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CHOOSING & DESIGNING YOUR IDEAL HOME

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The home is a special part of life. Not only is it likely to be the biggest financial investment you will make, it is where you and your family will grow up, grow old or just enjoy as a holiday home. It is a place you will look forward to coming home to and relaxing in.

There are several checklists that may be helpful when considering choosing a site and design for a home. A good starting point is to conduct a Site Analysis.

Site Analysis

Every good design works from the character and conditions of the land, so the first step is to complete an analysis of the land you wish to build on. This will help you identify the opportunities and constraints of the land.

A site analysis should highlight and document the following:

- Area for on-site wastewater disposal, if required (i.e. septic tank and effluent disposal area)
- Storage of water supply
- Movement of the sun
- Contours/slope of the land
- Setback distances of neighbouring houses in the street
- The position of neighbouring houses, their windows and outdoor entertainment areas (and outbuildings)
- Character of the landscape and neighbouring properties
- Views to and from the site
- All trees on your site, neighbouring sites and in the street
- The best position for a driveway
- Position of all drainage, services and easements
- View and solar access enjoyed by adjacent residents
- Location and height of walls built on the side boundaries
- Characteristics of adjacent open space
- Any street features such as poles, trees, kerb crossovers, services
- Any difference in levels between your site and neighbouring sites
- Any significant noise sources
- Any other notable features

The aim of the site analysis is to assess the natural and built opportunities and constraints of the site. Careful site planning will ensure the new development:

- Fits in with the existing character of the neighbourhood
- Considers the needs of neighbours and doesn't impinge on their privacy
- Takes advantage of natural attributes such as shape and slope
- Protects significant trees and vegetation

- Provides for adequate privacy, noise protection and security
- Makes good use of outdoor space
- Minimises the need for earthworks (cut and/or fill), and
- Provides for energy and water conservation measures.

The following is the 'Design Dozen'. A quick summary of issues and factors that should be taken into account when choosing and designing a home.

1. Get the rules in focus – Check the zoning and any special design or development requirements with the Council's Planning Department (refer to Council's Information Sheets on Development Application Requirements and the Yorke Peninsula Council Development Plan).
2. Source of water supply – Not all townships are provided with reticulated water.
3. Make the most of a great site – Understanding the natural opportunities and constraints of the site is a good way to get the best design outcomes.
4. Fit in with the neighbours – Paying attention to building appearance and neighbourhood character is important.
5. Let the sun shine in – Making sure that your house design is the right height, orientation and shape for the site (refer to Council's Information Sheets on Energy Efficient Homes).
6. The 'right place' for cars – The car is an integral part of our lives, but a garage or carport is not a thing of beauty and shouldn't dominate the site frontage.
7. You've got the power – save it! – Houses that are sited and designed to minimise energy consumption, with long term financial, comfort and environmental benefits (refer to Council's Information Sheets on Energy Efficient Homes).
8. Be 'water wise' – Consider ways to conserve water to save money and the environment (refer to Council's Water Conservation Information Sheets for In the Garden and In the Home).
9. Create privacy – Consider the siting, location and design of the house to provide privacy for the householders and neighbours. Consider noise issues as well.
10. Feel safe – Ensure the design, lighting and landscaping creates a safer house and community.
11. Design a home that works – Details such as house entry point, site facilities and storage can make a big difference to how a home functions.
12. A 'burning issue' – Don't forget the smoke alarms (they are compulsory), and in designing your home consider careful siting, landscaping and the choice of materials.

Further Information

For any queries regarding Choosing and Designing your Ideal Home please contact Council's Development Services Department on:

Maitland Office (08) 8832 0000
 Yorketown Office (08) 8832 0000

Further information may also be found at

Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure

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