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E10 Orchard Hills

A. Background

Area included within the Orchard Hills Precinct

The Orchard Hills Precinct is bounded by The Northern Road to the west, Caddens Road to the north, the South Creek corridor to the east, and the Orchard Hills defence establishment to the south. The M4 Motorway and The Northern Road are the main transport corridors in the area. Orchard Hills is a key part of the transition between the urban and rural areas of Penrith when approaching along the M4 Motorway and The Northern Road. The extent of the land is shown on the LEP Clause Application Map with a notation 'Orchard Hills'.

Orchard Hills has a predominately rural character with undulating hills and scenic vistas. Historically, its landscape was mainly overlaid with orchards and grapevines, and with rural farmhouses and outbuildings. A prominent line of hills mostly with an east-west orientation defines the topography of the area.

Today, Orchard Hills retains a largely rural character predominantly used for rural living on 2 hectare lots. There are also a number of intensive agricultural uses in operation throughout the locality. A number of schools and churches are dispersed in the area north of the M4 Motorway.

B. General Objectives

- a) To ensure that development does not adversely affect the scenic qualities, character and amenity of this precinct;
- b) To promote the continuation of the open, semi-rural character and regionally significant landscape setting of Orchard Hills and minimise the visual impact of development from major roads and public places;
- c) To recognise that Orchard Hills forms part of an important entry to the residential areas of Penrith, and that careful management of development in this location is critical to conserving the values of this City entry;
- d) To ensure that development does not unreasonably increase the demand for public infrastructure and public services;
- e) To ensure that non-residential activities do not:
 - i) Alter the character or scenic quality of the locality;
 - ii) Detract from the existing landscape setting;
 - iii) Promote the commercialisation of lands adjoining The Northern Road; or
 - iv) Generate traffic volumes which cannot be readily accommodated within the existing road pattern, or which create a traffic safety problem.

10.1 Siting and built form controls

10.1.1 Siting and orientation of dwellings and outbuildings

A. Objectives

In addition to the general objectives for Orchard Hills, the objectives of this section are to ensure that buildings are positioned in a manner and location that will:

- a) protect and enhance the semi-rural landscape of Orchard Hills;
- b) minimise the visual impact of development from major roads and public places; and
- c) enhance the important City entry qualities of Orchard Hills.

B. Controls

- 1) All buildings shall be set back a minimum of 30m to The Northern Road boundary and a minimum of 15m from all other roads.
- 2) An additional building setback shall be provided on those lots fronting The Northern Road, where in the opinion of Council, the development of the land is likely to impact on the open, semi-rural character of the land when viewed from The Northern Road.
- 3) Buildings and other structures shall not intrude into the skyline when viewed from The Northern Road or the M4 Motorway.
- 4) Buildings are to be located on mid-slopes to avoid visual impact on ridges and to avoid the banks of watercourses.
- 5) Buildings are to minimise excavation, filling and high foundations by avoiding slopes greater than 1 in 6.
- 6) The longest façade of a building is to be parallel to the contours of the land.
- 7) Buildings should be positioned to maximise opportunities for solar access in winter, and minimise exposure to summer sun and winter winds.
- 8) Buildings and other structures should be located to retain, whenever possible, remnant indigenous vegetation, including trees, shrubs, understorey plants and ground covers.

10.1.2 Building form, materials and colours

A. Objectives

In addition to the general objectives for Orchard Hills, the objectives of this section are to:

- a) ensure building forms are in keeping with the setting and context of the precinct; and
- b) ensure building materials contribute to maintaining the semi-rural character of the Precinct.

B. Controls

- 1) Buildings are to be a maximum of two storeys in height.
- 2) Pitched roofs are preferable with a slope of between 30 and 45 degrees. Skillion roofs by themselves are to be avoided except as verandahs or for extensions.
- 3) Large elements, especially flat surfaces, are to be avoided. Building facades and roof lines are to be broken into small elements. Garden structures such as trellises and pergolas can assist in breaking up large elements.
- 4) Buildings are to be designed with a horizontal rather than vertical emphasis.
- 5) Exterior windows and doors are to have a vertical rather than a horizontal emphasis. Large unbroken glazed panels are to be avoided.
- 6) Building materials and colours are to be in keeping with their surroundings, and are to be derived from the local horticultural and natural landscape.

10.1.3 Vegetation and plantings

A. Objectives

In addition to the general objectives for Orchard Hills, the objective of this section is to provide controls to ensure the layout of gardens and plantings, and the selection of species reflects the traditional landscape character of Orchard Hills.

B. Controls

- 1) Development on land occupied by existing vegetation (including, although not limited to, remnant and regrowth tree stands, existing or abandoned orchards and vineyards) shall demonstrate, in the design and siting of buildings, parking, access and general improvements, that all measures have been taken to retain and supplement this vegetation.
- 2) Landscape design should be based upon the traditional forms, colours, scale, textures, relationships and groupings of plant species in Orchard Hills. This can also include other garden elements of fences, gateways, hedges, windbreaks, driveways, and landscape built elements.
- 3) When deciding what to plant, applicants should consider the existing landscape and environmental amenity of the area with reference to agricultural, horticultural and homestead plantings, and the manner in which they have been traditionally used in the Orchard Hills landscape setting.

10.1.4 Access, parking and services

A. Objectives

In addition to the general objectives for Orchard Hills, the objective of this section is to ensure the visual impact of access roads, parking areas and services is minimised.

B. Controls

- 1) Access from properties fronting The Northern Road shall only be permitted if it serves dwellings or domestic outbuildings.
- 2) Traffic generating developments must demonstrate that traffic volumes can be readily accommodated within the existing road pattern and do not create a traffic safety problem.
- 3) Driveways and access roads shall follow the contours of the land, as much as possible, and be no wider than is necessary to allow for safe and effective vehicle movements.
- 4) Driveways, access roads and hardstand areas shall be constructed of compacted gravel, or paved or sealed in a dark coloured material if located on steep slopes.
- 5) Large parking areas shall not be visible from public roads, and shall be separated from access roads and from the buildings they serve by planting and other landscaping.
- 6) Any lighting provided should not intrude into the rural setting. Lighting structures and the light cast shall be discreet.
- 7) Services should be appropriately located and screened by walls and vegetation to form part of a coherent group.

10.1.5 Fences and entrances

A. Objectives

In addition to the general objectives for Orchard Hills, the objective of this section is to ensure fences, gates and entrances are in harmony with the existing landscape and character of the Orchard Hills Precinct.

B. Controls

- 1) If practicable, avoid fences on road frontage boundaries.
- 2) Fences should be simple and unpretentious, and in keeping with traditional forms; e.g. unpainted timber post and rail, timber post and wire, or steel post and wire.
- 3) Masonry fences, such as brick, blockwork or stone, should be avoided.
- 4) Gates and entrances should also be simple and in keeping with traditional forms. The scale, form and bulk should not detract from the established street frontage. Examples are:

- a) Rendered and pointed brickwork, blockwork, sandstone, painted timber or post and rail;
 - b) Decorated gateposts with the property name carved or painted onto the gatepost or painted onto a wide timber top rail; and
 - c) Decorated iron, steel or timber gates.
- 5) Gates and entrances should relate to the materials and colours of the building to which they belong.

10.1.6 Signage

A. Objectives

In addition to the general objectives for Orchard Hills, the objective of this section is to ensure that signage is in harmony with the existing landscape and character of the Orchard Hills Precinct.

B. Controls

Any signage must be rural in character and must:

- 1) relate to the style, character and function of the building or activity it advertises;
- 2) only refer to the development on the land to which the sign is located;
- 3) not be illuminated;
- 4) not exceed 1.5m² in area, or a maximum height of 2m above ground level, or intrude in the sky line; and
- 5) not be freestanding, but related to walls, fences or buildings.

10.2 Other relevant information

The following documents may assist applicants in addressing the controls for the Orchard Hills Precinct:

- Penrith Heritage Study
- Penrith Rural Lands Study and Strategy.