

Tainui Design Guide

What is Tainui Character Area?

Tainui 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 Tainui, 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 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 Tainui 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 Tainui 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: Tainui

Tainui has city-wide significance as an intact residential neighbourhood with a strong sense of place and identity. The key elements that contribute to the character of Tainui are:

- Attractive streets with established front and side gardens that are richly planted and contain lawns, shrubs and trees, generous street widths, mature street trees and grass berms.
- A high proportion of original houses from early to mid 20th century primarily consisting of villas and bungalows and some English Domestic Revival houses.
- The size, form and scale of houses, the roof profile and location of houses on sections are generally consistent along streets.
- Houses in the area contribute to a sense of neighbourliness with low boundary fencing and unobstructed views to and from the houses and the street.
- Architectural detailing contributes to a richness in house design. Consistency is established through the location, scale and proportion of windows and entrances.
- Mature trees within properties provide landscape amenity to the 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 Tainui and how they can be incorporated into the design so that new houses and the surrounding landscape complement the existing character. This will help ensure that the development reinforces the character of the area future generations can appreciate.



Map of Tainui Character Area





Example of a English Domestic Revival house in Tainui



Examples of bungalows in Tainui Character Area



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 Tainui. It includes the street and block layout, the underlying landscape features, heritage associations and the overall visual coherence of the streets, gardens and houses.

Street and block layout

The original block, street and section layout of Tainui and the wider area is intact with a street grid that runs northwest to southeast. Some infill subdivision has occurred with new houses behind the original houses, separate driveways and associated fencing. This has resulted in a reduction in front and side gardens, vegetation and views of houses from the street.

However in general section widths at the street boundary are consistent, which sets up a regular spacing and pattern of houses, fencing and front gardens along the street.

Design principles:

- Reinforce existing orientation and layout of sections.
- Ensure section widths are consistent with the original subdivision and adjacent sections along the street.
- When subdividing, have a shared driveway, with planting along its edge on the site boundary.

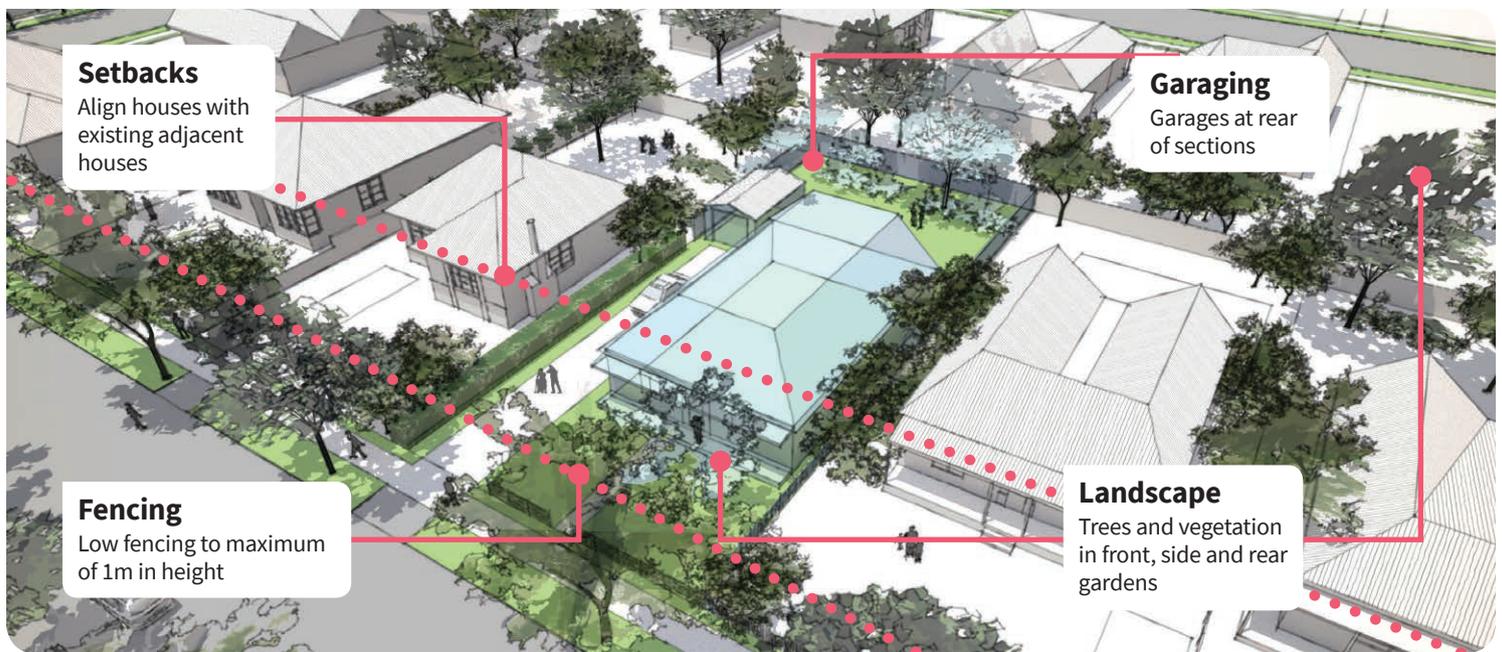
Landscape, vegetation and street amenity

Mature street trees within the streets contribute significantly to the Character Area by creating micro-climates, shade and an attractive street appearance.

Established vegetation including trees, shrubs, hedging and lawns within front and side gardens are a feature of Tainui. Low nib walls in the style of the house are also a feature of the Character Area.

Design principles:

- Retain existing mature trees and vegetation within gardens. However, ensure vegetation does not fully screen views of houses from the street.
- Locate driveways so that they do not interfere with street trees including their root systems.
- Allow for future street tree planting and avoid changing the regular spacing of street trees along the street.



Site design

Balance of house and garden size

A feature of Tainui is the consistent balance between the house and garden size. The area has a general spaciousness when viewed from the street with modest 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 trees and shrubs.
- Allow sufficient space between houses so that separation distances are consistent in the Character Area, vegetation is retained in side gardens and views towards the rear of sections are possible.

House setbacks and orientation

Houses within Tainui are located with consistent setbacks along streets and orientated to face the street. New houses should reaffirm this building edge, which contributes to the engaging pedestrian environment within the Character Area.

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.
- Ensure setbacks are not compromised by additions to existing houses.

Street boundaries

Fences and walls in Tainui are generally low allowing good visual connection between houses and streets contributing to an inclusive neighbourhood which promotes safety.

Design principles:

- Ensure consistent boundary conditions are maintained along the street with fence and wall heights of 1m or less.
- Ensure views to and from houses are not screened by fencing or vegetation.
- Consider fencing materials and pedestrian gates that are complementary to the materials of the house.

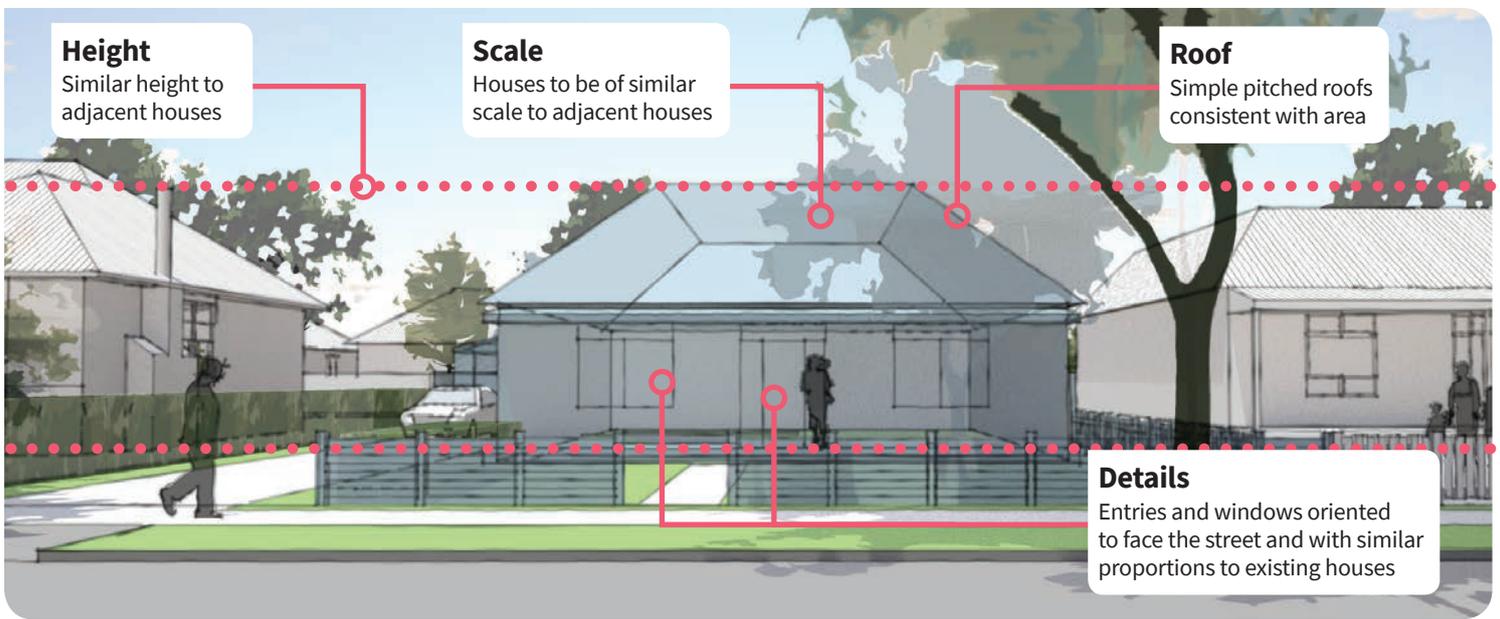
For further guidance refer to Building a Fence Design Guide available on the Christchurch City Council website.

Access parking and garaging

Vehicle garaging and parking in Tainui is generally located to the side or rear of houses. Garaging and parking in front setbacks significantly undermines the character of the area by reducing the visibility of houses from the street and removing vegetation.

Design principles:

- Locate garages to the rear of the section or at least behind the front edge of houses.
- 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.



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 Tainui are generally one or two storey stand-alone buildings with low-pitched hip and gable roofs and modest footprints.

Design principles:

- New houses should be consistent 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 simple pitched roofs that are consistent with adjacent houses.



Detail of a gable end of an early 20th century villa

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 Tainui have a range of architectural detailing including those consistent with 20th century villas, English Revival Houses and wooden bungalows. Detailing such as timber weatherboard cladding and corrugated iron roofing, bay and bow windows, occasional shingle detailing on gable ends, a variety of detailed entry features, verandahs and porches feature throughout the area.

Design principles:

- Existing houses should be maintained to retain the richness and texture of detailing including the windows, 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 should reflect the proportions, materials or details of existing houses in overall style or in the design of windows, entrance spaces and doorways, façade and roof edges.



Contemporary house using character details such as weatherboard cladding, corrugated iron roof, clear front entry with a modern porch and large windows facing the street

