

3. YOUR REAR GARDEN

Now that you understand your site and your family's needs, use your building plan as the basis to start your design. (Your builder will probably have a scale plan of your house on the lot.) The following principles should guide your design.

Solar Access

- Locate outdoor living areas where they'll get sun during the time of day that they will be used the most (refer fig. 1)
- Locate the clothes drying area where it will get sun for some of the day and as close to the laundry as possible.
- Be careful in tree location to maintain winter sunshine into the house, and possibly provide shade to windows in summer.

Shelter

- Shelter outdoor living areas from hot and cold winds, and utilise cooling breezes in summer.

Function

- Locate the main outdoor living area, perhaps with paving, close to the family room or kitchen (refer fig. 2).
- Provide doorways connecting the kitchen and/or family rooms with outdoor areas. Keep the level difference between these indoor and outdoor areas to no more than one or two steps.
- Put children's play structures or sand pits where they can be seen directly from the main indoor living area or even the kitchen sink (refer fig. 2).
- Locate utility areas out of sight of indoor and outdoor living areas, or else screen them from view with fencing or planting (refer fig. 2).
- Use plants, screens and fences to enclose and separate different outdoor use areas. A series of different spaces in the garden can make it more flexible to use and can actually make it feel larger.
- Provide all weather paved access between the main use areas and from the front to the back garden.

Privacy & Views

- Use simple screening, such as lattice on fencetops, tall shrubs or strategically placed small trees to prevent

overlooking by neighbours (refer fig. 3).

- Ensure highly visible large, exposed walls are softened through tall narrow evergreen trees or feature panels and climbers.
- Frame and accentuate attractive views into the garden from different rooms of the house.
- VicUrban should approve any proposals of fence extension to any boundary fencing which is visible from public areas.

Planting Design

- Keep the choice of plant materials simple. The best gardens rely on simple species repeated throughout. Try to use the same or complementing species used in your front garden to create a consistent character throughout.
- Keep lawn areas to a minimum to reduce watering costs. (Alternatives include ground covers, wood mulches and gravel mulches).
- Use deciduous trees to shade outdoor entertainment areas in summer and to allow winter sun to warm these areas (refer fig. 4).
- Use evergreen trees where winter shade won't matter and where screening is vital (refer fig. 4).
- Select shrubs to frame views or to create screens that separate spaces.
- The amount of light and moisture are the key growth factors of plants. Choose carefully for very shady, very wet or very dry places.
- Select plants for specific purposes. Avoid buying them first and then trying to find a place for them to fit in.
- Use plants of contrasting colour or foliage texture in areas you want to highlight or define.
- Consider using plants that will provide highlights due to seasonal change, while also ensuring a good selection of all year performers.
- Create hierarchy in your garden by the layering of plants (moving from larger shrubs towards the rear of the garden bed, to medium shrubs, through to ground covers at the front).
- Use planted garden beds along house and porch edges as grass directly against walls and fences can look very stark.
- Avoid paving running directly against walls, solid fences or the edge of your house. Instead a narrow garden bed will soften edges.

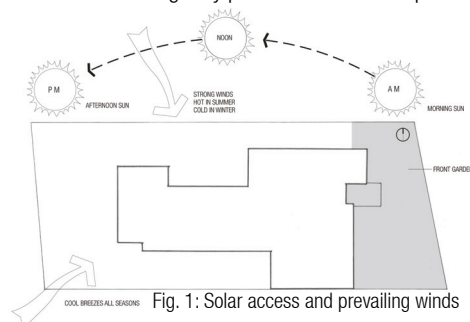


Fig. 1: Solar access and prevailing winds

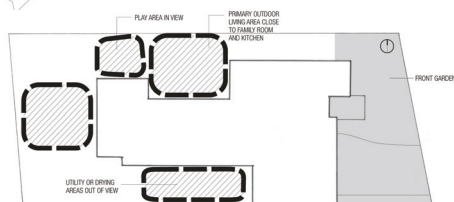


Fig. 2: Zones and functions

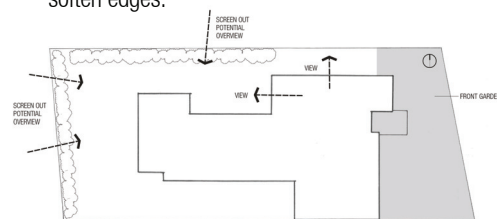


Fig. 3: Vegetative screening for privacy

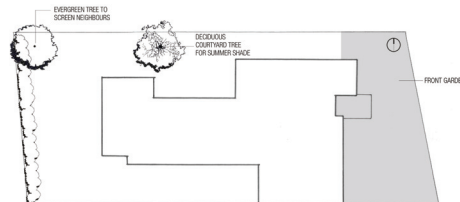


Fig. 4: Deciduous and evergreen trees

4. FINAL DESIGN

Putting it Together

If possible, get your builder to give you a copy of the floor plan of your house at a scale of 1:100. If not already there, add the lot boundaries. Use some tracing paper over this plan to sketch out different combinations. Try to keep to the sort of bubble diagrams shown here (refer Fig. 5) to allocate different uses to different outdoor spaces. This makes it quicker and easier to try out different combinations. Once you come to a combination or arrangement of these main elements that you are happy with, you can then work out the finer details of paving types and plant species.

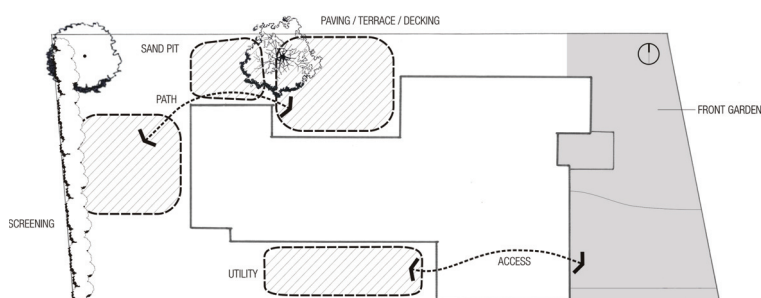


Fig. 5: Bubble diagram

The Final Design

Having settled on the layout (or bubble diagram) that best suits your property and your needs, develop a simple plan to guide your garden's development (refer to fig. 6).

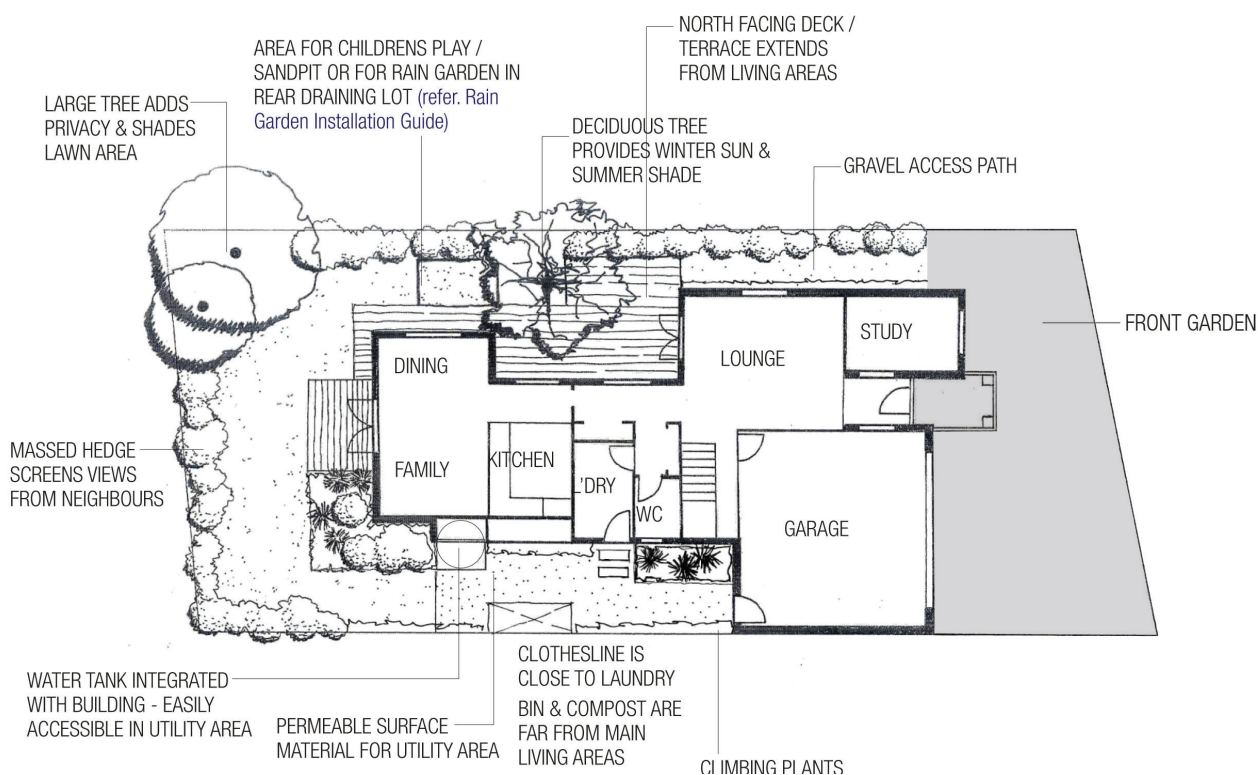


Fig. 6: Landscape plan

5. RECOMMENDED PLANT LIST

Botanical Name	Common Name	Indig.	Native	Evergreen/ Deciduous	Mature Size (H x S)
Trees					
<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>	Golden Wattle	3	3	E	4 x 6
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Hedge Maple			D	7 x 5
<i>Acer palmatum</i>	Japanese Maple			D	6 x 6
<i>Acmena smithii</i>	Lilly Pilly		3	E	6-8 x 4-6
<i>Agonis flexuosa</i>	Willow Myrtle		3	E	5 x 5
<i>Allocasuarina verticillata</i>	Drooping Sheoak	3	3	E	6 x 4
<i>Banksia integrifolia</i>	Coast Banksia		3	E	8 x 8
<i>Banksia marginata</i>	Silver Banksia	3	3	E	2-8 x 2-6
<i>Callistemon salignus</i>	Willow Bottlebrush		3	E	6 x 4
<i>Callistemon viminalis</i>	Weeping Bottlebrush		3	E	4-6 x 5
<i>Corymbia ficifolia</i> (Grafted stock)	Red Flowering Gum		3	E	5-8 x 4-5
<i>Eucalyptus caesia</i> 'Silver Princess'	Gungurru		3	E	7 x 5
<i>Eucalyptus 'Eukie Dwarf'</i>	Eukie Dwarf		3	E	7 x 5
<i>Eucalyptus pauciflora</i>	Snow Gum		3	E	8 x 6
<i>Hymenosporum flavum</i>	Native Frangipani		3	E	7 x 4
<i>Lagerstroemia indica</i>	Crepe Myrtle			D	6 x 4
<i>Laurus nobilis</i>	Bay Laurel			E	5 x 3
<i>Magnolia x soulangeana</i>	Magnolia			D	4-7 x 4-7
<i>Malus ioensis 'Plena'</i>	Bechtel Crab Apple			D	4 x 6
<i>Michelia doltsopa</i>	Wong-lan (Magnolia)			E	8 x 8
<i>Olea europaea</i> (sterile variety only)	Olive			E	5 x 5
<i>Pistacia chinensis</i>	Chinese Pistachio			D	5 x 5
<i>Prunus 'Mt Fuji'</i>	Mt Fuji Cherry			D	4 x 5
<i>Prunus subhirtella 'Pendula'</i>	Weeping Cherry			D	3 x 8
<i>Pyrus calleryana 'Red Spire'</i>	Flowering Pear			D	8 x 5
<i>Pyrus ussuriensis</i>	Manchurian Pear			D	5 x 3
<i>Tristanopsis laurina</i>	Water Gum		3	E	6 x 4
<i>Ulmus parvifolia 'Todd'</i>	Chinese Elm			D	8 x 8
<i>Waterhousia floribunda</i>	Weeping Lilly Pilly		3	E	10 x 7
Large Shrubs					
<i>Acacia acinacea</i>	Gold-dust Wattle	3	3		2.5 x 2.5
<i>Acacia boormanii</i>	Snowy River Wattle		3		5 x 4
<i>Acacia verniciflua</i>	Varnish Wattle		3		4 x 4
<i>Azalea species</i>	Azalea				1.5 x 1.5
<i>Callistemon 'Harkness'</i>	Bottlebrush		3		6 x 2-3
<i>Callistemon 'Eureka'</i>	Bottlebrush		3		6 x 2-3
<i>Callistemon 'Kings Park Special'</i>	Bottlebrush		3		5 x 4
<i>Callistemon sieberi</i>	River Bottlebrush	3	3		2-6 x 2-3
<i>Callistemon viminalis 'Captain Cook'</i>	Weeping Bottlebrush		3		2 x 2
<i>Camellia sasanqua</i>	Camellia				4 x 3
<i>Cassinia species</i>	Cassinia		3		2 x 2
<i>Choisya ternata</i>	Mexican Orange Blossum				2 x 2
<i>Dodonaea viscosa 'Purpurea'</i>	Purple-leaf Hop Bush		3		3 x 1.5
<i>Eriostemon myoporoides</i>	Long-leaf Wax Flower		3		2 x 2
<i>Grevillea species</i>	Grevillea		3		varies
<i>Kunzea ericoides</i>	Burgan	3	3		3-5 x 2-4.5
<i>Leptospermum laevigatum</i>	Coastal Tea-tree		3		3-5 x 3-5
<i>Leptospermum lanigerum</i>	Woolly Tea-tree	3	3		3-5 x 1.5-3
<i>Melaleuca ericifolia</i>	Swamp Paperbark	3	3		3-8 x 1-3
<i>Murraya paniculata</i>	Mock Orange				3 x 3
<i>Nandina domestica</i>	Sacred Bamboo				2 x 1.2
<i>Olearia phlogopappa</i>	Dusty Daisy Bush	3	3		1-2 x 1.5
<i>Plumbago capensis</i>	Plumbago				3 x 3
<i>Viburnum tinus</i>	Lauristinus				3-4 x 3
<i>Westringia fruticosa</i>	Coast Rosemary		3		1.5 x 1.5
<i>Westringia longifolia</i>	Native Rosemary		3		2 x 2
Small Shrubs					
<i>Acacia lanigera</i>	Woolly Wattle	3	3		1 x 1.5
<i>Agave attenuata</i>	Century Plant				1 x 0.2
<i>Convolvulus cneorum</i>	Silver Bush				0.6 x 0.7
<i>Correa glabra</i>	Rock Correa	3	3		1 x 1
<i>Correa reflexa</i>	Common Correa	3	3		1 x 1
<i>Epacris impressa</i>	Common Heath	3	3		0.8 x 0.5
<i>Goodenia ovata</i>	Hop Goodenia	3	3		1 x 1.5
<i>Hebe species</i>	Veronica				0.6 x 1
<i>Indigofera australis</i>	Austral Indigo	3	3		1-2 x 2
<i>Lavandula species</i>	Lavender				1 x 1
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Rosemary				1.2 x 1.2
<i>Spyridium parvifolium</i>	Dusty Miller		3		1 x 1.5
<i>Strelitzia reginae</i>	Bird of Paradise				1 x 1
Grasses & Tussocks					
<i>Anigozanthus 'Bush Gem' series</i>	Kangaroo Paws		3		1 x 1
<i>Carex appressa</i>	Tall Sedge	3	3		0.6 x 0.6
<i>Dianella species</i>	Flax Lily		3		0.6 x 0.7
<i>Dietes species</i>	Wild Iris		3		1 x 0.6
<i>Festuca glauca</i>	Blue Fescue				0.2 x 0.3
<i>Liriope muscari</i>	Lily Turf				0.3 x 0.5
<i>Lomandra longifolia</i>	Spiny-headed Mat Rush		3		0.5 x 0.5
<i>Phormium species</i>	New Zealand Flax				0.6 x 1
<i>Poa labillardieri</i>	Common Tussock Grass	3	3		0.8 x 0.6
<i>Wahlenbergia species</i>	Bluebell	3	3		0.5 x 0.3
Groundcovers					
<i>Brachyscome multifida</i>	Cut leaf Daisy				0.3 x 1
<i>Cerastium tomentosum</i>	Snow in Summer				0.1 x indefinite
<i>Chryscephalum apiculatum</i>	Clustered Everlasting	3	3		0.3 x 0.6
<i>Erigeron mucronatus</i>	Seaside Daisy				0.3 x 0.3
<i>Felicia amelloides</i>	Blue Marguerite				0.6 x 0.6
<i>Grevillea poorinda 'Royal Mantle'</i>	Prostrate Grevillea		3		0.3 x 3
<i>Kennedia prostrata</i>	Running Postman	3	3		0.2 x 1
<i>Myoporum parvifolium</i>	Creeping Boobialla		3		0.1 x 0.5
<i>Rosa noaschnee</i>	Carpet Rose				0.3 x 0.6
<i>Stachys lanata</i>	Lamb's Ear				0.4 x 0.6
<i>Viola hederacea</i>	Ivy-leaf Violet	3	3		5-10cm
Climbers					
<i>Clematis aristata</i>	Clematis	3	3		
<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>	Purple Coral Pea	3	3		
<i>Pandorea pandorana</i>	Wonga-wonga Vine	3	3		
<i>Trachelospermum jasminoides</i>	Star Jasmine				

Adjacent is a list of preferred species for use in Aurora. Care should be taken when selecting plants for your garden. Don't forget you can use the same or complementing plant species used in the front garden to create a consistent character throughout your outdoor space. The skills of a professional horticulturalist, landscape designer or landscape architect can prove invaluable when creating your garden.

Weeds

Plants that grow naturally in the Epping area are unlikely to become weeds, but any plants that are introduced from other parts of Australia, or from other countries, have the potential to become weeds. It is wise to select plants that are not considered to be invasive, and to ensure that plants do not escape from gardens and spread into natural areas. Contact the City of Whittlesea for a list of indigenous plants that you can use in your garden, and a list of plants or environmental weeds you should avoid. Some indigenous plants are included within our plant list.

6. ESTABLISHING YOUR GARDEN

Trial the Layout

- Mark out key outdoor areas and pathways on the ground. Use string and stakes for straight lines, the garden hose for curves, and whatever else is at hand to check that the design still works on the ground.
- Experiment with different arrangements, and placements of highlights such as feature trees by using sticks or brooms.

Ground Works

- Begin by carrying out any earthworks such as levelling, cut and fill, drainage works and installation of services such as power and water.
- Always strip and save topsoil for re-use.

Construction

- Paving can be laid, and structures built, when ground works are complete.
- Slope paved areas to drain water away from the house. A fall of 2 cm in 100 cm will ensure that paved surfaces shed water.
- Drain large paved areas to a grated pit or strip drain.

Plant Choice

- Seek assistance in choosing plants.
- Study the Suggested Plants list in this brochure for a range of plants suitable for planting at Aurora. Visit local nurseries to see many of these plants.
- Local nurseries can recommend additional plants which suit the local soils and climate.
- Save money by buying most plants in 10, 15 and 20 cm pots. After two years, many plants from these pot sizes will be as large as more expensive plants purchased in larger pots.
- Create a dramatic effect early in the life of the garden, if the budget allows, by purchasing feature trees in larger sizes.

Garden Bed Preparation

- Ensure that the depth of topsoil in garden beds is at least 20 centimetres.
- Cultivate thoroughly before planting by hand or with a rotary hoe. Use gypsum to break up clay soils and add compost or other rotted organic matter to any soil before cultivation.
- Separate garden beds from lawns and gravel surfaces using brick or timber edging to help with weed control.

Planting

- Water the plants in their pots thoroughly before you plant.
- In warm weather, plant during the cooler parts of the day.
- Place the plants in their pots in the proposed locations, for each bed or area of the garden. Adjust the locations of the plants to ensure an attractive spacing.
- Make a hole twice the diameter of the pot, but not deeper. Mix a slow release fertiliser in the soil which will be placed around the plant.
- Remove the plant from the pot and place in the hole without damaging the roots. Adjust the height if required, place and firm down topsoil around the plant.
- Water in all plants immediately after planting.
- Support larger shrubs and trees with stakes and soft webbing or cloth ties. Remove the stakes after approximately twelve months, to encourage growth of a strong root system and trunk.
- Mulch around plants to conserve water and maintain even soil temperature. Keep the mulch away from the base of plants.

Lawns

- Establish lawns when all other planting works are complete.
- Seed mixes with a high proportion of Fescue species will give a hard wearing lawn that does not require large quantities of water once established.
- A good depth of topsoil for lawns is 10 cm minimum. Prepare the seed bed by cultivating and levelling out high and low spots. Rake a lawn starter fertiliser into the soil.
- Sow seed by broadcasting in two different directions. Rake the seed lightly into the soil after sowing.
- Water the seed thoroughly at the time of sowing. Keep moist, until germination is complete (about 2 weeks).
- To conserve water and reduce maintenance and weed growth, keep your lawn at least 4 cm high.

Getting Design Ideas

- Look around for ideas which will suit your property and needs.
- Visit established and demonstration gardens to see how successful layouts organise spaces and use landscape materials.
- Gardening programs on television and radio can all be of assistance, as can books and magazines. Some sources for further reading are listed at the end of this brochure.

7. MAINTAINING YOUR GARDEN

It often is easier to evaluate the initial cost of construction materials than their long-term costs. However, the long-term maintenance costs of some building materials can be significant. Before choosing a product, research its initial and long-term costs as well as its recommended uses.

Design, plant selection and choice of materials will largely determine the level of maintenance required. A sustainable garden can be designed to minimize the use of electric tools or fuel-powered tools such as lawn mowers and chain saws.

Important maintenance duties for a sustainable garden include:

- Checking irrigation systems regularly for leaks and blockages;
- Topping-up of mulch;
- Watering lawns in the early morning rather than during the day;
- Keeping lawns longer in summer to maintain soil moisture.

8. FURTHER RESOURCES

- City of Whittlesea (<http://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au>) - indigenous plant list
- Eco-selector : A Guide to Materials Selection For Aurora
- Flora of Melbourne - A guide to the indigenous plants of the Greater Melbourne Area
- Native Trees and Shrubs of South-Eastern Australia, L.F Costermans
- Plants of the Merri Merri - A Home Gardener's Guide to Using Indigenous Plants in the Northern Suburbs of Melbourne, Merri Creek Management Committee
- Living in the Garden: Australian Style, Rick Eckersley

9. TECHNICAL NOTES

The 'Front Garden Designs' guide, 'Eco-Selector a Guide to Material Selection' and 'Fencing Guidelines' can be obtained from VicUrban or at www.auroraliving.com.au

The information contained in this document is supplied as a guide and should not be taken as representative in any respect on the part of the vendors or their agents. This document has been prepared by MDG Landscape Architects P/L for VicUrban (June 2008).