



## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a landscape Architect?

Landscape Architects are qualified professionals typically specializing in the quality design, planning and conservation of the outdoor built and natural environment. After graduating from an accredited institute, and with the correct training, study and experience they may become eligible to join the recognized professional body for the industry, the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects ([www.aila.org.au](http://www.aila.org.au)).

### What do we do?

Landscape Architects are employed in a large range of rolls in the private, academic and public sectors. They are involved in areas such as policy making, regional planning, education, bushland management & rehabilitation, urban design & planning, golf course architecture, conservation & research, expert witness as well as the design & documentation of landscape works on a domestic scale.

*Our office is primarily focused on preparing good quality and creative landscape plans at competitive industry prices for development & construction approval by local authorities, for residential, commercial and industrial projects.*

We endeavour to design, manage and help implement creative outdoor environments with consideration given to the often complex network of issues including the physical, environmental, economic, cultural and aesthetic implications and constraints for each project.

### What is a landscape plan?

A landscape plan is normally a responsive plan that interprets and overlays all the site information including the survey and levels, proposed building layouts, engineering and drainage plans including on-site detention, and the natural features of the site, including existing vegetation. This information is analyzed and interpreted and a creative and practical outdoor design solution is designed & developed.

If involved early in the planning process especially for sensitive sites, we may consult on proposed layouts and design to minimize environmental impact, reduce authority issues, and help promote sustainable development.

*For larger projects, these solutions may be focused more on aesthetics, environmental issues and maximizing return through creative design. For smaller residential projects, design solutions may be driven by budget and Council requirements.*

### Do I need a landscape Plan?

In the past few years standards required for new development in the broader Sydney region have been increasingly raised with the focus being on the environmental impact, landscape issues and sustainable design.

Council policies usually specify that the landscape plan is prepared by a "landscape professional" with the appropriate qualifications. Under the Exempt & Complying Development Code, landscape plans may not be required for smaller developments, however, they are always beneficial and should be considered.

For residential projects there are two areas of government policy which need to be addressed & satisfied.



Firstly **BASIX** (the *Building Sustainability Index* [www.basix.nsw.gov.au](http://www.basix.nsw.gov.au)) is State Government legislation and has been introduced to improve the sustainability of new housing. Basix addresses issues such as water recycling, insulation and heating, efficient design & endemic landscaping in order to promote the continuing sustainable expansion of Sydney.

Secondly, every local council has **D.C.P's** (Development Control Plans), or **L.E.P's** (Local Environmental Plans, as is the case with Warringah Council). These plans guide our design by introducing minimum landscaping standards & requirements, which usually include items such as maximum amounts of hard paved (or impervious) surfaces, minimum percentages of native landscaping, buffer planting between common private spaces, using planting to reduce the scale and bulk of new development from public areas etc.

*It should be noted that the approved landscape plan is a document accepted by Council as a plan of the final works to be installed on a site, and should be done so accurately prior to certification for the Occupancy Certificate.*

### **What does a landscape plan show?**

Landscape plans may vary in scale, style and format. They will vary on their focus depending on the nature of the project, and landscape designs may range from the very basic to complex.

Typically, they will display these common attributes:

- Survey levels, natural features & manmade features being retained
- A tree survey displaying the heights, spreads, species, condition and action
- The proposed landscape design responding to the proposed building, driveway & drainage layout, including both hard and soft landscaping elements.
- Proposed planting schedules including the species (Botanic & Common names), pot sizes, quantities and origins.
- Most plans will incorporate working landscape details and specification notes, to satisfy council requirements and so residential projects don't need to go back through the Construction Certificate process.

### **What does a landscape plan cost?**

Due to the differing range, scale and requirements of each project, jobs are typically quoted individually, based on a client brief and a copy of the plans ([enquiries@conzept.net.au](mailto:enquiries@conzept.net.au)) For project home clients, we offer a competitive standard fee in the Sydney region, and we are happy to quote.

### **Method Statement**

Our philosophy is a simple one – we strive to produce clear, imaginative, professional landscape plans at a competitive price, within a short time frame, and while maintaining a friendly, reliable and professional service.

We encourage sustainable development, primarily through the use of indigenous, low-water requiring, plants without compromising on aesthetics and style. *These plants also encourage native bird-life and fauna, hence the Sulphur Crested Cockatoo logo.*