

Town Precinct GORDONVALE



Precinct Map



Character Statement

Gordonvale forms a distinctive village away from the city and suburbs of Cairns. The Town Precinct comprises residential dwellings in wide, spacious streetscapes. A number of building eras are represented throughout streets, including pre-war, inter-war and post-war styles. Houses are generally well maintained, surrounded by gardens of shrubs, lawn and occasional canopy trees or tall palms. The landscapes surrounding the township are evident from some streets, including views to Walsh's Pyramid. The spaciousness of streets and the availability of views to surrounding landscapes reduces the impact of the built form on streets, although the frequent use of light-coloured finishes highlights the appearance of buildings throughout the precinct. A network of rear laneways adds a layer of interest to the precinct, providing a sense of the area's history and enhancing the function of the rear of properties.



Existing Character Elements

A survey of the Gordonvale Town Precinct showed that this area displays the following neighbourhood character elements:

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	Pre-war, inter-war and post-war and a large number of workers cottages and houses.
BUILDING MATERIALS	Predominantly timber, with corrugated steel roofs and occasional use of brick or fibro sheeting.
BUILDING FORM	Mixed.
ROOF STYLE	Pitched, with a mix of hipped and gabled ends fronting the street.
FRONT SETBACKS	Generally small, between 3 and 4 metres, although this is enhanced by very wide nature strips.
SIDE SETBACKS	Mixed.
BUILDING HEIGHT	Predominantly low-set and high-set, some of which have been enclosed underneath.
ORIENTATION TO STREET	Parallel to the street.
CAR PARKING / VEHICLE STORAGE	Where provided, carports and garages are generally sited to the rear of the dwelling.
GARDEN STYLE	Established with low-level exotic vegetation consisting of shrubs, lawn and occasional tall palms and canopy trees.
FRONT BOUNDARY TREATMENT	A mix of open frontages, post and wire fences, timber fences and vegetation as a front boundary treatment.
STREET TREES	Mixed - some streets are lined with established trees while others have no or irregular vegetation.
ROAD & FOOTPATH TREATMENT	Wide roadways, generally with upstanding kerbs and generous nature strips.
SUBDIVISION PATTERN	Grid.
LOT SIZE / FRONTAGE	Mixed. Generally between 15 and 20 metres
TOPOGRAPHY	Flat.



Town Precinct

GORDONVALE

Design Guidelines

Element	Objective	Design Response	Avoid
Existing Buildings	To encourage the retention of older dwellings that contribute to the valued character of the area.	Retain all intact and good condition dwellings, wherever possible, particularly private dwellings constructed up to 1940.	Demolition of intact and visible parts of older dwellings.
Height and Building Form	To ensure new buildings maintain the key roof form and height.	In any alterations to existing buildings, maintain the overall roof form and building height. In new development, reflect the existing height and form of surrounding buildings. Distinguish new development, including additions to existing buildings, from the original dwelling stock through the use of innovative and contemporary architecture and simple design detailing.	Loss of the consistent height and building form. New buildings that are out of character or scale with surrounding buildings.
Adjoining Buildings of Local Heritage Significance	To ensure new development is designed to respect the identified values of adjoining heritage buildings.	Where adjoining an identified heritage building, respect the height, building forms, siting and materials in the new building design.	New buildings that are out of character or scale with surrounding period buildings. Reproduction styles and detailing.
Materials and Design Detailing	To ensure new dwellings reflect the characteristic North Queensland style.	Reflect, but do not copy, the design detail of period buildings in new development. Retain and do not cover main existing external materials of buildings.	Reproduction styles and detailing. Heavy design detailing (eg. Masonry columns and piers, rendered facades).
Building in Underneath Queenslander Styles	To ensure changes to the ground level of Queenslander style dwellings maintain the characteristics, form and features of the style.	Buildings should not be raised to accommodate new development underneath. Building in underneath may only occur where the existing building height is sufficient to accommodate a lower level. Recess the lower level to retain the form of verandahs and the depth of shading beneath them. Ensure that the height of the lower level is less than that of the upper level. Consider using measures such as paint colours, materials or articulation to minimise the visual prominence of the ground level. Use materials that complement the upper level and result in a lighter building style including light transparent balustrading, textured render and other non-masonry materials. Provide design detailing on the lower level that compliments the style of the dwelling, including similarly proportioned windows and door placement and lattice or timber batten screening for enclosed semi-outdoor living areas.	Any increase in the overall height of the building. New lower levels that visually compete with or dominate the original parts of the building.
Additions to Buildings	To ensure alterations and additions reflect the existing form and design details of the building.	Building additions must be located to the rear of the dwelling. Retain the overall roof and building form. Utilise weatherboard in new additions and alterations and provide corrugated metal roofs.	Building additions that are visible from the streetscape. Alterations to the form of the original building or roof form to accommodate additions. Use of materials and colours not originally found on buildings of the era and style.
Siting of New Buildings	To maintain and reinforce the side boundary setback pattern and the existing rhythm of spacing between dwellings. To maintain the predominant front boundary setback pattern in the street.	Set buildings back from both side boundaries in accordance with the predominant setback pattern in the street. Set buildings back at least 1.2 metres from one side boundary and 3 metres from the other. Set buildings back, at a minimum, the average distance of the front setbacks of buildings on the two adjoining allotments.	Boundary to boundary development. No reflection of the predominant side boundary setback pattern. No reflection of the predominant front boundary setback pattern in the street. Buildings that are set further forward than buildings on neighbouring properties.
Car Parking and Vehicle Storage	To minimise the loss of front garden space and the dominance of car parking structures.	New garages and carports must be located well behind the line of the front façade of the building. Consider locating car parking structures to the rear of the building. For Queenslander dwellings, use the area beneath the building only where the overall height does not need to be increased to accommodate vehicle storage. Where providing an enclosed garage beneath a building, set back the garage door from the front façade. For enclosed car parking structures to the side of a dwelling, use a skillion or flat roof and materials, colours and finishes that complement those of the dwelling. Consider the use of timber or slatted garage doors. Minimise paving in front garden areas and use permeable or porous materials for driveways and crossovers and car parking areas.	Standalone garages and carports that mimic the design detailing of the building. Car parking in front setbacks.
Vegetation	To maintain and strengthen the garden settings of dwellings.	Provide substantial vegetation in all setbacks, including canopy trees, shrubs and lawn areas.	Lack of landscaping and substantial vegetation. Large areas of impervious surfaces.
Front Boundary Treatment	To maintain the openness of streetscapes, retain views to gardens and dwellings and reflect the predominant style of fences in the street.	Provide an open frontage or a low, open style front fence up to 1.2 metres in height, and constructed of materials appropriate to the dwelling style and era, including simple timber picket and wire styles.	High, solid fences.