



South Gippsland  
Shire Council

# Siting and Design Guide

*Dwellings and Associated Buildings  
in the Rural Activity and  
Farming Zones*





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# Introduction

The South Gippsland Shire Council has some of the most picturesque landscapes and productive agriculture in Victoria.

This siting and design guide for dwellings and outbuildings has been prepared to assist proponents of new developments to enhance and respect this picturesque landscape and is designed to reflect the provisions of the South Gippsland Planning Scheme.

Each application is subject to detailed consideration and it is recommended applicants meet with Council prior to submitting a planning application.



# Goals

## Rural Character:

The objectives of this Design Guide are to maintain the rural character of the land, outside towns and villages by:

- Siting buildings having the least possible visual impact;
- Minimizing the scale of buildings having the least possible impact and;
- Selecting design elements such as shape, colour materials that are most appropriate to the surrounding area.



# Goals

Protection of Agricultural Land:

The objectives of this Design Guide are to maintain the most efficient use of agricultural land by:

- Discouraging construction of buildings which do not directly contribute to agricultural production; and
- Encourage grouping of necessary buildings to minimise loss of productive land.



# Subdivision

Modern farm management is generally most efficiently carried out on larger parcels of land.

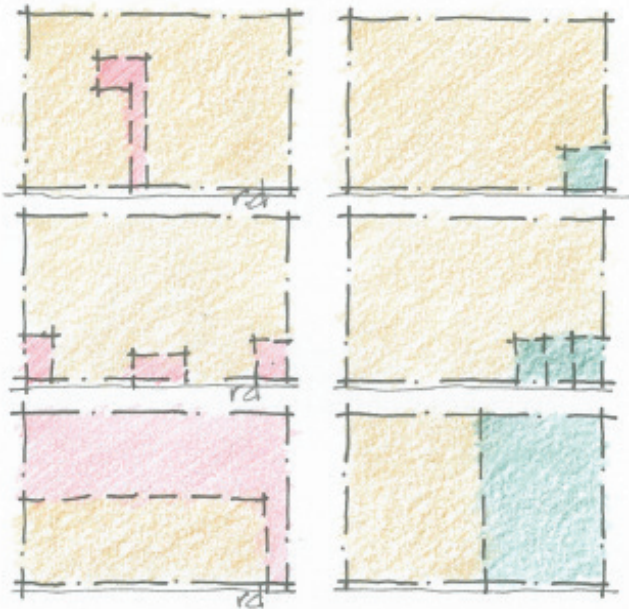
Subdivision of productive farm land is discouraged:

- Where resultant lots will be inadequate in size or inefficient in shape, to allow ongoing productive farming; and
- Where small lots are created with the intention of allowing more dwellings on the land.

**Discouraged**



**Preferred**

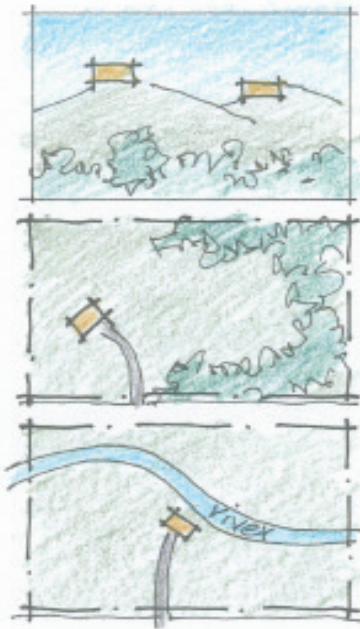


# Siting

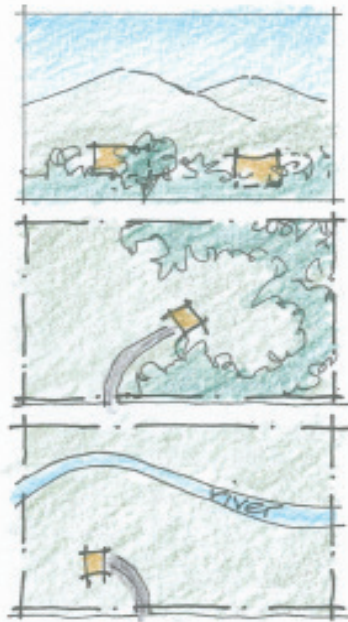
Careful consideration of the most suitable location for new dwellings and associated buildings, should be part of the design process, and include:

- Locate buildings within the landscape. Avoid use of prominent ridge lines and hill tops;
- Select locations with existing vegetation to screen buildings if available; and
- Allow for separation distance from waterways to minimise risks of water pollution.

**Discouraged**



**Preferred**





# Scale and Shape of Buildings

Dwellings and associated buildings should be of scale and shape to maximise their harmony with the landscape.

Buildings should:

- Not be excessively tall;
- Lower buildings are less conspicuous;
- Not be large in scale. Smaller built elements are less intrusive; and
- Use shapes which are not alien in landscape, such as severely geometric forms.

**Discouraged**



**Preferred**



# Colour

Dwellings and associated buildings can be designed to be less conspicuous in landscape by the selection of colours which do not strongly contrast with the background colours of the site.

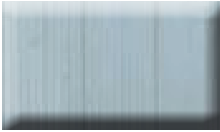


# Materials

Dwellings and associated buildings can be designed to be less conspicuous in landscape by the:

- Selection of materials common to rural areas rather than hi-tech alternatives; and
- Choice of materials without bright reflective surfaces or highly reflective pale colours.

## Discouraged



- Highly polished materials; and
- Glossy metal cladding panels.

## Preferred

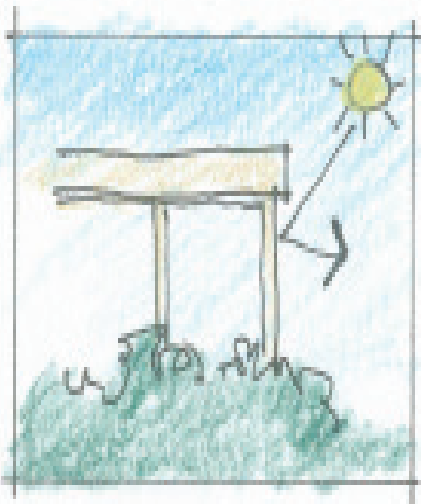


- Timber;
- Stone;
- Brickwork;
- Cement sheet; cladding; and
- Render finishes.

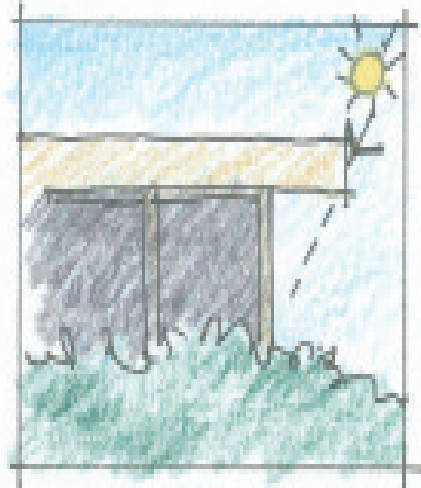
# Reflectivity

Dwellings and associated buildings can be designed to be less conspicuous in landscape by the shading of larger glass areas.

**Discouraged**



**Preferred**



- White or very light colours;
- Zincalume or other metallic surfaces;
- Very shiny or reflective materials;
- Extensive smooth surfaces;
- Large unshaded areas of glass; and
- Any material with a reflectivity of great than 35%.

- Colours as described previously on page 10;
- Low sheen surfaces;
- Rough surfaces; and
- Roof or shading overhangs to glazed areas.

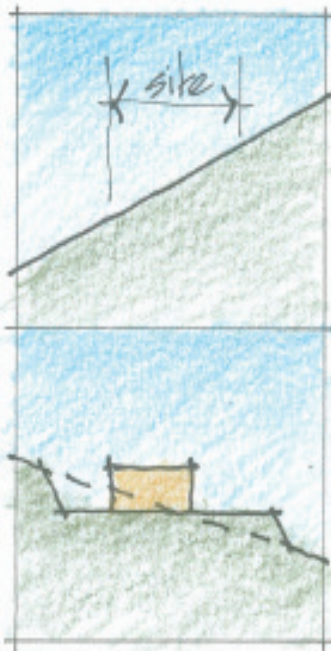
# Earthworks

A major part of the impact of buildings on the landscape is the works that surround the building. Large excavations are highly visible and carry with the risk of: erosion, pollution of waterways and consequential effects.

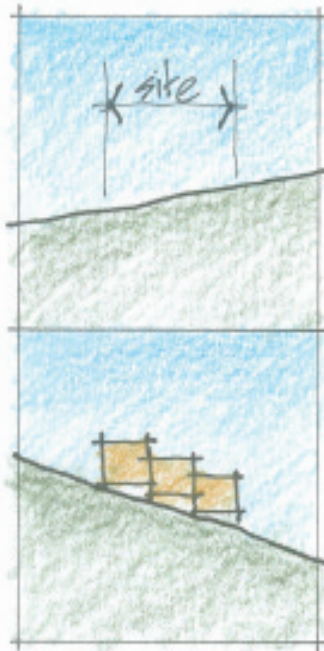
It is desirable to design buildings which are:

- Situated on less inclination (slope); and
- Have built form which works with the slope rather than requiring large excavations.

**Discouraged**



**Preferred**

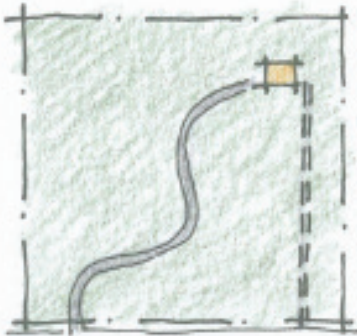


# Infrastructure

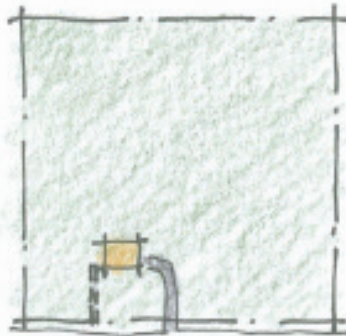
Dwellings and associated buildings on rural land are often distant from existing roads and services. To assist in minimising the effects of infrastructure on the land it is preferred that:

- Site locations are selected to minimise the length of driveways and service connections;
- Access driveways do not cross steep land requiring significant earthworks and drainage;
- Where possible services are installed in underground trenches; and
- Fencing reflect the rural style.

**Discouraged**



**Preferred**

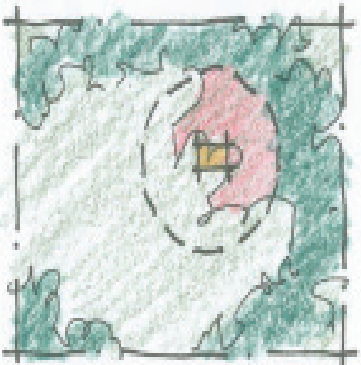
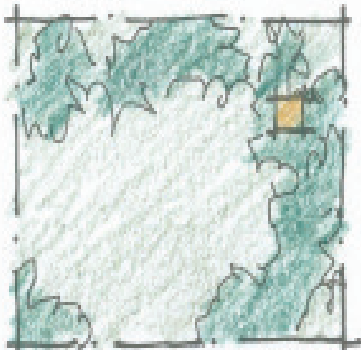


# Protection of Vegetation

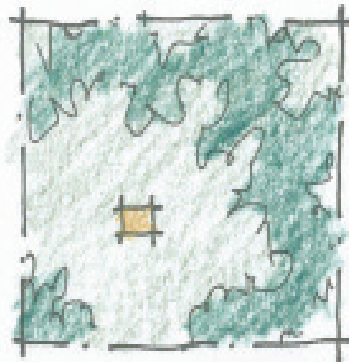
The major component of maintaining a rural landscape character includes the existence of mature native and in some cases non-native undergrowth and trees. Where new buildings are to be introduced it is preferred that:

- Existing clearings are selected where possible;
- The site location is selected to minimise consequential vegetation clearance (including measures for bushfire safety); and
- Existing vegetation is maintained to assist with screening of new buildings from other locations.

**Discouraged**



**Preferred**



# Bush Fire Safety

A well designed amenity or use of land will need to incorporate bushfire safety. Key aspects of bushfire safety:

- Do not locate buildings on top of ridges, narrow ridge tops or saddles;
- Ensure there are appropriate vegetation setbacks to create a defendable space, and reduce the effects of radiant heat from direct flame;
- Locate houses away from unmanaged vegetation;
- Apply appropriate vegetation screening for buildings whilst complying with Bushfire Mangement Overlay standards; and
- Plant or retain large vegetation to slow ember attack.

**Discouraged**



**Preferred**





# Permits and Approvals

Construction of a dwelling or an associated building may require one or more of the following permits:

## Planning Approval

There are two principals to Planning Control over land in the South Gippsland Shire:

1. Zones: Land Use Zones are established to control the activities which may be permitted.
2. Overlays: Planning Overlays are placed over the land to control the nature and scale of works which may be permitted and/or to protect important elements of the land.



# Permits and Approvals

Construction of a dwelling or an associated building in a rural area within the South Gippsland Shire may require Planning Approval (to be assessed and issued by Council). This will depend on the particular Zones and Overlays which may exist over the land for:

- The use of land;
- The use and development of the land; and
- Subdivision of the land.

The existence and nature of Zones and Overlays affecting your land can be checked by:

- Enquiring at the South Gippsland Shire Council offices;
- Access to the South Gippsland Shire Council website [www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au](http://www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au) ; and
- Access to the Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure website [www.dtpli.vic.gov.au](http://www.dtpli.vic.gov.au)



# Permits and Approvals

The requirement and issuing of a Planning Approval is the first step in proceeding with a dwelling or an associated building.

Owners should note that after Planning Approval (or if Planning Approval is not required) other permits may be required to allow construction of a building to commence.

## Building Approval

A Building Permit is required to construct building works and is normally issued by a private Building Surveyor.



# Permits and Approvals

The Building Permit is issued after checking the design for the structural safety, health and other requirements described in the Building Code of Australia and the Victoria Building Regulations.

## Wastewater Approval

A Permit to install a septic tank may be required. This is issued by the South Gippsland Shire Council's Wasterwater department. A permit maybe required to ensure proper treatment and dispersal of septic waste products from a dwelling - where reticulated sewerage is not available.

## Service Suppliers

Permits for connection to services such as: electricity, gas and water may be required. These permits are normally applied for by the Contractors for the works.

## Road Opening Permit

A road opening permit may be required for a drive way cross over or for any works to be completed in the road reserve.

# References

1. Country Fire Authority, Landscape for Bushfire Garden Design and Plant Selection, Victoria, November 2011.
2. Department of Transport Planning and Local Infrastructure, South Gippsland Planning Scheme, Victoria 2013, viewed 18/11/2013, <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/schemes/southgippsland>.
3. South Gippsland Shire Council, Housing and Settlement Strategy 2013, Victoria, September 2013.

This document is also referenced in Section 20 Clause 21.16 of the South Gippsland Planning Scheme.







*To obtain a copy visit Council's website  
[www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au](http://www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au)*

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