

Waitaki District Plan Review

Residential Development Bulk and Location Testing

14 October 2026

B&A
Urban & Environmental

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1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to assist Waitaki District Council (Council) to undertake bulk and location testing for proposed development standards within the General Residential Zone (GRZ) and Medium Density Residential Zones (MRZ) of the Waitaki Proposed District Plan. This is intended to assist with responding to a range of submissions on the bulk and location standards for the GRZ and MRZ, compared to the standards as notified. The exercise will assist in understanding the type of development that could be enabled on typical allotments over which these standards would apply.

In order to test the outcomes that could be established, a sample of sites from Ōamaru have been selected and informed a hypothetical "typical allotment" to be tested. Three sets of provisions for each zone have been tested; the provisions as notified, a set of provisions that provide greater development flexibility - "Increased Development Provisions" and a set that reduce development flexibility – "Decreased Development Provisions", as sought by various submitters.

Basic 3D models have been developed and geolocated to Ōamaru to show the outcomes and effects that could be reasonably expected from residential development enabled by the various provision sets. The use of geolocated 3D modelling provides an understanding of the shading that would occur in each of the modelled scenarios at 12pm at Summer and Winter solstice and Autumn and Spring equinox, New Zealand Standard Time (UTC+12:00) and shading diagrams are included in this report.

1.1 Caveats

It is acknowledged that there are a multitude of ways the design of residential buildings could be undertaken on a given site. These will be influenced by resident, market, developer and architectural preferences.

It should be noted that the models and sites shown in this report are for testing purposes only and represent a simple bulk and massing that reasonably fits on the site(s) and provide an indicative outcome that aligns with observed development trends from across New Zealand. The diagrams are intended for testing bulk, layout and massing outcomes and do not consider any architectural detail or materiality as part of the testing. It is assumed that the relevant design provisions of the Waitaki District Plan will address these matters.

2.0 Methodology

The testing of proposed plan provisions has been undertaken using the following methodology:

(1) A review of a range of "typical allotments" located in each of the GRZ and MRZ has been undertaken. A sample of allotments has been selected detailing the allotments' area and dimensions. Lots sampled are those considered to be representative of those that may be developed in their respective zone.

(2) A typical lot for each zone was generated based on the review in (1) and three sets of plan provision standards were tested in each zone:

For GRZ

(a) Notified provisions – Height according to GRZ-S2, HiRB according to GRZ-S3, Minimum setbacks according to GRZ-S6

(b) Increased development provisions – Height of 9m, HiRB using fixed recession angle of 45 degrees measured from 3m above boundary, reduced road boundary setback to 3m

(c) Decreased development provisions – Height according to GRZ-S2, HiRB according to GRZ-S3 but measured from 2.5m above the boundary, minimum setbacks according to GRZ-S6.

For MRZ

(a) Notified provisions - Height according to MRZ-S2, HiRB according to MRZ-S3, Minimum setbacks according to MRZ-S6.

(b) Increased development provisions – Height of 11m/3 storeys, HiRB using fixed recession angle of 60 degrees measured from 4m above boundary, minimum setbacks according to MRZ-S6

(c) Decreased development provisions – Height of 8m, HiRB according to MRZ-S3 but measured from 3m above the boundary, minimum setbacks according to MRZ-S6

(3) For each scenario a 3D "building envelope" was created based on the provision set being tested. These were tested on the same site, geolocated through SketchUp to Ōamaru to provide a realistic understanding of potential shading impacts that could arise.

(4) An indicative bulk and massing diagram was prepared to show a compliant response to the building envelope established by the proposed provisions, noting that there are multiple ways the design of buildings could be undertaken on a site. This testing looked to maximise the site coverage before increasing building height. Generic roofing detail has been included; however, it is recognised that roofline styles and scales can vary and are readily able to be designed to meet HIRB requirements.

(5) Shading diagrams have been provided that show the level of shading anticipated under each of the provision sets described above. The shading shown is based off a 3D model geolocated to Oamaru at 12pm NZ Standard Time (UTC+12:00) across the year at Summer (21/12) and Winter Solstice (21/6), and Autumn (21/3) and Spring (21/9) Equinox.

Theoretical Shading shows the level of shading that may fall relating to the building envelope established by the Height and Height in Relation to Boundary requirements. While full build

out of the envelope is unlikely due to site coverage and setback requirements, it shows where shading may occur as a result of development of the site.

A more realistic shading outcome is shown in the Bulk and Massing Shading Diagrams which, based on the same modelling approach, and the assumptions outlined above, show the level of shading anticipated based on the generic bulk and massing exercise undertaken above. These diagrams better reflect the impacts of built form that could reasonably be anticipated on the site and the influence on shading from roofs, setbacks and breaks in the building etc.

(6) Each modelling scenario used the following assumptions/approach:

(a) Used a typically dimensioned, flat site from the relevant zone as the "parent lot" (rather than the minimum site size).

(b) Modelling relied on the typical plan standards, rather than trying to show any of the exceptions provided for.

(c) The proposed building coverage in GRZ-S4 (40%)/MRZ-S4 (50%) respectively as a maximum site coverage were adhered to.

(d) The Outdoor Living Area requirements of GRZ-S9 (50m^2 with a diameter of 6m)/MRZ-S9 (30m^2) respectively were included in each model, however it is noted that from 30 October 2026, these are no longer required under changes made to the RMA through the addition of s104(1A) via the Planning Act 2026. OLAs have been included in this exercise as it is likely that some form of OLA will be provided as part of development (i.e. s104(1A) does not remove market preferences that exist for outdoor living spaces).

(e) The private way width requirements (min of 4m) for up to 3 dwellings was applied. It is noted that on-site vehicle access is not a requirement, however, is likely to be provided in the context of the Waitaki District and therefore was included in site testing.

(f) The density standards relevant to the zone GRZ – S1 (300m^2 per dwelling) and MRZ-S1 (200m^2 per dwelling) were adhered to.

(g) The modelling shows north, south, and east/west elevations for the indicative buildings.

(h) Shows the shading anticipated at midday for the summer (21 December) and winter (21 June) solstices and spring (21 September) and autumn (21 March) equinox based on NZ standard time (UTC+12:00)

(i) Assumed a modelled floor-to-floor height of 3.0m – there is no specific minimum or maximum floor-to-floor height set out within the plan but a modelled height of 3.0m would comfortably accommodate the minimum internal floor-to-ceiling height of 2.4m for habitable rooms required under the NZ Building Code.

(j) Did not undertake testing for vehicle manoeuvring (however, some on-site space was set aside to enable this to occur).

(k) Internal HIRB outcomes have not been tested between new lots on the basis a site would be developed comprehensively.

(l) Boundary fencing (or any vegetation / hedging) has not been included within shading diagrams. This produces a permitted level of shading that can extend onto neighbouring sites regardless of any future building mass.

3.0 General Residential Zone

3.1 Sample sites

A range of sites across the GRZ were sampled. These are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 - GRZ Lot Samples

Address	Lot area	Lot width	Lot depth
21A Stuart Street (rear site)	650m^2 (includes accessway)	19m	32m
38 Hull Street	1012m^2	20m	50.6m
29 Ure Street	412m^2	16m	26m
17 Farnham Street	754m^2	19m	39.5m
4 Witham Street	671m^2	16.5m	40m
6 Beal Street	1157m^2	18m	64m
Average	776m^2	18.1m	42m

Typical Lot Tested

The combined provisions of the plan mean that to test full site development with more than one dwelling, minimum density requirements are 300m^2 net site area per dwelling and therefore an allotment of at least 600m^2 + provision for access is required. Using whole numbers, the site dimensions identified in Table 2 have been tested.

Table 2 - GRZ "Typical" Lot Dimensions

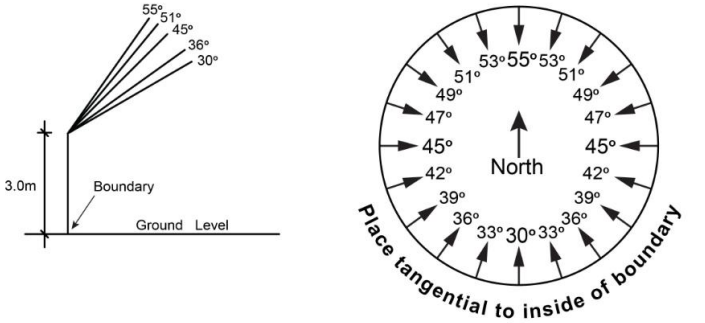
Lot area (approx.)	Lot width (approx.)	Lot depth (approx.)
760m^2	19m	40m

It is noted that there are a range of smaller sites within the district circa 500m^2. A basic building form on a 500m^2 allotment has been included in the shade testing exercise to show what could be anticipated on a site of this size. The testing of a 760m^2 site shows how compliant infill development could be achieved on smaller lots and is shown in more detail.

3.2 Provision Testing

3.2.1 Notified provisions

Table 3 - GRZ Notified Provisions

Provision	Standard
Density (GRZ-S1)	300m^2 per residential unit
Height (GRZ-S2)	8m
Height in relation to boundary (GRZ-S3)	Height recession plane from 3m from ground level (excludes road boundaries).  **Diagram 6 - Height in Relation to Boundary Recession Lines**
Site Coverage (GRZ-S4)	Maximum 40%
Setbacks (MRZ-S6)	
Front Setback	4.5m
Rear Setback	1.6m
Side yard setback	1.6m
Outdoor living area (GRZ-S9)	50m^2 – Diameter of 6m

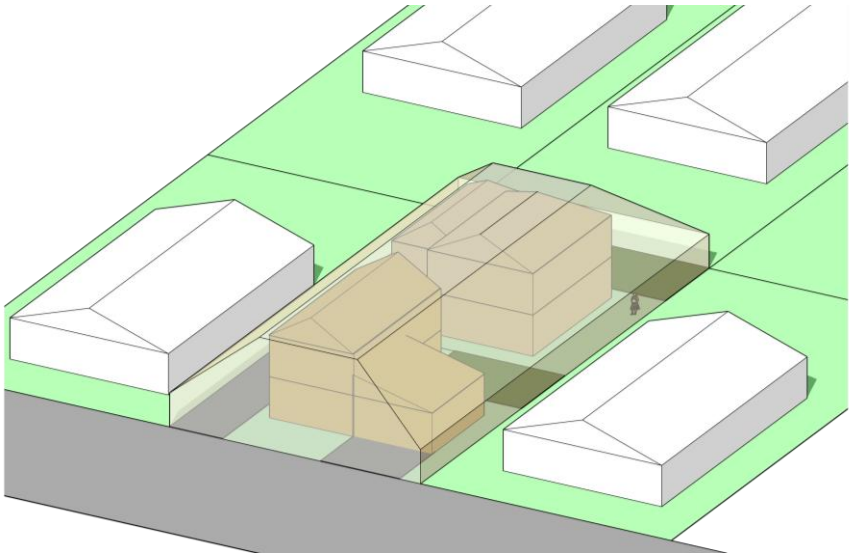


Figure 1: GRZ Notified provisions indicative bulk & massing

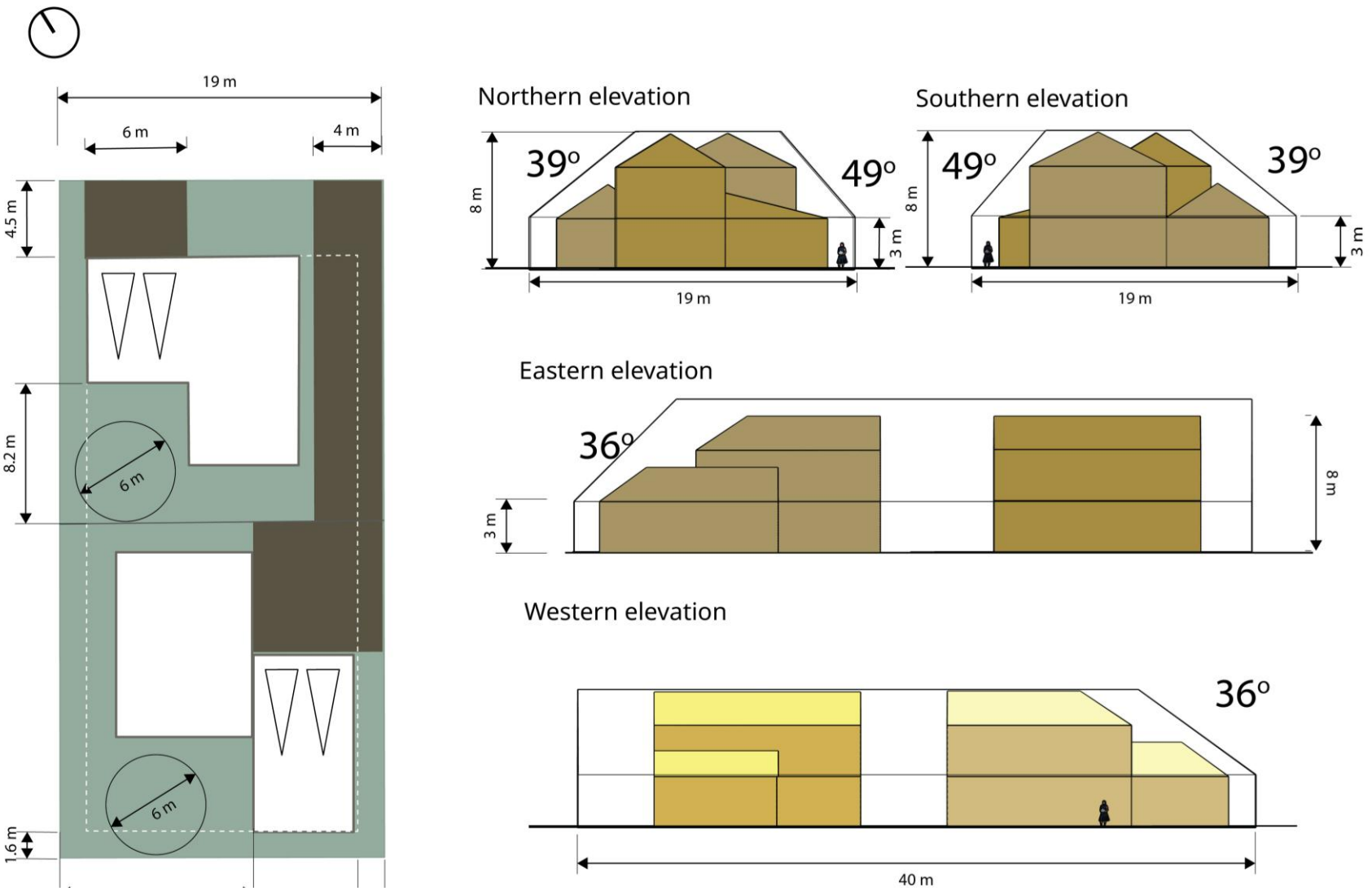


Figure 2: GRZ - Notified Provisions Plans & Elevations

3.2.2 Increased development provisions

Table 4 - GRZ Increased Development Provisions

Provision	Standard
Density (GRZ-S1)	300m^2 per residential unit
Height (GRZ-S2)	9m
Height in relation to boundary (GRZ-S3)	Height recession plane of 45° from 3m above boundary (excluding road boundaries).
Site Coverage (GRZ-S4)	Maximum 40%
Setbacks (MRZ-S6)	
Front Setback	3m
Rear Setback	1.6m
Side yard setback	1.6m
Outdoor living area (GRZ-S9)	50m^2 – Diameter of 6m

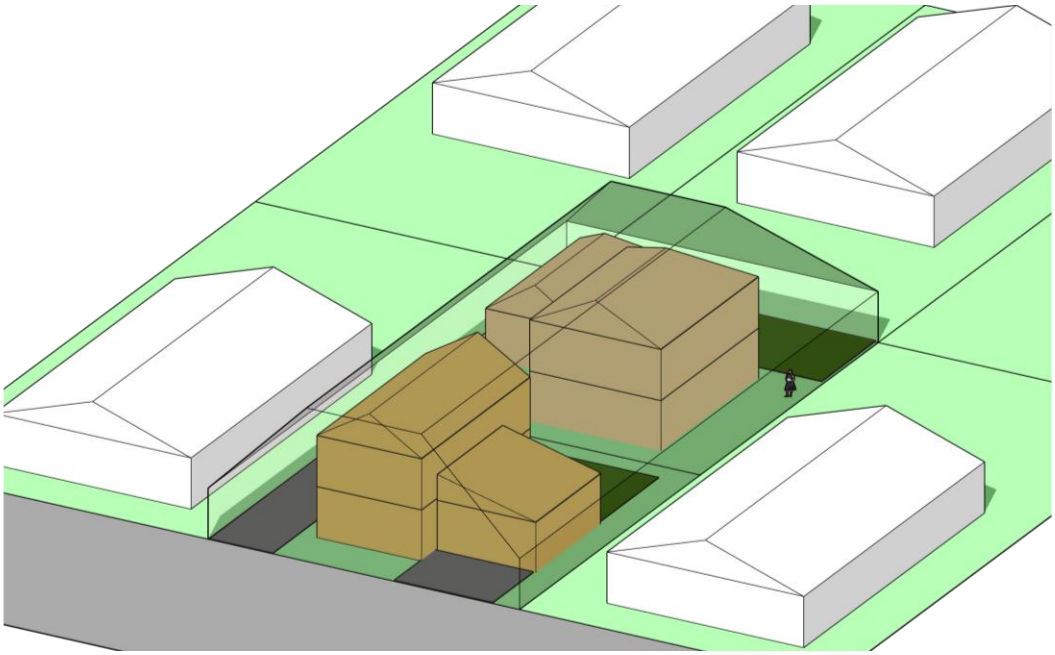


Figure 3: GRZ Increased development provisions indicative bulk & massing

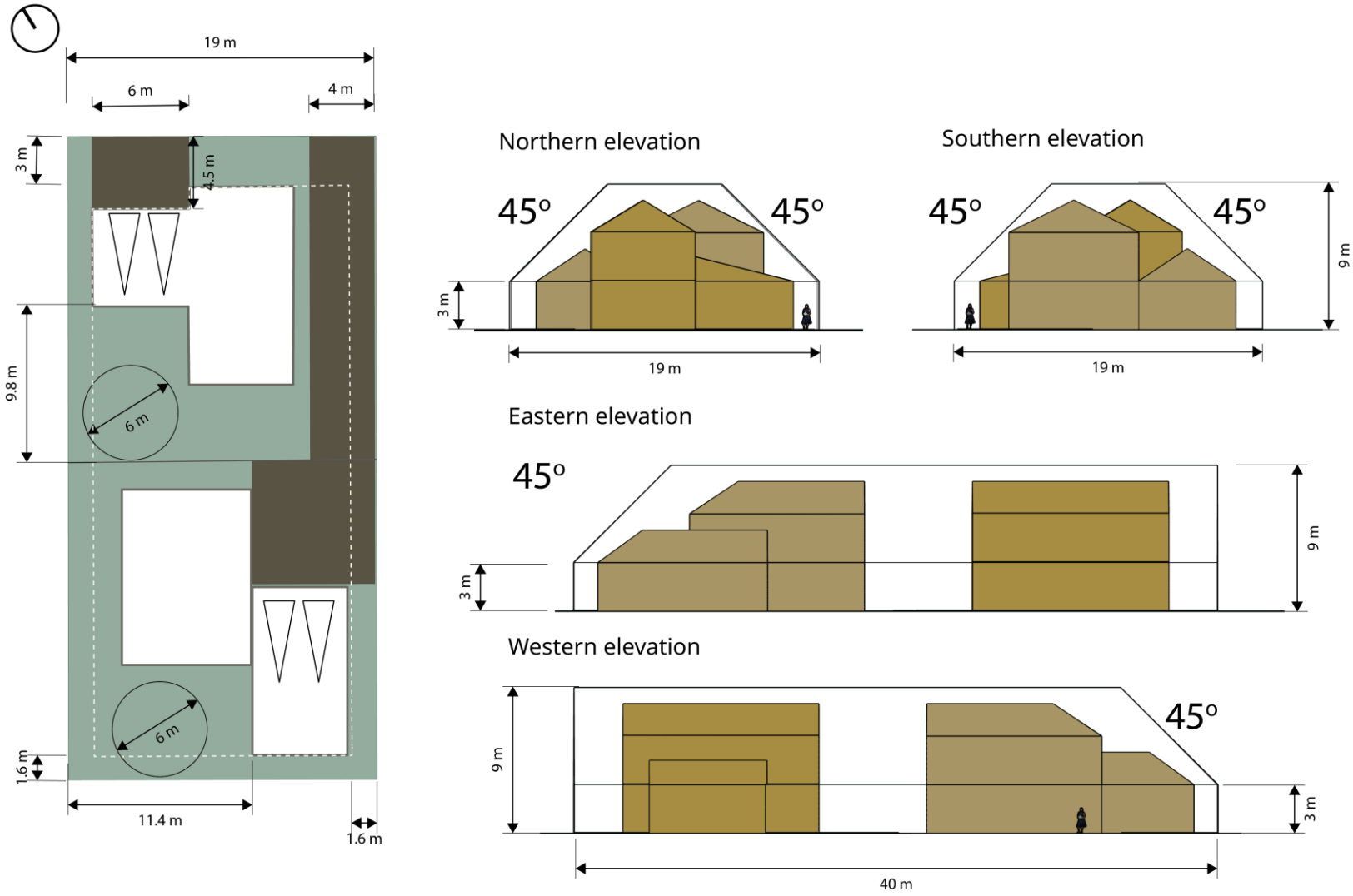
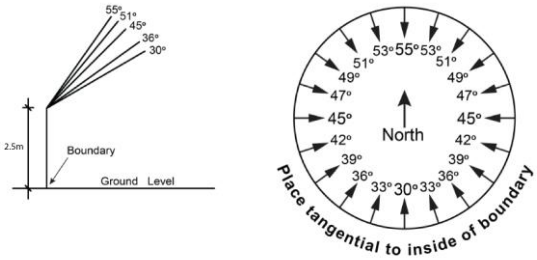


Figure 4: GRZ - Increased Development Provisions Plans & Elevations

3.2.3 Decreased development provisions

Table 5 - GRZ Decreased Development Provisions

Provision	Standard
Density (GRZ-S1)	300m^2 per residential unit
Height (GRZ-S2)	8m
Height in relation to boundary (GRZ-S3)	Height recession plane from 2.5m from ground level (excluding from road boundaries). 
Site Coverage (GRZ-S4)	Maximum 40%
Setbacks (MRZ-S6)	
Front Setback	4.5m
Rear Setback	1.6m
Side yard setback	1.6m
Outdoor living area (GRZ-S9)	50m^2 – Diameter of 6m

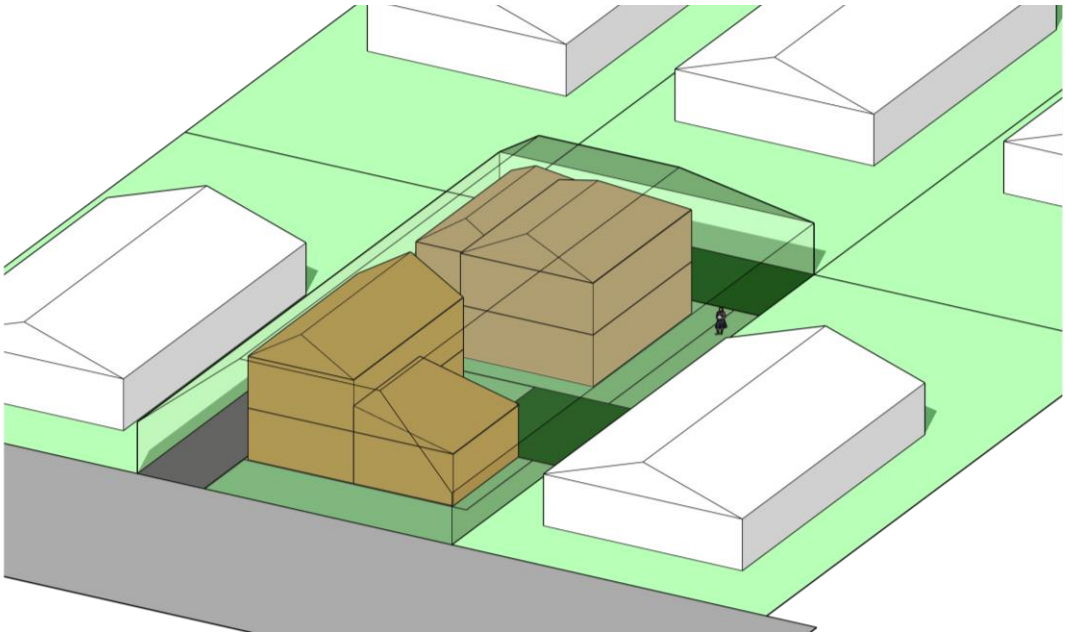


Figure 5: GRZ Decreased development provisions indicative bulk & massing

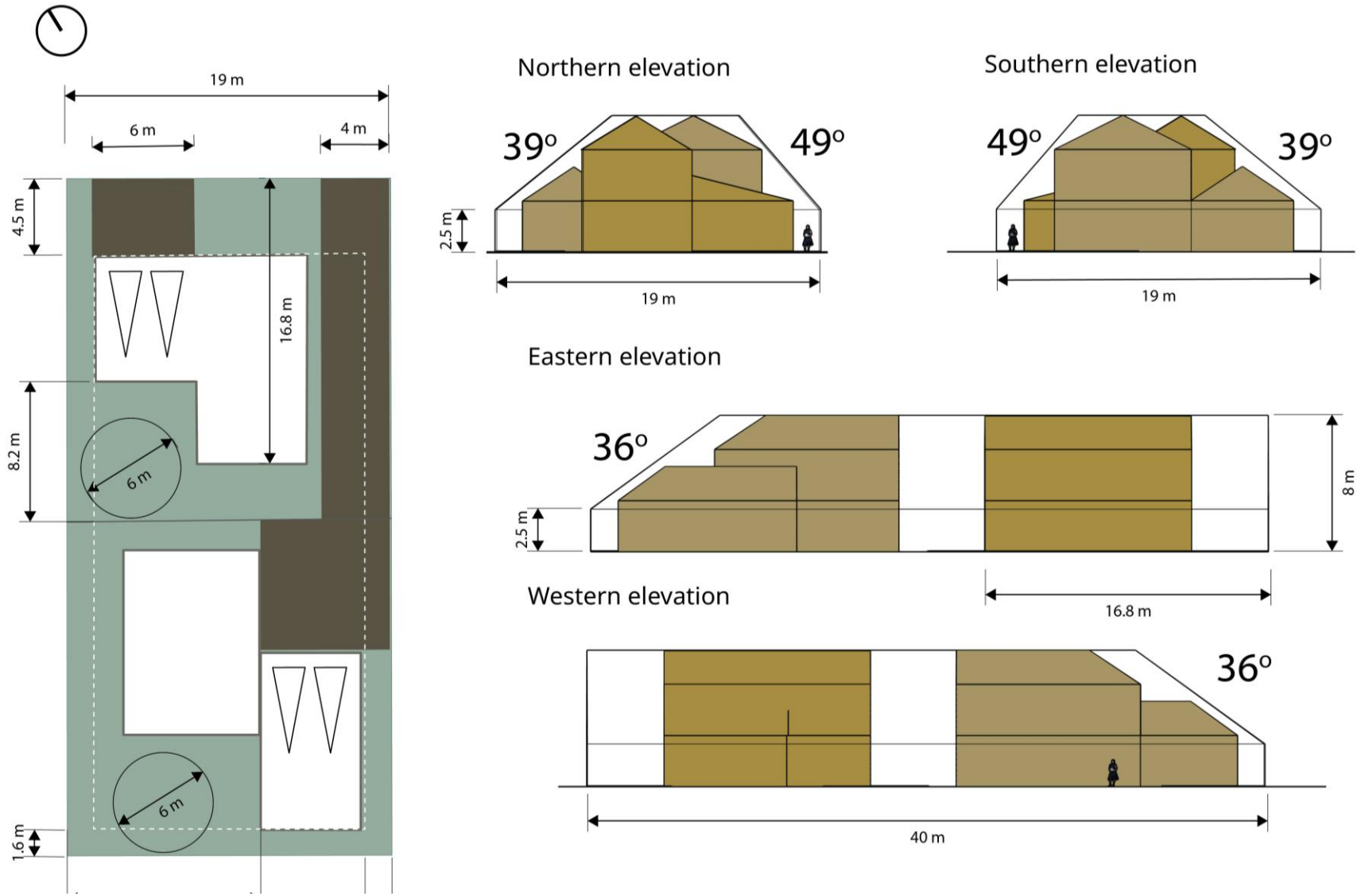


Figure 6: GRZ - Decreased Development Provisions Plans & Elevations

3.3 GRZ Shading

Shading diagrams have been provided that show the level of shading anticipated under each of the provision sets described above. The shading shown is based off a 3D model geolocated to Oamaru at 12pm NZ Standard Time (UTC+12:00) across the year at Summer (21/12) and Winter Solstice (21/6), and Autumn (21/3) and Spring (21/9) Equinox.

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A more realistic shading outcome is shown in the Bulk and Massing Shading Diagrams which, based on the same modelling approach, and the assumptions outlined above, show the level of shading anticipated based on the generic bulk and massing exercise undertaken above. These diagrams better reflect the impacts of built form that could reasonably be anticipated on the site and the influence on shading from roofs, setbacks and breaks in the building etc.

Figure 7 shows the comparable shading between the theoretical shading (left) and the bulk and massing shading (right).

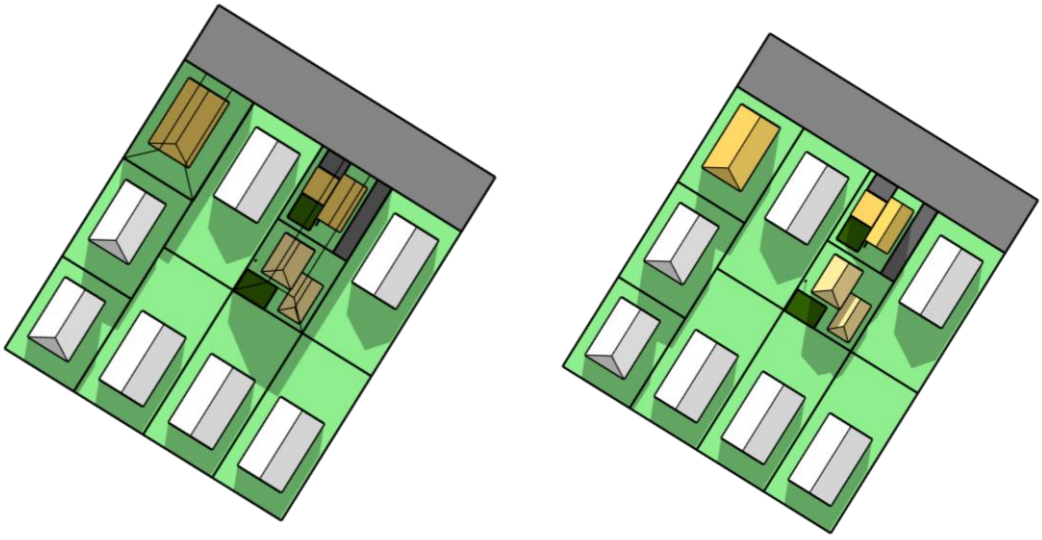
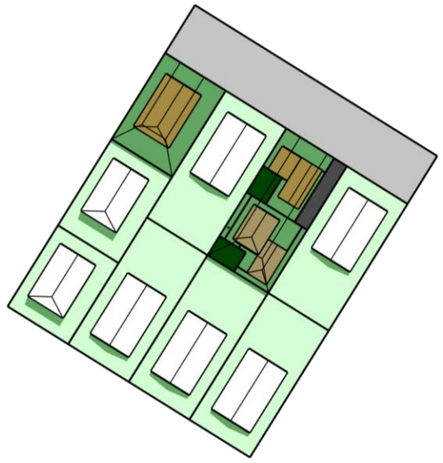
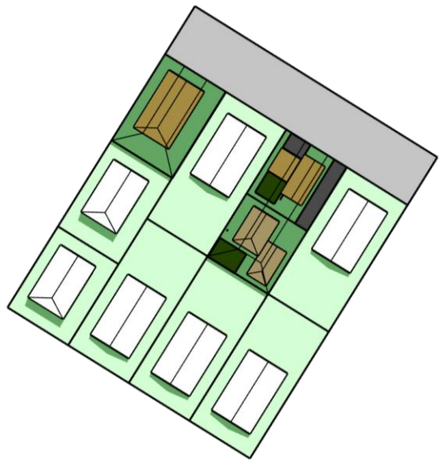
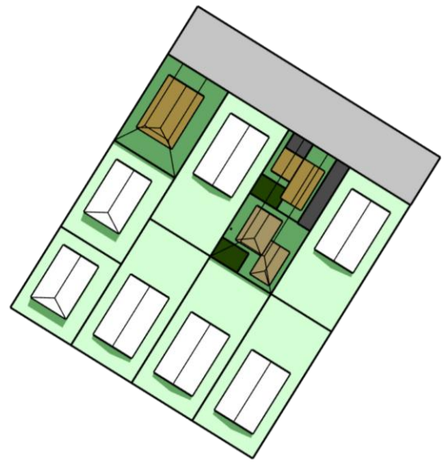
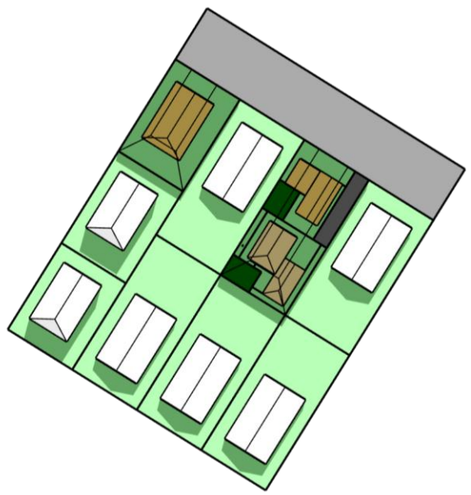
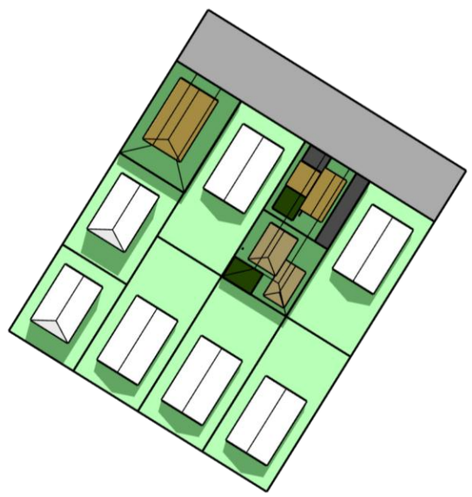
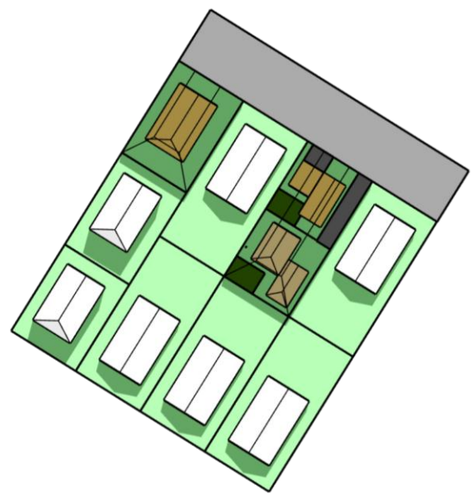
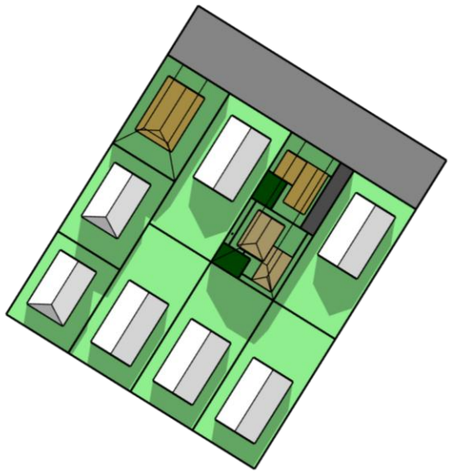
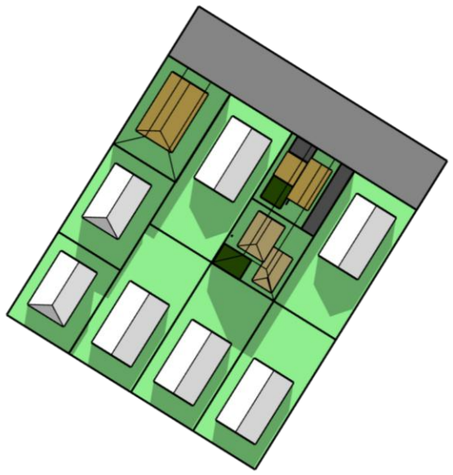
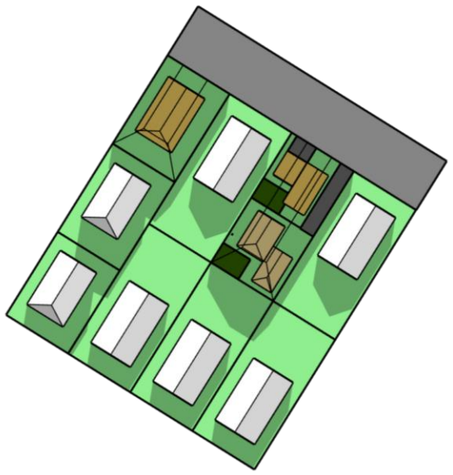
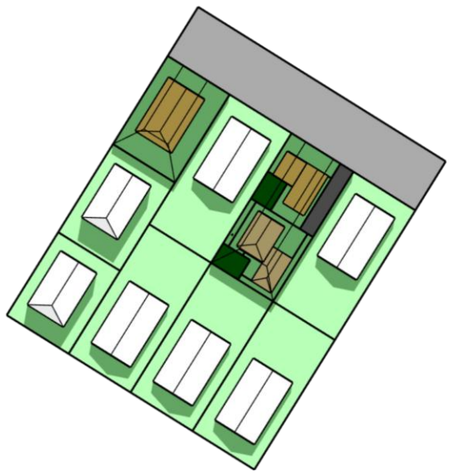
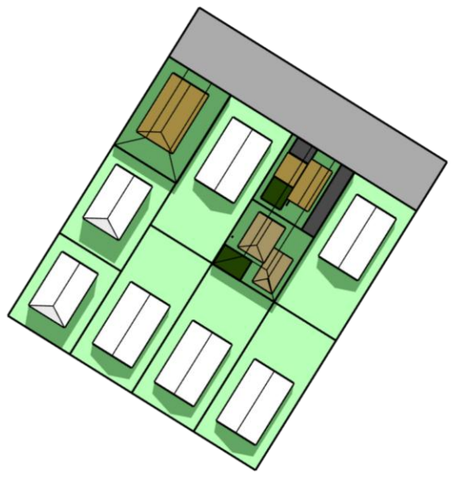
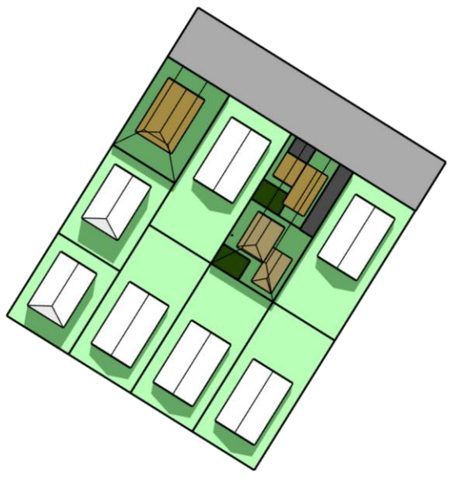
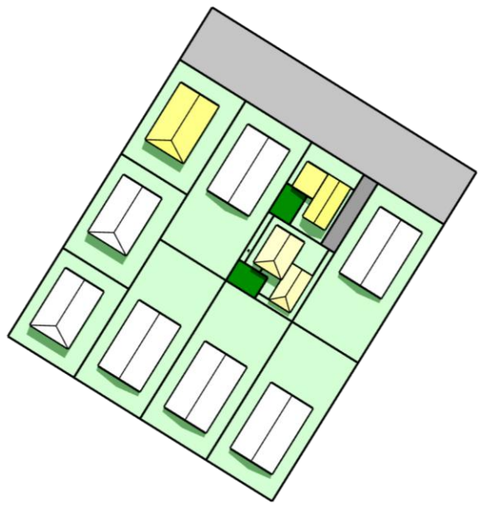
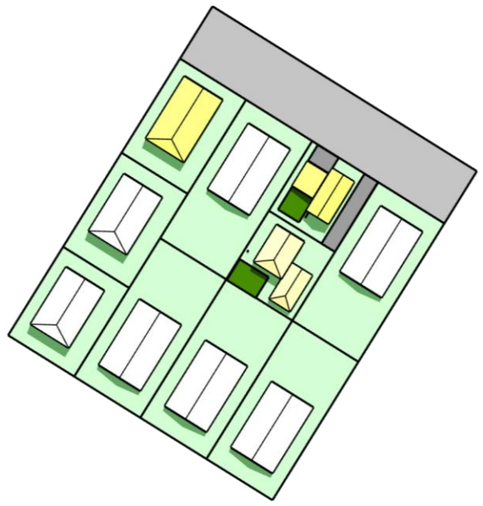
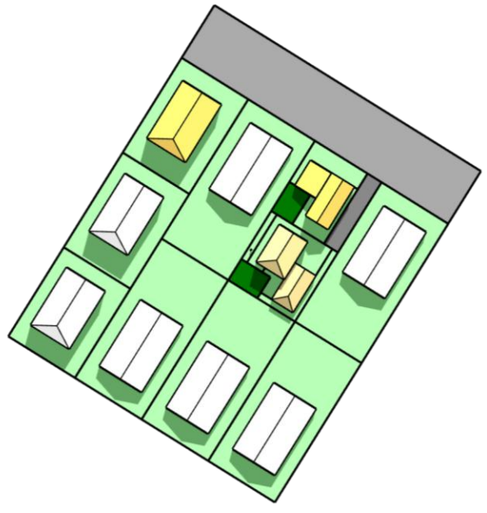
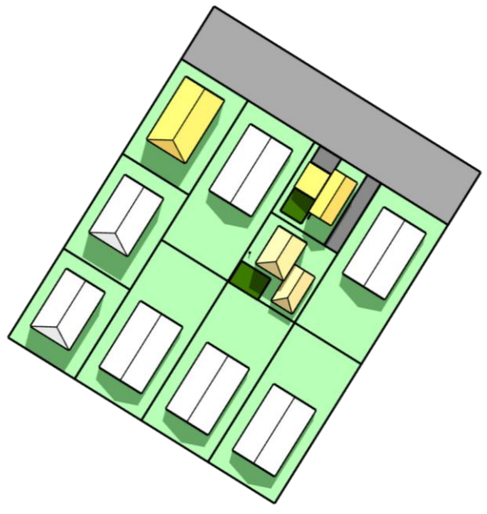
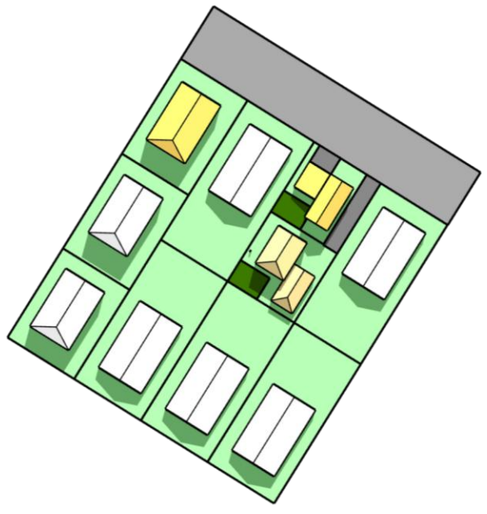


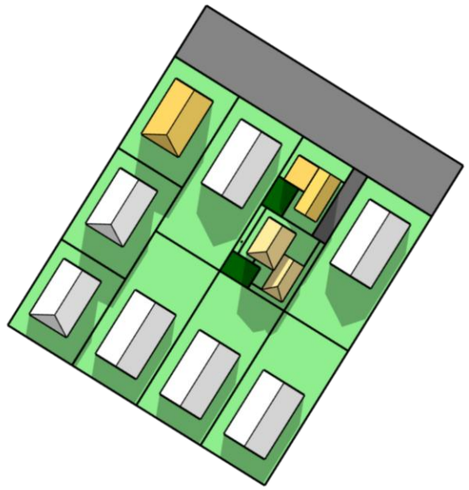
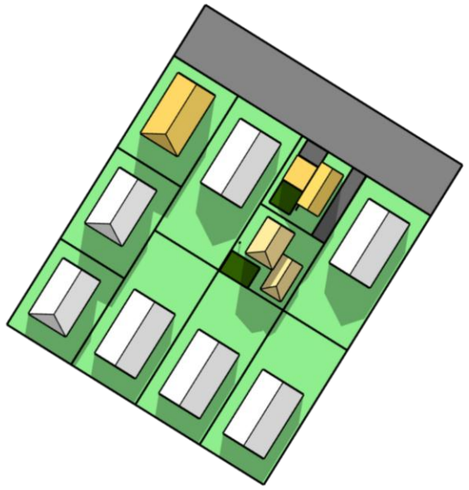
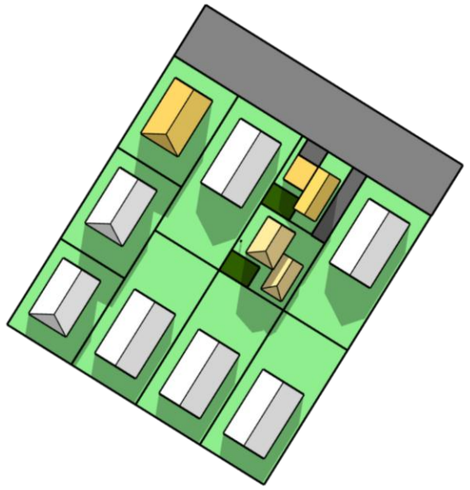
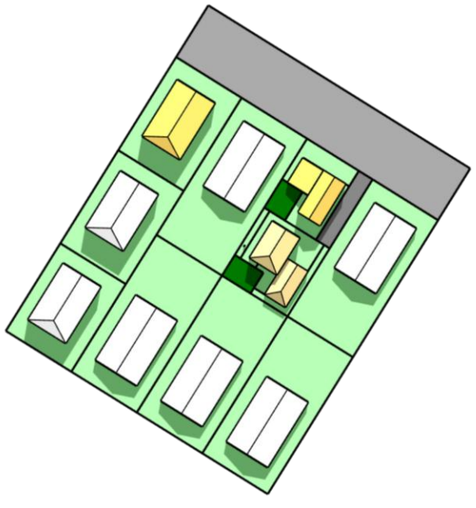
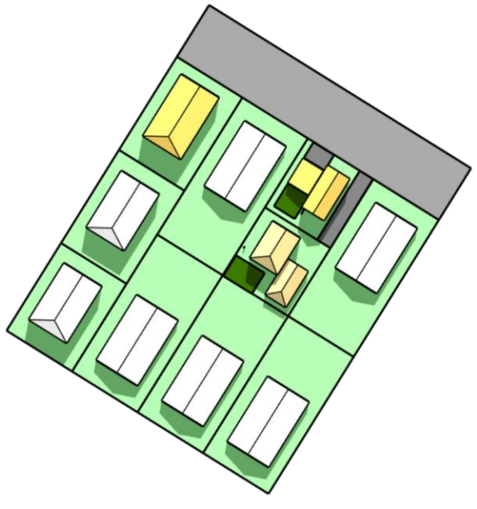
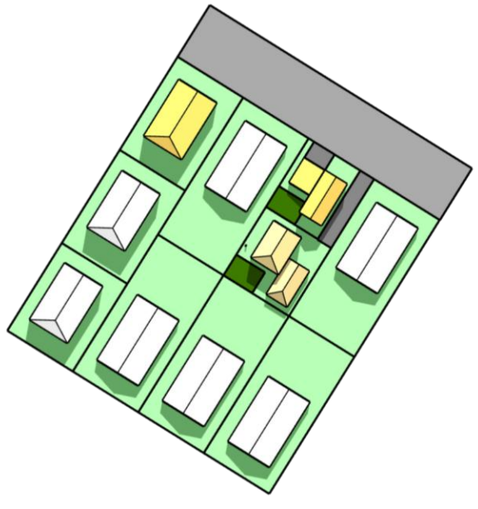
Figure 7: Comparison of theoretical shading and shading based on indicative bulk and massing GRZ Winter Solstice.

Table 6: GRZ Shading Diagrams

	Theoretical Shading based on HIRB Notified provisions	Increased development provisions	Decreased development provisions
Summer Solstice (12pm)			
Autumn Equinox (12pm)			

	Theoretical Shading based on HIRB		
	Notified provisions	Increased development provisions	Decreased development provisions
Winter Solstice (12pm)			
Spring Equinox (12pm)			

	Shading – Bulk and Massing		
	Notified provisions	Increased development provisions	Decreased development provisions
Summer Solstice (12pm)			
Autumn Equinox (12pm)			

	Shading – Bulk and Massing		
	Notified provisions	Increased development provisions	Decreased development provisions
Winter Solstice (12pm)			
Spring Equinox (12pm)			

3.4 GRZ Testing summary

The combination of plans, elevations and shading diagrams show minor variations in the built form enabled by the three provision sets. The shading effects of a typical built form scenario modelled across the three provision sets are essentially identical, with a small area of shading able to be brought forward on the site as enabled by the reduced setback of 3m tested as part of the increased development provisions set. Otherwise;

- The additional height enabled by the increased development provisions (up to 9m) is not sufficient to enable a third storey to be readily developed due to the setbacks created by the HIRB controls which increase with height. The increase in height does however provide greater flexibility in roof design.
- The reduced road boundary setback in the increased development provision set enables higher development flexibility and enables the built form to be brought forward on the front site compared to the notified and decreased development provision sets. With the site orientation tested, this has the effect of bringing the bulk and mass of the building forward and consequently shading is brought forward on the front site (or depending on site orientation to the road). This also provides greater potential to provide larger, more functional, outdoor living spaces to the rear of a dwelling. It does not alter the shading effects from a rear site.
- If the increased height limit and more enabling HIRB controls were implemented without changes to the front setback, the overall level of development enabled would be similar but more constrained in where it can be positioned on site. Ultimately, the effect would be that the bulk and mass of development would be positioned more centrally on the site, similar to the other provision sets tested.
- The regular HIRB shape of the increased development i.e. a 45^{o} recession plane on all boundaries enables more building mass to in the centre of the site when compared to the varying angles approach considered under the other provision sets which directs building mass towards the northern side of a site.
- The reduced development provisions appear to have minimal impact on the extent of site coverage enabled on the site, however, reduce the flexibility of ground floor design and roofing design due to the tighter building envelope established.
- The GFA enabled under the three provision sets is generally similar when considering a fairly typical building footprint and roof design.
- Shading effects from a detached dwelling of up to two storeys on a smaller lot of approximately $500m^2$ in the GRZ have the potential to create similar effects of those dwellings tested on smaller $300m^2$ sites. This is expected due to the same theoretical building heights and bulk and mass being enabled. However, in a real-world environment the effects are likely to be reduced as there is less pressure to build to the full height enabled due to the larger site area. This means that a desired internal floor area can be more readily accommodated on a single level which enables a developer to avoid the cost premium associated with construction above ground-floor level.

4.0 Medium Density Residential Zone

4.1 Sample sites

The following sites set out in Table 5 represent a selection from sites sampled across the medium density zone.

Table 7 – MRZ Lot Samples

Address	Lot area (approx.)	Lot width (approx.)	Lot depth (approx.)
12 Mersey Street	809m^2	16m	50.6m
37 Till Street	1012m^2	20m	50.6m
26 Wansbeck Street	1032m^2	20m	50.6m
11 Nen Street	1014m^2	20.5m	50.6m
5 Aln Street	1044m^2	20.5m	51.2m
Average	982 m^2	19.4m	50.72m

Lot Tested

There are many original “quarter acre sections” within the MRZ (measuring 1 chain by 2.5 chains). The size and dimensions of these lots mean they are accommodating of infill housing development. The site dimensions set out in Table 6 below have been tested.

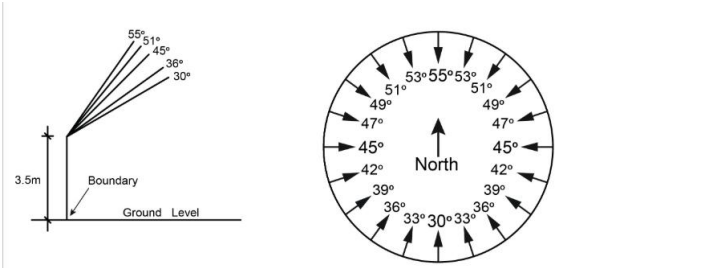
Table 8 - MRZ "Typical" Lot Dimensions

Lot area (approx.)	Lot width (approx.)	Lot depth (approx.)
1012m^2	20m	50.6m

4.2 Provision Testing

4.2.1 Notified provisions

Table 9 – MRZ Notified Provisions

Provision	Standard
Density (MRZ-S1)	200m^2 per residential unit
Height (MRZ-S2)	10m with a maximum of two storeys
Height in relation to boundary (MRZ-S3)	Height recession plane from 3.5m from ground level (excluding road boundaries).  *Diagram 6a - Height in Relation to Boundary Recession Lines*
Site Coverage (MRZ-S4)	Maximum 50%
Setbacks (MRZ-S6)	
Front Setback	2m (where not a State Highway) 4.5m for garages opening facing a transport corridor
Rear Setback	1m
Side yard setback	1m
Outdoor living area (MRZ-S9)	30m^2

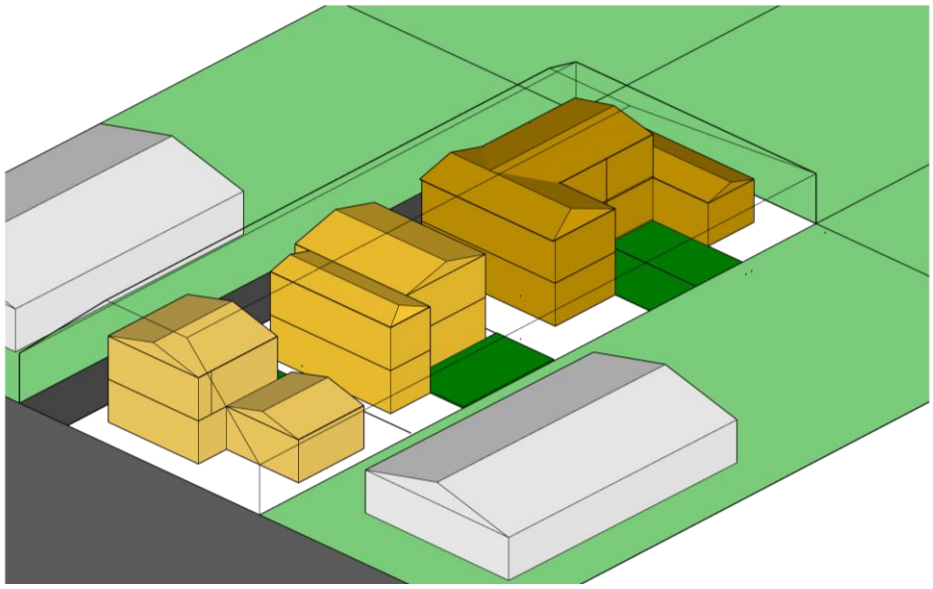


Figure 8: MRZ Notified provisions indicative bulk & massing

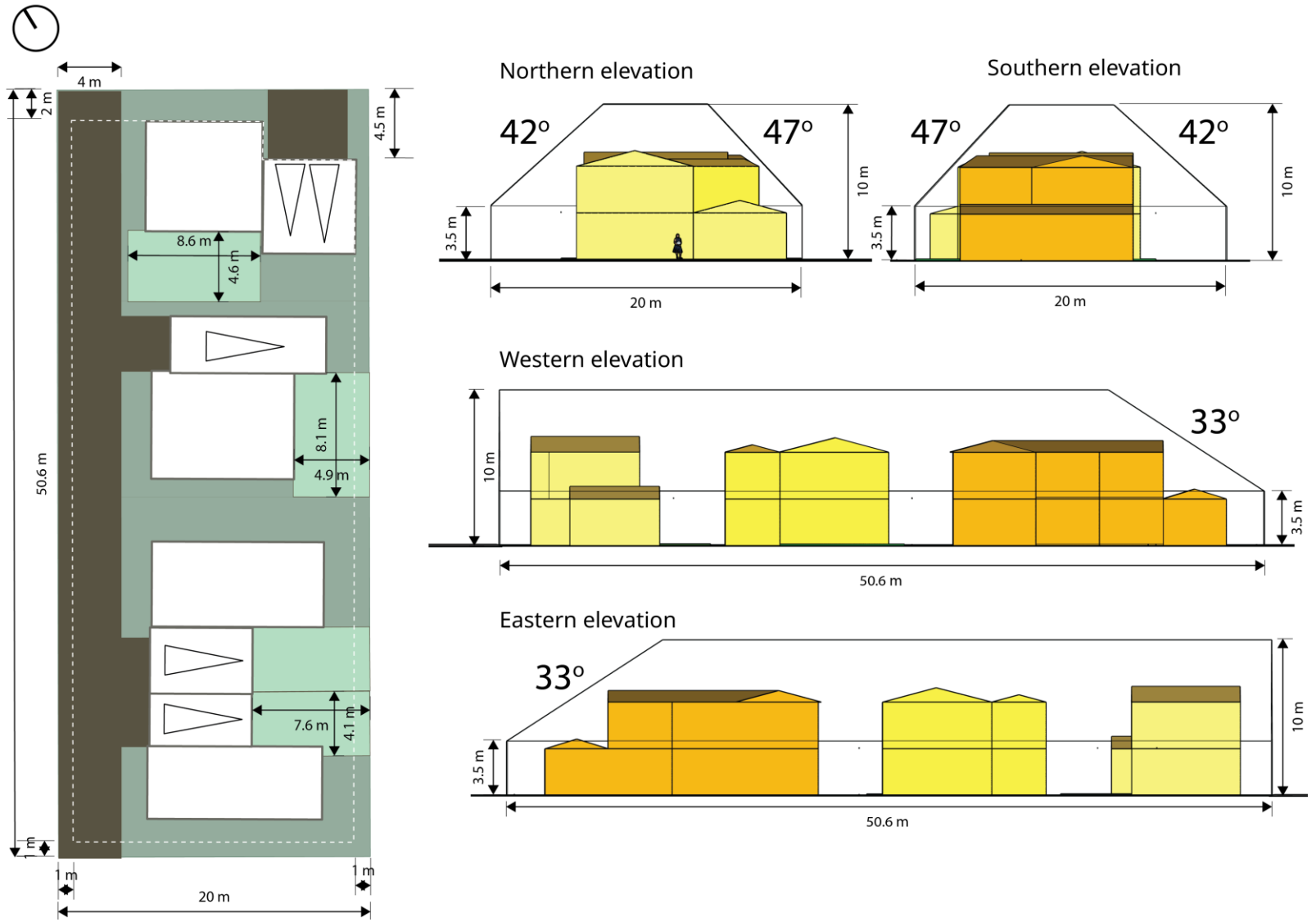


Figure 9: MRZ Notified Provisions Plan and Elevation

4.2.2 Increased development provisions

Table 10 - MRZ Increased Development Provisions

Provision	Standard
Density (MRZ-S1)	200m^2 per residential unit
Height	11m with a maximum of three storeys
Height in relation to boundary	Height recession plane of 60^o from 4m above ground level, excluding from road boundaries.
Site Coverage (MRZ-S4)	Maximum 50%
Setbacks (MRZ-S6 1) Front Setback Rear Setback Side yard setback	 2m (where not a State Highway) 4.5m for garages opening facing a transport corridor 1m 1m
Outdoor living area (MRZ-S9)	30m^2

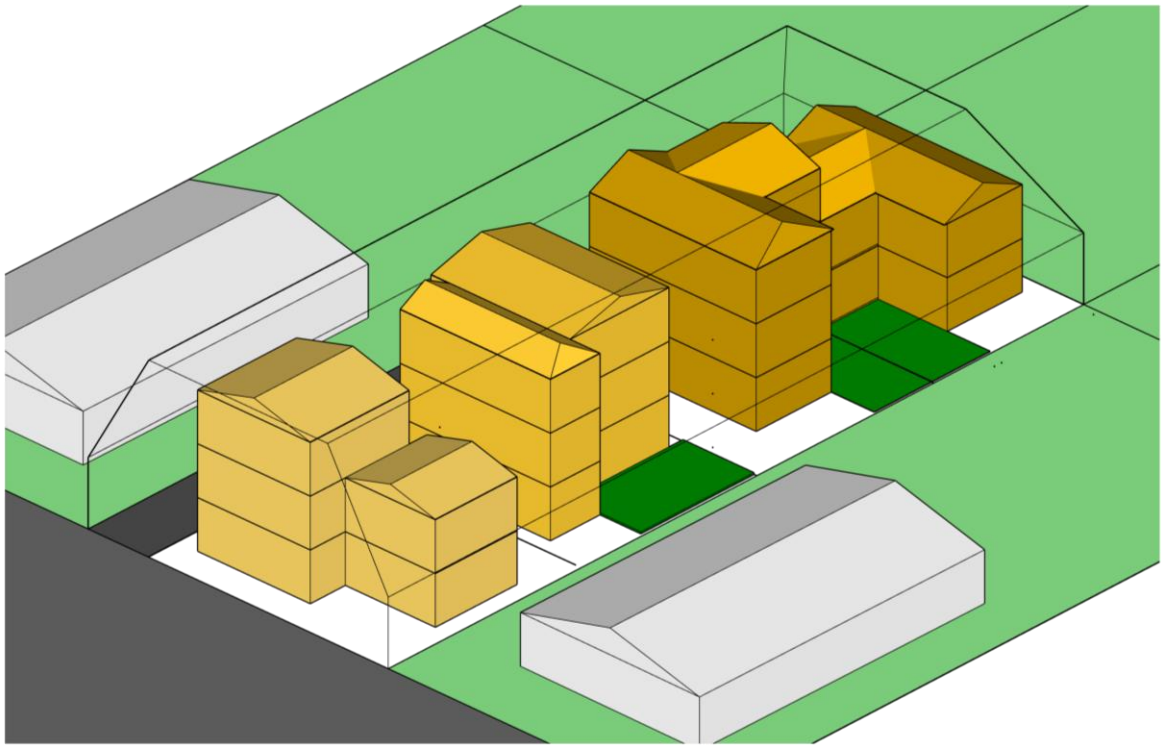


Figure 10: MRZ Increased development provisions indicative bulk & massing

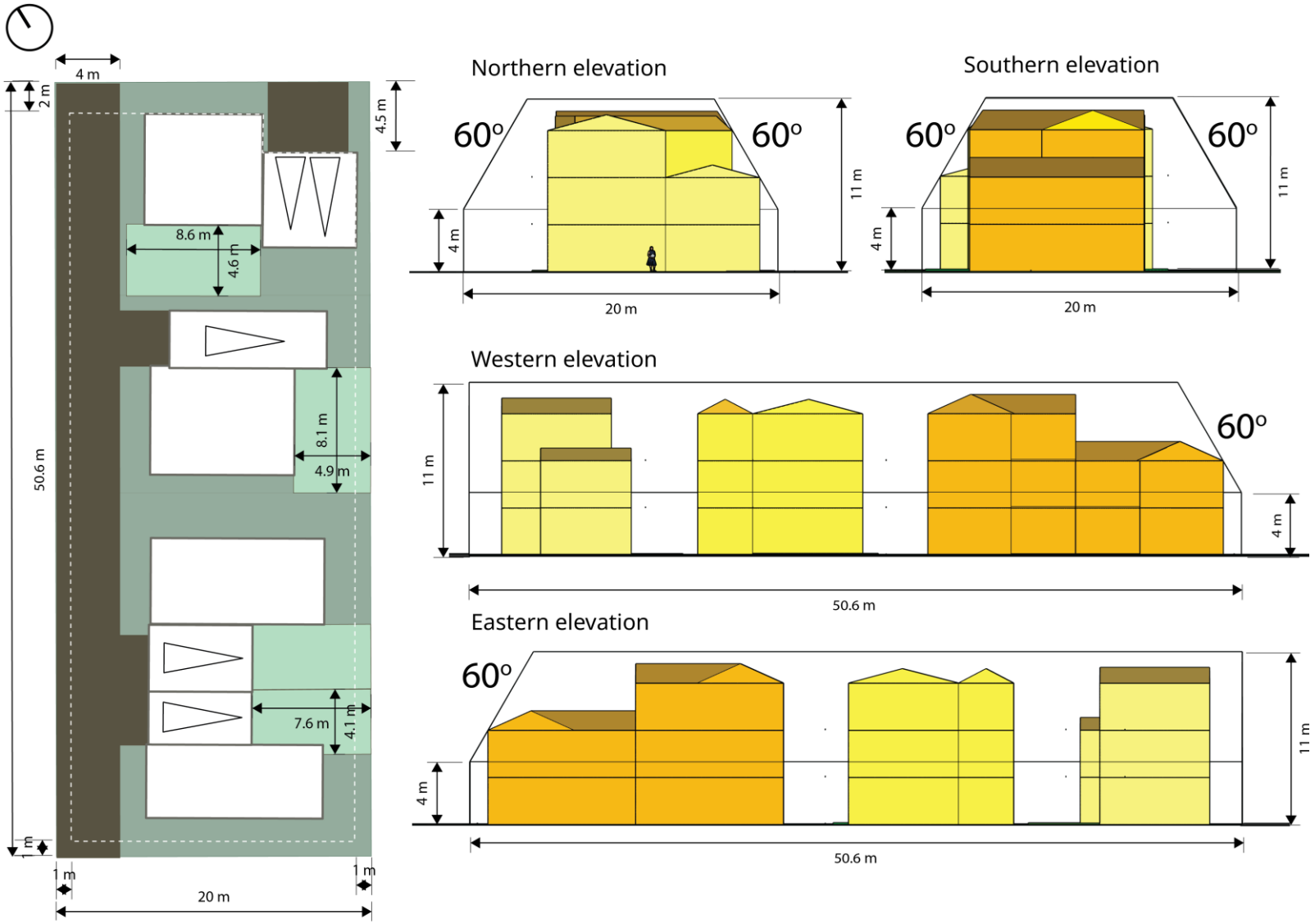
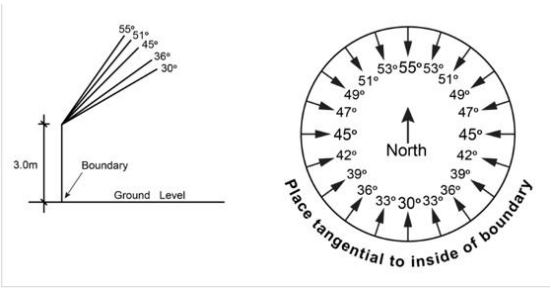


Figure 11: MRZ - Increased Development Provisions Plans & Elevations

4.2.3 Decreased development provisions

Table 11 - MRZ Decreased Development Provisions

Provision	Standard
Density (MRZ-S1)	200m^2 per residential unit
Height	8m
Height in relation to boundary	Height recession plane from 3.0m from ground level, excluding from road boundaries. 
Site Coverage (MRZ-S4)	Maximum 50%
Setbacks (MRZ-S6) Front Setback Rear Setback Side yard setback	 2m (where not a State Highway) 4.5m for garages opening facing a transport corridor 1m 1m
Outdoor living area (MRZ-S9)	30m^2

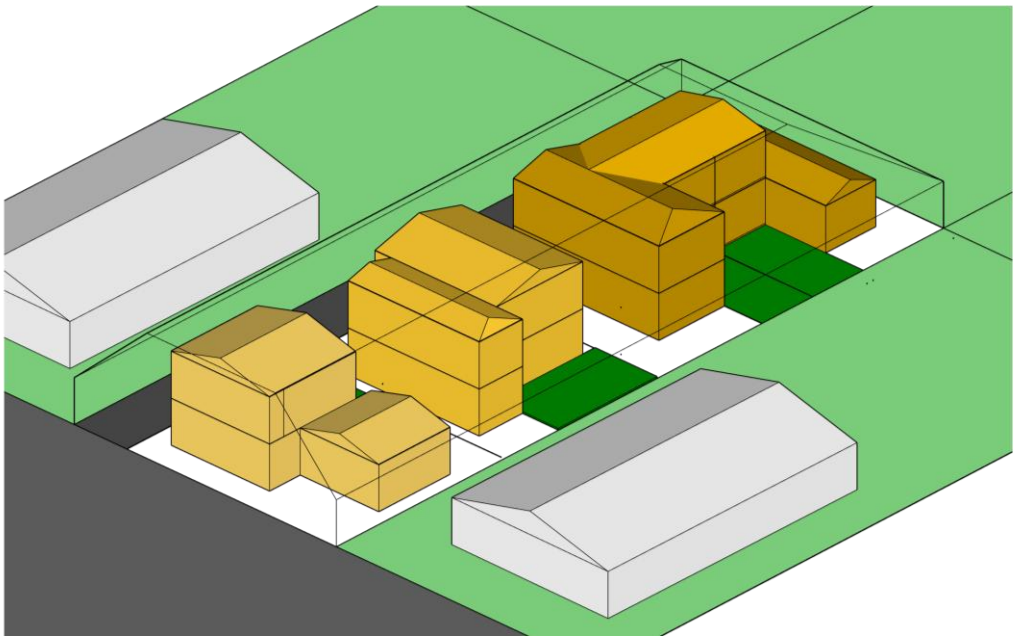


Figure 12: MRZ Decreased development provisions indicative bulk & massing

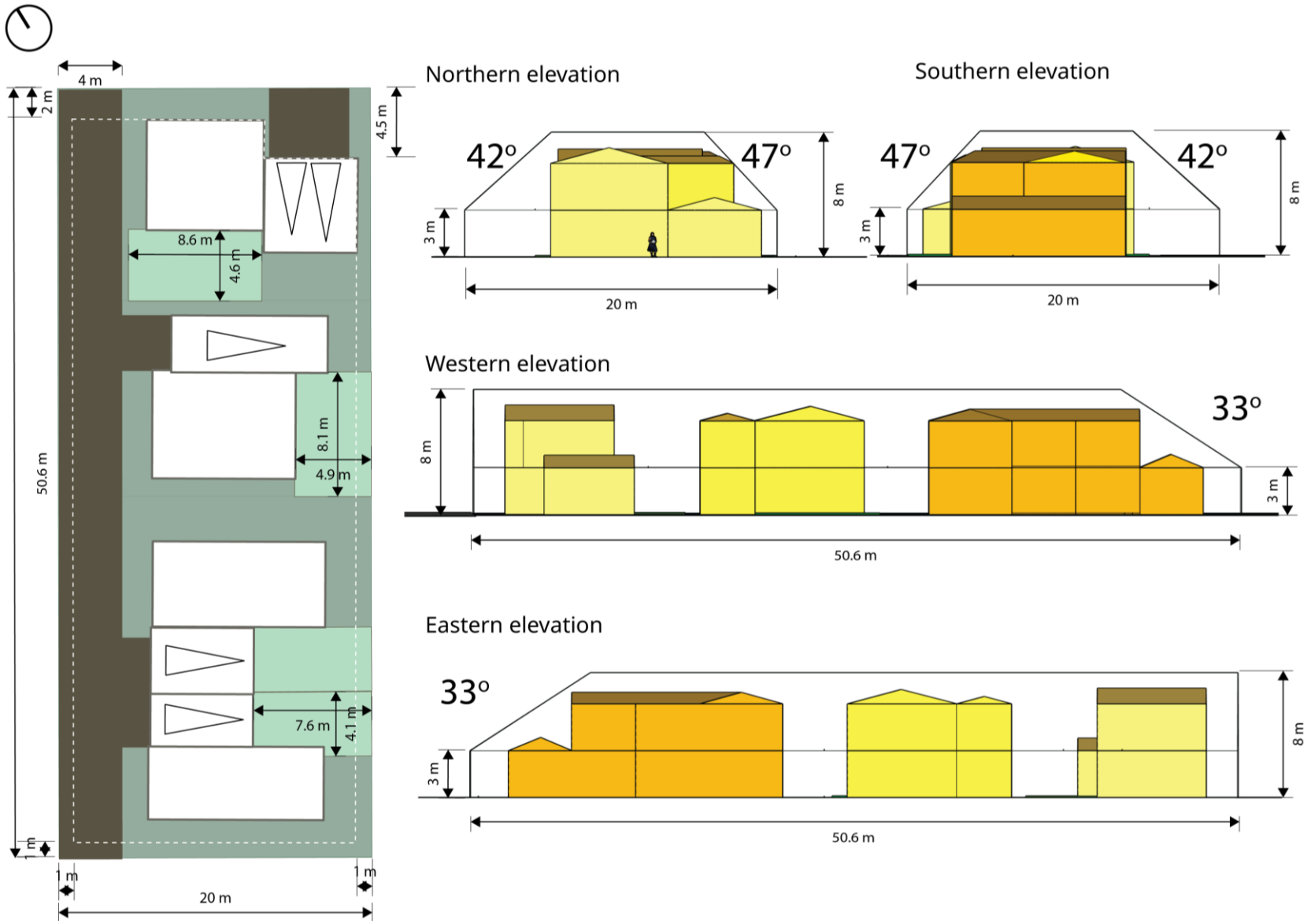


Figure 13:: MRZ - Decreased Development Provisions Plans & Elevations

4.3 Shading

Theoretical Shading shows the level of shading that may fall relating to the building envelope established by the Height and Height in Relation to Boundary requirements. While full build out of the envelope is unlikely due to site coverage and setback requirements, it shows where shading may occur as a result of development of the site.

A more realistic shading outcome is shown in the Bulk and Massing Shading Diagrams which, based on the same modelling approach, and the assumptions outlined above, show the level of shading anticipated based on the generic bulk and massing exercise undertaken above. These diagrams better reflect the impacts of built form that could reasonably be anticipated on the site and the influence on shading from roofs, setbacks and breaks in the building etc.

Figure 14 shows the comparable shading between the theoretical shading (left) and the bulk and massing shading (right).

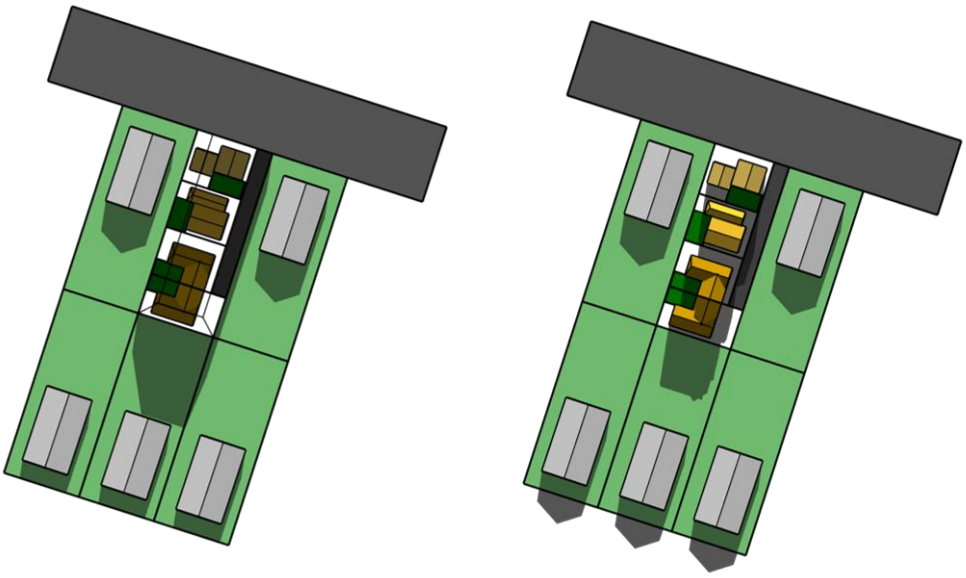
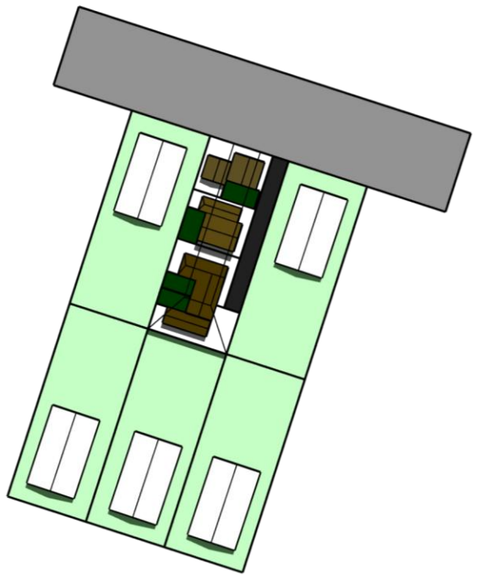
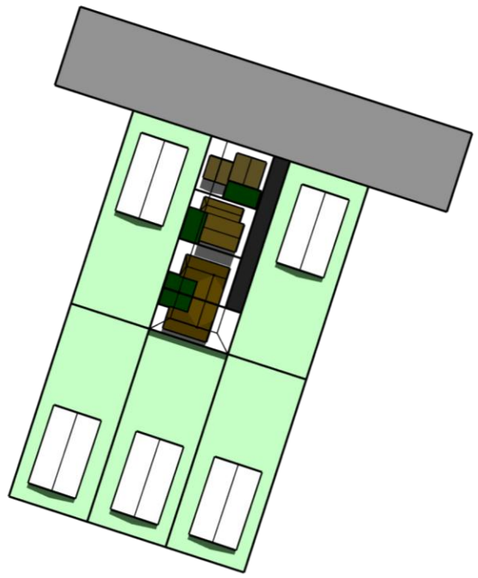
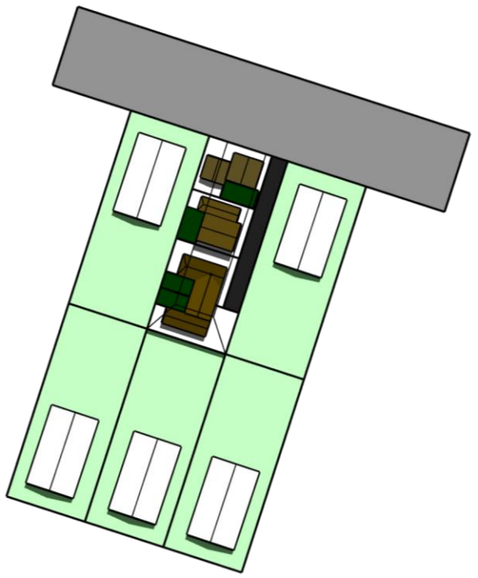
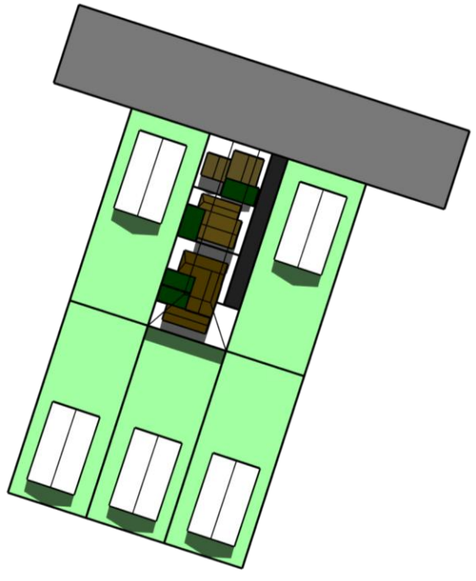
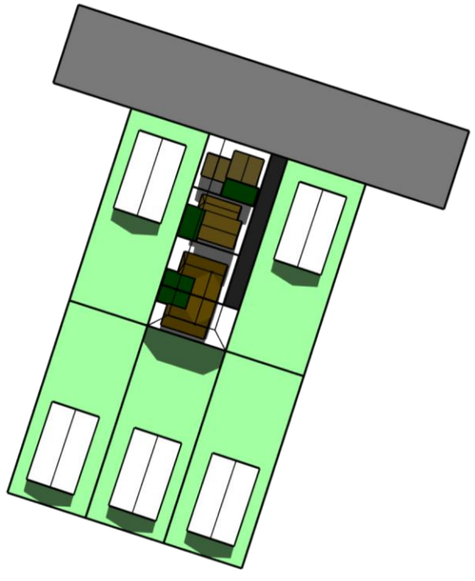
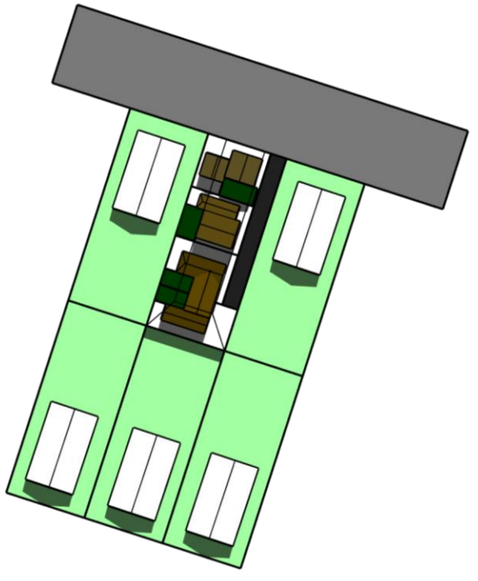
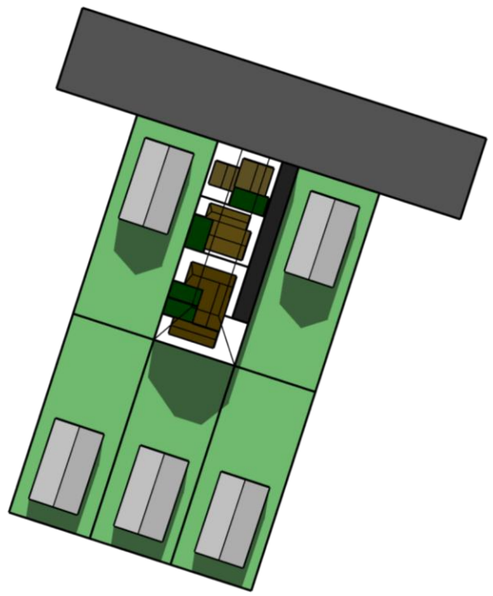
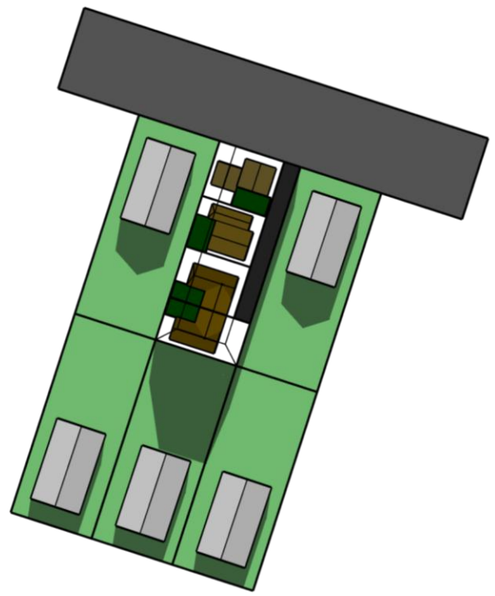
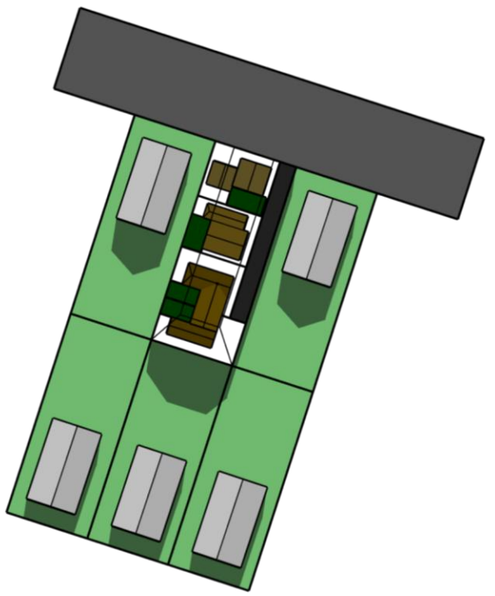
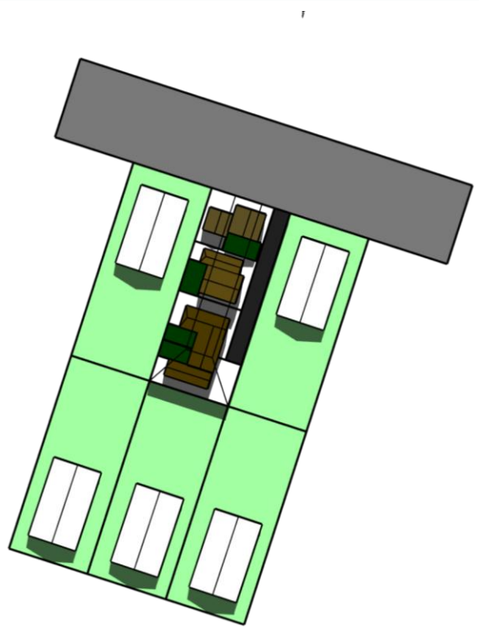
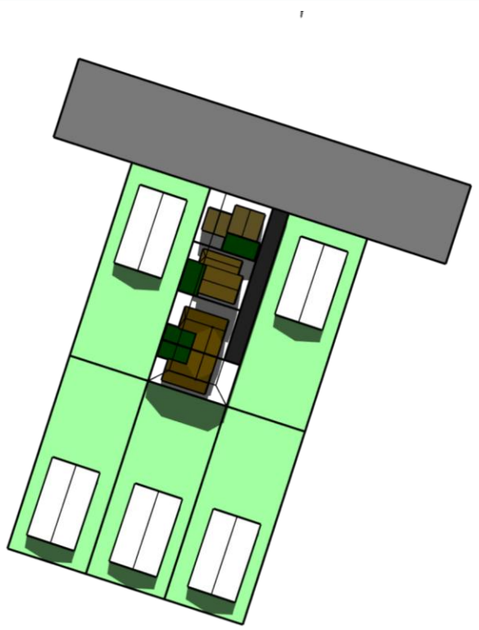
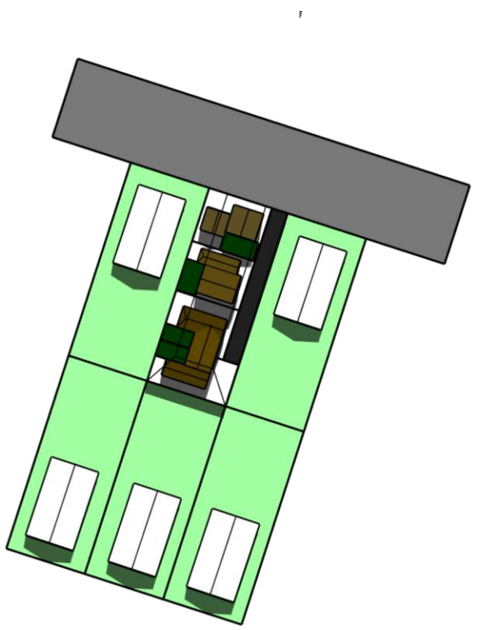
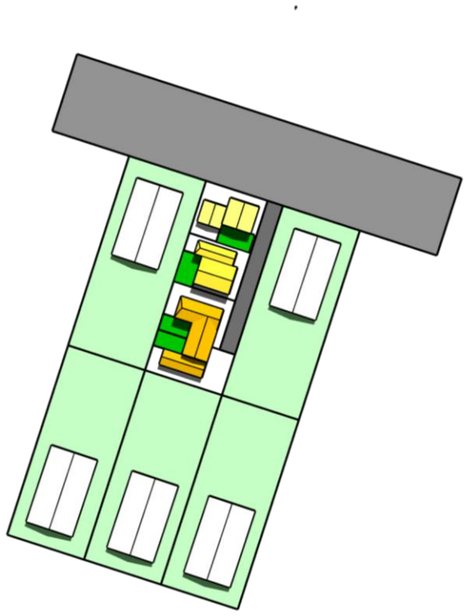
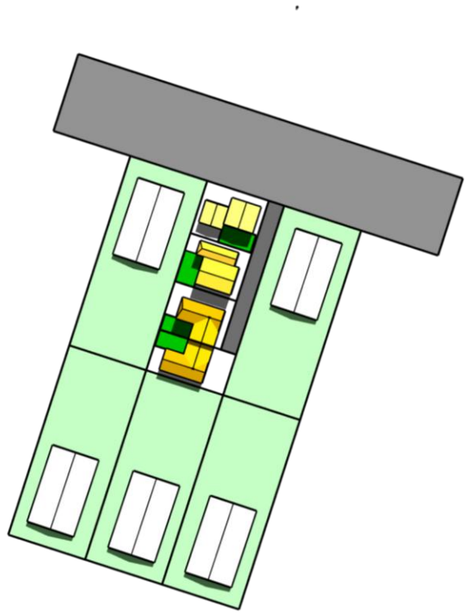
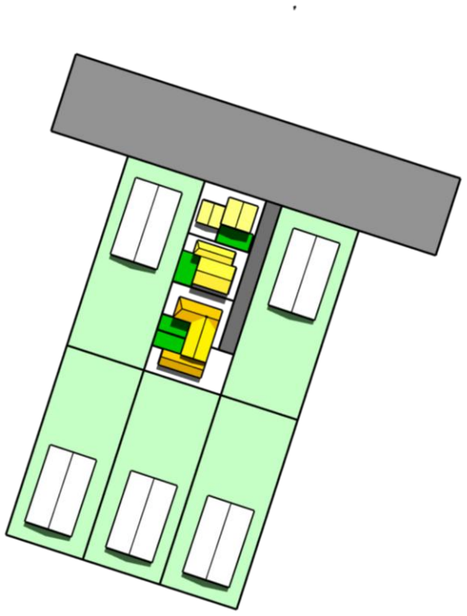
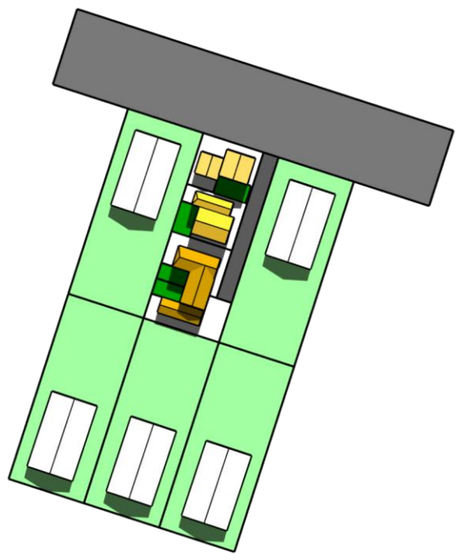
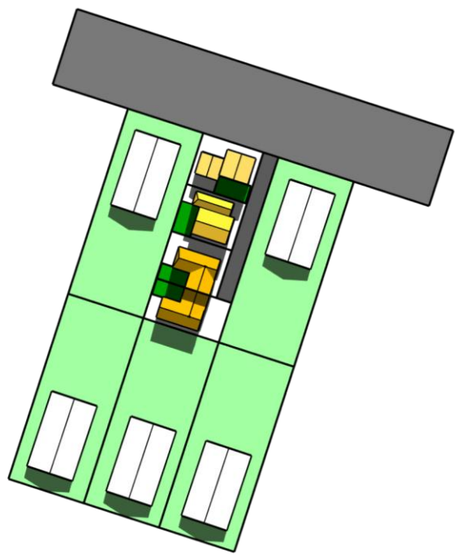
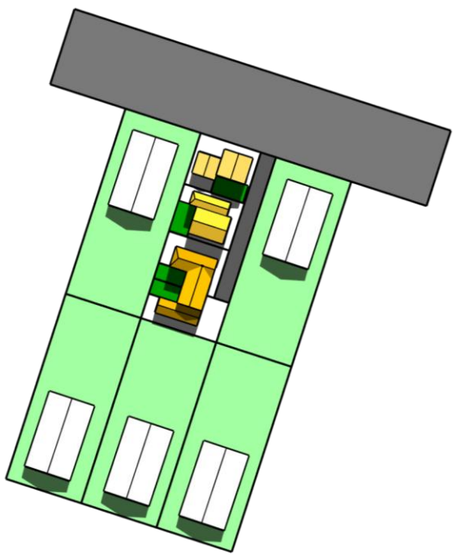


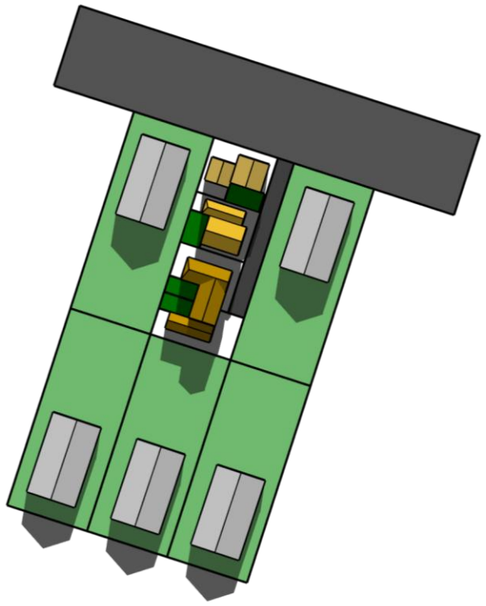
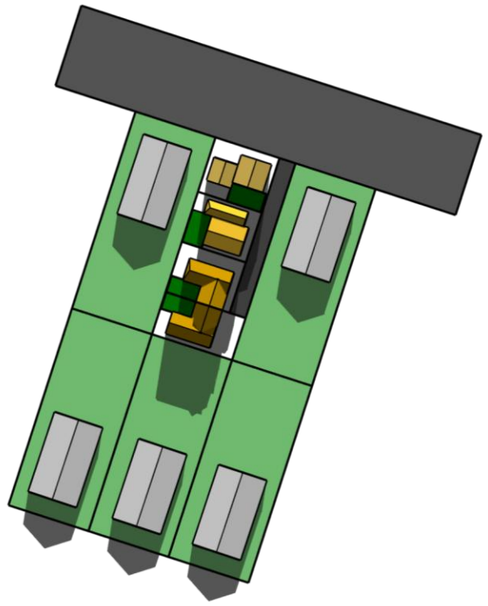
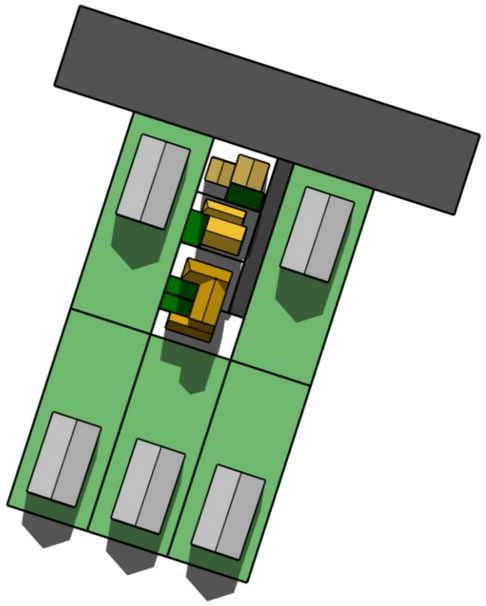
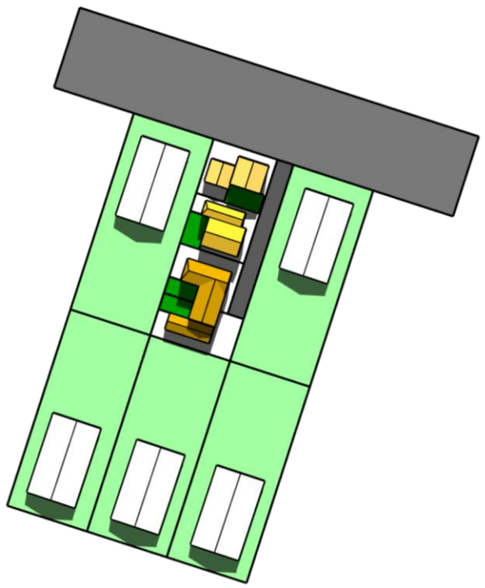
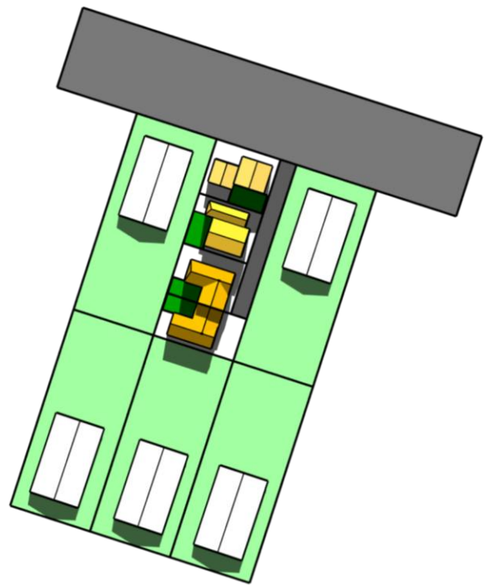
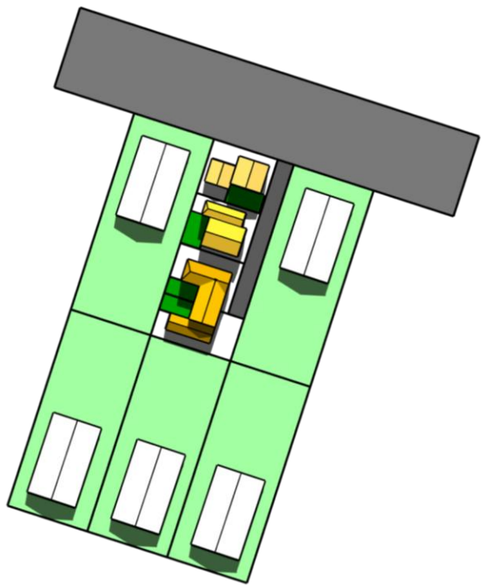
Figure 14: Comparison of theoretical shading and shading based on indicative bulk and massing MRZ Winter Solstice.

Table 12: MRZ Shading diagrams

	Theoretical Shading based on HIRB		
	Notified provisions	Increased development provisions	Decreased development provisions
Summer Solstice (12pm)			
Autumn Equinox (12pm)			

	Theoretical Shading based on HIRB		
	Notified provisions	Increased development provisions	Decreased development provisions
Winter Solstice (12pm)			
Spring Equinox (12pm)			

	Shading – Bulk and Massing		
	Notified provisions	Increased bulk provisions	Decreased bulk provisions
Summer Solstice (12pm)			
Autumn Equinox (12pm)			

	Shading – Bulk and Massing		
	Notified provisions	Increased bulk provisions	Decreased bulk provisions
Winter Solstice (12pm)			
Spring Equinox (12pm)			

4.4 MRZ Testing Summary

The combination of plans, elevations and shading diagrams show the variations in the built form enabled by the three provision sets. The shading effects modelled across the three provision sets show the different levels of development that could occur under each provision set.

- The provisions as notified readily enable two-storey development across the site, with plenty of flexibility in roofing design. Three-storey development could be achieved, however on the site tested, the dimensions and orientation of the lot mean that this could only occur centrally on the site's length, which would constrain the amount of floor area realisable at a third level.
- The use of a HIRB recession plane determined by boundary orientation (as per the notified and decreased development provisions) has a notable influence on the scale of development that can occur. This is particularly apparent on the southern boundary of the lot tested, with a recession plane of 33° requiring buildings to either be pushed forward on the site or reduced in height. Depending on the orientation of a given site this may have the impact of preventing a viable third storey from being able to occur and would also encourage site access / vehicle maneuvering areas to be positioned along a site's southern boundary as the HIRB acts the main constraint to development potential of a site.
- The increased development provision set comfortably enables three-storey development to occur. This is largely influenced by the more enabling HIRB provision with a 60° recession plane. Subsequently, the provisions enable greater GFA to be developed across the site, increasing the size of dwellings that could be built on the same size section as the other provision sets. On the buildings as modelled, the additional storey enabled across a development results in a possible increase in GFA of approximately 57%, noting that this would result in large floor areas for this development typology.
- The decreased development provisions enable similar levels of development to the provisions notified, however there is no opportunity to enable a third floor with an 8m height restriction.
- The levels of shading anticipated on the lots tested follow the observations above, with increased levels of shading anticipated under the increased development provision set. The build form tested under the notified and reduced development provision sets resulted in similar / the same levels of shading, however under the notified provisions, a third floor could be enabled should a targeted design approach seek to establish that outcome. The increased development provisions result in a notable increase in shading particular of those sites located to the south of the tested site.

5.0 Observations and commentary

The above analysis and modelling assists in differentiating the bulk and mass of development that could be enabled by the various provision sets proposed. When considering the level of development anticipated and enabled by the provisions of the plan it is important to consider how each of the development standards across the plan work together to drive built form outcomes.

In testing the bulk and massing enabled by the proposed provisions, it is apparent that site development outcomes within the MRZ are also strongly driven by density standards and accessway/ ROW width requirements.

Density minimums of 200m^2 per dwelling in the MRZ mean that some typologies, such as terraces may be unlikely to be provided through infill development on typical allotments due to the minimum density being too high when typical lot dimensions are considered.

As an example, a "quarter-acre" or 20m x 50.6m, 1012m^2 site in the MRZ can accommodate 3 -4 units once access requirements are considered. Configured with three lots served by a private way and the front site having direct access to the transport corridor, this enables the narrowest private way width permitted by the notified subdivision standards (4m). This reduces the depth available to accommodate lots to 16m and therefore a lot width of 12.5m is required to establish a 200m^2 site as required by MRZ-S1. In our experience 12.5m would be very wide for an individual terrace (or duplex) dwelling.

In our experience, and depending on the applicable density standards, typical width of terrace units ranges from 4.2m to 8m. Anything wider tends to be towards the high-end of the market and would be an exception to typical medium density development patterns observed across New Zealand. If the maximum density standard was reduced to 150m^2 (as already provided for on sites over 2,000m^2) this is more likely to enable terraced housing developments across the MRZ