

Cashmere Design Guide

This design guide is subject to review and updates pending Council decisions on suburban intensification, expected December 2025.

What is Cashmere Character Area?

Cashmere is identified in the Christchurch District Plan (District Plan) as a Character Area. It has qualities that make it distinctive and appealing resulting in an attractive and memorable area. The distinctiveness is created through the combination of the character of houses and their surroundings.

The purpose of the Character Area is to ensure the special qualities are identified, retained or enhanced, when people choose to make changes to or redevelop their property.

Over time, there have been some changes to houses and sections within Cashmere, that are not complementary to, and otherwise undermine, the still strongly recognisable character of the area. For example, the construction of garages in front gardens or the erection of high fences and walls, and removal of vegetation along the street. These changes can affect the character values of the area for residents and visitors.

The role of the Design Guide

To provide an overview of the special qualities of Cashmere and a series of corresponding design principles, which give direction to the development or alteration to houses and sections.

The design principles support and supplement District Plan policies, rules and matters. Development proposals* that require resource consent* are informed by the design principles in this guide, and consequently reviewed against the matters in the District Plan. This guide does not cover every contributing design detail. If you are considering making changes or rebuilding in the Cashmere Character Area it is advised that you seek urban design and planning advice (pre application advice) from the Council early in the design process.

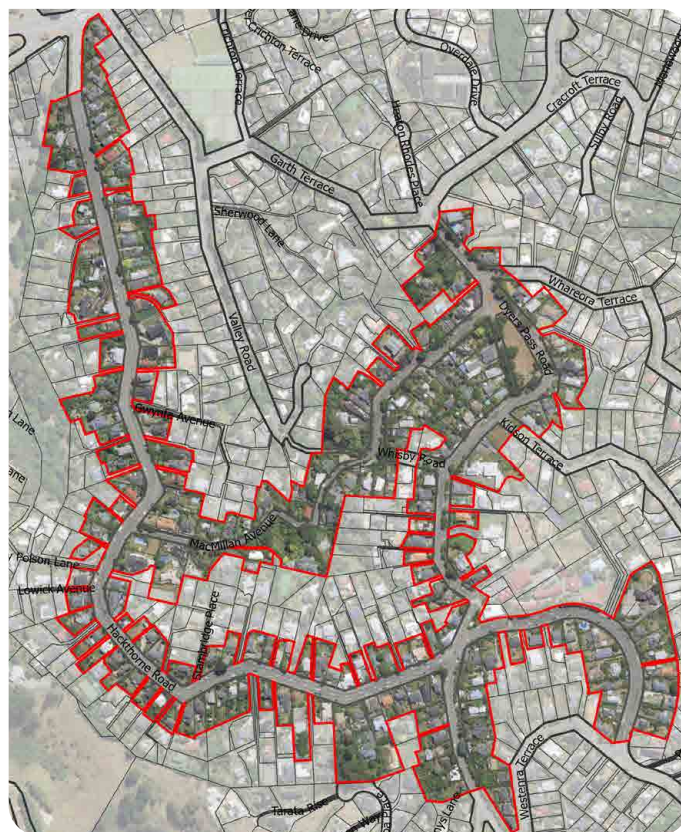
* Development proposals include changes to the existing site and building, or construction of a new building, for example.

* For further District Plan advice please contact Christchurch City Council on (03) 941 8999 and ask for a Duty Planner, or for design assistance, ask for an Urban Designer.

Area overview: Cashmere

Cashmere has city wide-significance as an intact residential neighbourhood, parts of which have historic importance for Christchurch and with a strong sense of place and identity. The key elements that contribute to the Cashmere's character are:

- A memorable geography with streets that follow the contour or ridgelines of the Port Hills, and houses that are settled into the steep topography.
- High levels of street amenity with established front gardens that are richly planted with trees, hedging, shrubs and herbaceous vegetation and often accompanied by stone walls along the street edge.
- Historic significance for Christchurch with six buildings scheduled in the District Plan (54, 63 Dyers Pass Road, 16, 30 and 141 Hackthorne Road as significant and 64H Hackthorne Road as highly significant) and four buildings listed by Heritage New Zealand (2 Macmillan Ave - Cashmere Presbyterian Church, 63 Dyers Pass Road, 2 Whisby Road, and 10 Westenra Terrace all listed as Historic Place Category II)
- A high proportion of houses from the late 19th century to the early 20th century with a mixture of styles including both the English Domestic Revival and Arts and Crafts styles.
- New housing in the area is generally complementary reinforcing the original character.
- Houses are often two storey with large footprints, surrounded by substantial gardens.
- The size, form and scale of houses, the roof profile and location of houses on sections are generally consistent along streets or within groups.
- Architectural detailing contributes to a richness in house design and consistency is established through the location, scale and proportion of windows and entrances and other such features.



Map of Cashmere Character Area

Designing to the character of the area does not need to be about replicating original houses. Consider how key elements contribute to the character of Cashmere. How might they be incorporated into the design so that new houses and the surrounding landscape complement the existing? This will help ensure that the development reinforces the character of the area future generations can appreciate.



Example of English Domestic Revival Houses on Hackthorne Road



Houses on Macmillan Avenue



2 Macmillan Ave – Cashmere Presbyterian Church

Area context

This guidance relates to sections 14.15.23 and 8.6.1 of the District Plan.

The area's context is the neighbourhood environment that makes up Cashmere. It includes the street and block layout, the underlying landscape features, heritage associations and the overall visual coherence of the streets, gardens and houses.

Heritage associations

Cashmere is an important area for its associations with the settlement of Christchurch and the introduction of trams to the Port Hills. Houses date from the late 19th century with typical building styles and physical form.

Respecting these heritage buildings through sympathetic scale, size and location of new development will help to retain the special impression that the neighbourhood creates.

Design principles:

- Consider the overall qualities of original houses and how they might inform changes to existing or the design of new houses.
- Changes to existing or new houses and boundary fencing should not overpower, cast shadow or box-in adjacent existing houses of heritage value.

Landscape and natural features

The Port Hills are a defining feature of this Character Area. Houses are generally settled into the slope of the hill which means that house footprints follow the contour of the land or step down the slope. This avoids extensive levelling or raising of land resulting in houses that sit above the slope, or construction of large retaining walls.

Design principles:

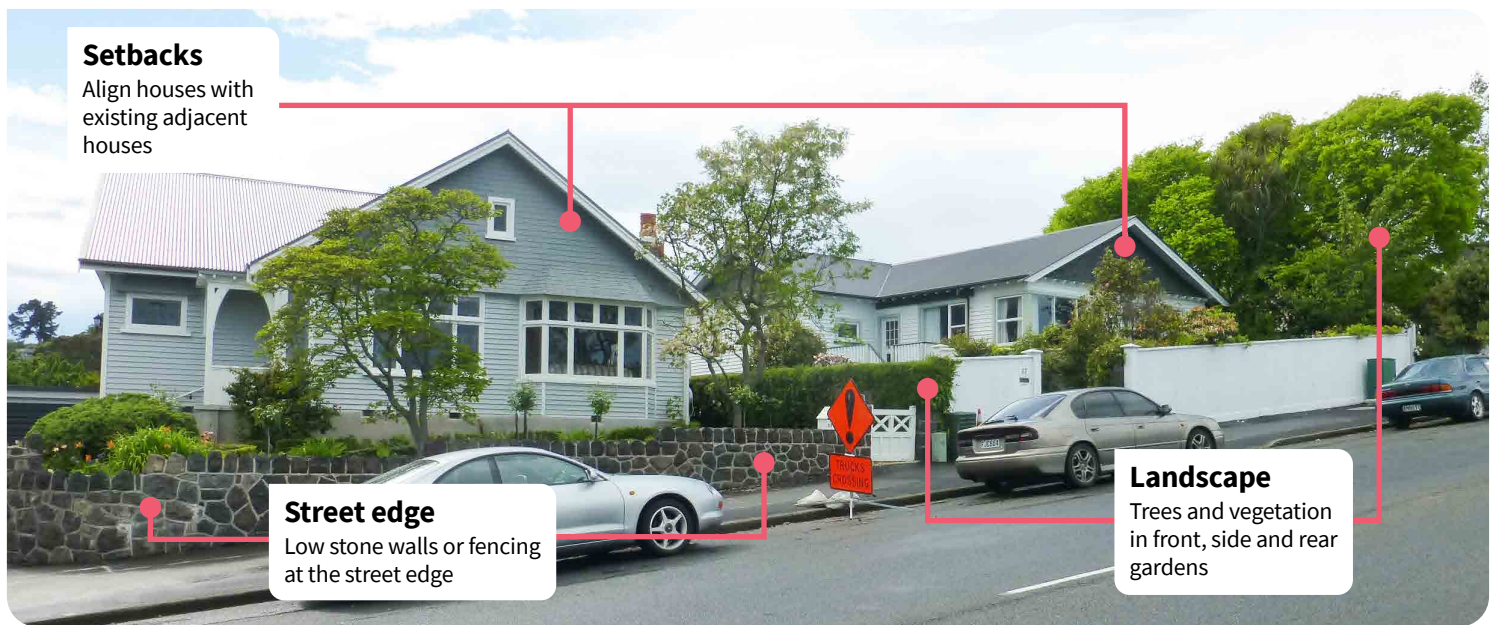
- Align houses to the contour of the landform to reinforce the underlying topography of the area.
- Consider stepping large building footprints down the slope
- Avoid large retaining walls that are dominant within the streetscape.

Vegetation and street amenity

Features of Cashmere are established front gardens richly planted with trees, hedging, shrubs and herbaceous vegetation, stone walls and details such as garden gates.

Design principles:

- Retain existing mature trees and vegetation within gardens and maintain filtered views of houses from the street.
- Consider the detail of railings, fencing and gates and particularly the use of stone walls that complement others on the street.



Setbacks

Align houses with existing adjacent houses

Street edge

Low stone walls or fencing at the street edge

Landscape

Trees and vegetation in front, side and rear gardens

Site design

Balance of house and garden size

A feature of Cashmere is the consistent balance between house and garden size. The area has a general spaciousness when viewed from the street with large house footprints, generous separation between houses and gardens that contain substantial vegetation.

Design principles:

- Maintain similar building footprint size with existing houses in the Character Area.
- Ensure gardens are of sufficient size to provide for mature trees and vegetation in particular within front and side boundaries.
- Allow a minimum of 3m planted zone to front boundaries which primarily consists of tree and shrubs.
- Allow sufficient space between houses so that separation distances are consistent in the Character Area.

House setbacks and orientation

Houses within Cashmere are located with consistent setbacks along specific streets or localised groups of houses. Houses are generally orientated to both face the street and to maximise views and aspect.

Design principles:

- Align new houses with existing houses along the street.
- When some minor variation to street setback exists, align with the predominant adjacent group of houses.
- Orientate house entrances, windows and porches to face the street.
- Orientate houses to take advantage of views and aspect.

Street boundaries

Fences and boundary walls in Cashmere vary but are generally low or non-existent and street boundaries are often softened by vegetation. Good visual connection between houses and streets is common.

Design principles:

- Ensure consistent boundary conditions are maintained along the street or adjacent group of houses.
- Consider multiple or stepped retaining walls at the street interface to avoid singular large walls.
- Consider using natural stone consistent with other retaining walls in the Character Area.
- Consider using vegetation as boundary treatment.
- Ensure views between the street and house are maintained and not screened by fencing or vegetation.

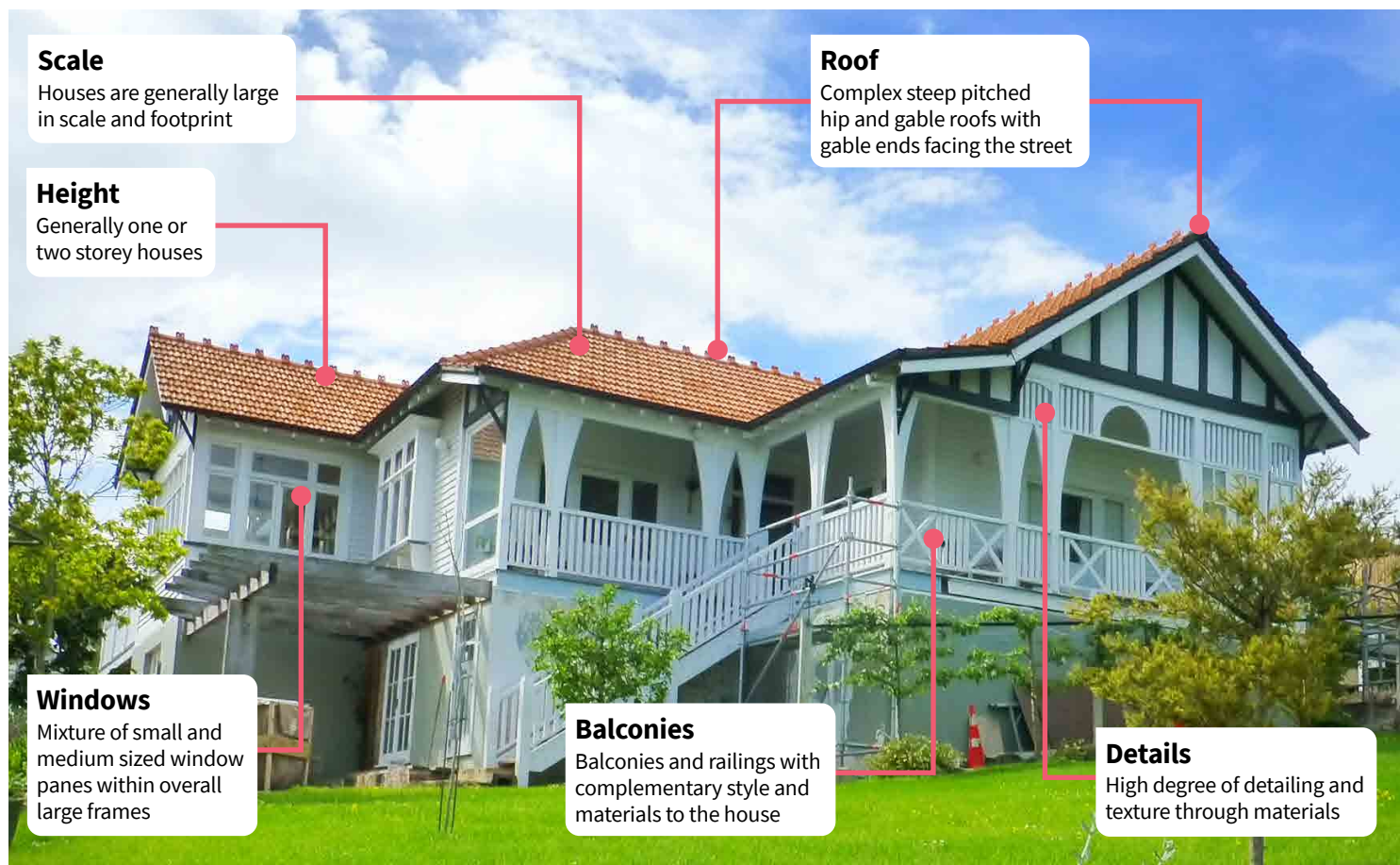
For further guidance refer to Building a Fence Design Guide available on the Christchurch City Council website..

Access parking and garaging

Vehicle garaging and parking in the Cashmere is generally located to the side or rear of houses. This avoids garaging and parking in front gardens which significantly undermines the character of the area by reducing the visibility of houses from the street.

Design principles:

- Locate garages to the rear of the section or at least behind the front edge of houses and where topographical constraints allow.
- Garages should be separate buildings to the main house.
- Coordinate garage and house design in terms of form, materials and colour.
- Do not locate parking between the house and the front boundary.
- Driveways should be discrete and not compromise outdoor living spaces.



Scale

Houses are generally large in scale and footprint

Height

Generally one or two storey houses

Roof

Complex steep pitched hip and gable roofs with gable ends facing the street

Windows

Mixture of small and medium sized window panes within overall large frames

Balconies

Balconies and railings with complementary style and materials to the house

Details

High degree of detailing and texture through materials

Building design

Scale and form

The height of a house and its size are key factors in determining what impact the building will have on its immediate surroundings within the Character Area. This includes how it is perceived from the street and by neighbours, and how successfully it fits with the character of the neighbourhood.

Houses in Cashmere are a mix of stand-alone one and two storey buildings. In general, houses have a variety of steeply pitched hip and gable roofs, some of which are complex with primary (larger) and secondary (smaller) roof forms and dormer windows. Houses vary in size but in general are large with substantial footprints.

Design principles:

- New houses should be consistent in height (and number of storeys) with existing houses in the Character Area and adjacent houses on the street.
- New houses should be similarly scaled and proportioned to existing houses and have similar sized footprints.
- When altering houses, extend towards the rear of the section to avoid intruding into the street setbacks.
- Ensure houses in the Character Area have pitched gable or hip roofs that are consistent with adjacent houses.

Architectural detailing

Architectural detailing is often one of the most noticeable expressions of a Character Area. Details are eye-catching and the style or age of houses can be recognised from them.

Houses in Cashmere have a range of architectural detailing including those consistent with the English Domestic Revival and Arts and Crafts styles of houses of the late 19th century to the early 20th century. Detailing such as timber weatherboard cladding and slate, tile or iron roofing, bay and box windows, mixture of small and medium sized window panes within overall large frames, exposed rafter ends to extended eaves, shingle detailing on gable ends, a variety of first floor balconies and railings, a variety of detailed entry features, verandahs and porches with simple ornamentation to columns, feature throughout the area.

Design principles:

- Houses should be maintained to retain the richness and texture of detailing including attention to roof edge, windows, and entrance and façade design.
- Additions and alterations to existing houses should be compatible with the overall proportions and detailing of the original house.
- New houses need to reflect existing houses in terms of the proportions and overall style of the windows, entrance space and doorway, façade and roof edge details and materials.

