

**RESHAPING OUR REGION'S PLANNING**

# **YOUR NEXT GENERATION HOME GUIDELINE**

**FOR DETACHED HOMES ON BLOCKS UNDER 600M<sup>2</sup>**





The rise of the ‘pre-designed home’ is resulting in houses that can be cheaper to build, but more expensive to live in over a longer period. These houses can also be less private and have little to no yard space for children to play or for outdoor entertaining.

Whilst ‘pre-designed homes’ can exhibit good internal layouts and design features, not all ‘pre-designed homes’ are suited to every block’s direction, size, shape, slope, breezes, and consider your neighbour’s house from a privacy perspective.

However, with some small, simple tweaks a standard ‘pre-designed home’ can become ‘your home’.

You don’t always need a customised home, and for many this can be an unaffordable option, but with the help of this guideline you can build a better home -

**A HOME THAT’S BETTER FOR YOU AND BETTER FOR THE MORETON BAY CITY.**

If you are asking yourself the following, then the **Reshaping our Region’s Planning** guidelines are for you:

- Is my house designed with my privacy in mind?
- Will my air conditioning and heating costs be very high, or will my windows let in cooling breezes and warming natural light?
- Is there space so I can plant a tree or grow some vegetables?
- Is there enough space for me to have my friends over for a BBQ and where will they park their cars?
- Is the backyard big enough for our child’s trampoline and for the dog to run around?
- Will my home be close to shops, cafes, parks, schools and my workplace or will it become expensive to drive my car all the time?

These are great questions to ask your builder or house designer.

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Country across our City. We also acknowledge and pay our respects to the Kabi Kabi, Jinibara and Turrbal Traditional Custodians, and their elders past, present and emerging.

**Reshaping Our Region’s Planning**  
**Your Next Generation Home Guide**  
Revision 4.0  
February 2024

Disclaimer:

1. This guide is not a statutory document. It has been prepared as a tool to assist homeowners, designers and developers to improve the design and quality of Next Generation housing in Moreton Bay.
2. Images, graphics and other illustrations depicted in this guide are for demonstration purposes only and are not intended to represent a specific design or existing house.
3. The specific circumstances of your chosen home design, lot and personal needs should be considered alongside design principles described in this document.
4. Submission of a development application, copying or recreating any design from the examples or illustrations in this guide does not guarantee approval. Each development application should consider site specific elements and constraints along with street and neighbourhood context. Each application is assessed on individual merit against statutory planning and building assessment provisions.



# YOUR NEXT GENERATION HOME

This guide is for anyone building a standalone house on a block under 600 square metres in the City of Moreton Bay.

Whether building your dream home or looking to make a smart property investment a well-designed, space efficient house can:

- suit a range of budgets and households;
- be easier to maintain;
- be cheaper in the long-term
- be better for the environment;
- be neighbour friendly; and
- complement the existing area.

Your block under 600 square meters might have a street frontage between 7.5m to 14.5m. To design a house appropriate for this block size you will need to consider:

- 1 Your block and its size, shape and the way it is oriented;
- 2 The design of your house and where you locate certain rooms;
- 3 Your front, back and side outdoor spaces;
- 4 Your budget, and how you can design your house affordably;
- 5 How your home can be accessible to you and your guests;
- 6 How your home can adapt to your needs over time;
- 7 Your neighbourhood character.



# YOUR BLOCK

## CONSIDER YOUR BLOCK FIRST, BEFORE THE DESIGN OF YOUR HOME

Every block of land is different. They face different directions, capture breezes differently, may be in the shade or sun, and can come in different sizes.

Most new suburban blocks are rectangular and have a narrow front to the street with longer sides. Some exceptions are blocks on corners which tend to be more square.

If you haven't yet purchased a block, consider its direction. For these tips on block orientation see the Reshaping Our Region's Planning: Your Climate Smart Living Guide.

### SMART IDEA

Always check standard house floor plans. You can make changes to any house floor plan you are presented. Consider that there may be additional costs with changes, but that these changes may come with long-term financial and comfort benefits, and if so these changes may be worth it.

## ONCE YOU HAVE SELECTED YOUR BLOCK:

1

### LOCATE NORTH

Locate where north is. You can use a compass app on a phone or check your block's survey plan. The best natural light comes from the north.

2

### WORK OUT BREEZE DIRECTION

Take note of the direction of the breeze. You can use this to cool your home. Most summer breezes come from the south-east, and winter breezes from the south-west, but it may differ in some coastal locations.

3

### TAKE IN THE VIEW

Take note of where your best views and vistas are as well as any existing trees and vegetation on your block.

4

### BUILD HIGHER

Consider building a two-storey house, particularly on blocks with a narrow frontage, to get the most out of your block and to allow space for gardens and outdoor rooms.

5

### SPLIT LEVELS

Take advantage of any slope or hills on your block by splitting up the levels of your house.

6

### IDENTIFY CONSTRAINTS

Identify any legal or planning requirements such as mandatory build to boundary walls, driveway locations and design requirements. Your building designer, town planner or certifier will be able to assist you with this.

## ASK YOUR HOUSE DESIGNER TO:

Consider your house's location on the block. It may be tempting to build your home as wide as possible, but by narrowing your house, you allow for wider side areas (also known as side setbacks). With wider side setbacks your house can:



### PROVIDE YOU WITH GREEN RELIEF

Provide a space for a side garden, maybe even a small veggie patch!



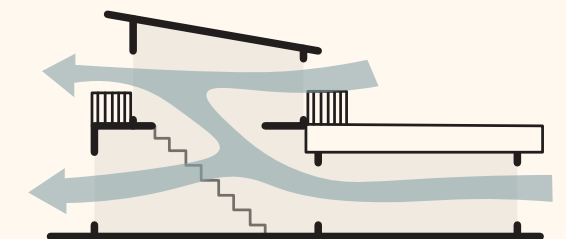
### INCLUDE EAVES

Eaves are the part of a roof that overhangs the walls of your house. Ensure that your house design has wide eaves to provide **shade to western walls** as well as windows and doors allowing you to leave these open at all times of the day and when it rains.



### CAPTURE THE BREEZES

Capture the south-east breezes with **larger windows and doors**. To make the most of these breezes remove any unnecessary hallways and walls and locate bathrooms and laundries in a way that doesn't block air movement and promotes cross ventilation.



Capture breezes through windows so that they can provide a comfortable airflow through your home.



# YOUR HOUSE DESIGN

DESIGN YOUR DREAM HOME OR YOUR NEXT GREAT INVESTMENT.

Your house design needs to suit your block. You should select a house design that works for how many people live in your house, your block's size and the way your block is facing.

*Reshaping Our Region's Planning: Your Climate Smart Living Guide* has detailed information about designing for comfort, shade, style, materials and more.

1

## THE RIGHT DIRECTION

When designing where the rooms in your house go, there are optimal locations based on the Moreton Bay climate, such as:

- Your living areas (such as lounge room, kitchen and dining) facing north and east so the room will be cooler through the day and filled with natural light.
- Your bedrooms facing south or east so that they will be cooler and will receive some natural light throughout the day.
- Your garage, bathrooms, laundry and garden walls on the west as these spaces will shield living areas from the impact of the afternoon heat. Walls built on the boundary of your block are best located on the west.

2

## FRONT FIRST

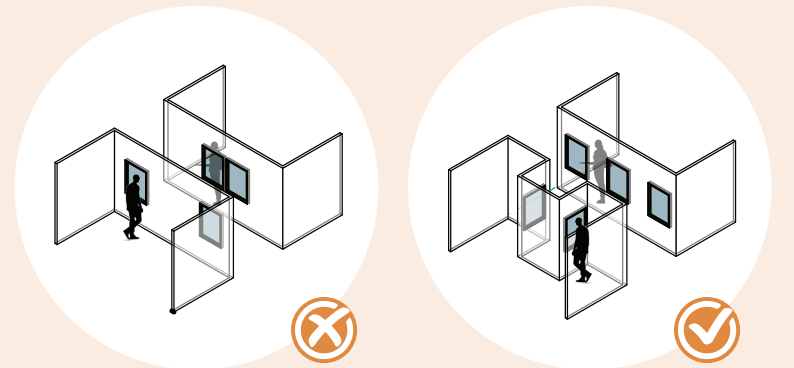
- Don't forget about the front of your house. Your front door should be easy to identify and should address the street, not be tucked down the side of the house. This also helps with safety and security.
- Front porches, front balconies, large windows and selecting multiple materials are all great ways to make the front of your house more visually appealing and welcoming.
- A second-storey balcony above the garage is a great way to interact with the street and reduce the visual impact of a garage or carport.
- Consider opening up your garage with windows and open sides. It is important to provide shade to your house whilst allowing heat to escape. Closed garages can trap heat inside the house.

3

## PLAN FOR YOUR PRIVACY

- Consider your privacy by placing windows that don't look directly into your neighbour's windows. If this can't be done then you may need to consider external screening such as operable louvres or planting shrubs. For bathrooms consider frosted glass for windows and skylights.

The left image is not ideal with the neighbour's windows looking in your house's windows. The right image is an alternative idea to have windows that don't face the neighbour's house but still allows natural light in.



## ASK YOUR HOUSE DESIGNER TO:



### IMPROVE YOUR COMFORT

Capture more breezes and natural light, making your home more comfortable all year round.



### DECLUTTER

Consider appropriate locations for bin storage areas, meter boxes, solar system inverters and batteries like the side of your house. Don't forget to plan for your letter box too!

## SMART IDEA

Consider planning the house around a **central courtyard**. A courtyard can transform a house by bringing light, air, greenery and winter sun in the heart of the house. It can also provide a beautiful generous private outlook when otherwise limited by narrow side setbacks and high side fences.



# YOUR OUTDOOR SPACES

**HAVING GREENERY AND NATURAL OPEN SPACES AROUND YOUR HOME CAN IMPROVE YOUR MOOD, REDUCE HEAT AND HELP YOU TO FEEL MORE RELAXED AT HOME, ALL CONTRIBUTING TO YOUR WELLBEING.**

In the City of Moreton Bay we are fortunate to live in a climate that allows us to make the most of the outdoors. Designing and integrating your outdoor spaces from the outset is just as important as your indoor spaces.

## SMART IDEA

To open up your home to the outside you can install large sliding or bi-fold doors that 'bring the outside in' and make your outdoor space feel like an extension to your home.

## 1

### TREES PLEASE

- **Retain existing large trees** for privacy and shade and as homes for native animals, if you don't already have a tree, consider planting one in your front and/or backyards. Trees have a cooling effect on your home and will make it more comfortable inside and outside.
- Design your outdoor spaces as a combination of **hard** (concrete, pavement and gravel) and **soft** (grass, plants and trees) materials.
- **Shrubs** can also assist with privacy and are especially important in your front yard.

## 2

### FUNCTIONAL FRONT YARD

- Consider building a front patio, lowering your front fence or planting along your front boundary. This can make your front yard more useable, especially as a space for children to play and can signal to pedestrians where your property is. Gardening out the front can be a great way to meet your neighbours.

## 3

### OUTDOORS FOR YOUR LIFESTYLE

- If you are seeking lower maintenance outdoor spaces, select plant species that require less water.
- Consider how you might use your outdoor spaces and where outdoor furniture might go so you can create a nice space for entertaining.

## SMART IDEA

A vegetable garden is a wonderful addition to a house. It provides a source of fresh food, engages kids with the outdoors, and is a way to connect with neighbours.



### ASK YOUR HOUSE DESIGNER TO:

**Demonstrate the space available** for outdoor living and landscaping by drawing in furniture, trampolines, clothes lines, trees, planting areas, vegetable gardens, spas and other things you might like to have in your front yard, backyard or sides areas.





# YOUR AFFORDABLE HOUSE

**DESIGNING YOUR HOUSE WELL CAN SAVE YOU MONEY IN THE SHORT TERM AND LONG TERM.**

The easiest way to save money is to design your house well by taking advantage of natural assets such as light and breeze and by being savvy with your spaces.

**1**

## **BE CLIMATE SMART**

- Capture breezes so that you can use less air-conditioning, saving you money on your electricity bill.
- Capture natural light, so that you won't need to switch on your lights during the day, also saving you money on your electricity bill.
- Invest in properly insulating your house walls and roof as well as protecting external windows from the summer sun with eaves to reduce on-going energy bills.

**2**

## **BE SPACE SAVVY**

- Make your house as compact as possible, and invest in good design to create clever uses of space.
- Avoid single use rooms such as home theatres, second living rooms, standalone offices, and ensuites for guest rooms, instead co-locate uses that are unlikely to be required at the same time, for example a home office and guest bedroom.
- Design spaces that can be used for multiple purposes such as open plan kitchen/dining/living spaces, shared pantry and laundry rooms and using the space under stairs for things like study nooks.
- Replace unused internal spaces with low cost but highly useable covered outdoor spaces.
- Spend a bit more upfront on quality construction and fittings, and low maintenance materials, to avoid large on-going maintenance and repair costs.

### **SMART IDEA**

Reduce wasted space in hallways and corridors by creating open planned spaces or by utilising hallways for study nooks or extra storage.







# YOUR ACCESSIBLE HOME

## DESIGN YOUR HOME TO BE ACCESSIBLE TO ALL FUTURE RESIDENTS

You and your guests, or someone living in your home, may live with a disability or have mobility issues. You can design your home to be more accessible allowing it to adapt to your future needs, and as an added bonus this can also increase the value of your home.

### 1

#### EASY ACCESS

- Make sure that there is easy access to the front door from the street with no steps and a doorway at least 850mm wide to accommodate a wheelchair. Internal doors can be 820mm wide.
- Design your interior so that wheel chairs and prams can be moved around. Corridors should be 1m wide and kitchen/living spaces should be open to support easy movement.
- Have a bathroom and a multi-purpose room capable of being used as a bedroom located on the ground floor for easy access.
- Locate taps, power points, light switches and window sills at a height that is easy to reach and use from a wheel chair.

### 2

#### FUTURE FRIENDLY

- Build reinforced walls around your toilet, shower and bath to install grab rails as needed at a later stage. Showers should be hobless (ie no lip or step into the shower recess).
- Design stairways to reduce the likelihood of injury and also enable future adaptation such as for a stair lift.

#### SMART IDEA

Build **reinforced walls** around your shower and bath to install grab rails at a later date. It's much cheaper to prepare for this now, then making structural changes later.



#### ASK YOUR HOUSE DESIGNER TO:

Make sure your home design meets the Livable Housing Australia silver, gold or platinum performance levels. This can be assessed and certified by an approved Livable Homes Assessor at the design or constructed stage.





### SMART IDEA

You don't need space in order to save water. You can store water in tanks located underneath your driveway or patio, a thin tank at the side of your house or in your backyard.

# YOUR SMART HOME

## DESIGN YOUR HOUSE TO ADAPT TO CHANGING LIFE STAGES AND TECHNOLOGIES.

There are many stages of life that we go through and your house may need to accommodate your changing needs over time. A well-planned home can provide a flexible and adaptable living solution designed to accommodate both the current and future needs of occupants at all stages of life. At different stages of your life you may need to work from home, you may have a family, become single and grow older in your house.

1

### FUTURE PROOF YOUR HOUSE

You can design your house so that it meets your current and future needs by:

- Making sure at least one room on the ground floor is adaptable for future uses - such as a multi-purpose living, bedroom and office space.
- Ensuring that structural bracing within the house allows for future renovations and minor modifications of the floor plan layout.

2

### TECHNOLOGY TALKS

A well-designed house with integrated sustainability and technology features can also result in a greater return on your investment.

- Consider installing the latest technology and smart solutions that you can afford, such as solar panels, batteries, rainwater tanks and grey water systems.
- Choose energy and water efficient appliances, lights and fittings throughout your home.
- Integrate smart technology allowing you to control household devices and functions remotely through your connected home.
- Source reclaimed, sustainably harvested or locally manufactured construction materials.



### ASK YOUR HOUSE DESIGNER TO:

Make provisions within your home to allow for any future modifications to the floor plan and the installation of smart and sustainable technologies.





### SMART IDEA

Consider how close you are to public transport, shops, schools and employment areas. This will help improve your property prices and the value of living in your home long term.

# YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

## THE BEST HOMES CONTRIBUTE TO THE LOCAL CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AND THE MAKING OF GREAT STREETS.

The City of Moreton Bay is made up of diverse urban, rural and coastal places, with each suburb having its own look and feel. Local character is the distinctive identity of a place, and how you experience it when you are there. It is formed by the built environment and the natural landscape, the culture, the people and the history of a place.

### 1

#### RESPECT THE LOCAL CHARACTER

To design your home so that it can contribute positively to local character you should ask yourself these questions:

- Is my neighbourhood new and emerging or is it established?
- What do other buildings look like in my neighbourhood, what materials are prominent?
- How can my house respond to the local climate and relaxed lifestyle of Moreton Bay?
- Are there any other notable features or characteristics of the neighbourhood? For example, prominent trees, traditional buildings or interesting local history.
- How can my house contribute to making my street a great place?

Respecting local character does not mean limiting the design of your house nor does it mean that your house should mimic or copy similar properties in the street. Instead, it means being inspired by the features or characteristics of your neighbourhood.



#### ASK YOUR HOUSE DESIGNER TO:

- Design features of your home that are inspired by the local neighbourhood.
- Provide a balcony or patio that engages with the street.
- Allow space for a garden or a beautiful shade tree in the street frontage.
- Select materials suitable for your area.



# WANT MORE TIPS?

## CHECK OUT:

1

### YOUR HOME AUSTRALIA

'Your Home' is an Australian Government guide to building, buying or renovating a home. It shows how to create a comfortable home with low impact on the environment – economical to run, healthier to live in and adaptable to your changing needs. Visit [yourhome.gov.au](https://yourhome.gov.au) for more information and to download example housing designs.

2

### LIVABLE HOUSING DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Livable housing design guide provides useful information for consumers seeking to introduce livable design features into a new home or could be readily applied within an existing home during renovation or refurbishment. The Guidelines describe livable design elements. The guideline is available to download from [livablehousingaustralia.org.au](https://livablehousingaustralia.org.au)

# YOUR HOME AND LIVING GUIDELINES

Other guidelines in the series are available to download on the Moreton Bay City Council website.

Visit [mbrc.link/your-home-and-living](https://mbrc.link/your-home-and-living)



1

### RESHAPING OUR REGION'S PLANNING – YOUR CLIMATE SMART LIVING GUIDELINE

Reshaping Our Region's Planning - Your Climate Smart Living Guideline is Council's guide to our local climate containing detailed information about designing for comfort, shade, style, materials and more.

2

### RESHAPING OUR REGION'S PLANNING – YOUR FLOOD SMART BUILDING GUIDELINE

Reshaping Our Region's Planning - Your Next Generation Home is Council's guide to rebuilding your home or building after it has been affected by flood or is located in an area prone to flooding.



For more information please contact Council

Visit	<a href="https://moretonbay.qld.gov.au">moretonbay.qld.gov.au</a>
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City of Moreton Bay 2024

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this guide is correct at the time of printing.

