





Empowering our Official Community Plan (OCP)

The South Pender OCP has been enacted in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act and under the jurisdiction afforded it by the *Islands Trust Act*.

The Islands Trust Act defines the purpose of the Trust as to “preserve and protect the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment for the benefit of the residents of the Trust Area and of British Columbia generally.”

Every bylaw passed and action taken by the Local Trust Committee (LTC), the locally elected land use authority for South Pender Island, has to be consistent with the Official Community Plan and the Trust Policy Statement. Most notably, this includes South Pender’s Land Use Bylaw.



South Pender's Character & OCP Goals

The OCP embodies a consensus of South Pender Islanders' views about how best to nurture a sustainable economy, environment and community in a manner that preserves and protects what we most value for the generations to follow.

Our OCP describes the character of South Pender as one of the least populated and least developed islands where "quiet, freedom from disturbance, and sense of privacy within what is a relatively undisturbed and visually attractive settings are key qualities valued by South Pender Islanders, who expect these qualities to be maintained."

At a fundamental level our OCP goals "are intended to act as focal points in protecting and maintaining the rural island character so valued by South Pender Island residents, property owners and visitors."



South Pender's OCP Goals

Key OCP Goals include:

1. To maintain the island's rural character
2. To protect the natural features and biological diversity of the island and its immediate surroundings
3. To protect...the scenic amenities derived from South Pender's areas of forest cover, natural vegetation, farmlands, residences and coastline
4. To ensure land use, development, and associated servicing are compatible with the rural island character



South Pender Land Use Bylaw (LUB)

How, and to what extent, does our Land Use Bylaw give regulatory effect to our OCP?

Our Land Use Bylaw prohibits a number of uses in all zones including:

- Airports and airstrip facilities
- Heliports and helipads
- Junkyards and auto wrecking yards
- The use of land for motorized trail bike or ATV paths or trails

Important as it is to prohibit such uses, similar restrictions, or variations thereof, can be found in many municipalities as well.

What then are the specific regulatory provisions within our LUB that respond to the preserve and protect mandate including protection of our natural features and visually attractive setting and that ensure land use and development is compatible with the rural island character?



South Pender Land Use Bylaw

Unfortunately, there are few, if any, provisions in our land use bylaw that meaningfully uphold our island community values and goals.

Our setbacks are similar to setbacks in other rural communities, such as Sannich's A-1 zone which has a 24.6 ft. front and rear yard setback and a 9.8 ft. interior side lot line setback.

In 2016, following spirited community discussions, the previous Trustees added regulations on maximum house size to the LUB. Laudable as this was, the regulations were very permissive and for any given lot size, the maximum permitted house size is still likely larger than most existing houses within that lot size category.

Large houses remain an outright permitted use in the bylaw, with only minimal setbacks to ameliorate impacts on adjacent neighbours and the rural character.



South Pender Land Use Bylaw

With the exception of three specific locations on the island, no steps have been taken to designate areas of land as development permit areas (DPAs) in order to protect our natural environment and its eco-systems and to promote energy and water conservation.

Consequently our LUB is still largely devoid of regulations that support our Official Community Plan.



South Pender Land Use Bylaw

Under the bylaw maximum house sizes have been established based on lot size:

Siting and Size

(5) Maximum Floor Area per lot:

RR1

✓

RR2

✓

RR3

✓

Lot Area	The total floor area of all buildings may not exceed:	The floor area of a dwelling may not exceed:
Less than 0.4 ha (1 acre)	465 m ² (5000ft ²)	353 m ² (3800ft ²)
0.4 ha to 0.79 ha (1 to 2 acres)	557 m ² (6000ft ²)	418 m ² (4500ft ²)
0.8 ha to 1.59 ha (2 to 4 acres)	743 m ² (8000ft ²)	520 m ² (5600ft ²)
1.6 ha to 3.9 ha (4 to 10 acres)	836 m ² (9000 ft ²)	543 m ² (5845ft ²)
4.0 ha (10 acres) or greater	1858 m ² (20000ft ²)	560 m ² (6030ft ²)

(6) The minimum setback for any building or structure, except a fence or pump/utility house, shall be:

(a) 7.6 metres (25 ft.) from any front or rear lot line;

✓

✓

✓

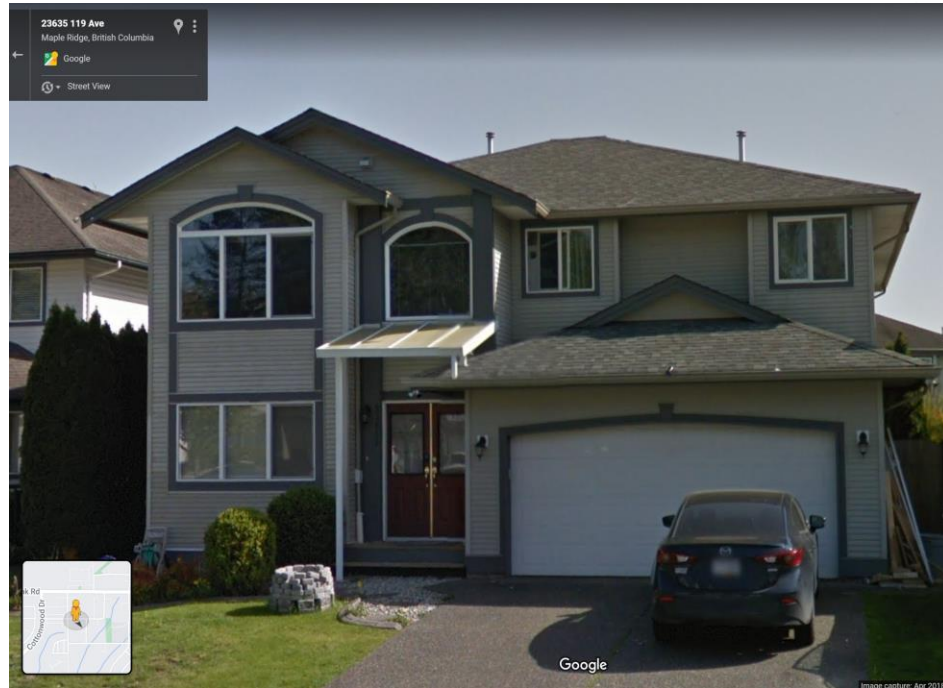


Dwellings & Rural Character

While it may be difficult to precisely define what is 'rural character', it is considerably easier to define what it is not!

The following are examples of houses that could be built on South Pender, under existing provisions of the land use bylaw, irrespective of whether the size, massing and exterior materials in any way respect 'rural character'.

With a lot area less than 1 acre, the floor area of a dwelling may not exceed 3,800 SF



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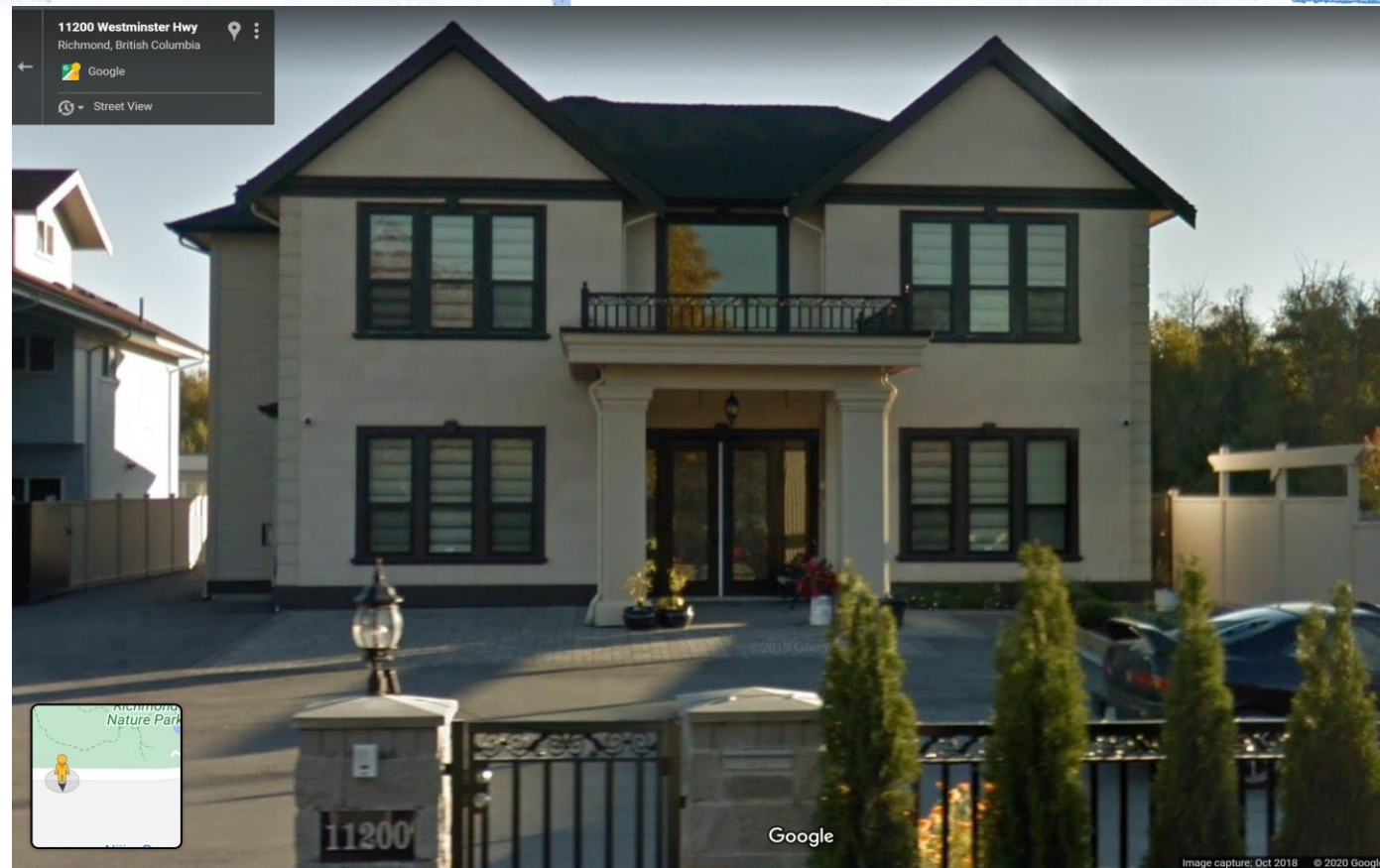
With a lot area between 1 to 2 acres, the floor area of a dwelling may not exceed 4,500 SF



With a lot area between 2 to 4 acres, the floor area of a dwelling may not exceed 5,600 SF



With a lot area of 10 acres or greater, the floor area of a dwelling may not exceed 6,030 SF





Impacts to rural character and fragile eco-systems

The largely unfettered ability to construct large, poorly designed houses without any requirements to consider the goals and objectives of our OCP or impacts on neighbouring properties coupled with minimal setbacks and no guidelines on materials, colours or building massing collectively leaves the door wide open for houses that will have a significantly negative and enduring impact on our rural character, our community and the environment.

Large homes, especially those with sprawling footprints can be very impactful on the eco-systems of the southern gulf islands.

The absence of a regulatory framework that adequately protects the islands' unique and fragile flora and fauna and, tree species is putting our natural environment and eco-systems at risk.



Limited regulatory tools

We have unique Provincial government legislation, the *Islands Trust Act*, that mandates us to “preserve and protect” the unique amenities and environment of the Trust Area.

We have a Trust Policy Statement that commits trustees to “proactive land use planning as essential for the protection of Trust Area ecosystems and directs local trust committees, in their regulatory bylaws to “address policies related to the aesthetic, environmental and social impacts of development” and to “ensure that land use is compatible with preservation and protection of the environment, natural amenities, resources and community character.”

We have an Official Community Plan that sets as its first goal, “to maintain the island’s rural character...”



Limited regulatory tools

It is therefore ironic and frustrating that in spite of special legislation, policies and a community vision to maintain our rural character we actually have limited regulatory tools to meet our preserve and protect responsibilities, and a land use bylaw that in its present form provides very little regulatory protection for our community values.

It is also ironic that other communities that are not endowed with an explicit “preserve and protect” mandate have in some cases, more mechanisms by which to protect values deemed important than what we have on the gulf islands.



Design Guidelines

Despite their regulatory differences, a common theme among jurisdictions ranging from Europe to California, the Pacific Northwest and Vancouver is the use of Design Guidelines.

The following examples illustrate the guidance found in various design guidelines:

Roscommon Rural Design Guidelines

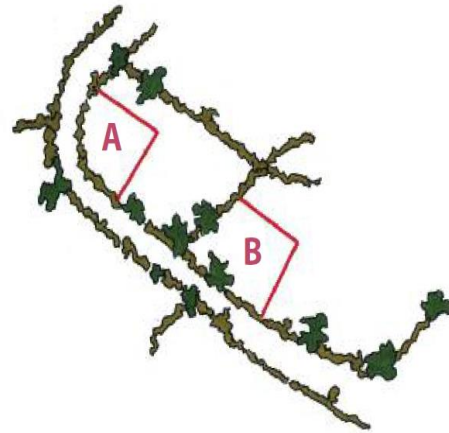
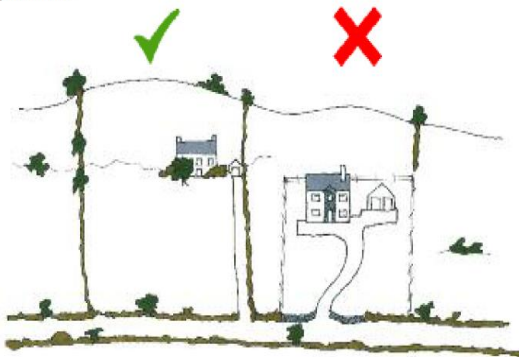
Siting and Integration

4.1 Choosing the right site

Of all the factors, site selection has the biggest influence on how successfully a dwelling can assimilate into its rural surroundings. While building form is also a crucial determinant, poor site selection places significant limitations on how you create your living space as its position in the landscape will make its assimilation difficult, while good site selections opens up significant number of potential possibilities for the creation of your living space.

Essentially good siting is when a building appears to "belong" to the landscape rather than intruding upon it. The key to allowing a new dwelling to "belong in the landscape" is the selection of the correct site within the landscape and then to consider the characteristics of that site and develop the design of your house based on these characteristics.

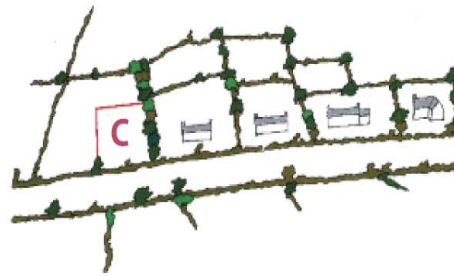
It is important for a dwelling to pay particular attention to the existing contours on a site, making use of and working with the site levels. Digging out the site can be expensive and the creation an artificial platform can make the site more prominent.



Site A is located too close to a corner which presents a danger to traffic safety.

Site B is located along a straighter section of the road with good visibility.

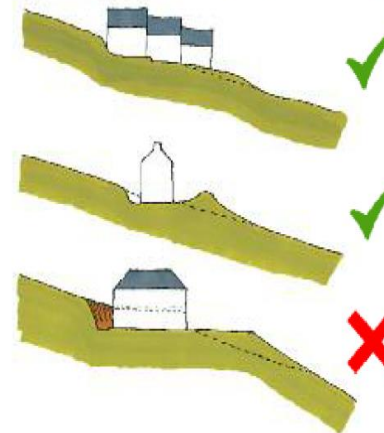
Site C is a poor location as it contributes to ribbon development.



Siting and Integration

4.4 Dealing with contours

The sloping contours of a site play an important part when choosing the location of and indeed the specific design of a dwelling for a particular site. A good design approach will work with the existing contours of the site and integrate the dwelling *into* the site as compared building *on* the site. Excessive excavation or the creation of an artificial platform can lead to a conspicuous building which is unrelated to the site.



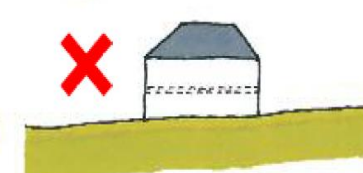
On sloping sites the house should ideally have stepped floor levels which reflect the contours of the site.

When excavation is necessary, narrow plan houses with minimal cut and fill is recommended.

Over scaled deep plan houses with large excavations and platforms should be avoided.



On flat or open sites, small scale houses are easier to blend into the landscape especially when supplemented by native species deciduous trees.



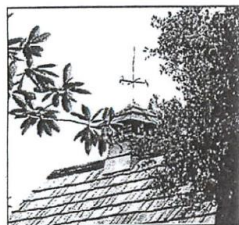
On relatively flat sites, large bulky houses should be avoided as it is very difficult to blend them into the landscape.



Houses should avoid being placed on a hill top or in a position where they break the horizon or skyline.

Carmel Residential Design Guidelines

• Carmel-by-the-Sea Design Traditions • Final Details Guidelines for Building Design •



Architectural details contribute to character of the building and their use is encouraged.



The use of simple wood details that appear to be true structural elements is appropriate.



Appropriately sized dormers can be used to reduce scale and achieve a well-integrated design.

Simple and restrained character

9.2 Keep building forms, materials and details simple and visually restrained.

- Building forms, materials and details that contrast strongly within a single building or with neighboring buildings are discouraged.
- Design features that increase the visual prominence of the building should be avoided.
- Avoid visual complexity. Too many different materials or excessive details create a busy appearance and should be simplified.
- Avoid overly ornate details.

Building scale and design integrity

9.3 Building details should be used to provide interest and not exaggerate the scale of a building.

- Add details to relieve blank surfaces and achieve a scale compatible with the building's forms and its architecture.
- Appropriately sized chimneys, overhangs, windows, doors, dormers, porches, entries and decks can be used to reduce scale and achieve a well-integrated design. Making any of these elements oversized can exaggerate the building's scale and should be avoided.
- Avoid grand entryways, windows and doors that are out of proportion with the human form. Avoid ostentatious design treatments.

Architectural details

9.4 Architectural details should appear to be authentic, integral elements of the overall building design concept.

- Details that appear to be applied as superficial elements should be avoided.
- The use of simple wood and/or native stone details that are (or appear to be) true structural elements (such as exposed rafter tails, wood beams, stone foundations, etc.) are appropriate. Avoid details that appear inauthentic, non-structural or gratuitous to the basic architecture.
- When design details and surface materials are selected they should be used throughout the full exterior of the building to maintain consistency. Avoid the application of special materials or design treatments to just the street facade.

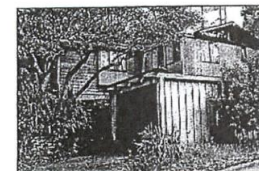
• Carmel-by-the-Sea Design Traditions • Final Details Guidelines for Building Design •



Historically, homes were small, often no larger than one- or one and one half-stories.



The construction method most often used was wood frame, although there were many homes constructed of rough cut stone.



Wood siding treatments were either shingle, vertical board and batten or horizontal clapboards.

noteworthy to Carmel in this period, however, was the design of "Storybook" cottages that drew upon references to "Cotswold houses."

By the end of the 1930s, much of the character known as "old Carmel" was established, both in terms of the landscape and the building stock. Infilling of parcels continued, however, with a number of "modern" houses appearing through the 1950s. These reflected themes along the coast—basic wood clad structures with picture windows and low-pitched roofs. Wood decks often extended living areas out into the forest.

During these decades of early development, individual expression was tempered with careful consideration for the setting and of the character of the community. The town that emerged therefore is a unique expression of a commitment to a special physical character as well as a distinct cultural pattern.

Some neighborhoods also exhibited distinct variations in architectural design. In the Old Mission Tract, for example, the Ranch and North Coastal styles are typical. Along Scenic, North Coastal houses blend with a variety of Modernist interpretations, along with other more traditional types.

Key principles of architectural design

At the Final Phase level of design consideration, three key principles underlie the guidelines:

1. Keep the design simple.

While variety in details is encouraged and visual interest is desired, this should be accomplished in a restrained manner, such that each building remains subordinate to the forest character.

2. Promote diversity of styles.

Within the basic framework of the design traditions, a range of architectural designs can occur. In fact, repetition of a single style in a block should be avoided.

3. Be consistent within an individual building.

While diversity is encouraged throughout the community as a whole, consistency in design throughout an individual building is very important. This is an essential ingredient of the design traditions of Carmel.

These three principles are fundamental to the Final Details Guidelines for Building Designs that follow and compliance with these key principles is a primary concern.

San Juan Islands Design Guidelines

Sustainable Planning and Design

Sustainability is an important consideration in planning and design of byway projects. Sustainable design balances human needs with the carrying capacity of the natural and cultural environments, avoiding or minimizing impacts to those environments. Sustainable design creates optimum and harmonious relationships between people and their environments. It allows opportunities for people to experience scenic qualities, natural habitats, wildlife, and plants with minimal effects on them.

Preserving the sense of place in the San Juan Islands and the scenic byway as part of this place is a critical aspect of sustainability. The uniqueness of the San Juan Islands is what drives visitors' interests and desires to see and experience this place. In providing facilities and activities for visitors, special care must be taken to not destroy the very resources and qualities the visitors are coming to experience. Retaining and enhancing existing aesthetics and visual character and protecting natural and cultural resources are the actions that will help preserve the islands' sense of place.

In addition to avoiding and minimizing impacts to the natural and cultural environment, sustainable design minimizes energy use or generates energy, manages or reuses waste, and conserves water. Sustainable design maximizes the use of local renewable resources and recycled and recyclable materials. The use of imported goods is minimized as much as possible. Sustainable design seeks to do more with less—more function within less space and more sharing of resources and spaces. It minimizes also long term upkeep and

replacement needs through the construction of lasting, durable improvements that require minimal maintenance and have a long life cycle. This results in a greater return on investment for public/capital expenditures. There are many excellent resources available to guide green building and sustainable design practices. Refer "References and Resources" in the appendix.

Existing Byway Context—Design Influences and Styles

In order to preserve and enhance the special characteristics of a place, it is important to have an in-depth understand of the existing natural systems and cultural influences that are inherent to that place—the existing context. Images on the following pages show the existing natural character visible from both marine and land segments of the byway, including natural conditions such as:

- Bluffs and beaches
- Forests/wooded areas
- Pastoral open spaces and fields
- Prairies and meadows

Vernacular architectural styles (historic and present-day) also influence the look and feel of the byway at every turn, including:

- Villages and hamlets nestled in the scenic landscape
- Unique places such as the historic Rosario Resort on Orcas Island and historic Roche Harbor on San Juan Island, that each have their own style and character

Typical Features of the Rustic Cascadian Style

- *Expression of substantial structural strength*
- *Low hugging profile/human scale emphasis*
- *Heavy timber (often log) and stone construction*
- *Unpeeled logs or half round logs or rough hewn timbers as beams, sometimes siding*
- *Multi-paneled windows (small paneled preferred)*
- *Exposed structure and decking*
- *Moderately to steeply pitched hipped and gable roofs*
- *Cedar shakes/shingles*
- *Sometimes asymmetrical composition*
- *Large stone chimneys*
- *Exterior materials and finishes complement the natural landscape such as rough-hewn wood, timbers, and rock; painted metal in an earhtone or accent color*
- *Varied exterior textures*
- *Board-and-batten or shingled siding left unpainted*
- *Natural materials such as cut stone used at the foundation, bases of columns, etc.*
- *Hand-worked metal fixtures*
- *Hand-crafted wood details, rustic decorative elements and artworks integrated into design*

the byway. Features of the style, such as pitched roofs and board-and-batten siding in some cases, are also consistent with architectural styles of the 1800s and early 1900s found along the byway.

Given the strong influence of arts and crafts in the islands, with pottery makers, painters, wood carvers, and various craftspeople, there could be opportunities to get local artists involved. Arts and crafts elements, such as tiles, carved wood features, and decorations could be integrated into the design of the roadside features, including Native American art and symbols with involvement of the tribes.

Recommended Materials Palette

To express the Rustic Cascadian style, natural, regionally available materials such as heavy, rough-hewn timbers or logs and the integral use of rock or stone should be used. The images on the following pages represent the recommended materials palette for roadside features.

Vancouver, Southlands Guidelines

1 Application and Intent

These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the RA-1 District Schedule of the **Zoning and Development By-law** for developments in the Southlands area. The guidelines indicate design opportunities to help applicants in the design of projects, as well as assist City staff in their evaluation. The guidelines should be consulted in seeking approval for conditional uses or the relaxation of regulations as may be permitted by the District Schedule. They will be most applicable to the Blenheim Flats area of the RA-1 District where the majority of the residential and equestrian development occurs.

The Health Department's guidelines for on-site sanitary sewage disposal and stabling in the RA-1 District should also be consulted.

2 General Design Consideration

2.1 Neighbourhood Character

The major intent of the guidelines is to ensure that new development will maintain and enhance the prevailing semi-rural character. As redevelopment occurs, it is essential that this character is not compromised. Semi-rural character is created by an assemblage of design elements such as expansive vistas, equestrian functions, open pastures and informal landscaping along the side edges.

Objective:

New development should maintain and enhance the existing semi-rural character, and ensure that the prevailing development pattern is not compromised.

Figure 1. Representative Semi-Rural Character



2.2 Street Character

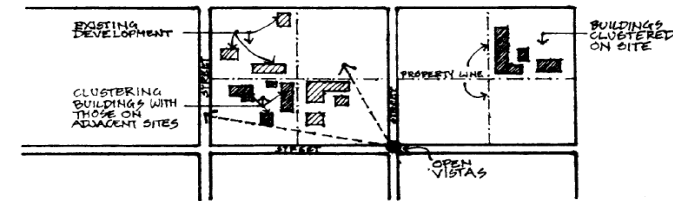
The character of the streets in the area contributes significantly to the overall image. The street edge is the most visible part of any development and assists in establishing a cohesive character. It is important that as redevelopment occurs, the treatment of private property adjacent to the street does not compromise or clash with the existing street character. Streets in the area are characterized by their informal edges. The lack of curbs, the presence of ditches and the gradual visual transition from the public to private domain contributes to the semi-rural image. Solid walls or hedges along the property line abruptly terminate the street edge, severely limit visual transition from public to private property, restrict views through the site and result in a more urban street image which is inconsistent with the established character.

Objective:

New development should provide a gradual visual transition from the public domain along the road to the private development site in order to maintain the semi-rural character and not disrupt the cohesiveness of the existing street pattern.

This can be achieved by:

Figure 4. Preferred Site Planning



2.2.2

Building Character

In the RA-1 area landscaping and open space are visually dominant in creating the overall character and image rather than the actual built form. Buildings are clearly set into the landscape. This is reinforced by the predominance of elements such as pitched roof forms, wood finishes and earth tone colours. Extensive use of stucco, concrete and bright colours is inappropriate. A variety of building styles can be compatible with the area character as long as they maintain this secondary image. An important relationship will be between the principal house and any infill or caretaker's units. These units should be subordinate to and compatible in character with the principal house.

Objective:

Residential buildings should be secondary to and fit unobtrusively into the existing semi-rural context primarily created by the overall landscaping, site planning and edge treatment.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Giving more prominence to landscaping than to buildings; and
- (b) Using low-scale, semi-rural building forms which blend into the landscape.

Objective:

Infill and caretaker's units should be compatible and subordinate to the principal house.

This can be achieved by ensuring that infill units do not create so strong an identity to imply a separate and subdivided lot.

Vancouver, Southlands Guidelines

4.4 - 4.6 Front, Rear and Side Yard

Most lots in the RA-1 District are substantially larger than the standard city lot, allowing a greater flexibility in site planning and resulting in much larger front, rear and side yards. Generally, the yards exceed the requirements of the RA-1 schedule. These setbacks should be considered as the minimum in most circumstances as the creation of open space is a major objective. Relaxations permitted in the RA-1 schedule should only be considered when such relaxations do not adversely affect adjacent properties or compromise other design objectives. In some cases, such as narrow lots, relaxations may be desirable.

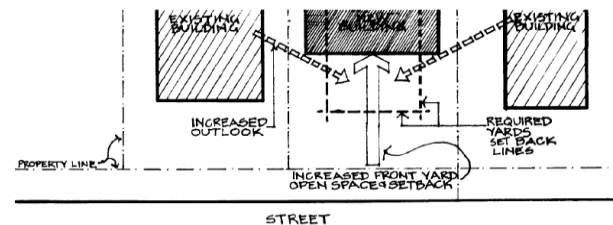
Objective:

New development should maximize front and side yards to emphasize semi-rural character and contiguous open space. Relaxations should only be considered in circumstances where it can be demonstrated that such relaxations will not compromise the semi-rural character nor adversely impact adjacent properties.

This can be achieved by:

- Ensuring that a relaxation of a side yard will be accompanied by an increase in the front yard setback; and
- Ensuring that the relaxation of any side or rear yard does not affect the privacy of an adjacent property and the visual outlook from the neighbouring house is enhanced.

Figure 8. Relaxation of Side Yards



4.9 Off-Street Parking and Loading

In addition to residential uses, many sites will be developed to include equestrian or nursery facilities. These facilities will require an additional number of parking stalls beyond those required for residential use. If the parking areas are prominently visible from the road, the objective of creating a pastoral semi-rural character could be compromised.

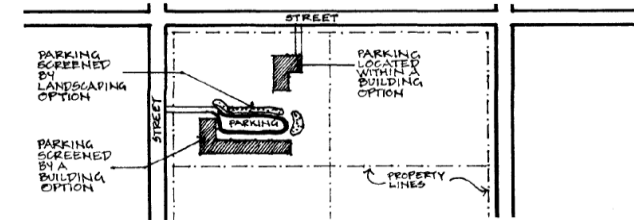
Objective:

New development should minimize the impact of parking areas to maintain a semi-rural character.

This can be achieved by:

- Providing some intervening screening between any parking areas and the street and adjacent sites;
- Locating parking areas behind buildings to make them less visible from the street; and
- Locating residential parking within a building, or ensuring it is appropriately screened.

Figure 9. Preferred Parking Location and Treatment



4.16 Building Width and Depth

Most existing buildings in the area have a depth and width that is an appropriate scale for the size of the site, and contributes to semi-rural character. Buildings which are overly deep and wide create an obtrusive image and limit views through the site. Section 4.16 of the RA-1 schedule prescribes the maximum width and depth of buildings used for dwelling uses and accessory to dwelling uses. Buildings used for equestrian and other purposes should also not appear out of scale and be overly dominant.

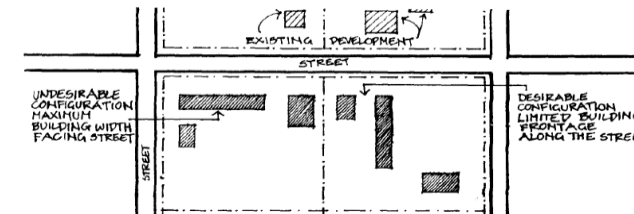
Objective:

New development should be compatible with the prevailing built form in width and depth.

This can be achieved by:

- Ensuring that buildings are not sited or configured so as to create a wall along the street edge; and
- Locating indoor riding rings well back from the street edge and by using other intervening buildings of a more compatible scale to screen and reduce visual impact. Riding rings should also be sited so as not to adversely impact any adjacent sites.

Figure 10. Preferred Width and Depth Configuration



7 Open Space

Open space is a key component in maintaining and creating semi-rural character in the RA-1 area. Generally, existing development consists of buildings sited in a manner which maximizes contiguous open green space in conjunction with equestrian functions. These large expanses of



Next Steps

So, where do we go from here?

We have a choice to make; we can either continue with the philosophy of minimal land use constraints such that property owners have the outright ability to construct very large houses regardless of their siting, consideration for the natural environment or neighbouring properties, or we can take proactive steps to preserve and protect the “trust area and its unique amenities and environment” and, the rural character of these islands.

If we are intent on preserving our rural character, particularly in light of increased ‘external’ demand to acquire and develop our rural landscape, what are the specific areas of regulation that we should be reviewing?



Next Steps

In my view, we need to consider the following:

- House size
- Building setbacks and siting
- The creation of building design and siting guidelines
- Establishment of development permit areas to protect the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity

Preservation of rural character as expressed in the built form need not mean 'sameness' or a uniformity of architectural style.

Rather, a diversity of architectural styles and character should be encouraged with the common theme being houses that manifest rural character values, respond thoughtfully to natural topography and unique site conditions and, respectfully consider adjacent properties.



Next Steps

I look forward to engaging with the community on the next steps towards empowering our land use bylaw to better reflect and manifest the values and goals of the community as expressed in our Official Community Plan.

Thank you.