



MEMBER ALERT

DesignWA – State Planning Policy 7 released for public comment

State Planning Policy 7 – Design of the Built Environment (SPP7) has been released for public comment, along with a number of supporting documents.

This policy has been developed to assess the design quality of the whole built environment. The key objectives of consistent design assessment processes, timely planning application assessments, consistency across jurisdictions and good design are set to be achieved through ten design principles, design skills measures and use of Design Review Panels.

The design principles are intended to provide a consistent framework for design and decision making. They include Context and Character; Landscape Quality; Built form and Scale; Functionality and Build Quality; Sustainability; Amenity; Legibility; Safety; Community and Aesthetics. Supporting State Planning Policies have and are being developed to provide criteria or guidance for specific types of planning proposals; namely for Precincts, Neighbourhoods, Apartments and Houses.

The R Codes will form the Housing policy document, and Neighbourhood and Precinct documents are being developed. Other documents made available for public comment include:

Apartment Design Policy – Replacing the multiple dwelling portion of the R Codes, this Policy lists primary controls such as setbacks and plot ratio limits (which are set unless varied by local government policy). These are paired with design outcomes for siting and designing the building. The outcomes can be achieved by either meeting the design criteria or by following the design outcomes. This will provide more flexibility in design, but also allows predictability of the overall outcome through the primary controls.

Design Review Guide - The guide sets a best practice model for establishing and operating Design Review Panels. The panels are used to provide feedback on the quality of the proposed design as it is being developed, aiming to address concerns early in the process to avoid expensive rework that occurs where development applications are rejected.

Design Skills Discussion Paper – This paper discusses the value of accreditation of designers, the level of design skill that relevant qualifications provide and the impact of any regulation of designers on the housing and design industries. Formal feedback on the options presented is requested, which include introducing threshold based regulation or competency based assessments for designers, making certain qualifications required in order to design different complexities of buildings.

Information and documents for downloading can be found [here](#)

Contact wa_planning@hia.com.au for further information, or if you would like to provide comments to be included in our submission.