

Protecting Low-Rent Housing

What is SEPP 10 about?

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 10—Retention of Low Cost Rental Accommodation is about ensuring people on low incomes have affordable places to rent. The policy was first gazetted on 6 July 1984 at a time when many inner city buildings in Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong were being remodelled to serve other markets. Long term renters were losing places to live.

Why has it been amended?

Competition for rental housing is still increasing. The NSW Government is committed to ensuring people on low incomes have a choice of affordable rental housing, particularly when there are pressures for tourist accommodation.

The aim is to have a mix of housing types available for each local community. So the policy has been amended to include more council areas. Councils have a critical role to play in looking after their local area. This includes having a range of housing to meet the needs of their present and future community.

Where does the SEPP apply?

The policy now applies to all the local government areas in the Greater Metropolitan Region, that is:

Auburn	Gosford	Maitland	South Sydney
Ashfield	Greater Cessnock	Manly	Strathfield
Bankstown	Hawkesbury	Marrickville	Sutherland
Baulkham Hills	Holroyd	Mosman	Sydney
Blacktown	Hornsby	Newcastle	Warringah
Blue Mountains	Hunters Hill	North Sydney	Waverley
Botany	Hurstville	Parramatta	Willoughby
Burwood	Kiama	Penrith	Wollondilly
Camden	Kogarah	Pittwater	Wollongong
Campbelltown	Ku-ring-gai	Port Stephens	Woollahra
Canterbury	Lake Macquarie	Randwick	Wyong
Concord	Lane Cove	Rockdale	
Drummoyne	Leichhardt	Ryde	
Fairfield	Liverpool	Shellharbour	

How does the policy work?

The policy comes into play when an owner or developer of a low rental residential building wishes to alter or add to, subdivide or, in some circumstances, change the use of or demolish the building. When council receives such a request, it must consider a number of matters set out in the policy, including how the proposal will affect rental stock in the area, the impact on current residents and future needs of the community.

If people can't develop won't the property just get run down?

The policy does not stop routine maintenance. In fact financial assistance is available to owners of boarding houses to make their buildings fire safe. See the *SEPP 10 Guide* for details.

What types of development does the SEPP apply to?

SEPP 10 applies to:

- boarding houses
- hostels

- low rental residential flat buildings

SEPP 10 applies to any proposal to:

- demolish
- alter or add to the structure or fabric—inside or outside
- change the use
- strata subdivide

- alter or add to the structure or fabric—inside or outside
- strata subdivide

What information is needed for assessment under SEPP 10?

The owner or developer, when submitting their development application to council, will need to provide some or all of the following information, depending upon the extent of the proposed changes. Early consultation is encouraged, as some councils might require further details.

Existing

- ✓ site plan and floor plans—showing current uses of all rooms and external areas
- ✓ description of residential use (i.e. managed or owner-occupied)
- ✓ age and history of the building, including details of past uses, approvals or licences
- ✓ photographs—internal and external
- ✓ structural and maintenance condition, including details of fire safety or other orders which have been served and details of any work carried out to comply with orders
- ✓ details of existing accommodation, including:
 - number of rooms/units/bedrooms, and which are occupied
 - number of residents and their general socio-economic position (e.g. age, disability, income)
 - latest rent level for, and duration of, each tenancy
 - average length of stay and average vacancy rate
- ✓ description of adjoining premises and the surrounding locality

Proposed

- ✓ plans and elevations—showing proposed uses of all rooms and external areas
- ✓ description of the proposal
- ✓ its purpose
- ✓ other development options considered, and why they were rejected
- ✓ details of the likely impact of the development. See clause 7 of SEPP 10 which outlines what must be considered, including whether there is sufficient comparable accommodation in the locality
- ✓ details of how any adverse impacts are to be lessened or prevented.

The Department of Urban Affairs and Planning will also be assessing proposals which come under the policy.

How can I find out more?

SEPP 10 Guide explains the intent of the policy and the development application process. It also explains how financial viability is to be assessed, and what is meant by 'cumulative impact' and 'comparable accommodation' in relation to the policy.

The policy and *SEPP 10 Guide* are available from the Information Centre, Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney, phone (02) 9228-6111, the department's website www.planning.nsw.gov.au or from **regional offices of the department**.

Inquiries: Housing Markets Team, phone (02) 9228-6111 and ask for Masud Karim.