

4.8 Commercial Urban Design Guidelines

4.8.1 Purpose

These guidelines set out the design outcomes Huon Valley Council want to see in Huonville's town centre. They aim to help developers, landowners, architects, and planners deliver high-quality buildings and spaces that support Huonville as a vibrant, walkable, and locally distinctive place.

4.8.2 How to Use These Guidelines

Each section includes:

- Objective: What we're trying to achieve
- Requirement: What you must do
- Design Guidance: Ideas and approaches that help meet the objective

The Guidelines apply to all new developments, extensions, or significant changes within the Huonville Town Centre.

4.8.3 Site Layout

4.8.3.1 Building Positioning

Objective: Ensure buildings front the main street and courtyards, creating an active and engaging town centre that is easy to walk around.

Requirements

- Buildings must have their primary frontage to Main Street.
- Buildings must have zero setback from Main Street (unless providing outdoor dining or seating areas).
- Building footprints must not exceed 30m in depth.
- Buildings on corner sites must provide active frontages to both Main Street and the side street.
- Development at the rear of a site or along side streets must provide an active frontage to the street.

Design Guidance

- Use courtyards within deep blocks to bring light and air into buildings, particularly where they connect to laneways.
- Frame courtyards with building edges on at least two sides, and ensure those edges include active frontages (windows, doors, shopfronts).

4.8.3.2 Laneways

Objective: Provide a fine-grain network of laneways to improve pedestrian connections, support smaller tenancies, and create active mid-block spaces.

Requirements

- Laneways must be provided at least every 30m along Main Street to support east-west pedestrian movement.
- Pedestrian-only laneways must be a minimum of 4m wide.

- Shared laneways (pedestrian and vehicles) must be a minimum of 6m wide.
- Laneways must include windows or doors to provide passive surveillance and activity.

Design Guidance

- Where sites have side laneways, include mid-block courtyards to break up long laneways and provide outdoor gathering space.
- Encourage small retail, food, or creative uses along laneways to add vibrancy.
- Use paving, lighting, and signage to make laneways safe and inviting, especially at night.

4.8.3.3 Arcades

Objective: Activate connections between the Main Street and large rear tenancies through well-designed arcades.

Requirements

- Arcades must be provided where the primary entrance to a large rear tenancy is from Main Street.
- Arcade widths must be sufficient for expected foot traffic (minimum 4m for pedestrians, wider for larger uses).
- Arcades must include transparent shopfronts or windows from smaller tenancies to ensure activation.

Design Guidance

- Design arcades as attractive, well-lit public passageways.
- Encourage retail kiosks, cafés, or creative uses inside arcades to add vibrancy.
- Use paving, signage, and lighting to make arcades visible and inviting.

4.8.3.4 Vehicle Access and Parking

Objective: Minimise the impact of cars on the main street while ensuring safe and accessible parking and loading areas.

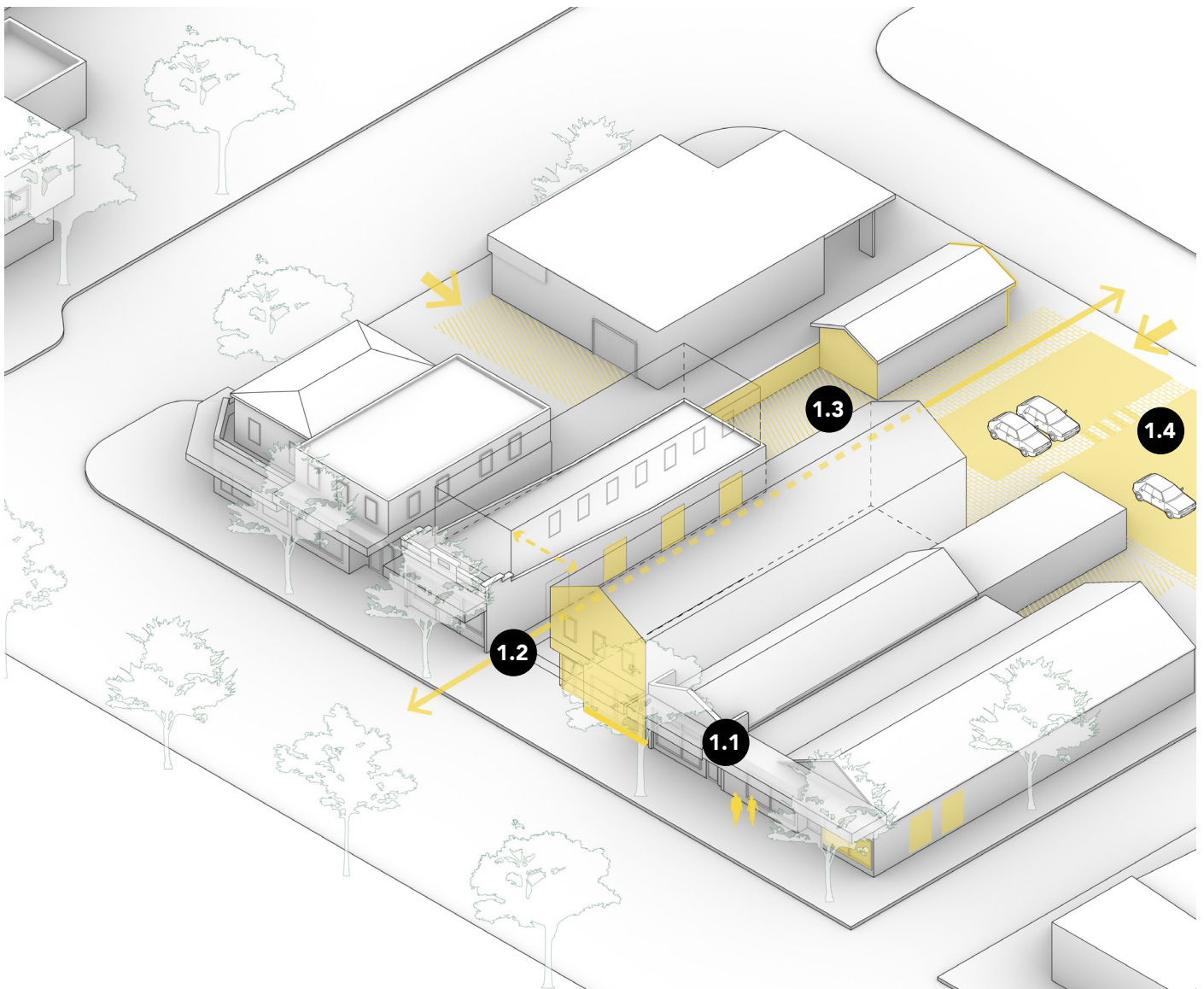
Requirements

- Vehicle access (crossovers) must not be located on Main Street. Access must be from a side street or rear lane wherever possible.
- Off-street parking and loading zones must be located to the rear of the site.

- Pedestrian pathways must be provided through car parks, clearly separated from vehicle movement areas.

Design Guidance

- Where rear access is not possible, minimise driveway width and impact on Main Street activity.
- Screen rear and side car parks with landscaping, low walls, or active edges (such as shopfronts to the street).
- Use trees and planting to shade parking areas and improve the appearance of larger lots.



Site Layout Isometric Diagram

4.8.4 Built Form

4.8.4.1 Building Height

Objective: Ensure new buildings fit Huonville's scale and reinforce the main street character.

Requirements

- Buildings must be a maximum of two storeys along Main Street unless stepped back above 7m.
- Large footprint buildings must be visually broken into smaller parts using changes in materials, rooflines, or modulation.

Design Guidance

- Use varied parapet heights and roof forms to avoid bulky frontages.
- Break up long buildings (especially on deep blocks) with internal courtyards, entries, or pedestrian links.

4.8.4.2 Building Use

Objective: Encourage two-storey development along Main Street that supports additional commercial or residential uses, while ensuring the ground floor remains visually dominant and pedestrian-friendly.

Requirements

- First-floor development is encouraged above ground-floor uses to provide commercial or residential space.
- Ground floors must appear visually dominant, with first floors designed to be recessive.
- First-floor extensions must respect the scale, massing, and architectural style of the ground floor.
- The first floor must have a zero setback from Main Street, except where recessed to provide a balcony or align with a parapet.
- Balconies overlooking Main Street must be designed to support outlook for residents and passive surveillance of the street.

- First-floor residential uses must have their primary outlook to Main Street, laneways or the rear of the site (not into side boundaries).
- First-floor commercial spaces must be accessed from Main Street, laneways or side street entrances.

Design Guidance

- Balconies should be integrated into the building façade, not appear as add-ons.
- Residential floorplates should be arranged to maximise natural light and ventilation.
- Encourage side-street stairwells or shared lobby access for first-floor uses, improving activation.

4.8.4.3 Roof Form

Objective: Ensure new roof forms are consistent with Huonville's existing roof character and contribute positively to the streetscape.

Requirements

- New roof forms must respond to neighbouring or predominant roof forms in the block.
- Acceptable roof forms include pitched (gable or hip) roofs or flat roofs concealed behind a parapet or decorative bulkhead.

Design Guidance

- Large roof spans should be broken with ridgelines, dormers, or parapets to reduce bulk.
- Encourage traditional forms facing Main Street, with contemporary roof structures behind.
- Roof materials should be muted in tone and non-reflective.

4.8.4.4 Building Rhythm

Objective: Ensure that all buildings, regardless of block size, contribute to the fine-grain rhythm and walkable scale of Huonville's Main Street. Large sites should be broken down into smaller modules, while smaller blocks should reinforce the existing shopfront rhythm.

Requirements

- Buildings on small blocks must provide at least one active frontage element (entry, window, or display) for every 6–8m of frontage.
- Buildings on large blocks must be visually broken into modules no wider than 8–10m, expressed through entries, window bays, or facade articulation.
- Long blank walls are not permitted on any street frontage.
- Corner lots must provide articulation and active frontage to both streets.

Design Guidance

- Use vertical bays, pilasters, or varied facade materials to divide larger buildings into smaller “shop-sized” components.
- Incorporate secondary entries, transparent glazing, or recessed shopfronts to avoid blank stretches of wall.
- On larger sites, consider introducing internal courtyards or laneways to reinforce permeability and break down building mass.
- Awnings, signage, and shopfront detailing should align with the rhythm of traditional Huonville shopfronts.
- Where a building exceeds 20m of frontage, provide at least one recessed entry or change in facade plane to create relief and interest.

4.8.4.5 Large Tenancy Integration

Objective: Ensure large footprint buildings (e.g. supermarkets, civic buildings) contribute to the Main Street character, while accommodating larger tenancies efficiently.

Requirements

- Buildings must have their primary frontage to Main Street.
- Buildings on corners must provide active frontages to both Main Street and side streets.
- Buildings must have zero setback from Main Street.
- Large tenancies must provide secondary entrances to activate side streets or rear car parks.
- Where multiple tenancies exist, smaller shops must be located along the Main Street frontage, with larger tenancies positioned towards the rear.

Design Guidance

- Use mid-block courtyards or arcades to improve light, air, and pedestrian links.
- Consider wrapping large footprint tenancies with small shopfronts or active frontages along the street.
- Provide sheltered public space (e.g., forecourts or small plazas) where large frontages meet the street.



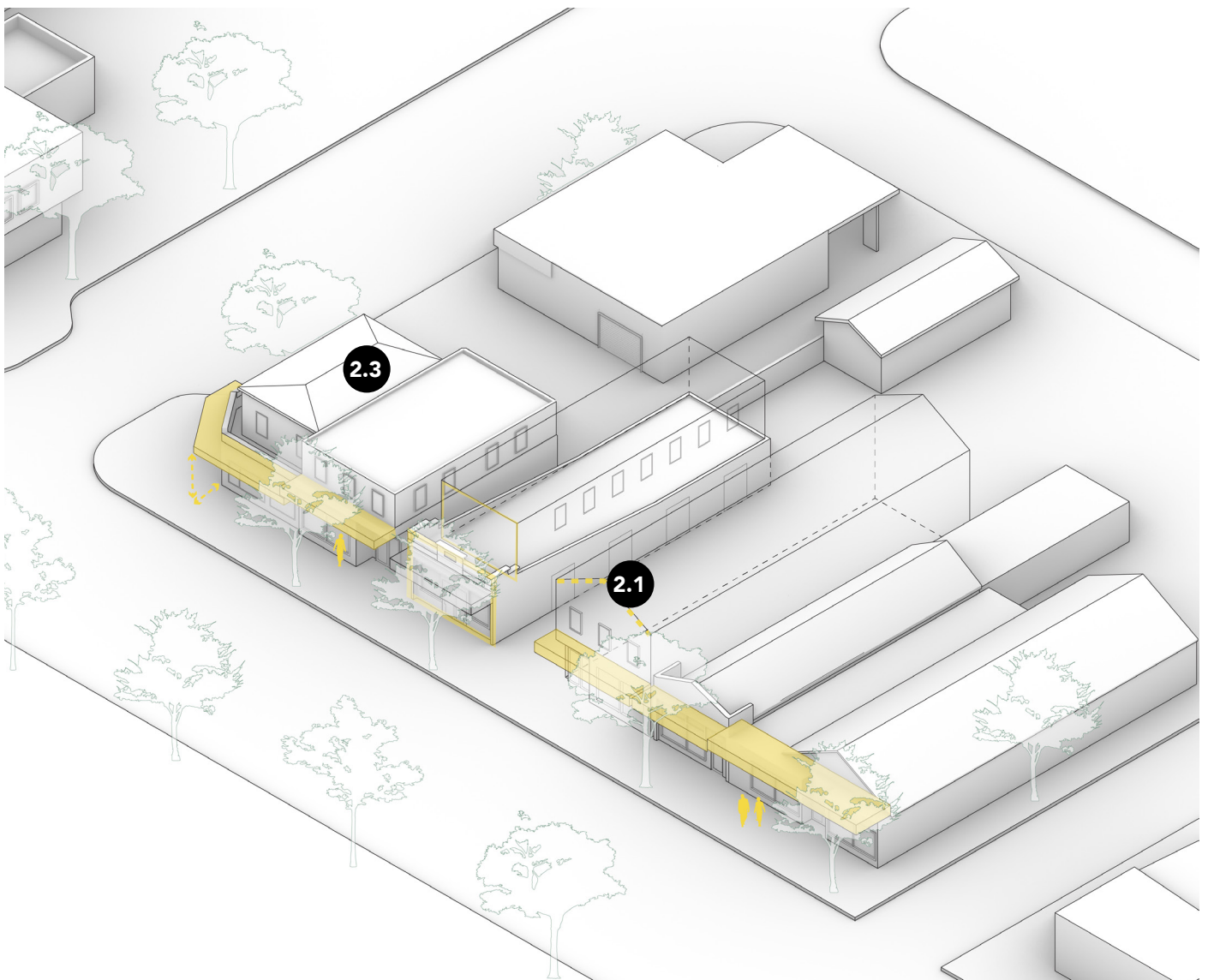
Two-storey, Main Street
REALMstudios



Apartment above shop,
Wilmot Road
REALMstudios



Apartment above shop,
Main Street
REALMstudios



Built Form Isometric Diagram



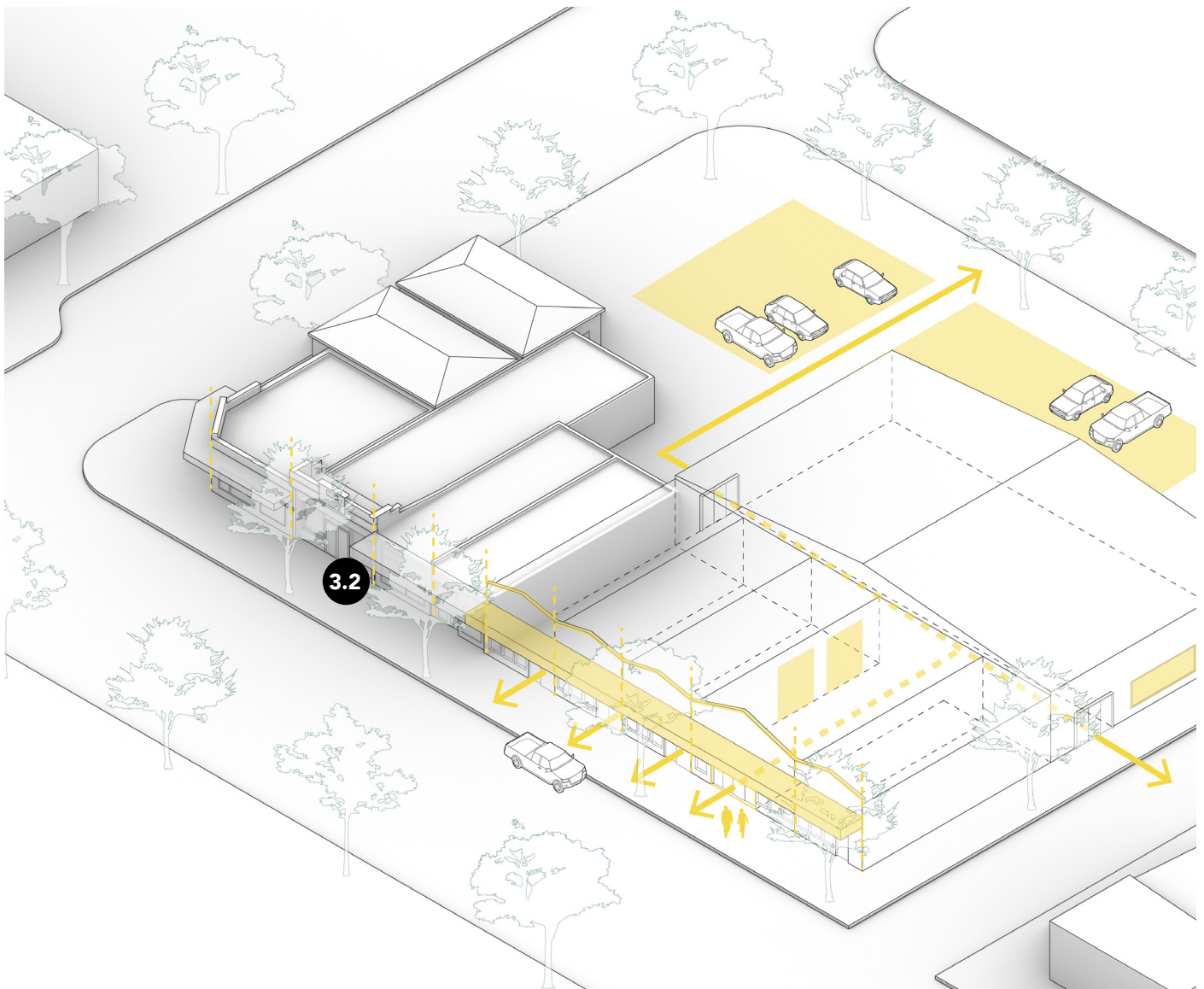
Johns Supermarket
REALMstudios



Clear glazing, Main Street
REALMstudios



Ramp, Main Street
REALMstudios



Built Form Isometric Diagram

4.8.5 Active Frontage

4.8.5.1 Awnings

Objective: Provide consistent weather protection and a continuous “streetwall” character along Main Street.

Requirements

- A continuous awning must be provided along all Main Street frontages, including large footprint tenancies.
- Awnings must be between 2.5m and 3.0m above the footpath.
- Awnings must project a minimum of 2m from the building line.
- New awnings must align with the height of neighbouring awnings within the recommended range.
- Awning materials must be solid and provide effective shade.
- Downpipes and structural supports must be integrated into the building design and not obstruct pedestrian movement.

Design Guidance

- Incorporate lighting under awnings for safety at night.
- Reuse traditional canopy detailing (e.g., timber, pressed metal fascias, or decorative brackets) where possible.
- Extend canopies around corners where possible to shelter pedestrians entering from side streets.
- Encourage transparent side panels or architectural detail at corners to signal entrances.

4.8.5.2 Street Interface and Glazing

Objective: Ensure building frontages are visually permeable and contribute to an active and safe street environment.

Requirements

- Glazing must comprise a minimum of 70% of the ground floor facade between 0.6m and 2.2m above footpath level.
- Sill heights must not exceed 600mm above adjacent footpath level.
- Glazing must be clear and non-reflective to allow visibility into internal spaces.
- Security treatments must be located behind glazing and be visually transparent (e.g., mesh rather than solid shutters).

Design Guidance

- Sills should align with seating or display shelf heights to support commercial activity.
- Recessed or framed windows are encouraged to add depth and visual interest.

4.8.5.3 Primary Entries

Objective: Ensure entries are visible, accessible, and contribute to a welcoming public realm.

Requirements

- A primary pedestrian entrance must be provided directly from the Main Street.
- Entrances must be clearly visible from the street and not obscured by screening, landscaping, or furniture.
- Entries must be at-grade or ramped to meet DDA standards.

Design Guidance

- Recessed entries are encouraged to provide weather protection and create a threshold.
- Where multiple tenancies exist, each ground-floor use should have a separate and legible entry.

4.8.5.4 Footpath Activation

Objective: Facilitate public life through comfortable and engaging street edges.

Requirements:

- No blank walls longer than 3m are permitted along the street frontage.
- Services (e.g., fire booster, substations, storage) must not be located on primary street frontages.

Design Guidance:

- Encourage outdoor dining, seating, or spill-out zones adjacent to building entries.
- Incorporate planter boxes, awning lighting, and signage to enhance activation.

4.8.5.5 Upper Floor Interface

Objective: Support passive surveillance and articulated building form at upper levels.

Requirements:

- Upper floor facades must provide a minimum 25% transparent glazing to street-facing elevations.
- Windows must be vertically proportioned and reflect the rhythm of traditional shopfronts.

Design Guidance:

- Use balconies, Juliet windows, or shading devices to add depth and interest.
- Avoid uniform curtain wall treatments—express individual tenancies or modules where possible.

4.8.5.6 Shopfront Materials

Objective: Use materials that reinforce Huonville's Main Street character through durability, quality, and sensitivity to local context.

Requirements

- Facade materials must be durable, low-maintenance, and appropriate for long-term use.
- Materials must complement the existing Main Street palette in both colour and type.

- Materials with richness and texture, such as masonry or horizontal cladding, are encouraged.

Design Guidance

- Prioritise natural or high-quality finishes that weather well over time.
- Use textured materials to provide visual interest, depth, and human scale.
- Consider combinations of materials to highlight shopfront modules or building articulation.
- Avoid large expanses of single, flat materials that appear monotonous or detract from the Main Street character.

4.8.5.7 Shop Signage

Objective: Ensure signage supports business visibility while contributing positively to the character and rhythm of Main Street.

Requirements

- Signage must be integrated with the building form — placed on awnings, bulkheads, or shop windows — not on free-standing structures.
- Signage must be scaled to be legible to both pedestrians and passing vehicles without dominating the façade.
- Visual clutter from oversized, competing, or excessive signage is not permitted.

Design Guidance

- Design signage to align with the architectural elements of the shopfront (e.g., within bays or above entries).
- Use consistent locations for signage across multiple shopfronts to maintain a coherent streetscape.
- Select materials and lighting that complement the shopfront and avoid glare or visual intrusion.
- Encourage creative, bespoke signage that reflects the identity of individual businesses while respecting the overall streetscape.



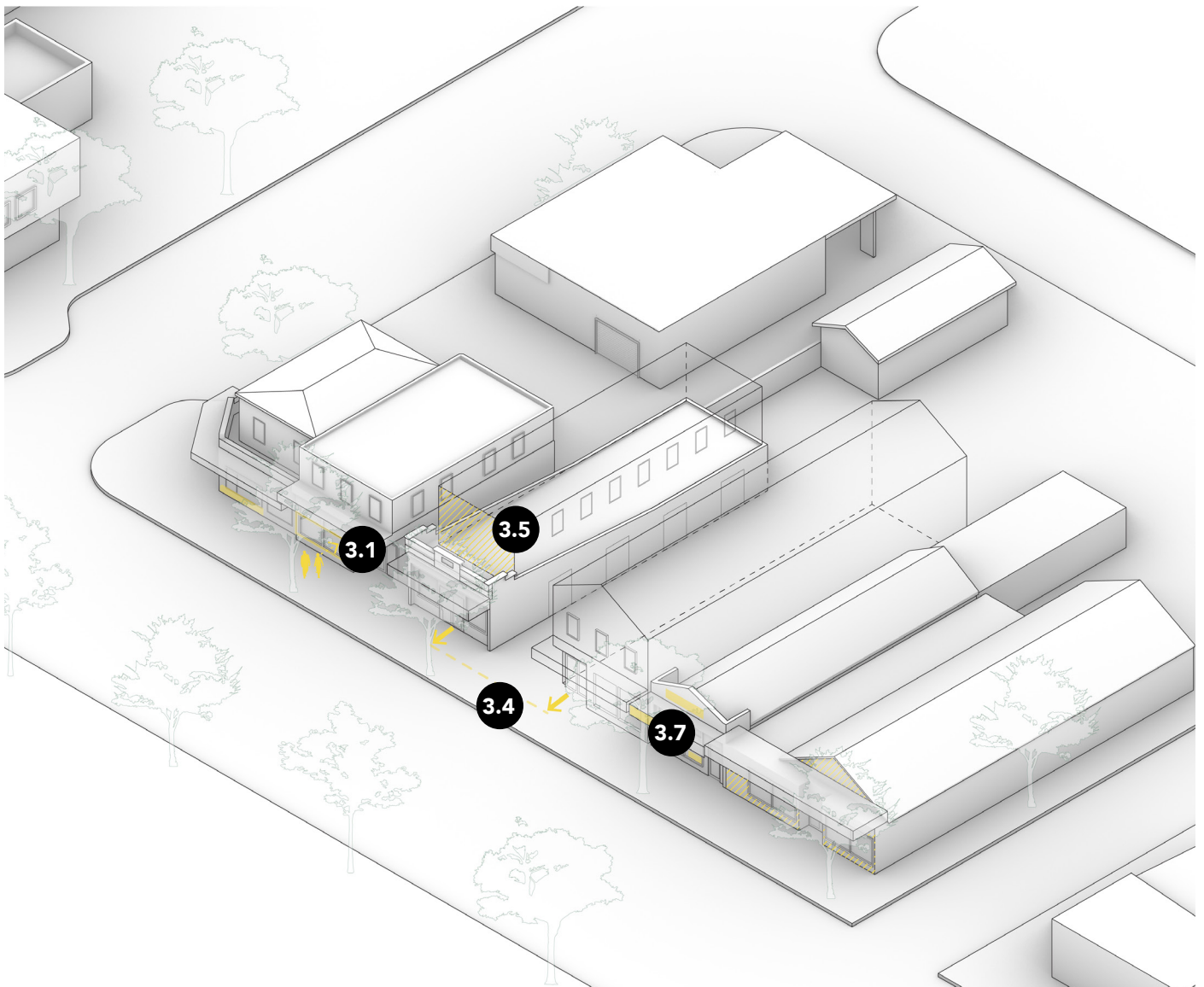
Awning, Main Street
REALMstudios



Street Signage, Wilmont Road
REALMstudios



Street Interface, Main Street
REALMstudios



Active Frontage Isometric Diagram

4.8.6 Public Realm

4.8.6.1 Street Greening

Objective: Create a continuous tree canopy along Main Street and into major side streets to provide shade, visual amenity, and a strong town character.

Requirements

- Street trees must be planted at intervals of approximately 10m along Main Street and major side streets.
- Trees must achieve a canopy that contributes to a continuous shaded pedestrian environment.

Design Guidance

- Select species suitable for footpath conditions, local climate, and soil type.
- Where large blocks or mid-block courtyards exist, additional tree planting is encouraged to provide shade and break up building mass.
- Integrate trees with footpath infrastructure such as grates or raised planters.

4.8.6.2 Side Streets

Objective: Extend the character, accessibility, and pedestrian friendliness of Main Street into major side streets that act as precinct thresholds.

Requirements

- Footpath width and pavement treatments must be consistent with Main Street along major side streets.
- Footpaths on corners and major side streets must be widened to allow for civic or pedestrian use and to shorten crossing distances.

Design Guidance

- Use consistent paving materials, colours, and textures as Main Street for continuity.

- Corners may incorporate small plazas, seating, or street trees to reinforce threshold areas.

4.8.6.3 Footpaths

Objective: Ensure a safe, continuous, and comfortable pedestrian network throughout the town centre.

Requirements

- Footpath pavement treatment must be continuous along Main Street throughout the commercial area.
- Raised threshold crossings must be provided at vehicle crossovers and side streets to maintain a continuous pedestrian path.
- Additional footpath width can be gained by converting some on-street car spaces where appropriate.

Design Guidance

- Consider textured or contrasting paving at crossings for visibility.
- Provide clear, unobstructed pedestrian paths, even in front of entrances and outdoor trading areas.

4.8.6.4 Activation

Objective: Support vibrant, engaging streets by allowing activities and uses along footpaths while maintaining safe pedestrian movement.

Requirements

- Footpaths must be wide enough to accommodate dining, trading, planter boxes, and pedestrian movement along building edges.
- Dedicated pathways must be provided through car parks to separate pedestrians from vehicles.

Design Guidance

- On small blocks, allow space for single outdoor dining tables or small seating areas without reducing clear pedestrian width.

- On large blocks, provide larger outdoor dining zones, landscaped edges, or wider circulation paths.
- Use planters or low fences to define trading zones and provide safety from vehicles.

4.8.6.5 On-Street Parking

Objective: Provide convenient short-term parking while prioritising pedestrian comfort and street activity.

Requirements

- Short-stay parking must be provided along Main Street for local trips and retail access.

Design Guidance

- Parking spaces may be angled or parallel to improve visibility.

- Where additional footpath width is needed, consider reducing long-term parking in favour of pedestrian space.

4.8.6.6 Street Furniture

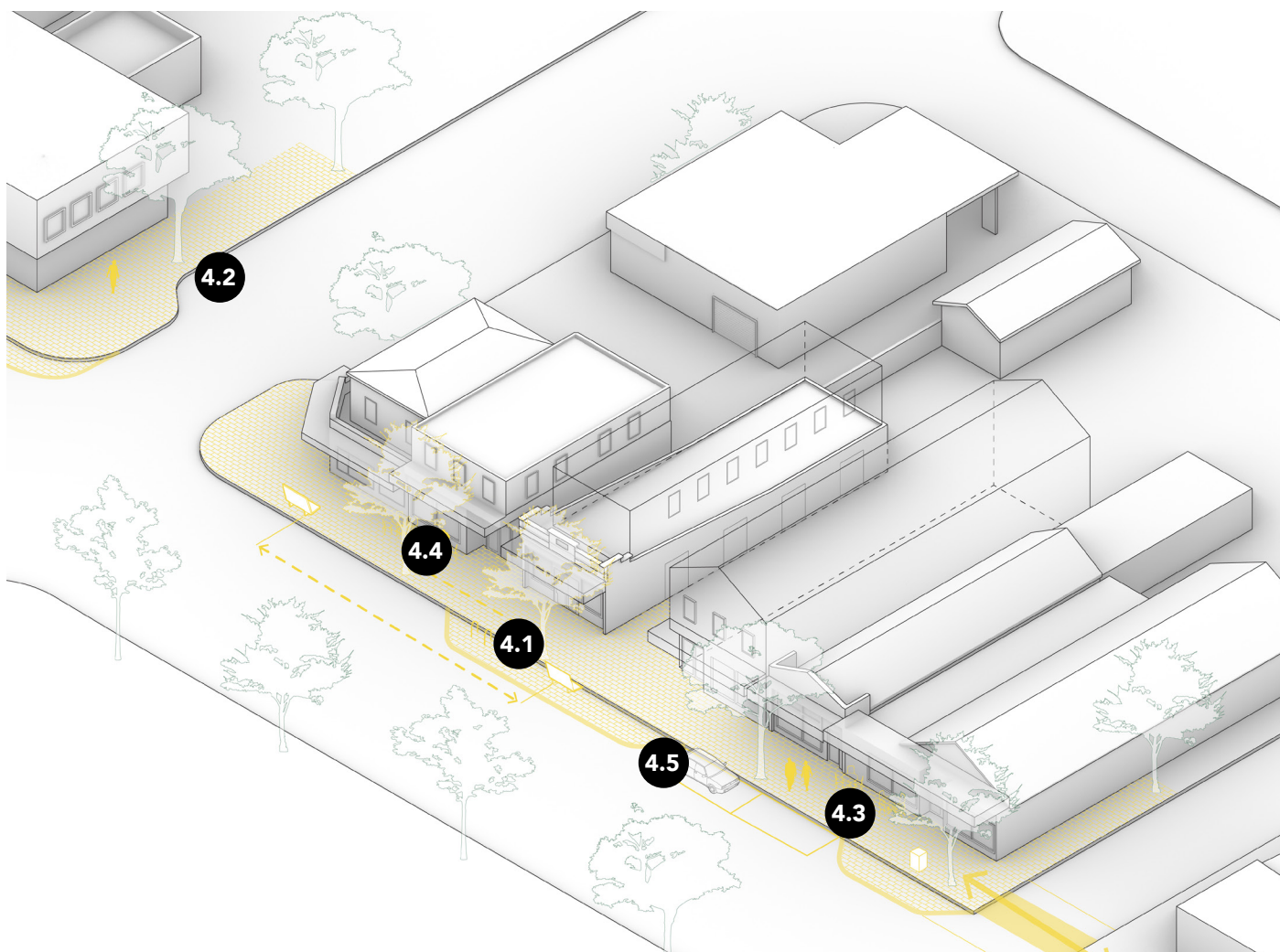
Objective: Provide seating and amenities to encourage people to linger, socialise, and activate streets.

Requirements

- Seating must be provided at intervals of approximately 50m along Main Street.

Design Guidance

- Seating should be integrated with landscaping, shade trees, or planter boxes.
- Where footpath dining occurs, ensure seating does not obstruct circulation.



Public Realm Isometric Diagram

4.8.7 Built Form Palette

4.8.7.1 Facade

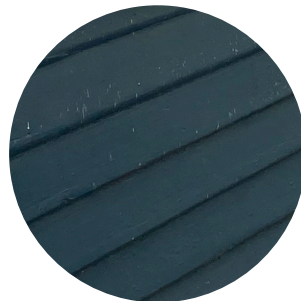
Facade materials should:

- Be durable and easy to maintain
- Be sensitive to the existing palette of Main Street
- Have a fine grain, such as the texture of roughcast render or the small scale of brick, tile or timber boards



Brick

Use: Shopfronts, laneways
Note: Most are red brick or mottled, can include extruded details, can be painted



Weatherboard

Use: Shopfronts, upper levels
Note: Most are painted



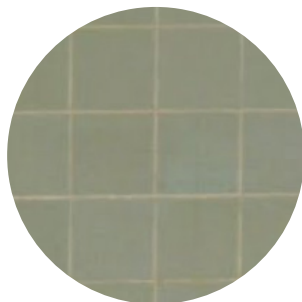
Roughcast Render

Use: Shopfronts
Note: Use on masonry and brick only, not lightweight cladding



Smooth Render

Use: Side and rear walls
Note: Use on masonry and brick only, not lightweight cladding



Tile

Use: Lower half of shopfront wall
Note: Avoid shiny tiles



Textured Concrete Block

Use: Shopfront, visible side walls
Note: Can be painted



Precast Concrete

Use: Rear walls, side walls
Note: Good smooth base for painted murals

4.8.7.2 Roof

Roof materials should:

- Be light in colour to reduce impacts of urban heating
- Be sensitive to the existing colour palette of Main Street and not be visually dominating



Corrugated Metal Sheet

Use: Sloped Roofs



Roof Tile

Use: Sloped Roofs, with brick facades



Transparent

Use: Infrequently used, front setbacks and some heritage buildings
Note: Vertical metal or timber is most common

4.8.7.3 Fencing

4.8.7.4 Glazing

Glazing should:

- Provide a visual connection between the shopfront and the street, with signage placement carefully considered to ensure this
- Be clear unless privacy is essential, when it can be opaque



Clear Glazing

Use: Shopfronts
Note: Consider shopfront displays



Opaque Glazing

Use: Areas of shopfront that require privacy
Note: Use sparingly, ensure majority of shopfront is clear glazing



Branding Applied

Use: Shopfronts
Note: Use sparingly, ensure majority of shopfront is clear glazing

4.8.7.5 Awning



Smooth Soffit

Use: Any location
Note: Should be solid to provide shade and weather protection



Feature Soffit

Use: Any location
Note: Corrugated metal is common



Fabric Shading

Use: Shopfront that is west facing, has footpath trading or wide footpath
Note: Can be adjustable

4.8.7.6 Signage

Signage should:

- Be of a scale that is visible to people walking on the footpath and people driving at 60km/hr
- Be of a scale and placement that does not visually dominate the street



Integrated

Use: Shopfront facade materials that allow integration such as brick and precast concrete



Attached

Use: Awning, shopfront facade, glass



Sandwich Board

Use: Footpath