

7 Your landscape

The overall landscape design for Mullum Creek responds to the topography, landform, remnant vegetation, microclimate, solar access and views across the estate, and enriches existing ecological values. Following this approach, landscaping of homesites will promote environmentally sensitive living with productive gardens and a visual character consistent with the natural environment of the Mullum Mullum Valley.

A notice of DRC Design Approval, together with a set of stamped building and landscape drawings, are required as part of your submission to Manningham City Council for a planning permit.

Objectives

- Support Council's Design and Development Overlay DDO11.
- Design landscaping in front yards to complement the public reserve areas, to promote a cohesive streetscape consistent with the natural environment.
- Where homesites adjoin public reserve areas, design home landscaping to complement these reserves.
- Minimise the impact of landscaping on natural landforms and soil profiles.
- Minimise erosion and soil loss.
- Promote the use of landscaping materials such as soil, rock and timber occurring naturally on or as close as possible to the site.
- Utilise landscaping materials of low toxicity and with low environmental impacts in their production and use.
- Promote the use of locally indigenous plant species on private allotments, consistent with vegetation communities occurring naturally in the vicinity.
- Support the thermal efficiency and passive solar design of homes at Mullum Creek, by careful selection and placement of trees and shrubs, to preserve good solar access for dwellings across the estate.
- Encourage the use of productive food gardens and plants on allotments.
- Promote on-site infiltration and use of rainfall.
- Use the opportunities provided by judicious planting to afford privacy and avoid potential overlooking across neighbouring lots.
- Reduce fire hazard from the planting of fire-prone vegetation on homesites.

Detailed Requirements

- R43** *Landscape Design Approval must be obtained from the DRC as part of the Step 2 Developed Design Review.*
- R44** *All landscaping works must be executed in accordance with the Landscape Design Approval.*
- R45** *Landscaping works for the front garden and must be completed within 6 months from occupation of the dwelling, or other timeframe as agreed to by the DRC.*
- R46** *Landscaping works for the remainder of a homesite must be completed within 12 months from occupation of the dwelling, or other timeframe as agreed to by the DRC.*

7.1 Landscape design approval

Landscape designs for homesites that are in line with these Guidelines will provide a consistent aesthetic and environmental character throughout Mullum Creek. The DRC will review your landscape plans as part of the Step 2 Developed Design Review process.

Mullum Creek offers an Incentive to engage a recommended landscape architect or designer to prepare a conceptual landscape design for your site. Close consultation between your building and landscape designers will provide the best possible outcome for your site.

Your landscape plan should take into account the character of your homesite with regard to its landform, solar access, drainage, views and existing trees. It is very important to integrate landscape design with the design of your home and lot from the outset, to ensure a highly functional and aesthetic outcome.

The ‘**Step 2 Developed Design Checklist**’ available on the Mullum Creek website details the landscape design detail you must submit for review.

Consider seasonal conditions when constructing and planting out your landscape. The DRC may consider seasonal limitations in assessing proposals for extending completion dates.

7.2 3D vegetation envelope plans

Plantings of tall trees and shrubs can have a significant overshadowing impact on neighbouring properties. Each lot at Mullum Creek has a prescribed 3D vegetation envelope which is shown on its 3D vegetation envelope plan. The surfaces of the 3D vegetation envelope shape the zone within which trees and shrubs (when at their mature height and form) must be located so as to minimise their overshadowing of homes on adjoining lots.

The 3D vegetation envelope plan for your lot, together with an explanatory note, are available on the Mullum Creek website. Also ensure that your plantings do not obscure winter sunlight to your own home and private open spaces.

Objective

- Ensure that planted vegetation does not obscure sunlight to adjacent homesites ¹.

Detailed Requirement

- R47** *Shrubs and trees must be planted in accordance with the 3D vegetation envelope plan relating to your lot.*

7.3 Protected trees and tree protection zones (TPZ)

The Mullum Creek landscape contains a number of existing indigenous trees with high aesthetic and biological value that must be retained and protected. These trees provide a high level of amenity not only to the local area, but also to your home, as well as providing faunal habitat. Trees that are considered especially important to the Mullum Creek landscape have been designated as 'Mullum Creek Protected Trees' and are shown on your Lot Plan. In addition, Council requires the retention of a number of other trees; these are also shown on the Lot Plan.

Each Lot Plan will show a tree protection zone (TPZ) for all protected trees. The TPZ is the area around the trunk required to be protected to ensure the health and survival of the tree. Careful consideration should be applied when siting a building or structure, or undertaking works near an existing tree that is to be retained. Refer to the "Tree Protection Zone Guide" on the Mullum Creek website for further information.

Detailed Requirements

- R48** *Trees marked on lot plans as 'Mullum Creek protected' (MCP) must not be removed. Lot plans also show other trees pre-existing on lots; the DRC may also require the retention of these trees. All trees require Council permit to remove.*
- R49** *The TPZs of all retained trees must be protected during any works, developments or activities, for example through fencing out the entire TPZ.*
- R50** *Trees marked on lot plans as Mullum Creek Protected must not be pruned or lopped except where necessary for safety or tree health reasons, as supported by an arborist's report made available to the DRC before commencing work. All trees retained on lots require Council approval to prune or lop for reasons other than ornamental or regeneration purposes.*

¹ The 3D vegetation envelopes ensure that for a minimum of 5 hours between 9am and 4pm on May 22 or July 22, no surface of any building envelope will be overshadowed by vegetation located within the 3D envelopes on adjacent lots. At the winter solstice (June 22), overshadowing is limited to quite shallow strips around the base of envelopes. The number of hours per day in which surfaces of building envelopes remain clear of shadows increases quite quickly either side of May 22 and July 22.

R51 *Any application to the DRC for a variation of the TPZ protection clause of Requirement R48 must be accompanied by:*

- *An explanation of why encroachment on the TPZ is considered necessary or desirable; and*
- *Advice from a qualified arborist that details the type and extent of encroachment, and proposed construction and protection methods.*

Where the DRC has approved a variation of Requirement R48, the conditions on that approval, which may include a requirement for hand excavation, must be complied with.

R52 *All equipment, materials and debris must be kept clear of protected trees and their TPZs during construction.*

Guide

G46 At early design stage, minimise potential conflict between existing trees and new buildings, earthworks, external structures, driveways and pavings.

Application requirement

Protected trees and associated TPZs must be clearly indicated on any documentation submitted to the DRC for Design Approval. If the TPZ of a tree is to be encroached upon, an arborist's report outlining measures to protect the tree must accompany your submission. Applications for Council planning permits that involve any encroachment on TPZs will also require this information.

Additional information

The removal of protected trees other than Mullum Creek Protected Trees may be agreed to by the DRC. However, DRC agreement does not assure Council approval and Council permission must be independently sought. The Planning Scheme's Significant Landscape Overlay SLO8 requires that a planning permit be obtained to remove, destroy or lop native and exotic vegetation. Refer to the Manningham Planning Scheme and contact Council for advice. A report from a qualified arborist may be required to support requests for removal.

7.4 Fencing

Mullum Creek promotes an open, spacious and visually permeable landscape character, in keeping with the natural environment and the nearby rural bushland setting. Therefore fencing will be open and rural in nature but of a high quality. In accordance with Council's Design and Development Overlay (DDO11), fencing is not allowed within front boundary setbacks. Where agreement can be reached between adjoining lot owners, Mullum Creek encourages them to dispense with inter-lot fencing altogether, as this will afford a further openness and communal feeling for the estate. Fencing is to be constructed using timbers that are harvested in an environmentally sensitive manner (see Requirement R30).

Boundaries adjoining reserves are fenced by the developer in the basic post and wire format approved by Council.

Objectives

- Support Council's Design and Development Overlay DDO11.
- Ensure a consistent suite of fencing types are adopted to provide a coherent visual appearance throughout the estate.
- Adopt fencing types and layouts that maintain an open, spacious and visually permeable rural-style landscape throughout the estate.
- Maximise the use of environmentally sensitive fencing materials.

Detailed Requirement

R53 *The following must apply to all fencing built on a homesite:*

- 1) *Fencing must be installed as per the Fencing Guide which can be downloaded from the Mullum Creek website, and will be of a simple post and wire type.*
- 2) *The selection of wooden fencing materials must satisfy Requirement R30.*
- 3) *Fence timbers, steel wire and mesh must be left unpainted.*
- 4) *No fencing or screens are permitted within the front boundary setback and must be set back a minimum of 1.0m behind the front façade.*
- 5) *All screens, whether installed to provide visual privacy, or to hide service areas, or applied to boundary fencing, must be minimum 50% permeable, and of a maximum 1.8m height.*
- 6) *Any screening applied in addition to the basic post and wire (BPW) fencing installed on side and rear boundaries must not exceed 50% of the total length of fencing allowable on that boundary, must be negotiated and agreed between adjoining lot owners, and must be approved by the DRC.*
- 7) *A wing fence (fence between side boundary and house) will be approved at the discretion of the DRC on a case-by-case basis. It may be decorative and should complement the design of the home.*
- 8) *Any screen not on a boundary or wing fence must be limited in extent and located at least 3m from the boundary to allow for adequate landscaping. They require DRC approval, and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.*
- 9) *Dense formal cypress, box or similar hedging must not be used as fencing along a boundary.*



Figure 24. Example of fencing in accordance with Requirement R52.

Alternative screen styles with artistic merit will also be approved at the discretion of the DRC on a case-by-case basis. Any screening along a lot boundary that is taller than 1.8m will require both DRC approval and a planning permit from Council.

7.5 Treatment of homesites facing reserves

If you have purchased a homesite that addresses a public reserve, we strongly encourage you to take advantage of the Mullum Creek landscape design incentive.

Objectives

- Ensure that high-quality landscape appearance is achieved on lots where they front reserves.
- Maintain passive surveillance of reserves from homes.
- Ensure that all fencing and screening demonstrates a high-quality design response, and does not unreasonably impede the open visual character of the estate when viewed from a reserve.

Detailed Requirements

- R54** *External services and equipment (water tanks excepted) must be located in a designated services area that is located away from public view.*
- R55** *The developer will install Council approved basic post and wire fencing along boundaries that adjoin the reserve. Modifications to these must be approved by the DRC.*
- R56** *Privacy screening for private open spaces adjoining a reserve must be submitted to the DRC and Council for review. They will be assessed on how well they integrate with the surrounding landscape at this public-private interface.*



Figure 25. *Decorative gates and screens, to be at least 50% permeable.*

7.6 Driveways and paving surfaces

New landscape works at Mullum Creek strive to rest gently within the existing natural environment. Driveways are no exception. They must not be visually dominant when viewed from the street. Therefore, the extent of driveway surface area is to be minimised, and permeable pavements are preferred.

Driveway surface materials and paving should remain visually consistent with the natural bush setting with regard to texture and colour. Refer to **Section 5.7** for a description of suitable driveway materials and finishes.

Objectives

- Minimise the impact of driveways and paving on the natural landform, soil profile and drainage, by minimising the impermeable area covered by driveways and paving on lots.
- Maximise the use of permeable and environmentally friendly driveway and paving materials that also facilitate the infiltration of rainwater (see Figure 19).
- Adopt textures and colours of the natural bush setting, to reduce potential glare and the heat island effect.

7.7 Batters, terracing and retaining walls

Much of the land at Mullum Creek slopes steeply and care must be taken when designing for usable outdoor spaces. Requirements regarding grade changes are addressed in **Section 3** and **Section 7** of these Guidelines. We strongly advise you to discuss your options with a Mullum Creek recommended landscape designer before drawing up plans for approval by the DRC. Mullum Creek has an approved range of retaining wall materials to select from. Other materials may be approved by the DRC based on merit



Figure 26. Well designed batters/embankments can add depth to your landscape design.

Objectives

- Adopt form and scale for these works that harmonise with and enhance the existing landform.
- Use landscaping materials for batters, terracing and retaining walls that reflect the colours, textures and materials of the Mullum Mullum valley.

Detailed Requirement

R57 *Garden retaining walls must not exceed 1.0m in height.*

Guides

- G47 Where possible use local stone varieties that express the geology and character of the site.
- G48 Preferred form, materials and detailing for batters, terracing and retaining walls are shown in Figure 26 above. See also Figure 9 on page 22.

7.8 Hard landscaping materials

To maintain Mullum Creek's naturalistic landscape character, it is important to select landscaping materials consistent with the local natural environment and visual palette. This includes loose laid rock, materials for retaining walls, soil and gravel. For example, basalt or granite boulders do not reflect the geology or appearance of the local environment, and are likely to incur higher energy costs in transportation than local stone, increasing the environmental impact of their use. Nonetheless, as the use of basalt boulders in landscaping is well-established in this vicinity (for example, through the work of landscaper Gordon Ford), their use may be allowed if supported by a strong design rationale.

A range of sustainably sourced materials consistent with the natural environs of the Mullum Mullum valley are listed in a **Hard Landscaping Materials Guide** on the Mullum Creek website.

Objectives

- Promote landscaping materials with relatively low environmental impact, that are durable and readily reused or recycled.
- Promote the use of local materials consistent with the natural landscape of the Mullum Mullum valley.

Guide

- G49 Where possible use topsoil already present on your site, rather than importing large quantities from elsewhere. Conserve your site's topsoil by removing it from within the proposed footprints of dwellings and pavements, stockpiling it, and using it for garden beds and soft landscape works elsewhere. Maintain site hygiene during construction to prevent contamination of soil and soil stockpiles.

7.9 Design of home gardens

Gardens should complement the natural bushland of the Mullum Creek environment. The planting of local indigenous vegetation is encouraged within homesites at Mullum Creek, to promote a consistent visual appearance across the estate, to integrate gardens with public reserve areas, and to support the local flora and fauna. Productive food gardens are also encouraged as part of the Mullum Creek vision, to foster household self-sufficiency.

Objectives

- Promote Mullum Creek's environmental and aesthetic objectives in the design of home gardens.
- Encourage the use of locally indigenous plants.
- Ensure variety and richness in front garden landscape treatments, by including non-lawn garden elements such as plantings of varied densities, garden beds, rocks, etc.
- Incorporate bushfire hazard reduction measures in garden design and plant selection where necessary.
- Promote the production of fruit, vegetables and other foods on homesites.

Detailed Requirement

R58 *Lawn must not exceed 60% of the area of the front garden, excluding driveways and hardstand areas.*

Guides

- G50 Lots at Mullum Creek that have gardens addressing a public reserve should where possible include locally indigenous plants. Plant selection should take into account the BAL (Bushfire Attack Level) for the lot, to minimise bushfire risk. In some cases deciduous fruit trees may be a more appropriate choice. The following document may also be helpful: http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/fm_files/attachments/plan_and_prepare/landscaping/landscaping_for_bushfire.pdf
- G51 Front gardens should predominantly adopt a natural bushland aesthetic with a locally indigenous theme in landscaping materials and plant selection, with a limited component of exotics to provide variation along the streetscape.
- G52 Planted trees and garden beds should be located to provide appropriate screening and shade, having regard to the thermal performance (or energy efficiency) of the home, as well as potential overlooking and privacy issues.
- G53 Level changes should as far as possible be addressed through use of planted batters. Large stone boulders may be interspersed within plantings. The treatment of embankments and batters should appear natural and informal.
- G54 Use of indigenous grasses for lawn is encouraged.
- G55 Gardens should provide an area for composting and/or compost bins that are not in public view.

Productive food gardens

Food gardens are encouraged at Mullum Creek, and hopefully fruit trees and vegetable plots will become a feature of each homesite. Food planting is encouraged in both the front and back gardens at Mullum Creek.

Objectives

- Promote the growing of fruit, vegetables and other edible produce in home gardens at Mullum Creek.
- Minimise the impact of vegetable garden beds on natural landforms.

Guides

- G56 If you wish to create a flat area for a vegetable garden, sensitively terrace the natural landform in accordance with the Requirements in **Section 3** of these Guidelines.
- G57 Use raised garden beds filled with sustainably sourced clean soil to grow vegetables.
- G58 Consult the 3D vegetation envelope plan for your lot (available on the Mullum Creek website) to ensure that fruit and nut trees in your garden are planted in an area that doesn't impact adversely on solar access for your neighbour's home. Check that you are not planting tall trees in an area designated for shorter species.
- G59 Use rainwater collected and stored on site to irrigate your food garden, and adopt water conserving irrigation technology.



Figure 27. Growing fruits and vegetables.

7.10 Recommended plant selection and prohibited species

To help enrich the landscape and promote food self-sufficiency, Mullum Creek encourages owners to plant indigenous species and plants in character with the area, as well as fruit trees and other productive species.

Objectives

- To achieve an overall landscape theme for the estate consistent with the natural environment and landscape character of the Mullum Mullum valley.
- To promote the planting of productive gardens.
- To exclude environmental weeds and prohibited invasive species.

Detailed Requirement

R59 *Locally indigenous ‘signature’ trees must be planted on all homesites consistent with the Mullum Creek Recommended Plant List and 3D vegetation envelope, and to at least the densities listed in the table below.*

Area of homesite	Minimum number of signature trees or shrubs (in brackets)
Less than 1500m ²	1 (5)
1500m ² to 2,000m ²	2 (10)
Over 2,000m ²	3 (15)

A signature tree may be replaced with signature shrubs at the rate of 5 shrubs per tree. This requirement may be relaxed if existing protected signature trees are already present on your homesite. Please contact the DRC if you have any queries about signature trees on your homesite.

Guides

- G60 Indigenous trees and grasses should generally be used in preference to exotic species, although food producing species are strongly encouraged. Please only purchase indigenous plants grown from local stock. These are generally available from the indigenous plant nurseries listed in the Planting and Gardening Guide on the Mullum Creek website.
- G61 Please consult the Mullum Creek Recommended Plant List on the Mullum Creek website for guidance on suitable plants for your garden and for information on weedy species.
- G62 Consider the Bushfire Attack Level for your homesite and consider planting less-flammable species such as fruit trees where necessary.

7.11 Environmental weeds

Plants that act as environmental weeds have the capacity to invade natural bushland, displacing locally indigenous species and reducing native faunal habitat. Consult Manningham Council's Weed Identification Booklet which you can find on the Mullum Creek website. Council's website also includes links to other relevant noxious weed and invasive plants lists.

Objective

- Minimise the use of plants with the capacity to invade and negatively impact on natural vegetation and habitat within and adjoining the estate.

Detailed Requirement

R60 *Environmental weeds, as listed in the references on the Mullum Creek website and in particular the Mullum Creek Planting Guide, must not be planted.*

7.12 Water-efficient garden design

Water conservation is an important environmental objective at Mullum Creek. Appropriate choice of drought tolerant species and a responsible approach to irrigation will ensure that your home garden uses a great deal less water than would a more traditional European style garden.

Raingardens, designed to promote water infiltration and sediment reduction, can assist in managing stormwater run-off. Information on how to build a raingarden can be found on the Melbourne Water website. See: <http://www.melbournewater.com.au/raingardens>.



Figure 28. Raingarden examples.

Objective

- Minimise the use of mains supplied drinking water for garden irrigation.

Guides

- G63 The following strategies are recommended in order to make your garden water-efficient:
- Select drought tolerant plant species.
 - Select plants that are appropriate to the moisture and exposure conditions of the lot.
 - Install a water-efficient irrigation system connected to your water tank(s).
 - Collect and re-use ground surface stormwater, for example through the use of swales, ponds and raingardens.
 - Apply mulch.

7.13 Bushfire attack level (BAL)

Consider the bushfire risk associated with your lot when designing your garden and selecting plants. A BAL assessment and report prepared by Terramatrix for the estate as a whole is available on the Mullum Creek website. Your building surveyor will determine whether this report is relevant to your site. Refer to information on the Victorian Building Authority website to understand what landscaping requirements may apply.

Guides

- G64 Address the BAL rating and other bushfire considerations when selecting plants for areas directly adjoining reserves.
- G65 Fruit trees can assist in shielding homes from radiant heat and tend to be less flammable.