

Massey Design Guide

What is Massey Character Area?

Massey 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 Massey, that are not complementary to, and otherwise undermine, the still strongly recognisable character of the area. For example, the use of brick cladding, 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 Massey 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 Massey 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.



Map of Massey Character Area

Area overview: Massey

Massey 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 Massey are:

- A memorable geography with a distinctive curving street layout, in contrast to the surrounding street grid.
- High levels of street amenity with mature street trees and grassed berms, established front and side gardens that are richly planted and contain lawns, shrubs and trees.
- A high proportion of original houses from early to mid 20th century primarily consisting of single storey wooden bungalows.
- Generally an intact original subdivision with generous section sizes and a general spaciousness.
- An open flow of space between the street and houses with low or no fencing or tall boundary vegetation.
- The size, form and scale of houses, the roof profile and location of houses on sections are generally consistent along street.

Houses in the area contribute to a sense of neighbourliness with low boundary fencing and unobstructed views of the houses from the street and vice versa.

Architectural detailing contributes to a richness in house design and consistency is established through the location, scale and proportion of windows and entrances.

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 Massey. 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 a bungalow on Massey Crescent



Example of a side-entry bungalow on Massey Crescent



Street trees on Massey Crescent

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 Massey. 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 Massey is generally intact. The crescent form of the street contributes to the character of the area. The majority of sections across the area have not been further subdivided resulting in original sized sections, which sets up a regular spacing and pattern of houses, fencing and front gardens along the street.

Design principles:

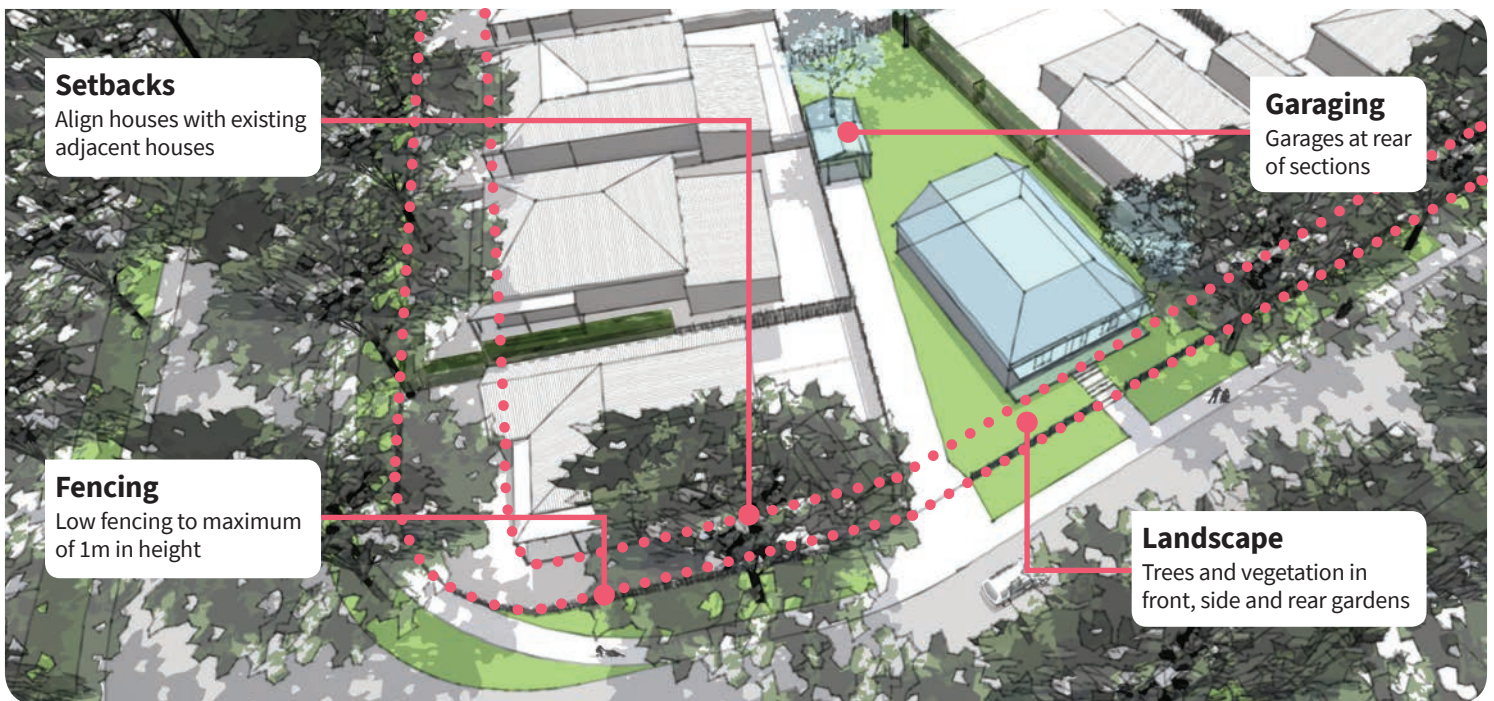
- Reinforce existing orientation and layout of sections.
- Section widths when viewed from the street should be consistent with adjacent sections along the street.
- When subdividing share a driveway, retain side gardens and minimise fencing.

Vegetation and street amenity

Mature street trees contribute significantly to the Character Area by creating micro-climates, shade and an attractive street appearance. In addition, open gardens and established vegetation within them including shrubs, hedging and lawns are a feature of Massey.

Design principles:

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



Setbacks

Align houses with existing adjacent houses

Garaging

Garages at rear of sections

Fencing

Low fencing to maximum of 1m in height

Landscape

Trees and vegetation in front, side and rear gardens

Site design

Balance of house and garden size

A feature of Massey is the consistent balance between 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 widths 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 Massey 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 adjacent 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 street setbacks are not compromised by additions to existing houses.

Street boundaries

Generally Massey has no fencing, low fencing or hedges along the front boundary. This results in good visual connection between houses and streets contributing to a sense of neighbourliness, which promotes legibility and safety.

Design principles:

- Ensure consistent boundary conditions are maintained along the street and fence heights are consistently 1m or less.
- Consider fencing materials that are complementary, or use hedges instead, to the materials of the house.
- Ensure views to and from houses are maintained and not screened by fencing or vegetation.

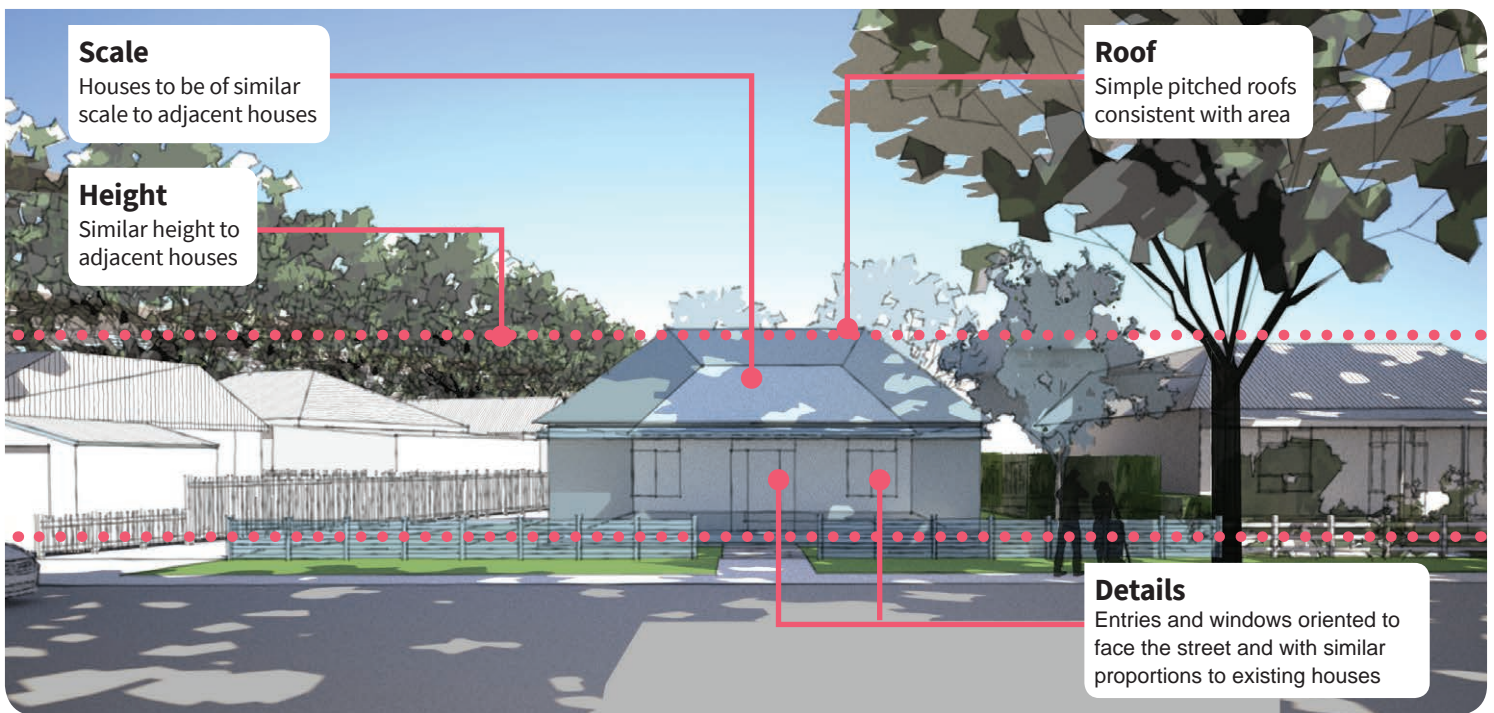
For further guidance refer to Building a Fence Design Guide available on the Christchurch City Council website.

Access parking and garaging

Vehicle garaging and parking in the Massey 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.

Design principles:

- Locate garages to the rear of the section or at least behind the front edge of houses.
- Garages should be separate buildings from 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 to be of similar scale to adjacent houses

Height
Similar height to adjacent houses

Roof
Simple pitched roofs consistent with area

Details
Entries and windows oriented to face the street and with similar proportions to existing houses

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 Massey are generally single storey stand-alone buildings with modest footprints, side entries and low-pitched hip and gable roofs.

Design principles:

- New houses should be single storey, consistent with the height of existing houses in the Character Area. If two storey, incorporate the upper storey within the roof form.
- 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 and building to avoid intruding into street setbacks.
- Ensure houses in the Character Area have low-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 Massey have a range of architectural detailing including those consistent with early to mid 20th century bungalows. Detailing such as timber weatherboard cladding and corrugated iron roofing, bay and box windows, shingle detailing on gable ends, a variety of detailed entry features and side porches, feature throughout the area.

Design principles:

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

