

Multi Residential Standards Advocacy Points



Australian
Institute of
Architects

BACKGROUND

Australia is a highly urbanised country and its population is growing dramatically. ABS statistics indicate that Australia's population will grow to 40 million by 2051, with the large proportion of that growth expected in existing urban centres. The projected population increase is being compounded by a continuing reduction in the number of occupants per dwelling, particularly by a substantial increase in single person households.

The most effective way of housing more people in our cities and regional towns is to plan for greater density within the current urban footprint. This makes maximum use of the existing infrastructure and helps to protect arable land on the city fringe. As a consequence, a further increase in the number of dwellings is required, particularly within 10 kilometres of city centres.

There is a low level of regulation of multi-residential design and construction in many jurisdictions. There are also some government and community concerns about quality outcomes. To address these concerns, the increase in density and population needs to be accompanied by minimum quality standards that require architects and developers to design and build multiple housing that provides a good quality of living for residents.

ADVOCACY POINTS

The Institute believes that State and Territory Governments planning and building policies must include the following:

- Planning controls that encourage greater housing density through a variety of building types, such as boarding houses, terrace housing, villa units, medium rise and smaller lot higher density subdivision housing with the aim of integrating them into the lower density environment.
- State and territory governments are encouraged to consult with their Government Architects to determine how to raise the standard of apartment design.
- The minimum design standards and performance metrics need to be included in legislation introduced in each jurisdiction in Australia.
- Architects have the requisite training and skills to design complex buildings that meet design standards and community expectations and this expertise should be utilised in the design process.
- The standards can be supplemented by guidelines providing advice on how the standards can be achieved.

- Guidelines should include advice on how local governments can introduce or amend development control plans (or similar guidelines) to assist applicants to meet the design standards while enabling new development that fits within its context.
- The legislation and guidelines should be reviewed at five-year intervals so that they are consistent with other building design and construction standards.
- Local councils can review their development control plans (or similar guidelines) so that they encourage good quality housing density.
- Design review panels should be appointed to advise proponents and consent authorities on the design quality of multi-residential development proposals.
- Planning legislation should encourage the conversion of disused industrial buildings, under-utilised heritage places and redundant government land to multiple housing and reduce greenfield expansion on the city fringe.
- The capacity of existing infrastructure must be thoroughly analysed together with an assessment of its likely needs for maintenance/upgrade/replacement as part of all increased density plans
- Research should be undertaken to identify, measure and replicate the design quality standards that improve the quality of life for residents of multi-residential developments.
- The following metric design standards are supported by the Institute
 - Daylight access
 - Sunlight access
 - Definitions
 - Size
 - Outlook
 - Natural ventilation
 - Noise
 - Outdoor space and balconies
 - Storage
 - Adaptability
 - Landscape
 - Universal access
 - Energy use
 - Waste management
 - Car parking
 - Bicycles