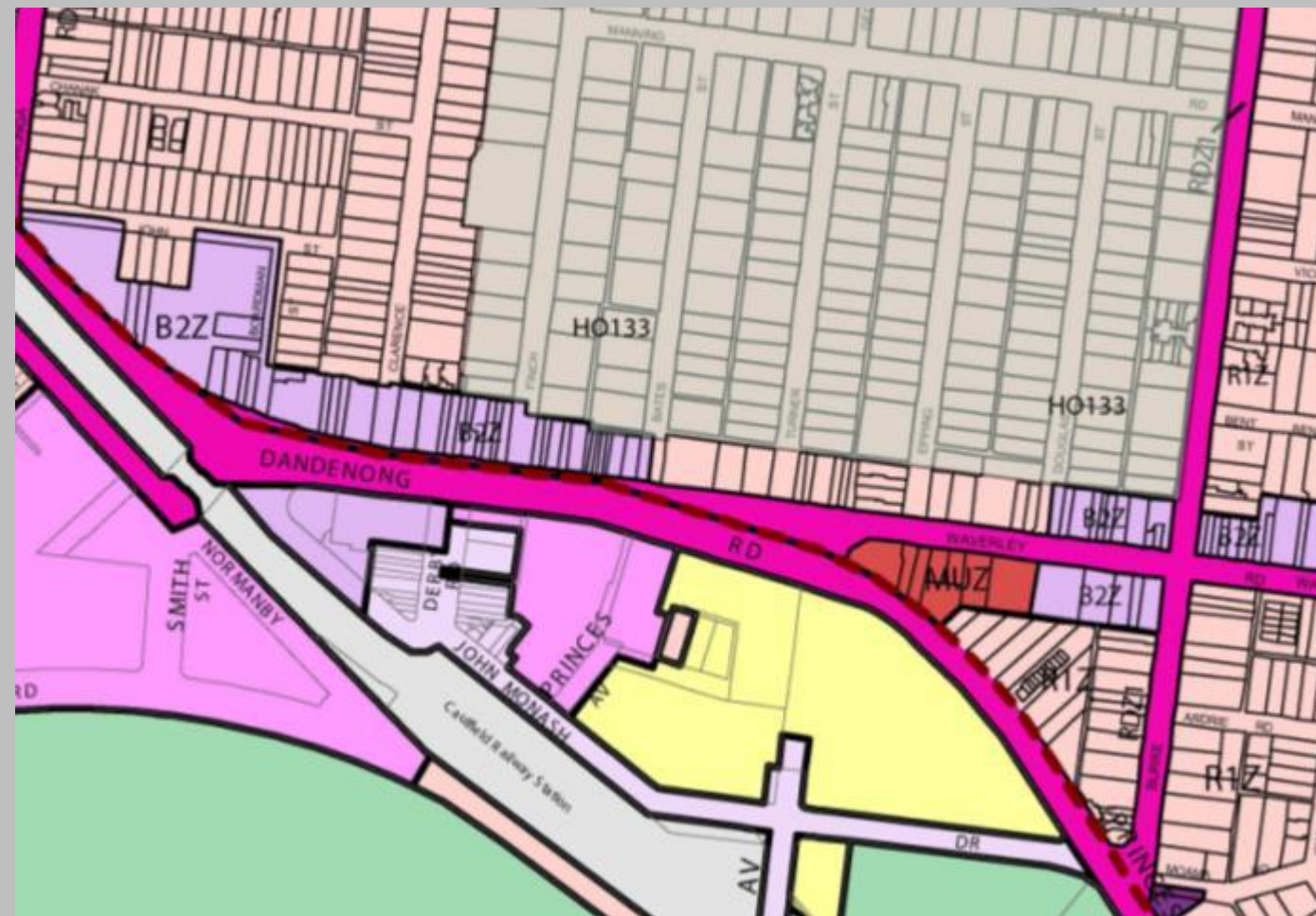


Figure 2.1: Zoning and Overlays Plan showing zones and overlays north and south of Dandenong Road

3.0 Existing Conditions

Precinct A

The built form character along this part of Dandenong Road is highly mixed. It currently comprises buildings of varying scales and forms.

Precinct A is dominated by two large land parcels. To the north-west, 781-805 Dandenong Road is a triangular site currently occupied by a large 2-storey building that accommodates a Fitness First gym. In the eastern half of Precinct A, 809-823 Dandenong Road is a large irregularly shaped site occupied by a Dan Murphy's liquor store in a large single storey building. The remainder of the site accommodates surface level car parking. Both sites are accessed from Dandenong Road. The public realm along the Dandenong Road frontage is of poor quality and is uninviting to pedestrians, mainly due to the proximity of such a busy thoroughfare and lack of an active frontage.

Along John Street, between these two sites, are 4 single storey detached residential dwellings. Directly abutting two of these properties to the south is a narrow property at 807 Dandenong Road, occupied by a single storey detached dwelling. At the south-east corner of the precinct is a generally rectangular site containing a large two storey former industrial building, occupied by a commercial business.

Precinct A has a number of different interfaces, some of which are more sensitive than others. To the south/south-west, Dandenong Road and the rail line buffer it from the residential areas in Caulfield beyond, approximately 85m away. Therefore, the primary design considerations at this interface relate to public realm outcomes.

To the north is John Street, a 15m wide residential street. The land on the northern side of this street is developed for 1-2 storey detached dwellings, fronting the street. John Street is lined by semi-mature trees, a 2.5m wide footpath/nature strip and setbacks of approximately 5-7m, which contribute to its amenity.

To the east is Boardman Street, a 13m wide residential street. The land on the eastern side of this street is developed for single storey detached dwellings, fronting the street. Boardman Street has a narrow footpath along both sides but no nature strip within the road reserve, limiting opportunities for trees to enhance the amenity of the street.

John Street and Boardman Street have been identified as having potential neighbourhood character significance that may warrant the application of an NCO. Clarence Street is currently proposed to form part of the NCO under Planning Scheme Amendment (C168).



Figure 3.1: View south along Boardman Street



Figure 3.2: View west along John Street



Figure 3.3: Dwelling on south side of John Street



Figure 3.4: Aerial Photo of Precinct A

Precinct B

The existing built form character of Precinct B is varied. It can be broadly characterised as containing a continuous row of 1-2 storey buildings, many of which are of limited architectural quality. There are some exceptions to this character, most notably the recent 6 storey mixed-use development at 833-843 Dandenong Road. 7-storey developments have also been approved for 857 Dandenong Road, on the southeast corner of Clarence Street, and 875-879 Dandenong Road, halfway along the block towards Finch Street. The land uses comprise of a mix of retail, commercial, light industrial and food & drink premises.

The public realm and pedestrian experience of Dandenong Road is adversely impacted by the broad and heavily-trafficked nature of the highway, although the treed outer separator that separates the service road from the main carriageways provides some sense of a more intimate character. An awning runs for the majority of street frontage between Finch Street and Bates Street which improves the public realm amenity in that block.

The rear interfaces along this precinct vary in their sensitivities. A laneway (approximately 3m wide) runs along the rear of most properties, separating them from the neighbouring residential properties. Only behind 845-851 Dandenong Road is there no laneway. The adjoining residential properties have a side-on relationship with the properties in the Precinct, apart from the 2-storey townhouse at 3 St John's Lane.

There are four 'conventional' houses and one block of flats alongside the precinct. These all have windows facing towards it. Three of the houses also have rear gardens that directly abut the rear laneway. Whilst the 'primary orientation' of these properties is not towards the precinct, their south-facing windows and rear gardens are nonetheless sensitive to visual bulk impacts of development in this precinct.

The three villa units at 2 Clarence Street are primarily orientated towards Clarence Street and to the north, away from the precinct. Therefore, they are not particularly sensitive to development within it. However, the 2-storey townhouse at 3 St John's Lane faces directly south towards the precinct.

Boardman, Clarence, Finch and Bates Streets provide views towards the precinct from the residential neighbourhood to the north. In Finch and Bates Streets, there is a substantial tree canopy on both sides of the street which filters views towards the precinct, even in winter. St John's Church on Finch Street and the 2-3 storey dance studio on Clarence Street will further limit views towards the precinct from those streets.



Figure 3.5: Recent 6 storey development at 833-843 Dandenong Road



Figure 3.6: Public realm between Finch St and Bates St



Figure 3.7: Aerial Photo of Precinct B



Figure 3.8: Aerial Photo of adjacent properties

These interfaces are illustrated below.



Figure 3.9: A - Villa units at 2/1, 2/2 and 2/3 Clarence Street abutting St John's Lane looking north



Figure 3.10: B - 1 Bates Street looking north



Figure 3.11: C - 2 Finch Street



Figure 3.12: D - 3 St John's Lane

4.0 Urban Design Principles

Dandenong Road frontage

Development in this precinct should contribute to a high quality public realm along the entire Dandenong Road frontage, given that it forms part of an activity centre. Therefore, the guidelines seek development that is built to the front boundary for its full width, to contribute to a continuous frontage without potential places for concealment. It also seeks active frontages to animate the public realm, and an awning or colonnade to provide weather protection.

The guidelines allow for a significant increase in height at the Dandenong Road frontage. This is because there is a strong policy basis for taller buildings in this location and no little reason to limit height, other than to avoid unreasonable impacts on the amenity of adjacent residential streets and properties to the north (discussed below), as concluded by the Panel which considered Amendment C75.

More specifically:

- The proximity of the land to amenities and good public transport makes it well-suited to accommodate housing growth.
- This part of Dandenong Road does not contain a sufficiently consistent or high quality built form character or heritage values to outweigh the strategic attributes of the land for urban consolidation.
- Even 2-storey development will overshadow the northern footpath of Dandenong Road. Limiting development to a single storey to maintain solar access to this footpath would be a gross underdevelopment of this land given its strategic merits.
- The broad width of Dandenong Road ensures that development which complies with the guidelines below will not overshadow the footpath on the south side of Dandenong Road east of Smith Street, in Caulfield, at the equinox. Therefore, development need not be limited in height for solar access reasons.
- In Precinct A, the width of Dandenong Road and the lack of buildings on the south side means that development which complies with the guidelines below will not result in an uncomfortable degree of enclosure. Indeed, taller buildings are needed to have sufficient presence to reduce the visual dominance of the road.

Instead, this land offers an opportunity to create a vibrant new precinct that will contribute to housing objectives, enliven local shops and services, and create a memorable new place identity.

There is an emerging character in Precinct B of 6-7 storey buildings with the top floor setback. Therefore, the guidelines include a discretionary height limit of 25m with a preferred street wall height of 20m to reinforce this character.

The width of Dandenong Road means that development which complies with the guidelines below will not result in an uncomfortable degree of enclosure. Indeed, taller buildings are needed to have sufficient presence to reduce the visual dominance of the road.



Figure 4.1: View south-east across Dandenong Road towards Monash University building

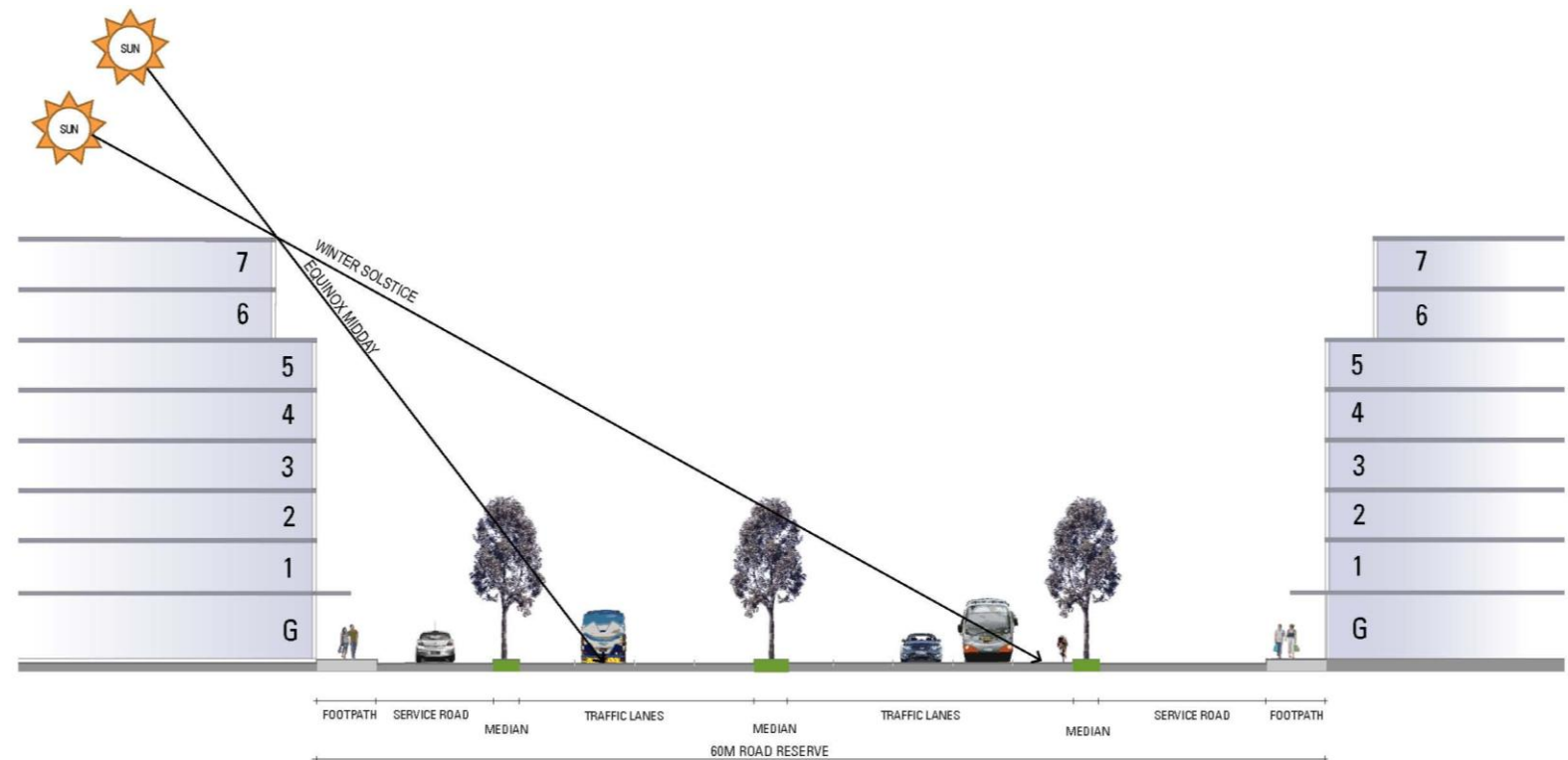


Figure 4.2: Cross-section through Dandenong Road east of Boardman Street

Residential interface of Precinct A

Vehicle access

Given the size of this development opportunity, it will generate a large amount of traffic, which would be incompatible with the quiet residential nature of John and Boardman Streets. Therefore, the guidelines encourage vehicle access in this precinct to be from Dandenong Road wherever possible. The existing crossovers on Dandenong Road may be able to be retained and used to provide vehicle access to new development.

The guidelines do not promote a connection through the site from north to south, as this would not serve a broader desire line. (There is no connection to the north from John and Boardman Streets.) However, this is not intended to discourage the creation of a route if it suits the internal layout of development within this precinct.

Built form at John and Boardman Street frontages

This precinct influences the streetscape of John and Boardman Streets. These streets are currently residential on one side and largely commercial on the other, resulting in an incoherent character. The policy support and market demand for residential development in this location creates an opportunity to repair this character through medium-density housing at the John and Boardman Street frontages of the precinct.

The existing residential development on the north and east side of John and Boardman Street's respectively is largely detached, single-storey houses. However, adopting a similar density for this precinct would represent a significant underdevelopment given its strategic attributes for urban consolidation.

Instead, the guidelines propose 3-storey residential development at the John and Boardman Street frontages. This will both respond to housing policy and complement the existing character of the residential development in these streets.

The guidelines promote a number of siting and design elements at these frontages that will assist development in contributing to the residential character of John and Boardman Streets. This includes:

- A 3m front setback. This reflects the modest front gardens typically found in Boardman Street. Whilst the setbacks in John Street are generally larger, a 3m setback strikes an appropriate balance between complementing the existing character and making efficient use of this land.

- Soft landscaping within the front setback. This will reflect the landscaped front gardens found in John and Boardman Streets. Canopy trees are specifically sought along the Boardman Street frontage because there is insufficient space for them in the road reserve, whereas John Street is well planted.
- The third level generally recessed from that below. This will reduce the visual impact of development and result in a 'street wall' closer in height to the scale of existing development. The guidelines do not prescribe a specific dimension, preferring to allow the flexibility for creative design responses.

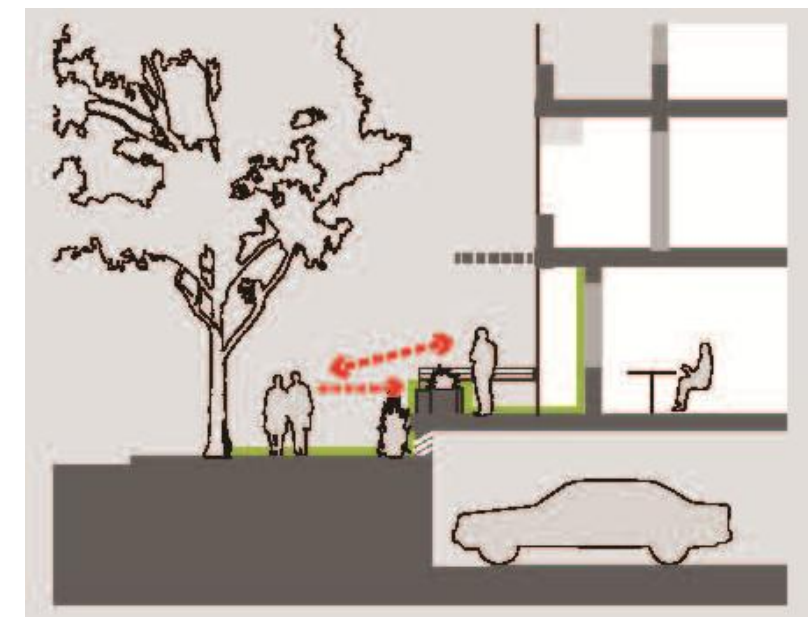


Figures 4.3 and 4.4: An example of appropriately recessed third levels



- Modulation of the built form to reflect the rhythm of existing residential development in the street. For example, development could include recessed sections between pairs of apartments or townhouses to mimic the gaps between detached houses.
- A contemporary domestic architectural character. This will reinforce the residential character of the street but allow for development to be authentic to its era.
- Front fences up to 1.5m high from footpath level. This reflects the typical requirement for fences in suburban areas.
- Individual entries to ground floor dwellings. This will reflect the frequency of front doors in the existing residential development.

The guidelines provide for the ground floor of development to be raised up to 1m above natural ground level. This can help to provide privacy for ground floor apartments with modest front setbacks without the need for a high front fence that would preclude passive surveillance. It is particularly useful for providing some privacy for terraces in the front setback.



Figures 4.5: Indicative diagram illustrating raised ground floor terraces, providing privacy for the resident and casual surveillance of the street

Built form away from John and Boardman Street frontages

Away from the John and Boardman Street frontages, the large size of this precinct, the lack of sensitivity of its Dandenong Road frontage and its position south of the nearest residential properties offers the potential to accommodate substantial housing growth. However, development should be limited in scale to ensure that it does not overwhelm the character and amenity of John and Boardman Streets.

There are many different ways in which the potential of the site can be realised while avoiding unreasonable impacts on the residential area to the north. For example, well-spaced and slender towers can have a similar visual impact as lower but more continuous building forms. Therefore, the guidelines avoid prescribing a single massing solution for this precinct, which would unnecessarily preclude other, potentially equally or more successful options. Instead, they outline the requirement for development to avoid overwhelming John and Boardman Streets and illustrate two possible design solutions.

6-12 John Street, which form part of the precinct, are zoned Residential 1 and currently comprise detached houses, with their private open spaces at the rear surrounded by the remainder of the precinct. Until such time as these properties are redeveloped, they represent sensitive interfaces to taller development, primarily for visual bulk reasons. Therefore, the guidelines seek setbacks in accordance with ResCode Standard B17 within 30m of the rear of these properties, generally within the primary orientation of their rear yards, until they are developed. This will avoid unreasonable visual bulk while still allowing substantial development. Beyond 30m, the visual bulk impacts of taller development are not considered to be unreasonable, given that they are more than a typical property length away.

At the northwest and southeast corners of this precinct, where John and Boardman Streets meet Dandenong Road, the guidelines promote 'mid-rise' 6-storey forms to mediate between the lower-rise development on the residential streets and higher-rise forms on the highway. This will also mark the street corners in views along the residential streets. These forms are encouraged to step down to 5-storeys at the John and Boardman Street frontages, to contribute to a gradual transition between the lower and higher rise forms.

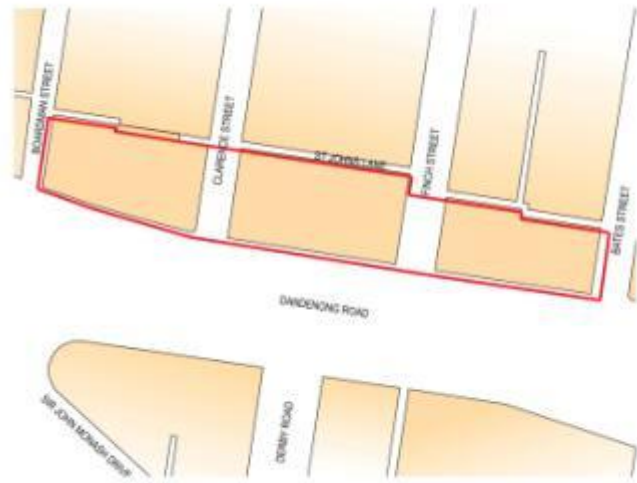
The proposed 5-6 storey form will match that recently built at 833 Dandenong Road. The 5-storey form at the Boardman Street edge will only be approximately 5m above the height of the existing building at 825 Dandenong Road, avoiding unreasonable impact on the nearby Boardman Street residential properties.

Residential interface of Precinct B

Rear access

There is a laneway along much of the residential interface of this precinct (857-887 Dandenong Road and 1-33 Waverley Road). Development of these properties is encouraged to locate vehicle access on this laneway to maintain a continuous active frontage to Dandenong Road. However, the laneway is only approximately 3m wide. Therefore, the guidelines include a requirement for a 3m setback to widen the lane to 6m, to provide for 2-way vehicle movement. Development is also encouraged to locate substations and other services cabinets on the laneway to minimise its visual impact on the primary public realm.

There are dead-end laneways behind 2 Boardman Street and 851 Dandenong Road. Development in this area is encouraged to provide for the connection of these lanes to provide better vehicle access to the rear of these properties.



Figures 4.6: Diagram illustrating existing lanes at the rear of the study area

Built form

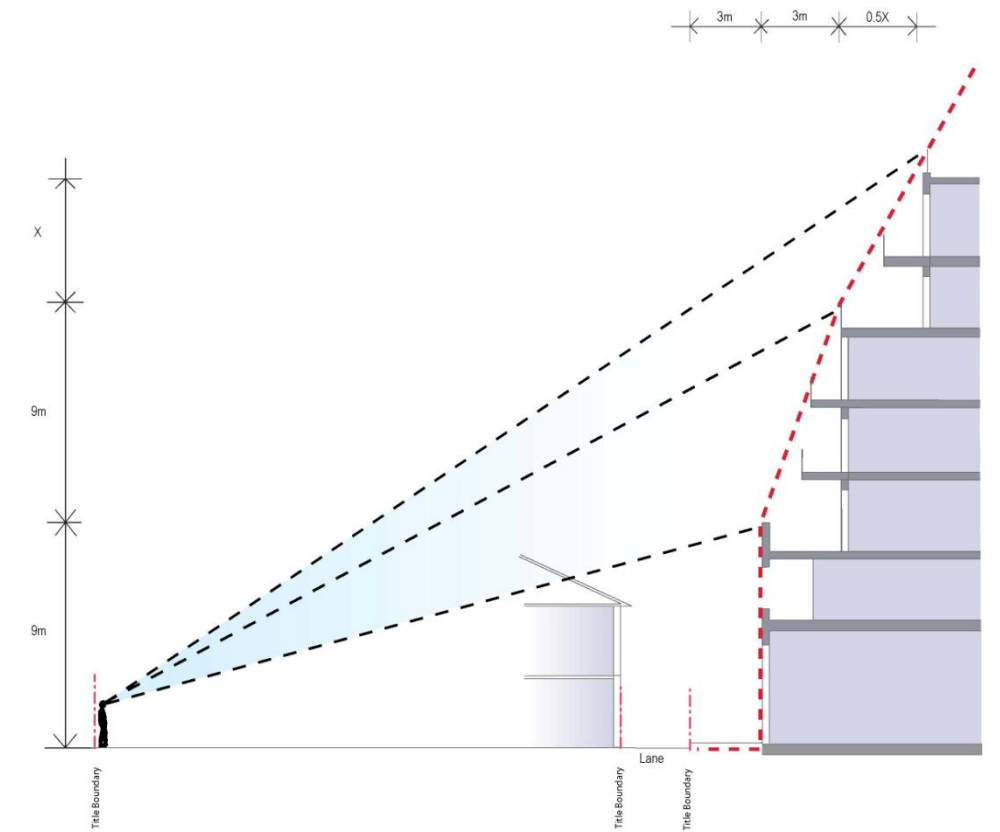
The use of ResCode provisions is proposed to guide building setbacks adjacent to residential properties. In relation to the properties between Boardman and Bates Streets, it is assumed that this is to avoid unreasonable visual bulk, given that the residential properties are to the north where they will not be overshadowed by development within the UDF area, and overlooking can be avoided by privacy screens and obscure glass.

However, ResCode is designed for suburban residential development, rather than activity centres. It is a well-accepted principle that occupiers of residential properties adjacent to business-zoned land must temper their expectations in relation to amenity protection. Further, the residential properties adjacent to this part of the study area generally have non-sensitive interfaces with the business-zoned land. Given that amenity expectations must be different adjacent to business-zoned land, it is considered that ResCode provisions are inappropriate. Instead, a new set of setback guidelines has been developed.

There are three components to the proposed setback guidelines:

1. A 2-storey form is provided for at the base of development. This matches the height of the existing 2-storey buildings in the study area and on adjacent residential properties. A height of 9m is provided for this form, to allow for the higher floor-to-floor requirements of a commercial ground floor use and a privacy screen at the edge of the third level.
2. A 3-level mid-section is provided for at a further setback of 3m. This will be visible from the adjacent residential properties. It will be higher than the existing buildings in the study area (apart from that at 833 Dandenong Road). However, this is an appropriate reflection of the suitability of this land for more intensive development. The additional setback will reduce its visual impact. A height of 9m is provided for this part of development, to allow for three levels with a floor-to-floor dimension of 3m.
3. Should development rise higher than 18m, the guidelines require it to be set back a further 1.5m per floor. This will ensure that it is highly recessive in views from the adjacent residential properties.

These three components of development and their visibility from adjacent residential properties is illustrated in the diagram below:



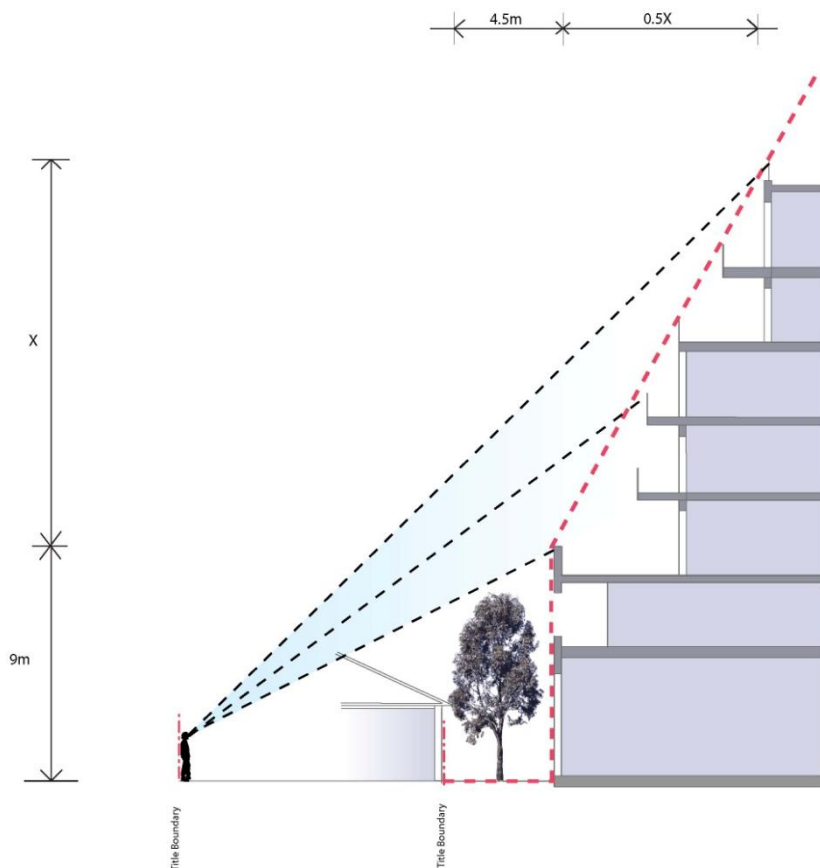
Figures 4.7: Diagram for properties adjacent to a lane, with sightlines from the far side of adjacent rear gardens

If the properties with no rear lane (845-849 Dandenong Road) are proposed to be developed, and it is not feasible for a rear lane to be established, the guidelines are varied. Rather than a 3m lane plus a 3m setback to the base of development, a 4.5m setback is required. This places development 1.5m closer to the adjacent residential properties. However, this greater proximity is compensated for by a requirement for screen landscaping. The middle and top sections of development are required to be set back the same distance from adjacent residential properties as elsewhere in the study area (taking the width of the lane into account).

Whilst the residential properties adjacent to this precinct generally have non-sensitive interfaces with the business-zoned land, the guidelines provide for greater setbacks to be required opposite sensitive areas such as rear gardens with an open aspect towards the development, should this circumstance arise.

Detailed building design

Stepping buildings in the manner required by the guidelines can result in unattractive 'wedding cake' building forms. However, it is also possible to design attractive stepped building forms. The guidelines seek design concepts that integrate the required 'steps' within an over-arching design concept.



Figures 4.8: Diagram for properties not adjacent to a lane, with sightlines from the far side of adjacent rear gardens

Given the visual prominence of buildings over three storeys, the guidelines seek to ensure that upper facades are finely-articulated and lightweight in appearance to minimise any adverse visual impact.

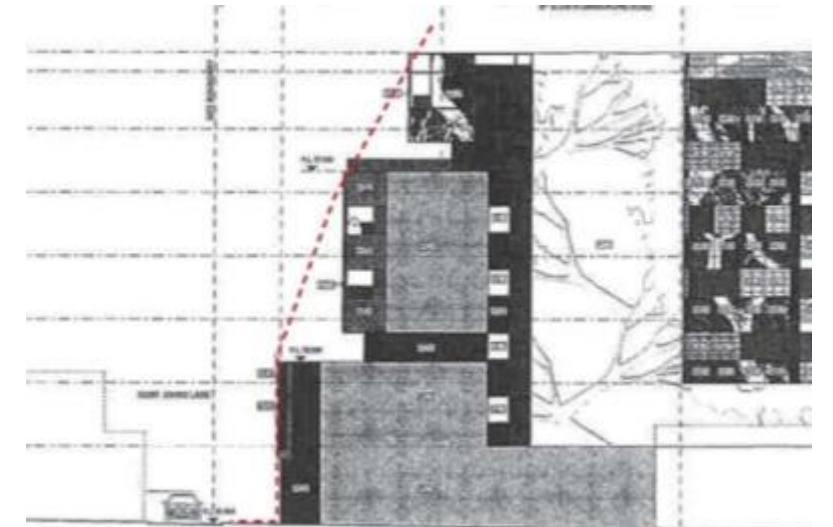
Finally, the guidelines refer to standard overlooking and equitable development expectations for completeness.



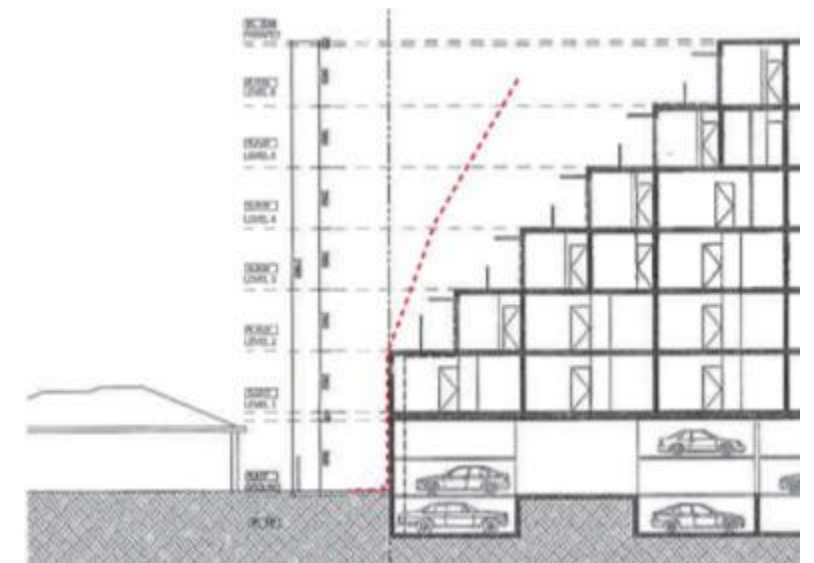
Figures 4.9: An example of a well-articulated and lightweight 6-7 storey building - Moore Park, Sydney



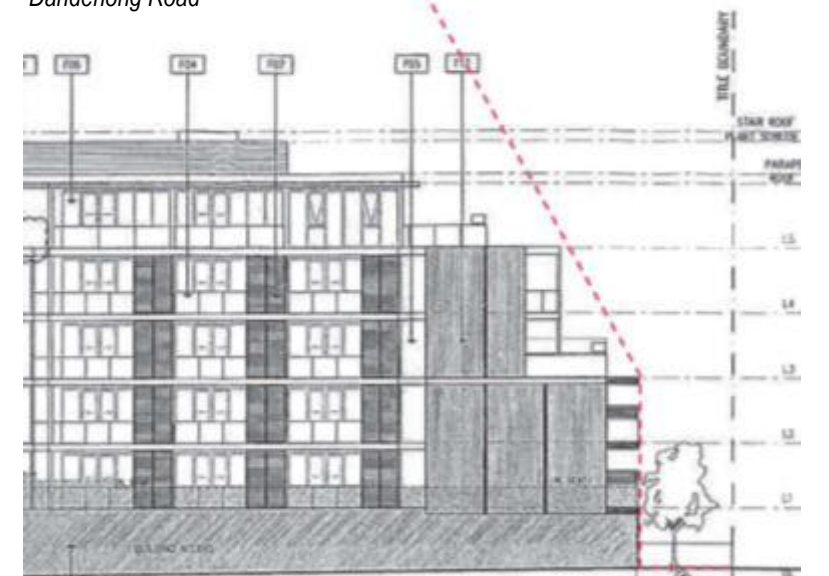
Figures 4.10: An example of an attractive stepped building form – The Melburnian, St Kilda Road



Figures 4.11: The proposed setbacks overlaid on a recent approval at 875-879 Dandenong Road



Figures 4.12: The proposed setbacks overlaid on a recent approval at 857 Dandenong Road

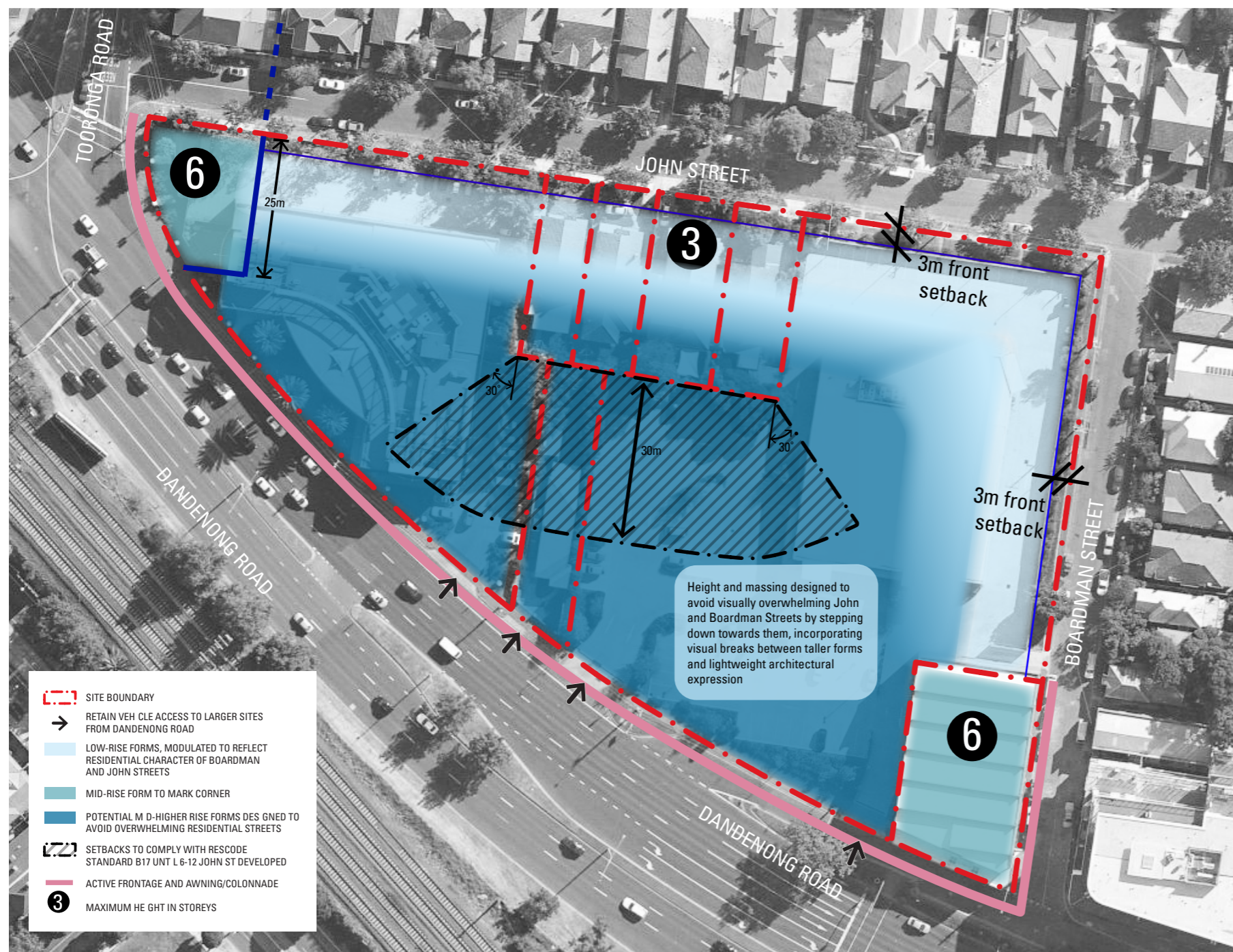


Figures 4.13: The proposed setbacks overlaid on a recent approval at 833-843 Dandenong Road

General

Clauses 15 and 22.02 of the Stonnington Planning Scheme provide further guidance regarding the detailed design of apartment buildings, along with the Activity Centre Guidelines and the Guidelines for Higher Density Residential Development. These guidelines do not seek to repeat this guidance to avoid duplication. However, nothing in these guidelines should be taken to reduce the need to respond to other relevant policies and guidelines.

Appendix A



Objectives

- To complement and provide a transition to the low-scale residential character of John and Boardman Streets.
- To avoid unreasonable impacts on the amenity of surrounding residential streets and properties.
- To avoid underdevelopment of the land.
- To contribute to the safety and visual interest of the public realm.

Guidelines

John Street and Boardman Street frontages (excluding the northwest corner of 781 Dandenong Road and 825 Dandenong Road)

- Development should:
 - avoid vehicle access from John and Boardman Streets wherever possible, and
 - incorporate residential uses for the length of the street frontages, at all levels.
- Buildings should:
 - be set back at least 3m from the street,
 - present a maximum height of 3 storeys at the street frontages, with the front wall of the third level visually recessed from those below,
 - be modulated to reflect the rhythm of existing residential development in the street, and
 - have a contemporary domestic architectural character.
- The ground floor level of buildings may be raised up to 1m above natural ground level.
- Street frontages should incorporate:
 - front fences on the street boundary with a maximum height of 1.5m above the footpath,
 - individual entries to ground level dwellings, and
 - soft landscaping within the front setback, including canopy trees along the Boardman Street frontage.

NW and SE corners

- Within 25m of Boardman and John Streets, buildings should be limited to a maximum height of 6 storeys, with any sixth level set back from the boundary with Boardman or John Street.

Balance of site

- Vehicle access should be from Dandenong Road where possible.
- Car parking, substations and other services cabinets should be located to minimise their visibility from the public realm.
- Buildings should be built to the Dandenong Road boundary. There is no requirement for upper level setbacks from Dandenong Road.
- Buildings should be designed to avoid visually overwhelming John and Boardman Streets. This may be achieved through a number of techniques, including limiting their height, incorporating visual breaks between upper forms and adopting a contrasting and lighter-weight architectural expression to that of the lower-rise form on John and Boardman Streets. The Design Suggestions below should be used as a guide to building massing that may be acceptable.
- If the buildings at 6-12 John Street are to remain, buildings within 30m of the southern boundary of these properties and within 30° of their east and west boundary alignments should be set back from them in accordance with ResCode Standard B17.
- Buildings should present active ground floor frontages to Dandenong Road with clear glazing for a minimum of 50% of the facade width.
- Buildings should incorporate an awning over the Dandenong Road footpath and/or a colonnade within the property boundary.
- Building should have well articulated facades at lower levels and a visually interesting form at upper levels.

Design Suggestions

The design suggestions provide indicative massing options for the land that avoid overwhelming the character and amenity of John and Boardman Streets. These are examples of how the intent of the guidelines may be achieved. However, alternative massing arrangements will be considered provided they meet the guidelines. Both design suggestions incorporate well-modulated 3-storey development along the John and Boardman Street frontages, in accordance with the guidelines.

Both design suggestions assume 6-12 John Street are redeveloped, either as a discrete development or part of a larger redevelopment. The height of development in the southeast corner of 781 Dandenong Road and the northwest corner of 809 Dandenong Road would need to be reduced while these properties remain detached houses with their private open space at the rear.