

Landcom Affordable Housing Design Guideline

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Introduction

The Affordable Housing Design Guideline (this Guideline) explains the role of good design in affordable housing and key considerations in the design and planning assessment process.

Purpose of this design guide

The primary purpose of this Guideline is to support Landcom’s assessment of affordable housing developments carried out by or on behalf of Landcom in accordance with Division 5.1 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and the State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021.

This Guideline can also assist other affordable housing projects undertaken by Landcom.

It is intended for buildings and does not apply to precinct wide projects or subdivisions. It provides design focused goals and principles, driven by resident and community well-being, housing diversity, sustainability and ongoing long term affordability.

The building types developed as affordable housing, may include, but are not limited to:

- Residential flat buildings
- Low rise and multi dwelling housing
- Detached housing.

Relationship of affordability and sustainability

Affordability should not be viewed as a simple cost-cutting exercise in which dwelling quality is compromised. Good design should be linked to sustainability, where issues such as equity, comfort, liveability and the environment are addressed, to ensure that housing is affordable in the short and the long term. Therefore design solutions which have low construction costs but high maintenance requirements, operational costs, greenhouse gas emissions and water consumption, and that also lack a capacity to adapt to changing user needs over time, are not affordable. In this context, it may be that housing with higher initial costs may be more ‘affordable’ than those with low construction costs.

Landcom is committed to genuine relationships and strong partnerships, that maximise the opportunities for affordable housing supply.

This includes partnerships with Community Housing Providers.

Why good design?

Good design is NSW Government policy and it underpins the creation of better places that support the physical, social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being of the community.

Design quality is also a key commitment within Landcom’s Housing Policy.

Where this design guide fits

This Guideline aligns with and complements NSW legislation and policy. Other legislation, policy and guidelines that may also apply include:

- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Housing Act 2001 (NSW)
- Residential Tenancies Act 2010
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021
- Other environmental planning instruments (SEPPs and LEPs)
- National Construction Code (NCC) and referenced Australian Standards
- BASIX/NatHERS
- Apartment Design Guide
- Low-Rise Housing Diversity Design Guide
- Seniors Housing Design Guide
- Better Placed: An integrated design policy for the built environment of NSW
- Better Placed: Connecting with Country Framework
- Local development control plans and council guidelines
- Livable Housing Australia Design Guidelines.

Landcom sustainability tools

Landcom’s Sustainable Places Strategy features a number of sustainability rating tools and targets, that should be incorporated in the design and assessment process and during building occupancy. These include Climate Adaptation and Community Resilience Plans, Green Star Building ratings tool, Landcom Place Score and Landcom’s Reconciliation Action Plan.

Goals

Residents	Well-being The design of homes supports the physical, cultural, social and economic well-being of residents.
Communities	Belonging The quality of housing and urban design supports a sense of belonging, social cohesion, community well-being and connection to country.
Neighbourhoods	Diversity Affordable housing incorporates diverse and universal housing to create mixed and balanced neighbourhoods, with a variety of housing choices.
Cities	Sustainability Buildings are efficient, resilient and maximise low emissions and healthy materials.

Principles

Residents	Supportive homes Housing supports the needs of tenants, including their physical and mental health and safety. Flexible homes Open and flexible floorplates to allow for living and working and to adapt to future requirements. Welcoming environment Light and spacious design that allows living with a sense of dignity and reflect a commitment to design quality.
Communities	Distinct local character Housing contributes to distinctive streetscape. Welcoming shared and public spaces Housing provides welcoming and safe public spaces and common areas, that support positive social interactions. Positive common circulation Well-designed common circulation space that promotes apartment amenity. Variety of building types A variety of building massing and forms.
Neighbourhoods	Meets local needs Addresses the needs of local households with very low-moderate incomes. Universal housing Housing meets or exceeds Livable Housing Australia’s silver level certification to allow housing to be used irrespective of age, level of mobility or health. Tenure blind Housing is designed and integrated as indistinguishable from market housing.
Cities	Efficient, low cost living Homes are designed and constructed for durability and high performance thermal comfort, and significantly reduce the cost of living through high efficiency performance. Resilient and future proofed Homes are designed and delivered to support resilience, responding to the site specific climate risk assessment and adaptation responses. Healthy for the environment and people Homes embrace low Volatile Organic Compound (VOC), low carbon and renewable materials. Wherever practical, homes are third party certified by the Green Building Council of Australia.



Landcom Design Review Panel

The Landcom Design Review Panel (DRP) provides Landcom with independent, expert and impartial design advice on our development projects in order to achieve good design outcomes across our project portfolio.

The State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021 enables Landcom to self-assess development of affordable housing, subject to certain requirements. This means that Landcom does not need to submit a development application. Before carrying out these developments without consent Landcom must consider the Landcom Affordable Housing Design Guideline (this Guideline).

To satisfy this requirement, the Landcom project team responsible for the proposed development must:

- Demonstrate how the proposal will achieve good design in accordance with the Goals and Principles set out in this Guideline; and
- Consider and respond to advice from the DRP.

Where a proposal departs from the advice, the project team should provide an explanation of how the changes made deliver a better outcome than those delivered by following the advice of the DRP.

Affordable housing projects that will be carried out as development without consent should be seen a minimum of two times by the DRP. The first review should be when the design is approximately 25% resolved, when design and development options are still open. The second review should be prior to finalisation of the Review of Environmental Factors.

The Landcom DRP provides advice on a range of Landcom projects, including affordable housing projects that will be self-assessed. The DRP Terms of Reference set out the purpose, scope and operational arrangements of the DRP.

Acknowledgement

In the spirit of reconciliation, Landcom respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout NSW and recognises and respects their continuing cultural heritage, beliefs and connection

to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. Country across Australia always was and always will be traditional Aboriginal land.

This document has been developed in consultation with and is endorsed by Government Architect NSW.

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