

**CHAPTER 5**

**EDGE RESPONSES**

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE RESPONSE OF BUILDINGS TO THE PUBLIC ENVIRONMENT. INTERFACES**

As explained previously, buildings enclose and give form to the public environment. The portions of blocks, parcels and buildings that face the public environment are called edges or interface areas. Of particular concern in this urban design framework is the strip around the perimeter of a development block, within 25m of the property boundary. This strip includes the recommended building platform for the perimeter block form, and the interface between private development and the public environment.

There are three main types of edge response: Solid, semi-solid and soft.

**Solid edges** are those formed by buildings placed in a fairly compact form on the street boundary.

**Semi-solid edges** are those with roughly equal proportions of solid buildings and landscape areas. In general however, the corners of blocks should be solid.

**Soft edges** are those that remain open with just landscaping, or where the building is setback from the boundary by more than 7.5 m.

### **Street level interface**

Regardless of the type of edge response, an active visual and functional interface between buildings and the public environment must be ensured, at least on the ground and first floors.

Functional interface means that people should be able to walk along a street in front of a building and experience an attractive environment, including some interaction between the building and the street. Entrance lobbies, shops, coffee shops, offices, gateways into mid block spaces, all provide functional interfaces.

Transparent surfaces, balconies and terraces provide a visual interface which means that people in the buildings and in the public environment can see life and activity occurring. This helps to make a place vibrant and interesting.

This can take place without affecting the privacy in the buildings, since uses on ground floor should be of a more public nature, while those above can be private. Small changes in levels can also help to keep an active visual interface while still creating a degree of privacy.

### **Parking structures**

Parking structures should preferably not face directly onto the public environment, because they normally present blank walls and are devoid of activity and interest.

However, parking structures can be placed on the street boundary line if they protrude less than one metre above the ground level at any point along the façade of the building (i.e. constitute a genuine basement).

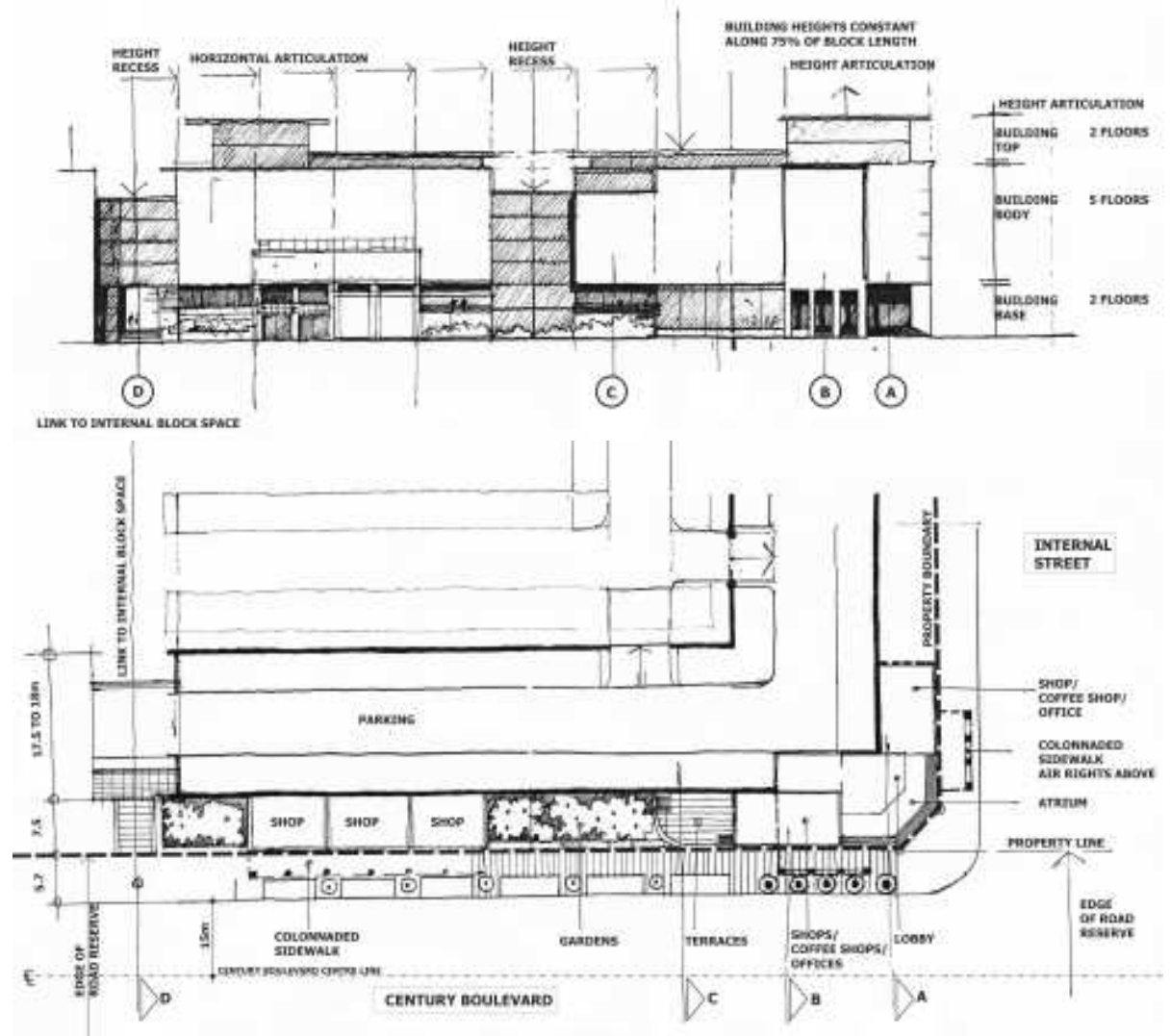
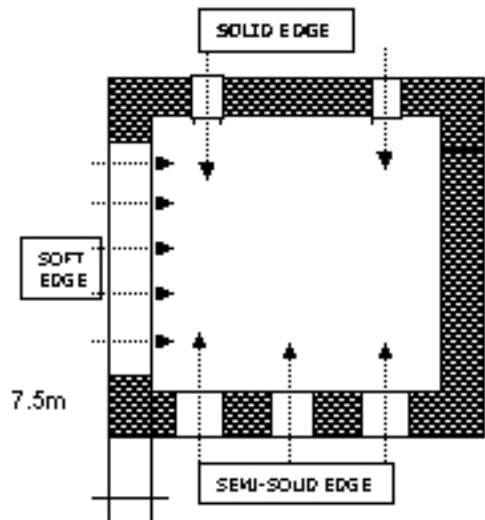
Parking structures protruding more than one metre above the ground level should be recessed at least 7.5 m from the boundary line. This will provide opportunities for suitable interface activities to be introduced between the street and the parking. That depth can be reduced to 5 m in narrow properties provided this is sufficiently motivated.

Alternatively, and only in narrow properties where there is a water table constraint, parking structures protruding more than a metre can be placed on the boundary, but some parking bays must be replaced with uses such as lobbies, shops, and landscaped gardens.

The following pages contain typical edge responses for low - medium and medium - high rise buildings. They illustrate the application of the foregoing principles to create an appropriate edge response, and they illustrate the wide range of design options that can be achieved.

## SOLID EDGE RESPONSE TYPICAL PLAN AND ELEVATION

The drawing below illustrates generically the three typical edge responses that are acceptable in Century City. Solid edge describes a compact building with controlled façade recesses and a few openings in the form of gateways. Soft edge is an open landscaped area, and semi-solid edge is a combination.

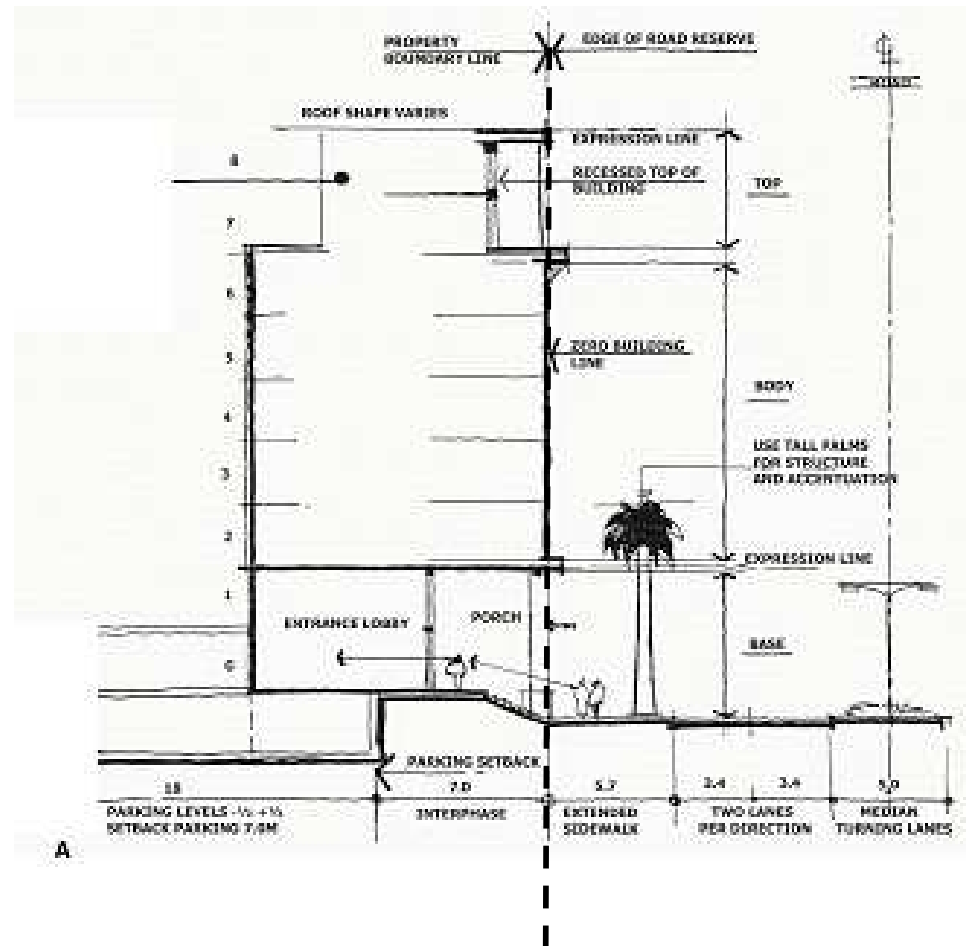


The sketches opposite illustrate various ways of dealing with the street interface. Similar principles apply in low, medium and high-rise buildings, although some dimensions may vary.

## SOLID EDGE RESPONSE MEDIUM TO HIGH RISE BUILDINGS: GUIDELINES

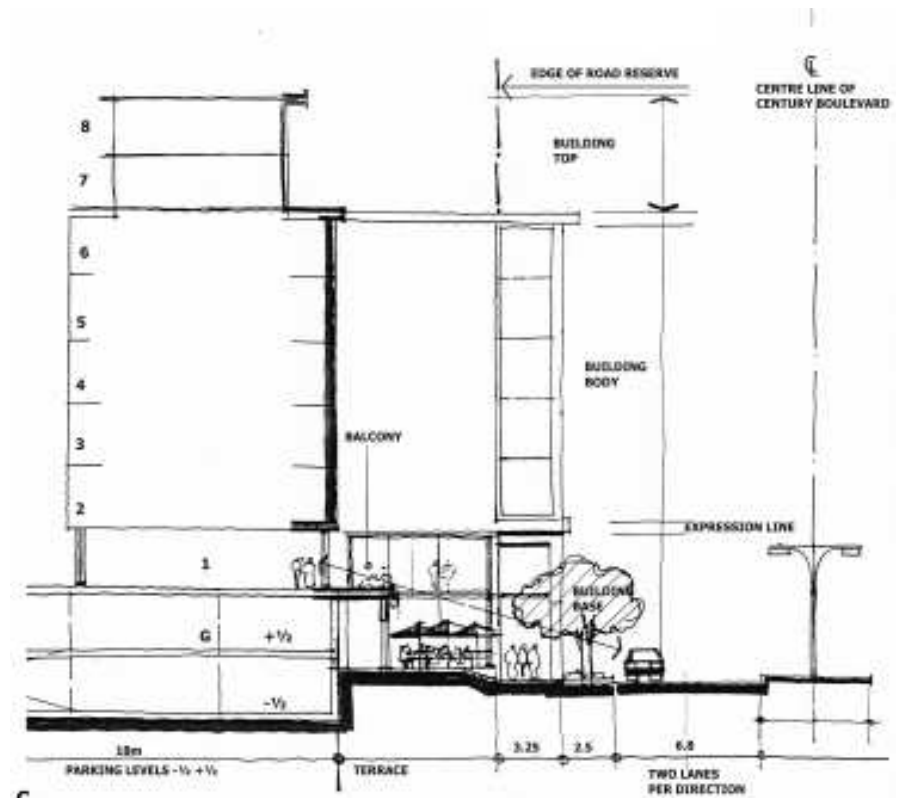
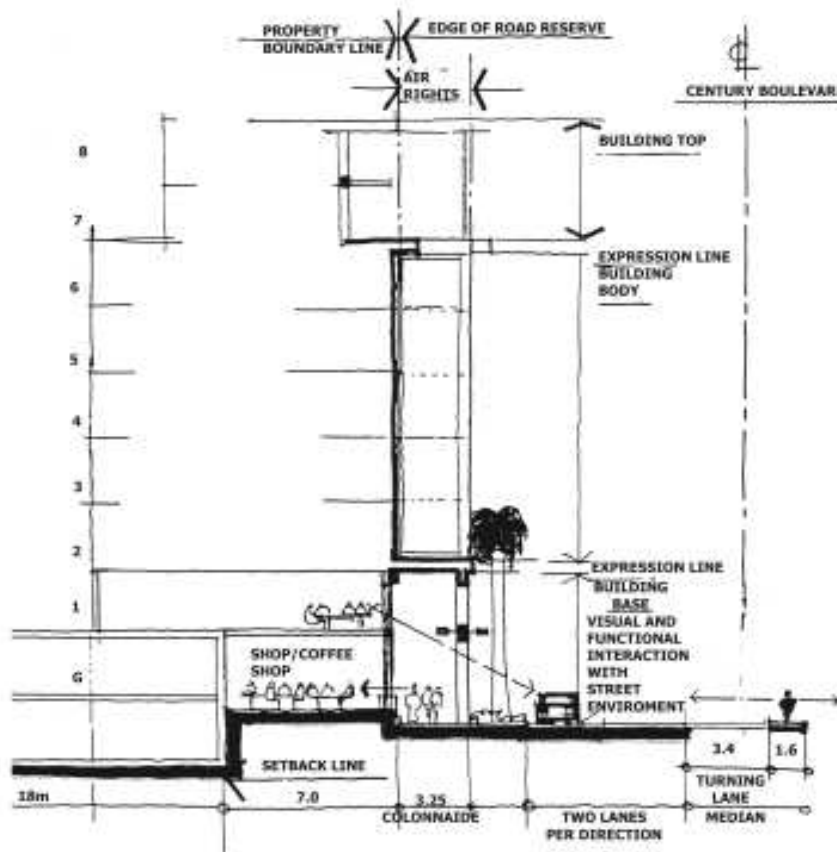
The following principles should be applied where medium to high rise buildings are situated at or close to the street boundary (solid edge response).

- Vertical articulation :Building base at ground and first floors, building body at second to sixth floors, building top seven and eight floors plus roof space. Expression lines in between.
- Maximum building line setback: 7.5m
- Corners of blocks must build to zero building line (see block details in precinct plans)
- Parking semi-basements protruding one metre or less above street level can be built to zero building line.
- Parking structures protruding more than one metre above street level must be setback 7.5 m from boundary line with a suitable interface.
- Active uses on ground floor at least 25% of the length of the block, in the form of functional and visual interface (people can walk into the building and back to the street) This includes entrance lobbies, gateways to internal block areas, shops, coffee shops, etc.
- In addition there should be a visual interface, where people inside the buildings and in the street can see one another on the ground and first floors for at least 25% of the length of the block in the form of large window panels (glass), balconies, terraces, etc.
- Uses on ground floor should be predominantly offices and retail, as well as entrances to buildings.





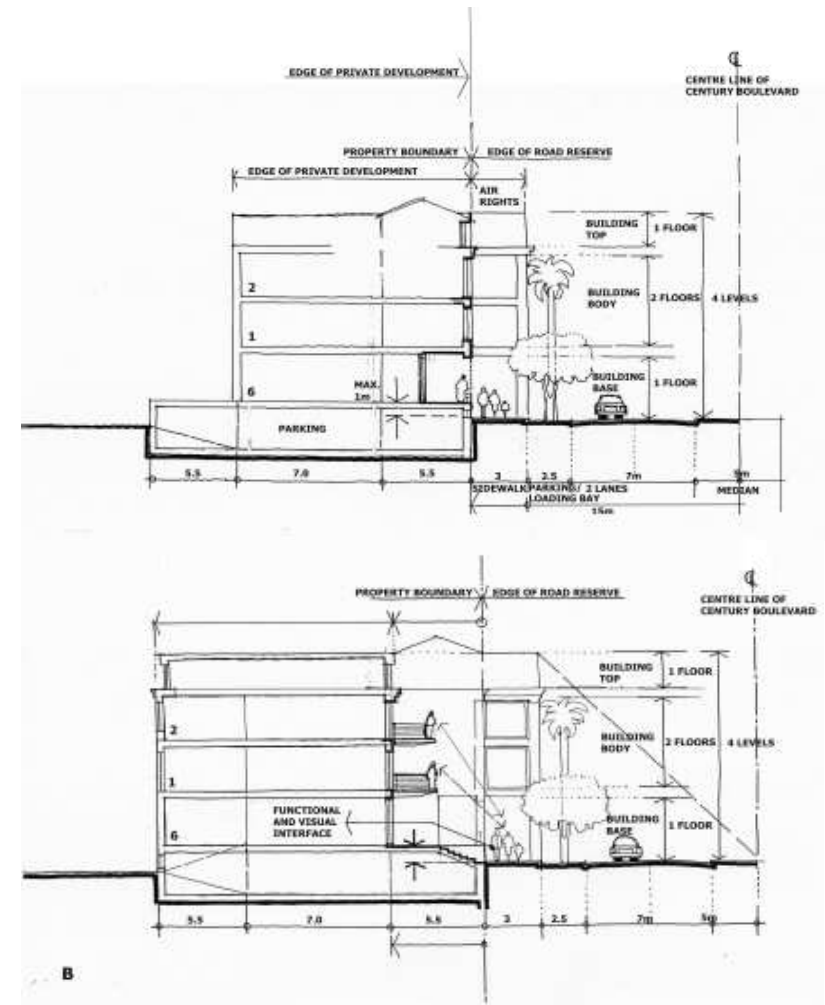
These pictures illustrate an appropriate solid edge response for medium to high rise buildings.



## SOLID EDGE RESPONSE: LOW TO MEDIUM RISE BUILDINGS

Low to medium rise buildings follow the same edge response principles as high rise buildings, with some dimensional variations.

- Vertical articulation: Building base on ground floor, building body on first and second floor, building top is roof space and loft if any.
- Maximum building line setback: 5m
- Corners of blocks must build to zero building line
- Parking semi-basement protruding one metre or less above ground level can be built to zero building line.
- Parking structures protruding more than one metre above ground level must be setback 5 m from street boundary line, with a suitable interface.
- Active uses on ground floor at least 25% of the length of the block in the form of functional and visual interaction. This includes entrance lobbies, gateways to internal block areas, shops, coffee shops, etc.
- In addition, visual interface on ground and first floors at least 25% of the length of the block in the form of large window panels (glass), balconies, terraces and other so that people in the street and in the buildings can see one another.
- Uses on ground floor should be predominantly offices and retail as well as entrances to buildings.



## SOFT EDGE RESPONSE

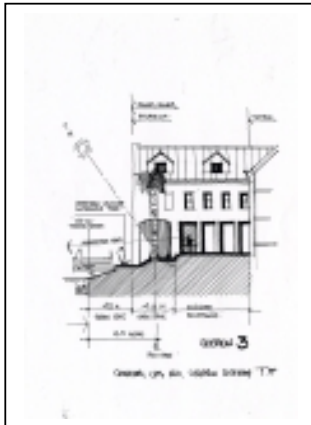
Soft edges are preferred for all edges fronting onto the open space system. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, no soft edges are permitted fronting onto the boulevard or on main linking streets, as the sense of enclosure necessary to street spaces would be lost.

Within a block with soft edge responses, some solid building elements might be created for accentuation purposes; this limited to 10% of the length of the block.

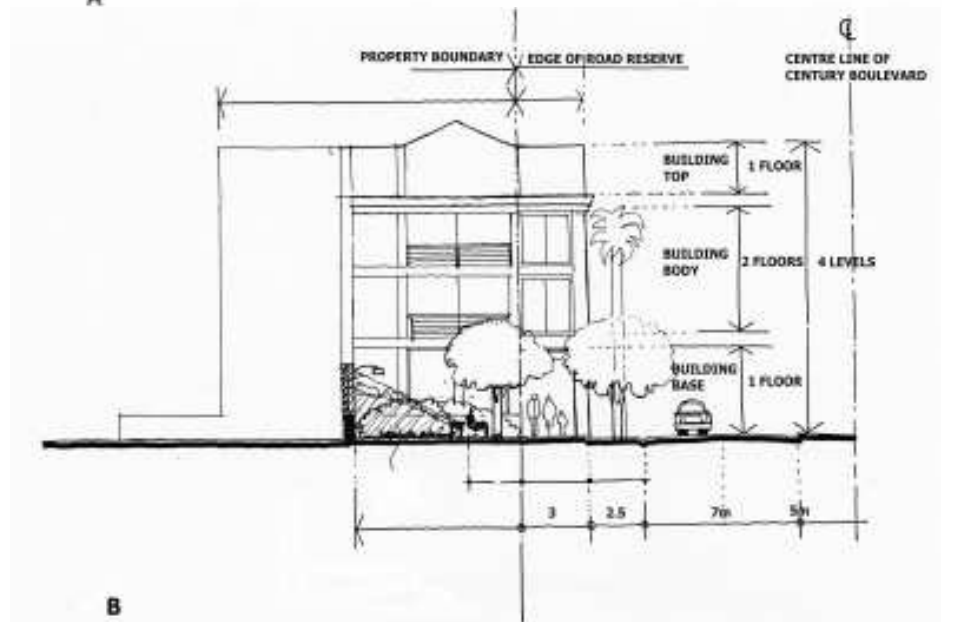


## SEMI-SOLID EDGE RESPONSE

This built form response consists of a combination between solid and soft edges in a proportion of about 50% to 50%. Corners of blocks should always be solid, even if that block has a soft edge indicated. This helps to define the extent of the block in visual terms.



A



B