NEW CODE TO DELIVER WELL-DESIGNED HOUSING OPTIONS

The NSW Government has introduced new rules making it easier to develop versatile, well-designed and more affordable low-rise medium density housing across the State.

The Low Rise Medium Density Housing Code and Low Rise Medium Density Design Guide will allow well-designed, dual occupancies, manor houses and terraces to be built under a fast track complying development approval, saving homeowners time and money.

Minister for Planning and Housing, Anthony Roberts, said the new Code would facilitate faster housing supply and contribute to housing affordability.

“The need for more high-quality medium sized homes comes as population projections estimate metropolitan Sydney will need another 725,000 homes to accommodate an extra 1.7 million people by 2036,” Mr Roberts said.

“Low-rise medium density housing is the missing part of the NSW housing stock between traditional free-standing homes and strata-titled apartments.

“With the growing and ageing population in NSW, there is a need for a greater variety of houses to suit the range of needs and lifestyles including growing families and empty nesters.

“The Code and Design Guide will encourage the market to provide more diverse housing options by making it easier to build well-designed, quality medium density homes that respect existing neighbourhoods.”

Proposed two-storey building height limits will ensure the size and scale of complying development is low rise and will easily fit into established streetscapes.

“The Greater Sydney Commission’s Region and District Plans identify medium density housing as promoting greater housing choice, diversity and affordability. It allows for seniors to downsize as well as being a more affordable option for young people,” Mr Roberts said.
The Medium Density Design Guide has been developed in partnership with the Government Architect’s Office and aims to improve the design of medium density housing by addressing key considerations including layout, landscaping, private open space, light, natural ventilation and privacy.

Mr Roberts said the Design Guide was influenced by a national medium density design competition held by the NSW Government that invited architects and building designers to present a glimpse of the future of the state’s homes while testing the controls.

“During the competition, talented creators showed what the future diversity of homes will look like, using space, light and smaller blocks,” Mr Roberts said.

Executive Director, NSW of the Australian Institute of Architects, Mr Joshua Morrin, said that good architectural design of medium density homes would ensure that residents could enjoy good amenity and liveability.

“Architectural design prioritises both quality of space and human amenity - qualities which our cities will need all the more as they continue to grow - the spaces that we live in need to work harder.

“The smaller homes that will increasingly be part of our cities, highlighting the need for good design principles and requirements, such as those in the Medium Density Design Guide. We need more quality design to future proof the liveability of our communities,” Mr Morrin said.

Housing Industry Association’s Director, David Bare, said the code would help with supply and cost.

“Faster approvals of these types of homes will address both supply and affordability. They are typically built on smaller blocks of land than traditional free-standing homes, which helps improve affordability,” Mr Bare said.

The new Code will only apply in areas where councils have already permitted medium density housing under their Local Environmental Plan.

A three-month deferred commencement period will apply to the Code and Design Guide to allow councils and industry time to prepare for the new changes.

Consultation with the community, councils and industry informed the preparation of the new code and design guide.

For more information on the code and design guide, visit http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/mediumdensityhousing

For videos and still pictures go to: http://bit.ly/2GizprL

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