YieldChecker

SAMPLE REPORT

YIELD STUDY *Tested layouts, site calculations, red flags and planning pathway*

# Sample A · Altona, Hobsons Bay

| REPORT REF | DATE | PREPARED FOR | PREPARED BY |
|---|---|---|---|
| YC-SAMPLE-001 | 9 October 2026 | Sample client | Benni Trajcevski |

OUR VIEW

## Recommended yield: 12 townhouses if the front trees can be removed, 11 if T1 and T2 must stay.

Both layouts meet every numerical standard we tested, including garden area, canopy cover and overshadowing. The south row's deeper yards keep all new shadow inside the site at the equinox, so the southern neighbours are protected. The yield turns on one question: whether council will allow T1 and T2 to be removed. If they stay, 11 relies on the arborist accepting the driveway on permeable paving through T1's protection zone; otherwise it is 10.

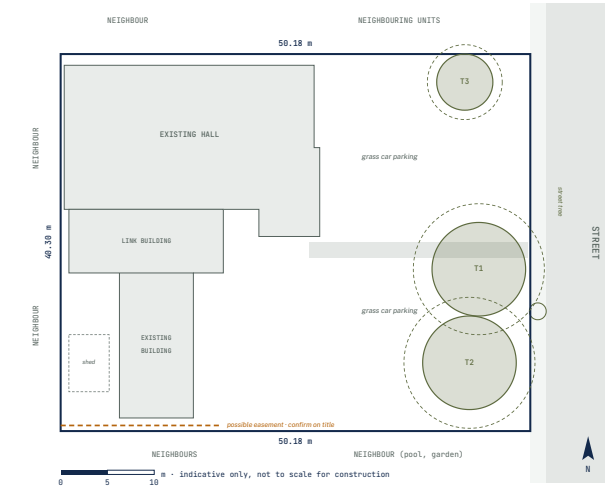
- ✓ 12 townhouses meet garden area (42%), site coverage (43%) and parking (1 garage each).
- ✓ No new shadow on the southern neighbours between 9 am and 3 pm on 22 September.
- ! Canopy cover is the tightest standard in the 12-townhouse layout.
- ! Start the arborist report and CHMP check now, as both affect yield and timing.

| LIKELY YIELD | SITE AREA | FRONTAGE × DEPTH | ZONE | OVERLAYS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **11–12** double-storey townhouses | **2,023 m²** approx., per property report | **40.3 × 50.2** metres · regular, flat | **GRZ4** General Residential | **None** no flood, heritage or tree overlay |

## 01 Site and planning controls

| | |
|---|---|
| **Title** | One lot (title details withheld) |
| **Council** | Hobsons Bay City Council |
| **Site area** | 2,023 m² (approx.) |
| **Dimensions** | 40.30 m frontage to the street, 50.18 m deep. A regular rectangle. |
| **Orientation** | Frontage faces east. The long side boundaries run east–west, so the southern neighbours are directly affected by shadow. |
| **Existing use** | Non-residential buildings at the rear with grassed car parking at the front. |
| **Topography** | Flat, about 2 m above sea level. Port Phillip Bay is roughly 150 m south. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Zone** | General Residential Zone, Schedule 4 (GRZ4), "Garden Urban Areas, Altona" |
| **Overlays** | None |
| **Flooding** | Not mapped as flood affected |
| **Bushfire / landslip** | Not affected |
| **Aboriginal cultural heritage** | **Within, or near, an area of cultural heritage sensitivity** |
| **Easements** | An easement appears along part of the south boundary on the property report map. Confirm on title. |
| **Permit history** | No planning permits recorded for this property |




existing tree  protection zone (est.)

possible easement

Existing conditions. Building outlines and tree positions are approximate, traced from aerial imagery. Tree sizes and protection zones are our estimates until an arborist assesses them.

## 02 Planning controls that shape the yield

| CONTROL | REQUIREMENT | WHAT IT MEANS FOR THIS SITE |
|---|---|---|
| **Building height** | Max. 11 m and 3 storeys (Clause 32.08). GRZ4 sets no lower limit. | Two storeys, about 7.5 m, sits well within the limit. |
| **Minimum garden area** | 35% of a lot over 650 m² (Clause 32.08-4) | At least **708 m²** of open garden. Usually the control that caps yield on sites like this. |
| **Site coverage** | Max. 65% (Standard B2-5) | Up to 1,315 m² of building. Not the limiting factor here. |
| **Permeability** | Min. 20% (Standard B5-1) | At least 405 m² of permeable surface. |
| **Canopy trees** | Canopy cover at maturity of 10% (sites up to 1,000 m²), 15% (1,000–1,500 m²) or 20% (over 1,500 m²), with at least one canopy tree in the front setback (Standard B2-7, as amended by VC315) | The site is over 1,500 m², so about **405 m² of canopy** (20%). Retained trees count towards this. |
| **Tree removal** | Clause 52.37 (Canopy trees): permit needed to remove or lop an existing canopy tree (at least 5 m high with a canopy at least 4 m wide). A tree with its trunk within 6 m of the street frontage or 4.5 m of the rear boundary always needs a permit. | All three front trees are inside the 6 m frontage zone. T1 and T2 are almost certainly canopy trees; T3 is borderline. |
| **Street setback** | The lesser of the abutting front setbacks, to a max. of 6 m (Standard B2-1) | The trees, not the standard, are likely to set the front building line. |
| **Side and rear setbacks** | 1 m plus 0.3 m per metre of height over 3.6 m (Standard B2-3) | About 2.6 m for a 7.5 m high two-storey wall. |

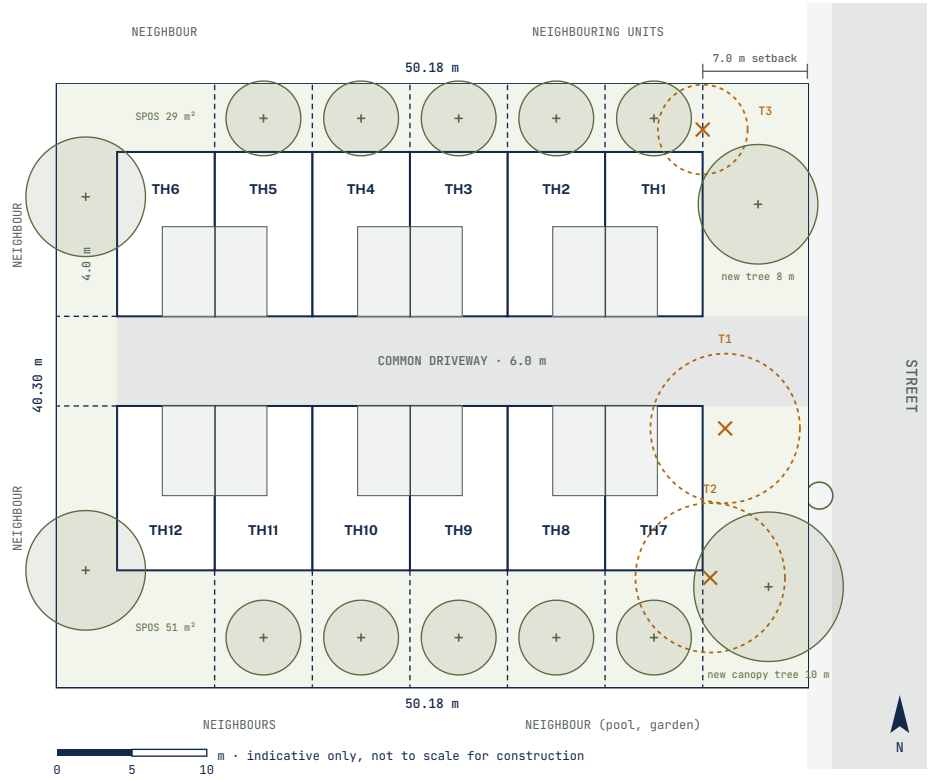
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Overshadowing** | Neighbours keep sun on more than 50% (or 25 $m^2$) of their secluded open space for 5 hours, 9 am–3 pm on 22 September (Standard B4-3) | Critical for the southern neighbours at the southern neighbours. |
| **Solar access to open space** | The southern edge of each secluded private open space is set back from any wall to its north at least 2 m + 0.9 × the wall height (Standard B3-6) | Critical for the south row, whose yards sit south of its own walls. A 7.5 m wall needs 8.75 m, so the first floor steps back about 1 m from the yard. |
| **Car parking** | Category 2: min. 1 space per dwelling, no visitor parking (Clause 52.06) | One garage per townhouse meets the requirement. |
| **Accessway width** | Max. 33% of the street frontage (Standard B2-6) | Up to 13.3 m. One 6 m crossover is well within this. |
| **Front fence** | Max. 1.2 m within 3 m of the street (GRZ4) | Low front fence only. |

Standards are from the Townhouse and Low-Rise Code (Clause 55). Amendment VC315 (24 September 2026) refined Clauses 55 and 52.37. Check the current clause wording before lodging an application.

## 03 Layout options tested

We tested two layouts. Both use a central 6 m common driveway from the street, with townhouses in two rows facing it. The north row has north-facing private open space (SPOS). The south row has deeper yards against the south boundary, which keeps two-storey walls well away from the southern neighbours. Garages are paired against the shared wall of each pair of townhouses, so front doors, windows and landscaping alternate along the driveway instead of a continuous run of garage doors.

### Option 1 · 12 townhouses (front trees removed)




townhouse · garage · driveway · garden · SPOS fence · existing tree removed · new canopy tree

Option 1. Two rows of six townhouses, each about 6.5 m wide, with garages paired at the shared walls. Requires a permit under Clause 52.37 to remove T1–T3, replaced with new canopy trees.

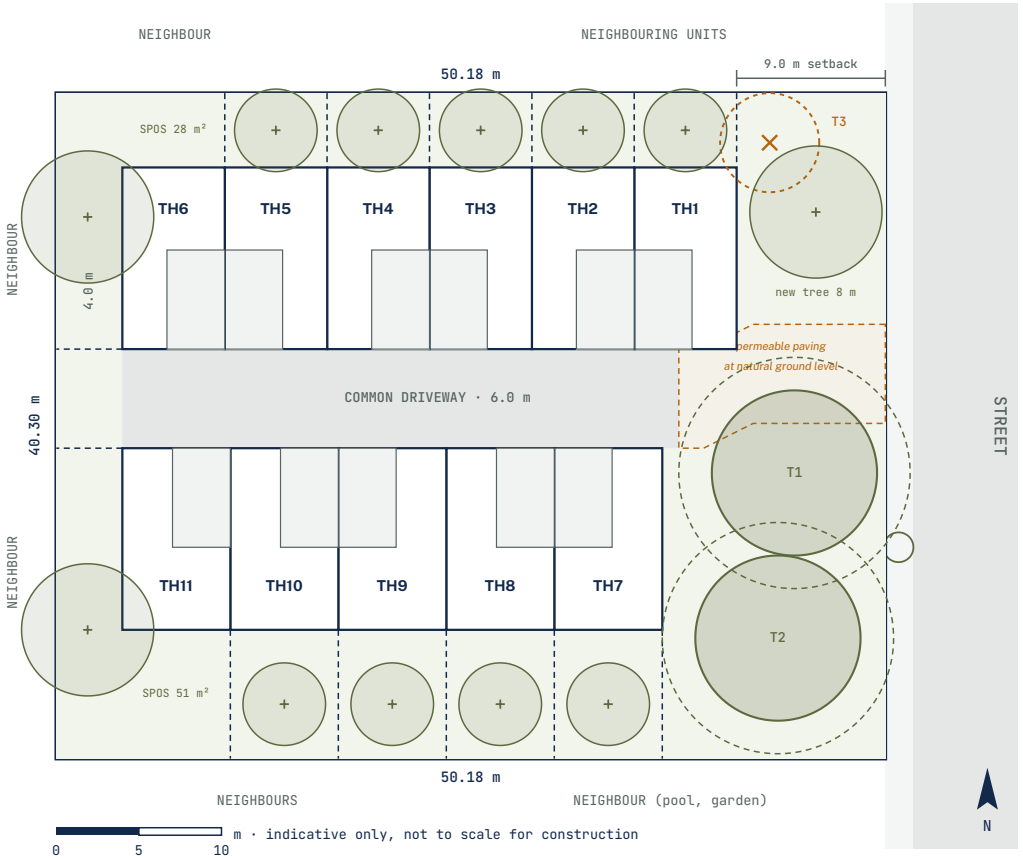
### Option 1 at a glance

- 12 × 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom double-storey townhouses, about 137 m² each including a single garage
- 7.0 m front setback with new canopy trees in the front garden
- North row (TH1–TH6): north-facing SPOS of about 29 m² each, fenced along the line of the party walls
- South row (TH7–TH12): SPOS of about 51 m², walls 7.8 m off the south boundary
- TH6 and TH12 also get the side garden at the rear of the site
- Front trees removed and replaced. This needs council approval.

### The risk in Option 1

If council or the arborist report says T1 and T2 must stay, Option 1 fails and you fall back to Option 2. Don't pay a 12-townhouse price for this site until the trees are resolved.

## Option 2 · 11 townhouses (T1 and T2 retained)




townhouse · garage · driveway · permeable paving at ground level · SPOS fence · retained tree · tree protection zone · T3 removed · new canopy tree

Option 2. T1 and T2 stay, T3 is removed. The driveway runs straight in from the street, crossing T1's protection zone on permeable paving laid at natural ground level. The north row starts 9.0 m from the street (six townhouses); the south row starts 13.5 m back, behind the protection zones (five townhouses).

### Option 2 at a glance

- 11 × 3-bedroom double-storey townhouses: six about 6.2 m wide in the north row and five about 6.5 m wide in the south row
- T1 and T2 retained, giving a strong garden frontage that council is likely to support
- T3 removed. It is the smallest of the three and may not meet the canopy tree definition
- The driveway passes about 3 m from T1's estimated trunk position, taking up roughly a quarter of its protection zone. That is a major encroachment under AS 4970, so the arborist must confirm no-dig permeable paving at natural ground level is acceptable. If not, the north row loses a townhouse (10 in total).
- Retained trees provide over a third of the required canopy cover

### The risk in Option 2

Option 2 relies on the arborist accepting the driveway within T1's protection zone. If they don't, the north row loses a townhouse and the yield drops to 10.

## 04 Site calculations

| STANDARD | REQUIREMENT | OPTION 1 · 12 | OPTION 2 · 11 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Garden area** | ≥ 708 m² (35%) | 841 m² (41.6%) | 938 m² (46.4%) | **Meets** |
| **Site coverage** | ≤ 1,315 m² (65%) | 862 m² (42.6%) | 768 m² (38.0%) | **Meets** |
| **Permeability** | ≥ 405 m² (20%) | ≈ 841 m² (41.6%) | ≈ 938 m² (46.4%) | **Meets** |
| **Canopy cover** | ≥ 405 m² (20%, site over 1,500 m²) | ≈ 426 m² | ≈ 485 m² | **Meets** |
| **Car parking** | 1 per dwelling | 12 garages | 11 garages | **Meets** |
| **Private open space** | ≥ 25 m², min. 3 m wide | 29–51 m² | 28–51 m² | **Meets** |
| **Side and rear setbacks** | ≥ 2.6 m (7.5 m wall) | N 4.5 · S 7.8 · W 4.0 m | N 4.5 · S 7.8 · W 4.0 m | **Meets** |
| **Street setback** | Lesser of abutting, max. 6 m | 7.0 m | 9.0 m north · 13.5 m south | **Meets** |
| **Height** | ≤ 11 m, 3 storeys | 2 storeys, ≈ 7.5 m | 2 storeys, ≈ 7.5 m | **Meets** |
| **Accessway width** | ≤ 13.3 m (33%) | 6.0 m | 6.0 m | **Meets** |
| **Overshadowing (south)** | Checked below | No new shadow | No new shadow | **Meets** |
| **Solar access to SPOS (B3-6), south row** | Ground floor ≥ 5.2 m (3.6 m wall) · first floor ≥ 8.75 m (7.5 m wall) | 7.8 m · 8.8 m | 7.8 m · 8.8 m | **Meets, just** |
| **Solar access to SPOS (B3-6), north row** | Neighbours' walls to the north | Single-storey units | Single-storey units | **Likely meets** |

Garden area excludes buildings, the driveway and an allowance for paths and bin areas. Canopy is measured at maturity. **Option 1:** a 10 m canopy tree in the south front garden, an 8 m tree in the north front garden, two 8 m trees in the rear setback and a 5 m tree in 10 of the yards (≈ 426 m²). **Option 2:** T1 and T2 retained (≈ 157 m², estimated), an 8 m tree in the north front garden, two 8 m trees in the rear setback and a 5 m tree in 9 of the yards (≈ 485 m²). Each new tree needs the deep soil area in Table B2-7.2 (for example 49 m² for an 8 m tree). Canopy cover is the tightest standard in Option 1, so plan the planting from the first sketch. **Solar access (B3-6):** the south row only meets the standard with the first floor set back about 1 m from the yard (as assumed in the floor areas), or with the yard-side wall kept to about 6.4 m high. The north row's yards need the neighbouring units at the neighbouring units to sit at least about 0.2 m off the boundary (single-storey wall about 3 m high); confirm on the feature survey.

### Overshadowing check

At the equinox (22 September) a 7.5 m high two-storey wall casts a shadow about 5.8 m long to the south between 9 am and 3 pm. The south row sits 7.8 m from the south boundary, so new shadow stays inside the site and the southern neighbours keep their sun (Standard B4-3). Formal shadow diagrams will be needed for the application. The Full Feasibility includes the full hour-by-hour test.

## 05 Red flags

| ISSUE | IMPACT | WHY IT MATTERS | WHAT TO DO |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Front trees** | HIGH | Two large trees (T1, T2) and a smaller one (T3) stand in the front garden, all inside the 6 m zone where Clause 52.37 requires a permit for removal. Each large tree's protection zone is likely to reach 7 m or more into the site. **Keeping T1 and T2 costs about one townhouse**, provided the driveway can pass T1 on permeable paving at natural ground level. | Arborist report on T1–T3 before you buy or design. |
| **Aboriginal cultural heritage** | HIGH | The site is mapped within or near an area of cultural heritage sensitivity, most likely because it is within 200 m of the bay (coastal land, reg. 31 of the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018). Three or more dwellings on a lot is a high impact activity (reg. 48), so a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is likely before council can issue a permit. **Exemptions checked:** the exemption for three or more dwellings (reg. 10) only covers lots under 0.11 ha that are more than 200 m from the coast, so it does not apply to this 0.2 ha site. Ground that has been significantly disturbed is not sensitive (reg. 31(2)). The building footprints may qualify, but the grassed front car park probably does not. | Heritage advisor desktop assessment to confirm the reason for the mapping and whether any disturbance argument is available. If a CHMP is needed, allow roughly $15k–$40k and 3–6 months (our estimate). |
| **Overshadowing to the south** | MEDIUM | The southern neighbours have gardens and a pool along the shared boundary. Two-storey walls close to that boundary would shade them. | Keep two-storey walls about 8 m off the south boundary. This is tested in the Yield Study. |
| **Existing buildings** | MEDIUM | Demolition of large older buildings. Buildings of this age commonly contain asbestos. | Asbestos survey before demolition. Allow for removal costs. |
| **Title and covenants** | MEDIUM | Restrictive covenants are common in older Altona subdivisions. Several nearby properties have needed covenant variations. A single-dwelling covenant would stop the project. | Read the title and any covenant before signing. |
| **Easement** | LOW | An easement appears along part of the south boundary, likely for drainage. Our layouts keep gardens, not buildings, over this area. | Confirm its width and purpose on the title plan. |
| **Waste collection** | LOW | Around 36 bins for 12 dwellings is a lot for one 40 m frontage with a crossover and a street tree. | Expect a waste management plan, possibly private collection. |
| **Low-lying coastal land** | LOW | About 2 m above sea level near the bay. No flood overlay applies. | Confirm stormwater detention and floor levels with council. |

## 06 Planning pathway

| PERMISSION | NOTES |
|---|---|
| **Planning permit** | Clause 32.08, assessed against Clause 55 (Townhouse and Low-Rise Code). Meeting every applicable standard limits objectors' review rights at VCAT (Clause 32.08-13). |
| **Tree removal** | Clause 52.37, in the same application. Needs an arborist report and a landscape plan. |
| **Cultural heritage** | A CHMP is likely and must be approved before council can issue a permit. Start it during design. |
| **Fees and notice** | Planning permit fee, Metropolitan Planning Levy (about $6,165) and advertising to neighbours. The new 10-day VicSmart pathway for up to four homes on a lot (from October 2026) does not apply to 11–12 townhouses. |
| **Subdivision** | Usually lodged with or after the development permit. |

## 07 Recommendation

1. **Arborist report on T1–T3 first.** It decides between 10, 11 and 12 townhouses, including whether the driveway can pass T1, and is worth hundreds of thousands of dollars in land value.
2. **Heritage advisor desktop assessment** to confirm whether a CHMP is needed.
3. **Feature and level survey,** then design to the Option 1 or Option 2 pattern depending on the arborist's advice.
4. **Full Feasibility** if you want the full overshadowing test, tree assessment, costs and what the site is worth before you bid.

Engage Achieve Design Group within 6 months and the full fee for this report is credited against the design fee.

### Assumptions and limitations

- **Trees:** T1–T3 positions and sizes are estimated from aerial and street-level imagery. Tree protection zones of about 7 m (T1, T2) and 4 m (T3) are assumed. We cannot confirm which trees may be removed until an arborist report is prepared and any required permit is granted. Arborist advice is not included.
- **Title:** no contract of sale was supplied for this sample, so we have assumed there are no restrictions on title other than the easement noted. In a live report we review the title, plan of subdivision and any covenant, section 173 agreement or easement in the contract of sale (Section 32) you send us. Have your conveyancer or lawyer review the title before you sign.
- Site dimensions and area are taken from the property report and are approximate. A feature and level survey is needed before design.
- This is a desktop assessment. We have not inspected the site.
- Planning controls are current at the date of this report. Approval of any permit is a decision for council, referral authorities and, where relevant, VCAT.

**Sources:** Property report (October 2026); Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme, Schedule 4 to Clause 32.08; Townhouse and Low-Rise Code Guidelines (DTP, May 2025); Clauses 52.37 and 55.02-7 (Amendment VC315); Clause 52.06 (Amendment VC277); Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018; aerial and street-level imagery.

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