

neighbourhood context

character

Neighbourhood character: the collection and pattern of various elements – streets, buildings, trees, infrastructure, open spaces and historic resources – which give a neighborhood its distinct identity.

A proposed dwelling should be compatible with and contribute to the visual continuity of the neighbourhood patterns:

- dominant architectural styles and forms;
- building elements and materials; and
- landscaping and other distinguishing features.

A proposed dwelling should fit with the character of the site and the immediate surroundings, while creating a visually seamless transition with the adjacent and nearby dwellings.



Identifying the existing patterns is critical in understanding the neighborhood's character.



The new dwelling (centre) incorporates patterns and elements of its neighbours – dwelling width, gable roof, projecting window bays, porch, and materials.

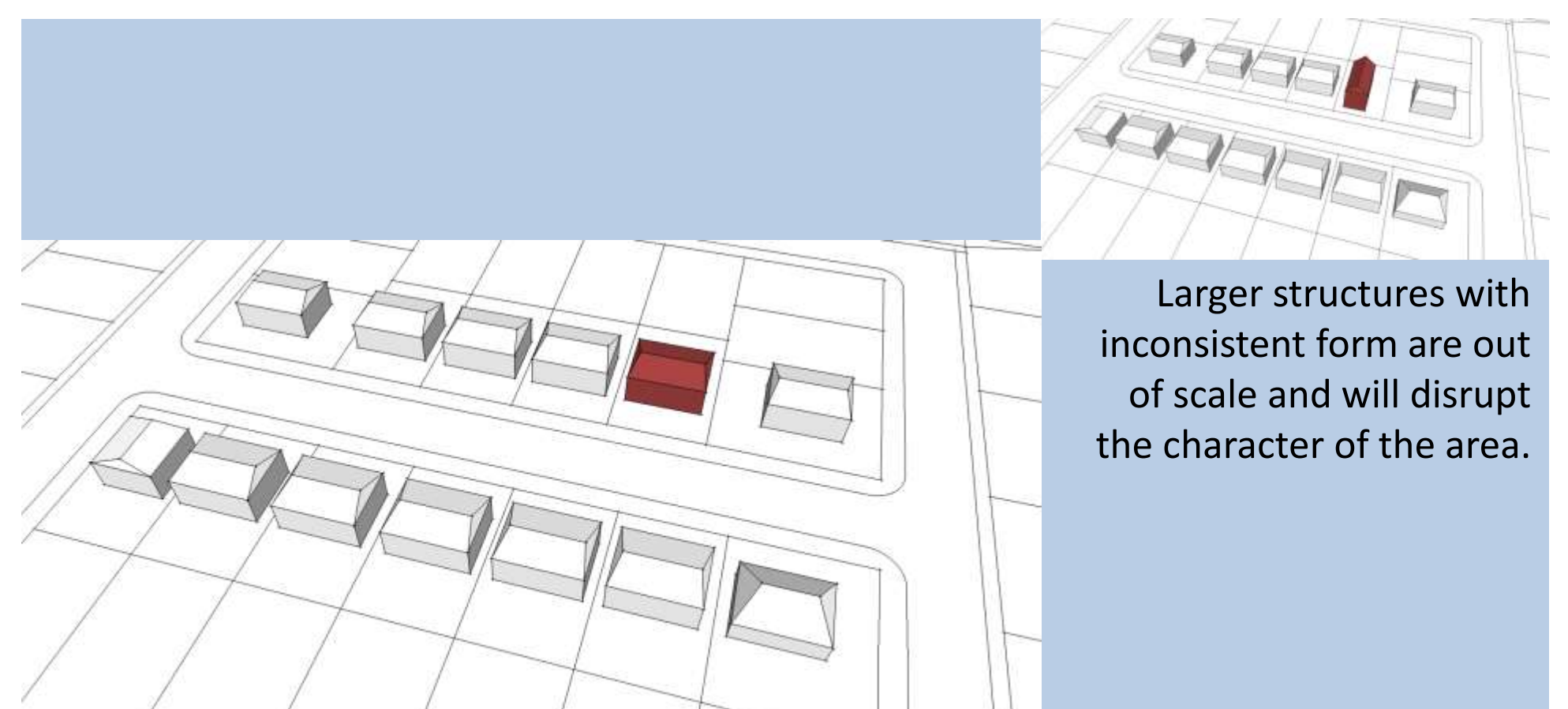
scale

Scale: the size of a building and its component parts in comparison with neighbouring dwellings.

A proposed dwelling is considered to be 'in scale' with the neighbourhood when:

- the size, form and proportions are compatible with the neighbours;
- the architectural elements are applied with similar proportions; and
- the size and form are at a human scale to create a pleasant and comfortable environment.

A proposed dwelling that is larger than houses in the immediate vicinity can be divided into smaller elements to be more compatible with the massing and details of the neighbourhood pattern.



Larger structures with inconsistent form are out of scale and will disrupt the character of the area.

The scale and proportions of a new dwelling should be similar to those of adjacent existing dwellings.



A larger structure is divided into various elements to be more compatible with the massing and details of the existing neighbourhood pattern.

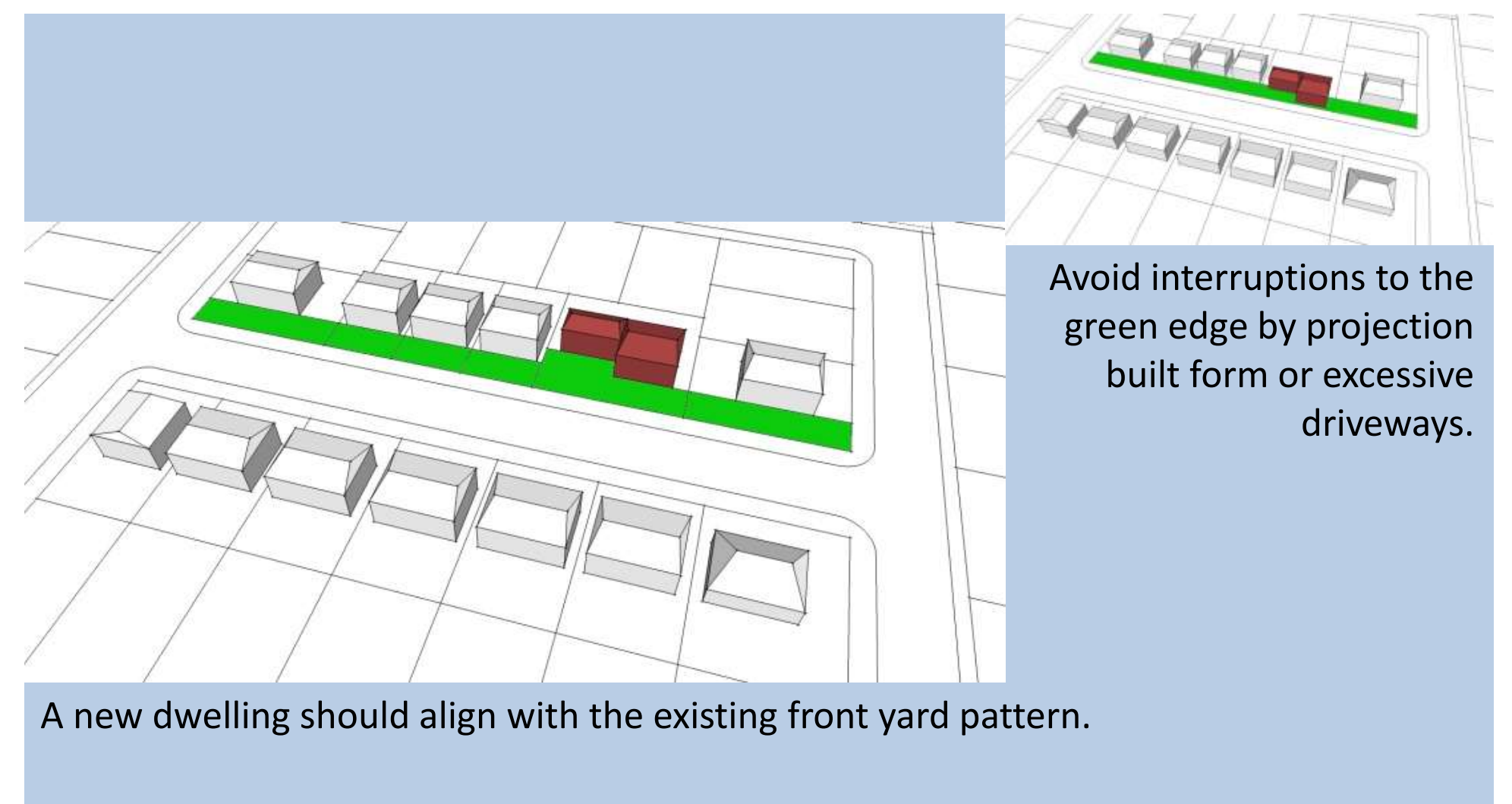
neighbourhood context

front yards

Front yard: the area that extends across the full width of the lot between the front property line and front façade of the dwelling.

The front yard treatment should contribute to the continuous 'green edge' that is characteristic of the neighbourhood. This green edge typically:

- creates a hierarchy of spaces from public to semi-public to private;
- incorporates a rich variety of landscape elements – trees, shrubs, hedges, soft ground cover, planting beds, low decorative fencing, etc.;
- is defined by the regular setback of dwellings;
- is framed by outdoor living spaces that foster greater social interaction; and
- contains limited interruptions by significant building projections and expansive driveways.



This new house matches the front yard setbacks of adjacent properties and creates a generous landscaped area with a porch and main entrance as the backdrop.

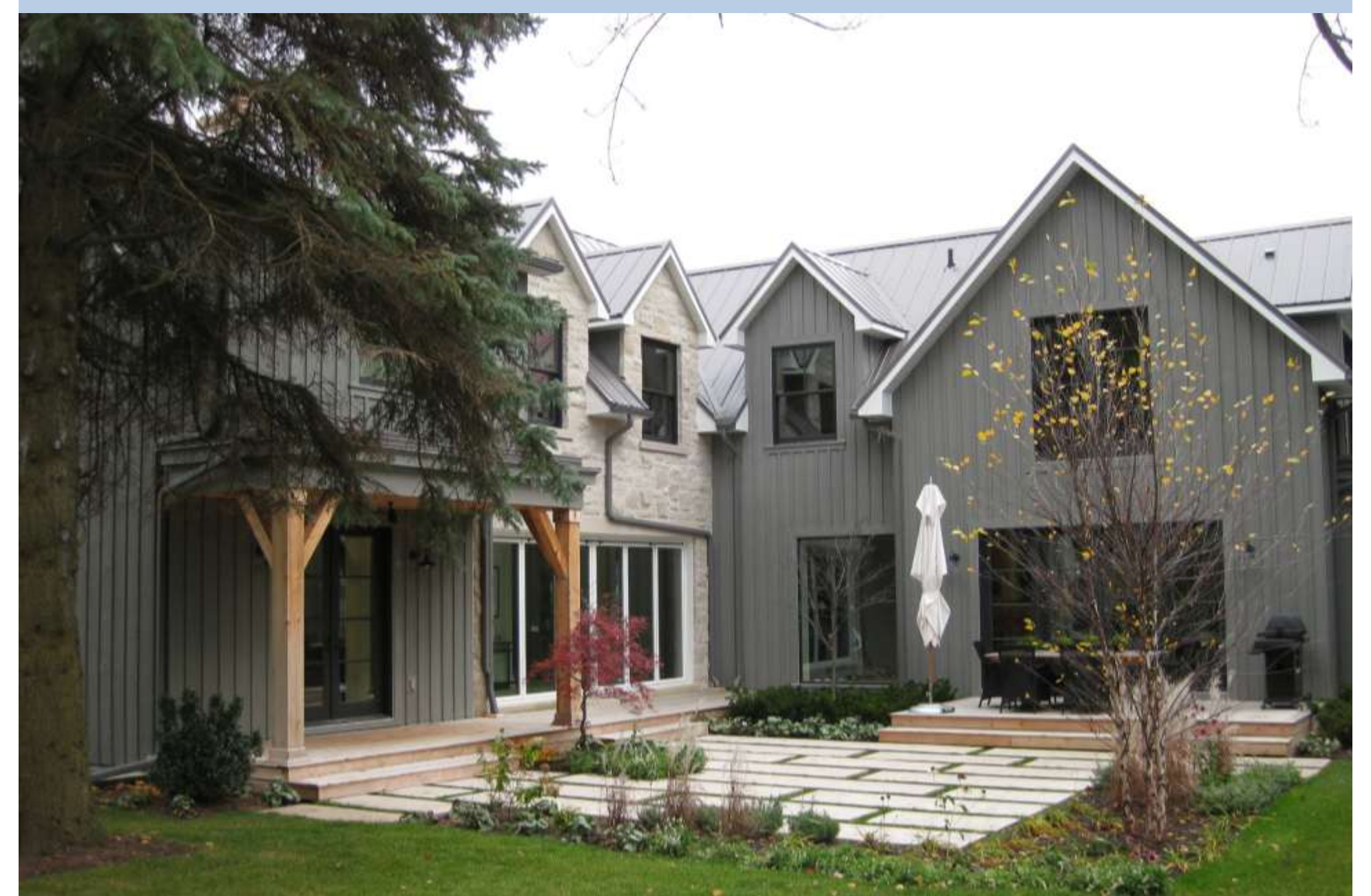
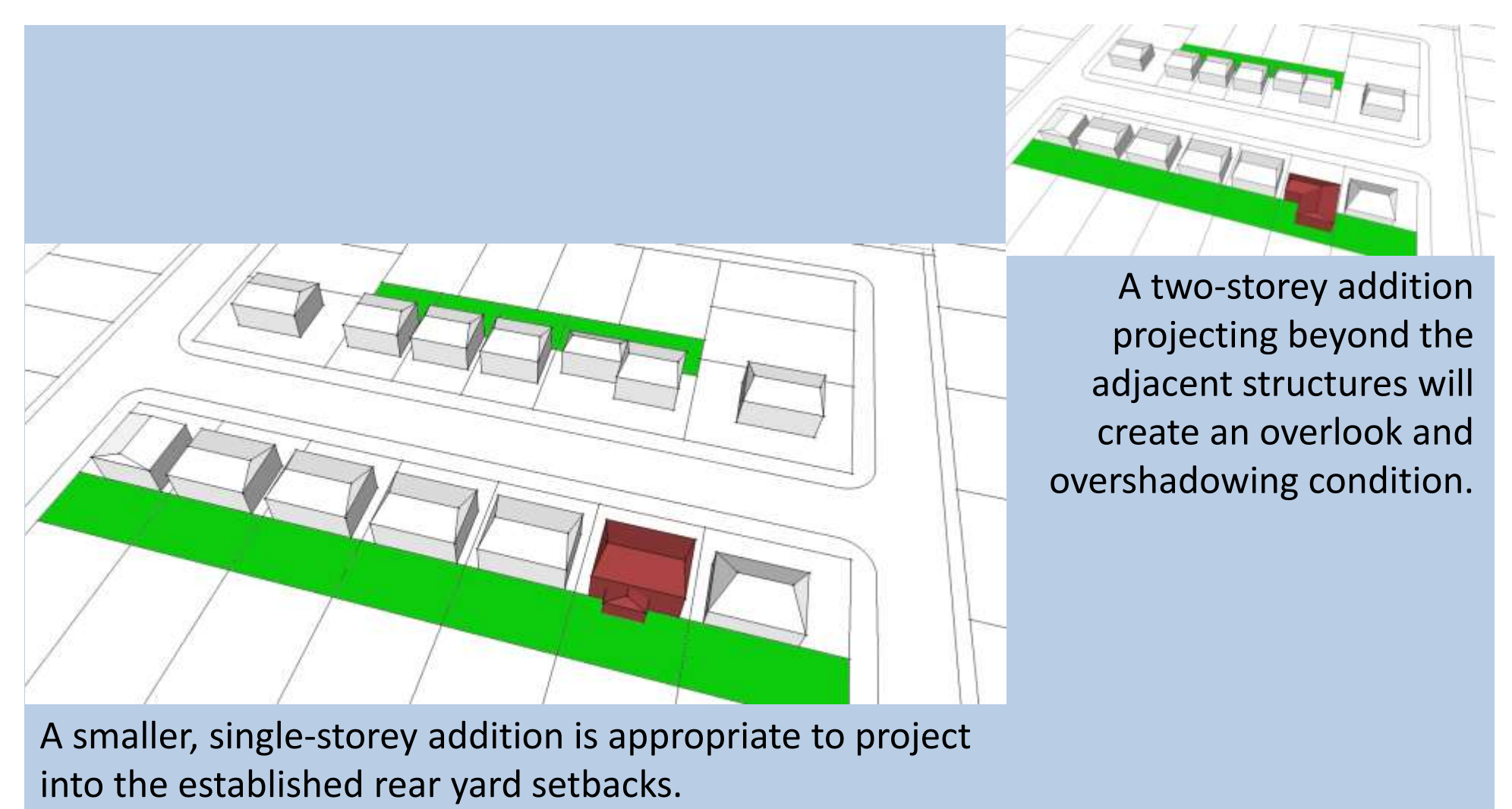
rear yards

Rear yard: the area that extends across the full width of the lot between the rear property line and rear façade of the dwelling.

The rear yard area is defined by the established dwelling setback pattern of surrounding properties. Maintaining the pattern can result in creating quality private amenity area(s) and preserving privacy.

A proposed dwelling which projects beyond the established rear yard setback should avoid overlook and minimize undesirable impacts on rear yard privacy by:

- the careful placement of windows, doors, decks and balconies;
- avoiding second storey decks and balconies; and
- providing screening with dense landscaping and fencing.



The two-storey addition is designed to face an internal courtyard and eliminate an overlook condition.

architectural context

height and massing

Height: the measurement between established grade and peak of the roof of a building.

Massing: the three-dimensional form of a building.

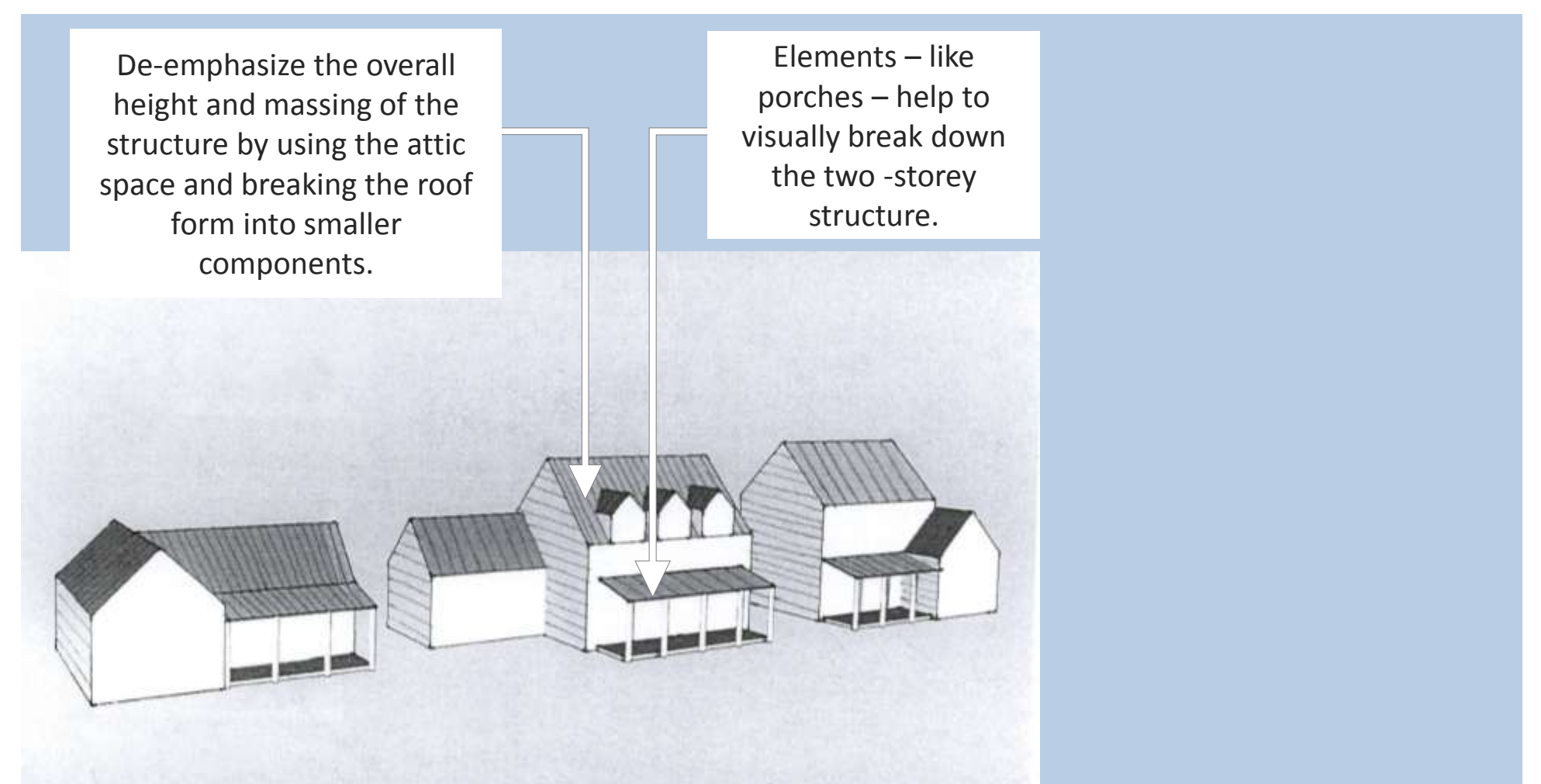
A proposed dwelling should incorporate a gradual transition in height with adjacent buildings by stepping down a portion of the proposed dwelling and/or increasing the space between the dwellings.

The prominence of the proposed dwelling height can be minimized by:

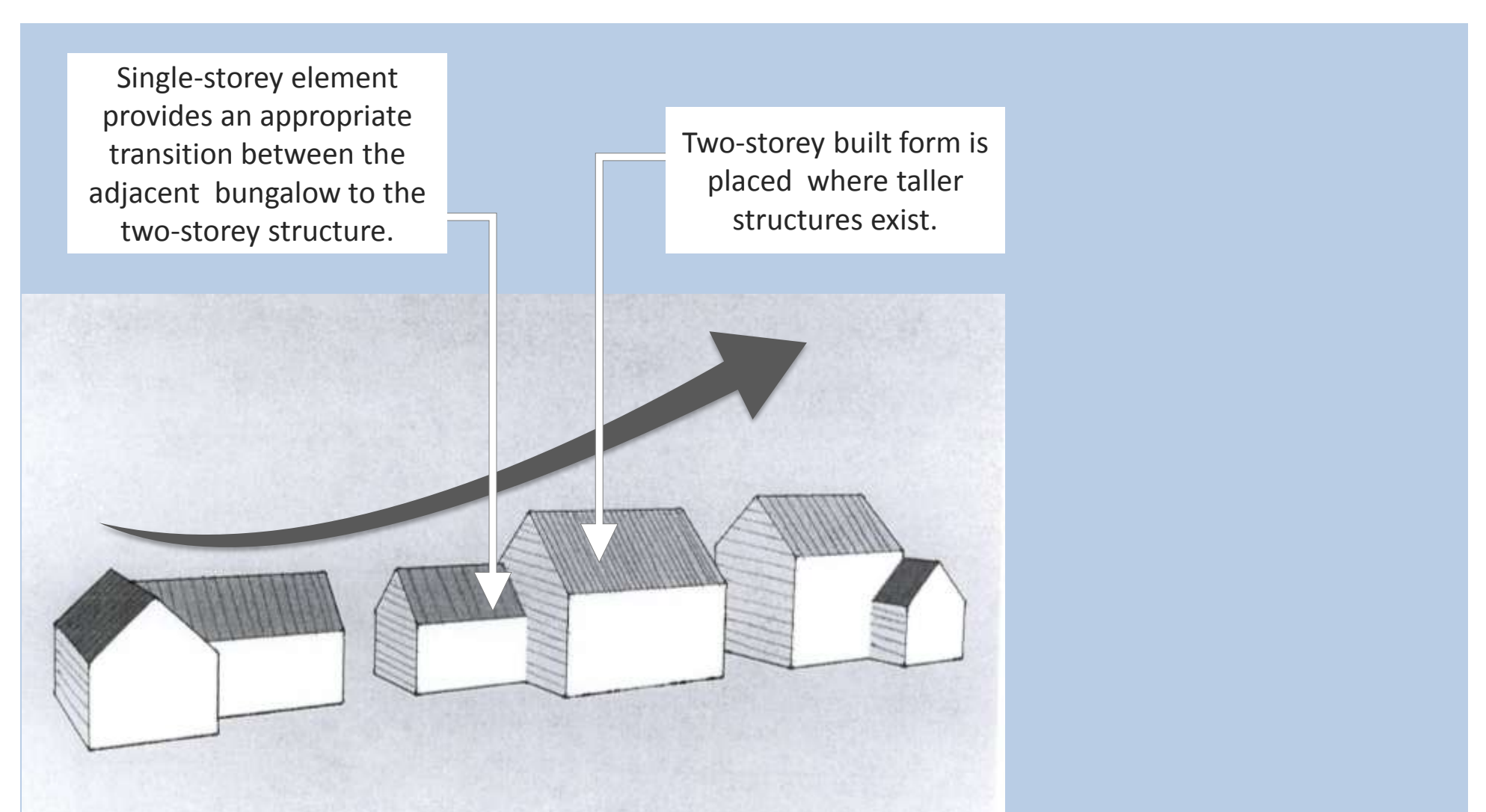
- stepping back higher portions of the façade;
- integrating different building materials on the upper storey façade;
- incorporating upper storey living spaces within the roof structure;
- avoiding two-storey architectural elements that are not human in scale.

A proposed dwelling, which is larger than existing dwellings, can be compatible and achieve visual harmony with its surroundings by:

- replicating the proportions of the dominant structures within the neighbourhood;
- ‘breaking down’ the large form into smaller architectural elements by providing variety in wall projections and recesses, roof forms, heights, porch or balcony additions, etc.; and
- incorporating single-storey building elements adjacent to lower height dwelling to achieve an appropriate transition.



In a neighbourhood dominated by bungalows, the second-storey living space are incorporated in the roof structure.



This house fits well into the neighbourhood as the massing is broken into smaller elements, including wall projections, a porch and balcony, and change in materials.

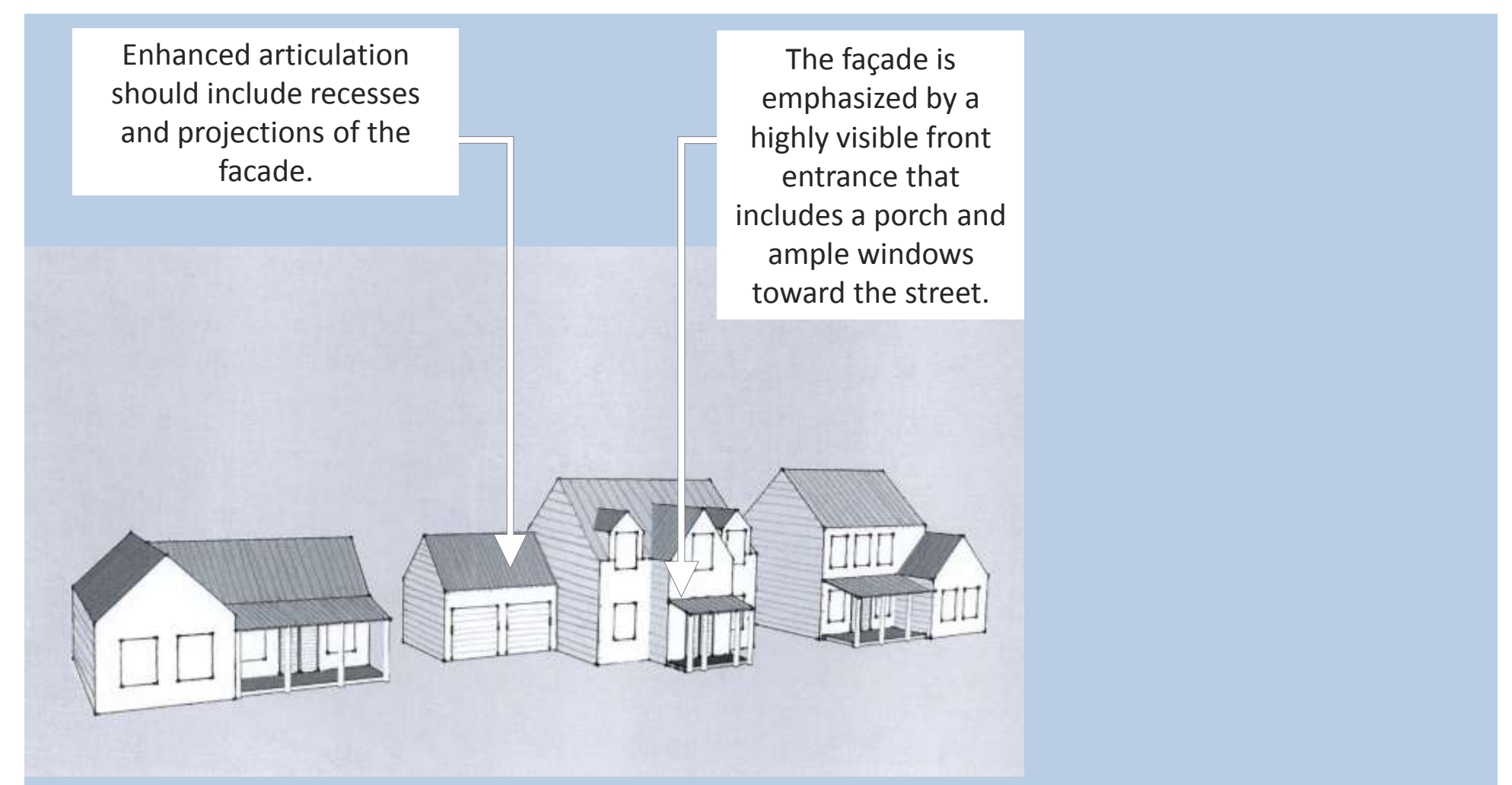
architectural context

primary facade

Primary façade: the façade that faces the street and contains the main entrance.

The primary façade of a proposed dwelling should be well-articulated and oriented towards the street. It should incorporate:

- architectural elements that are human-scaled and compatible with surrounding dwellings;
- a highly-visible primary entrance, including a porch or verandah (if appropriate for the neighbourhood);
- interior living spaces along the front façade of the dwelling;
- an attached garage that is flush with or recessed behind the front façade; and
- an extension of the articulation on other facades that face side streets or public spaces.



This house features an interesting primary façade with projecting building elements, a large covered porch, variety in roof forms, and centralized main entrance.

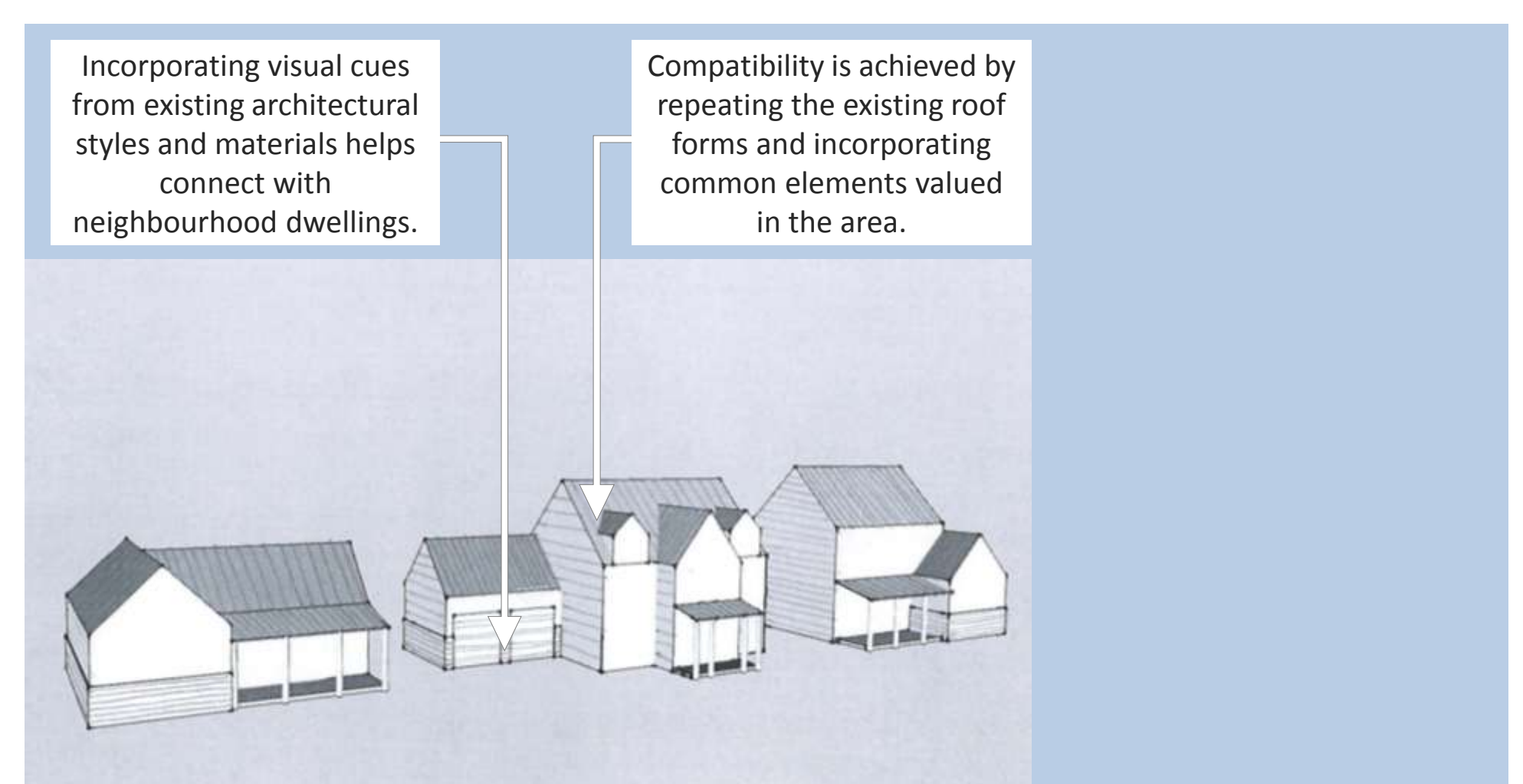
elements and materials

Architectural elements: the components and details that together create the style of a building.

Building materials: materials used for constructing a building exterior.

A proposed dwelling should complement the well-established and dominant architectural styles within the neighbourhood by incorporating:

- architectural elements that are both functionally and stylistically authentic and at a human scale;
- ample windows on all facades to maximize light and views;
- door and window openings that are proportionate with the façade; and
- durable, high quality materials that are compatible with the materials found on dwellings within the neighbourhood.



The stone retaining wall is typical for this street. The stone materials has been incorporated in the façade, along with other contemporary materials.

architectural context

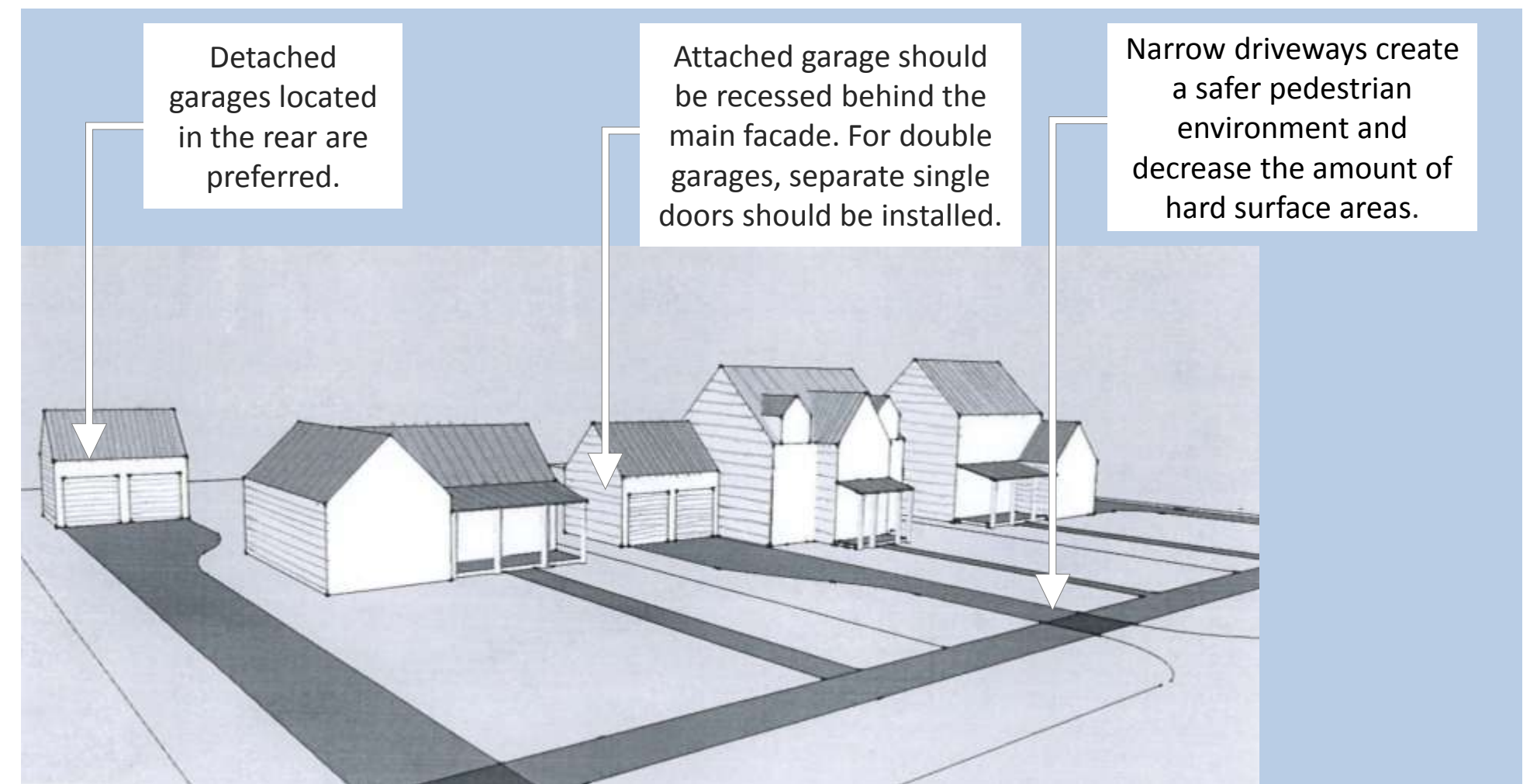
attached garages

Attached garages: an enclosed parking area integrated into the main dwelling structure.

Minimize the prominence of the garage and surface parking area on the property frontage by locating the garage in the rear or side yard.

If a garage is located on the front façade, it should be incorporated into the overall design and form to reduce the visual impact, and be designed:

- to complement the scale and style of the dwelling;
- flush with or recessed behind the front façade of the dwelling;
- with a porch or trellis that blends the garage with the façade;
- with neutral/subdued colours and glazed panels in the overhead door(s); and
- with two separate overhead doors for double car garages.



This attached garage is adequately recessed behind the main façade of the house. This well-detailed single-storey structure does not create a negative impact on the street.

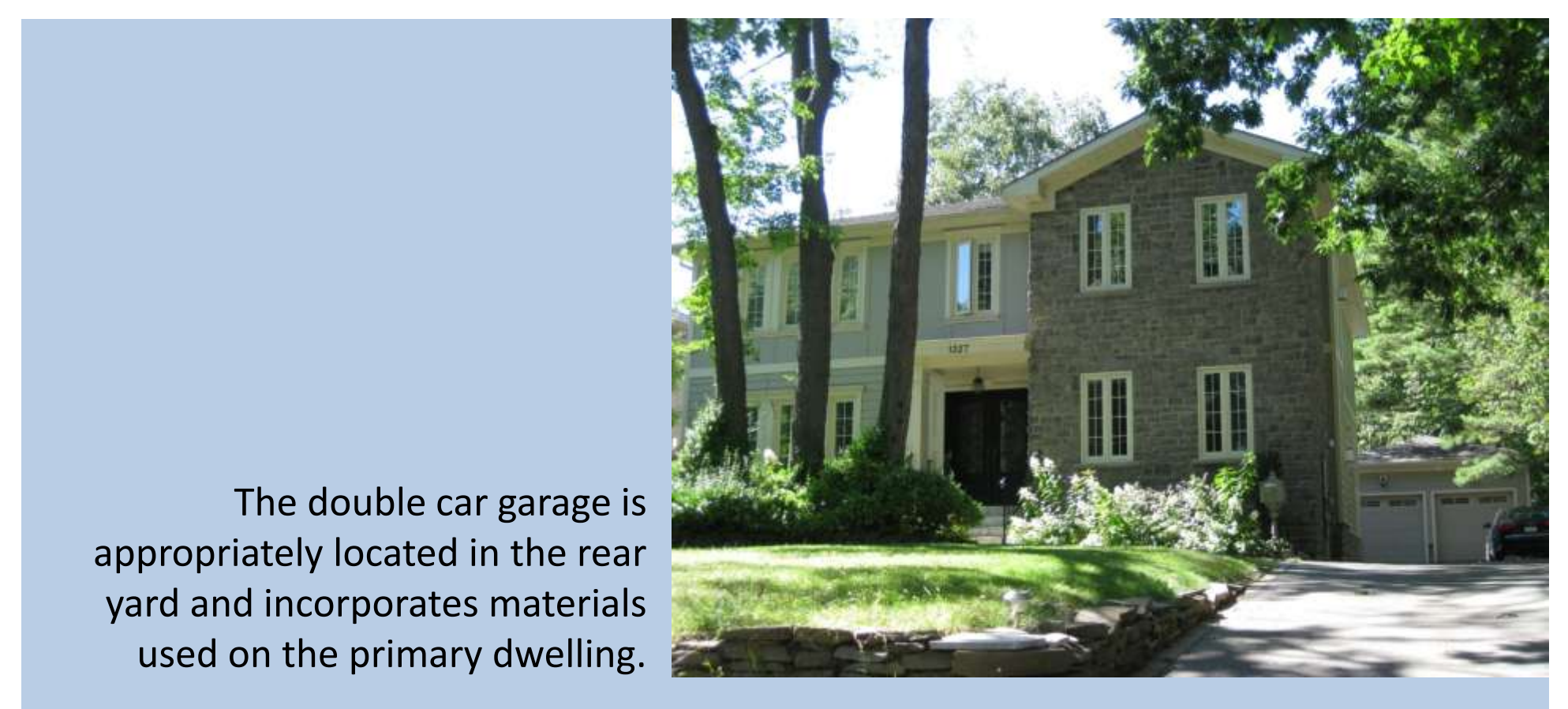
accessory buildings

Accessory structures: free-standing buildings not connected to the main dwelling – typically detached garages, carports, cabanas, gazebos, play structures and storage structures.

Proposed accessory structures should only be located in the rear or side yard to reduce the prominence on the property and the established streetscape.

The design and siting of these accessory structures should:

- be compatible with the quality, style, form, materials and colours of the primary dwelling; and
- incorporate façade articulation on all facades that are adjacent to or highly visible from a street or public space.



The double car garage is appropriately located in the rear yard and incorporates materials used on the primary dwelling.



The single car garage has a minimum impact on the streetscape. A double car garage is located in the rear yard to provide additional parking.

site context

landscaping

Landscaping: an activity that modifies the visible features of an area of land, including simple to complex arrangements of living elements, natural elements, and human elements.

All established landscaping should be retained by designing around these features. Where the removal of healthy mature trees cannot be avoided, replacement trees are required.

The proposed landscaping should:

- incorporate as many healthy mature trees and significant features as possible;
- maintain existing grades, especially along shared property lines;
- reflect the dominant character and layout of landscaping in the neighbourhood;
- create pleasant micro-climate conditions (shade summer sun and screen winter winds); and
- incorporate rainwater harvesting for irrigation and other sustainable features.

driveways

Hard surface: an area paved or covered with a permanent, durable material to create a suitable surface for vehicles and pedestrians.

The front yard of a proposed dwelling should be dominated by soft landscaping and not by expansive driveways and paved areas.

Driveways should incorporate:

- minimal amounts of paved area and a minimal width,
- permeable paving materials for managing water run-off – unit pavers, slab pavers, grasscrete pavers, and wheel strips;
- a pedestrian walkway, with materials that differentiate it from the driveway surface; and
- be positioned directly in front of the garage door(s).



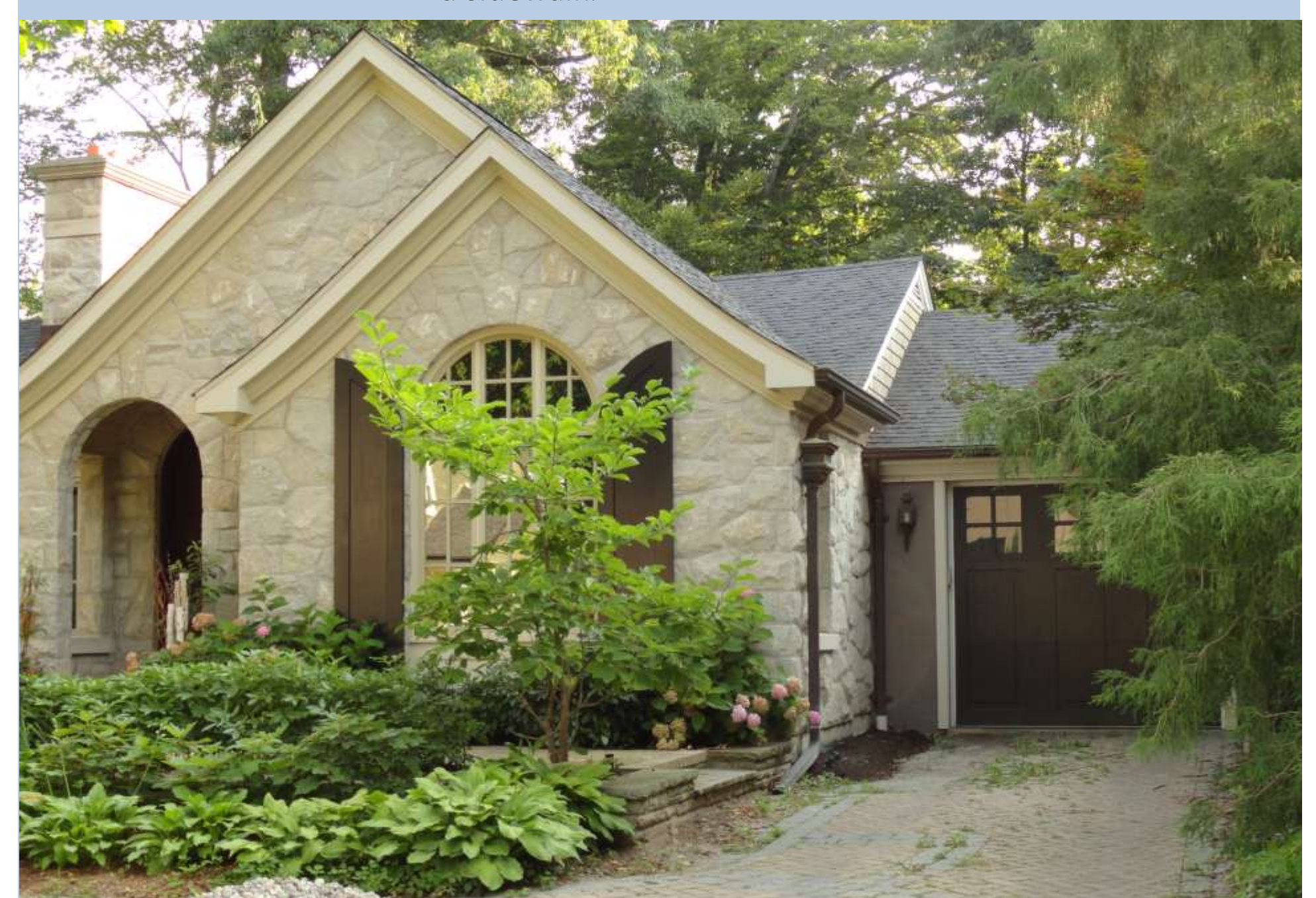
This landscape treatment incorporates hedges that are characteristic of this neighbourhood.



Maintaining the mature trees on this property were preserved and incorporated into the site design. Existing vegetation helps this new dwelling fit in the neighbourhood.



A corner lot with a well-designed pedestrian connection to a sidewalk.



Permeable paving materials help managing storm water run-off and create visually softer alternative to commonly used asphalt.