



This visual diary focuses on the generic elements that contribute to the overall landscape character of the Suburban Estates Character Area. The unique characteristics of individual areas needs to be considered alongside these general character guidelines.

A Vision for the Future of the Suburban Estates

These rapidly expanding areas of the Gold Coast become a series of small diverse communities that are easily identified and connected by useable open space. The new estates evolve into areas which provide the vital link between the ‘green’ and the ‘gold’ by use of remnant vegetation, extensive parkland systems and strong framework planting in public and private land.

Development in the estates utilises the character of existing landform and vegetation. Built form within the suburb becomes diverse and streetscapes contribute positively to the enjoyment of activities on the street.

Existing Landscape Description

The suburban estates are a series of small connected landscapes that are rapidly increasing in number. The land ranges from largely flat to slightly sloping with the foothills of the hinterland forming the backdrop. The majority of these estates align the Brisbane / Gold Coast Highway. The highway

is a major visual corridor to the city and therefore development along it is important to the way people imagine the city.

The estates consist of a variety of block sizes, and often have a monoculture of housing styles. The houses are primarily brick with tiled roofs, located on areas of mass cut and fill. This has resulted in a fairly denuded landscape due to clearing of large areas of bush. Some estates have large entry statements that provide a perceived character for that particular estate.

Important landscape elements

- ▶ Areas of retained ridgeline planting
- ▶ Areas of remnant vegetation
- ▶ Any variation in landform
- ▶ Appropriate and manageable entry statements
- ▶ Appropriate built form

Social & recreational issues

- ▶ Poor open space linkages across the estates
- ▶ Few recreational opportunities and access to community facilities
- ▶ Parkland sometimes inappropriate in form and function for use by the community

Important views & vistas

- ▶ Views out of the estates to the surrounding foothills
- ▶ Views into these estates from the highway



Character desired **Character not desired**



- Landform**
- ▶ Scale & form of building complements existing landform & landscape features
 - ▶ Vegetation retained as part of site development, i.e. minimal clearing
 - ▶ Ridgelines retain vegetation, housing under tree line
 - ▶ Mass clearing in conjunction with bulk earthworks & areas of cut & fill
 - ▶ Boundary retaining walls to every block
 - ▶ Houses exposed on the ridgelines
 - ▶ No revegetation after clearing



- Landscaped Buffer Strips**
- ▶ Width appropriate to function, i.e. wide buffers to busy roads, smaller buffers for internal area privacy
 - ▶ Wide, deep buffers with appropriate density of planting re: screening function
 - ▶ Variation in height, form & species
 - ▶ Species are long lived
 - ▶ Buffer contributes to the amenity of the area
 - ▶ Width inappropriate for function i.e. width too small to provide a visual screen
 - ▶ Inappropriate species for particular growing conditions, unsuitable form, scale or densities
 - ▶ High maintenance
 - ▶ Character & design have a negative contribution to local streetscape



Streetscape



- Streetscape**
- ▶ Street tree species provide shade & amenity
 - ▶ Trees contribute positively to local streets
 - ▶ Low maintenance/ single trunk species
 - ▶ Fence form & location appropriate to street character - transparent and integrated with planting
 - ▶ Streets trees are inappropriate species, providing little shade or general amenity
 - ▶ Trees are high maintenance & in poor health
 - ▶ Fencing form & materials provide a barrier visually separating residential use from street
 - ▶ Road reserve areas are primarily hard surfaced



- Built Form**
- ▶ Variation in roof forms, colour & materials
 - ▶ Variation in building styles, colour & materials
 - ▶ Retained ridgeline planting
 - ▶ Front fences integrated with landscape & allow surveillance of the street
 - ▶ Retention of remnant vegetation provides a strong local character
 - ▶ Monoculture/little variation in built form or streetscape
 - ▶ Housing siting & road layout does not reflect landform
 - ▶ Minimum retained vegetation
 - ▶ Entry statement as primary identifier of estate
 - ▶ Inadequate buffer treatment to major roads



- Open Space**
- ▶ Physically & visually appropriate through the use of vegetation and linkages in key positions within estates
 - ▶ Multi-use community spaces
 - ▶ Vegetated & shady
 - ▶ Open space contributes positively to character of local area
 - ▶ Unusable, left over space
 - ▶ No linkages to the open space system
 - ▶ Principles of dual use drainage system not achieved
 - ▶ Hot & dry - treatment does not contribute to local character & amenity
 - ▶ Minimal vegetation



Open Space