Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**
Housing

Housing

PART A: QUALITATIVE BRIEF

Low-Rise Multiple Dwellings

Revision Date	Comment
06/04/2016	Section 3.1 – Added design objective for buildings built in a Bushfire Prone Area.
06/04/2016	Section 3.3.3 – Added BCA requirements i.e. materials & finishes for built form in Bushfire Prone Areas.
09/05/2016	Clause 4.3.6 – Inclusion of 1200mm x 400mm recess to each dwelling.
09/05/2016	Clause 5.3.2 – Inclusion of 1 x 100L tree for each ground floor dwelling and any communal area.
03/06/2016	Section 2 Façade & Interface – Clause 2.3 item E Letterboxes.
03/06/2016	Section 7 Submission Requirements - Elevations to be shown in colour.
24/05/2017	Section 5.3.4 Additional requirements.
17/07/2017	Section 7 Submission Requirements Existing Site Plan – Direction of prevailing cooling breezes in summer and areas exposed to winter sun; desirable views and sightlines.
17/07/2017	Section 7 Submission Requirements Addition to Development Site Plan of Proposed trees and landscaping including details of species suited to intended location or area giving consideration to any Local Authority requirements.
17/07/2017	Section 9 – Amendment Change to Signature of Approving Officer to Project Manager.

Introduction

Purpose

The Department of Communities, Housing (DCH) is committed to achieving design excellence and delivering better places and spaces that will facilitate appropriate, available and affordable housing.

'Best practice' Urban Design Objectives are to be applied to all multiple dwelling projects. It is expected that the Design Objectives, Performance Criteria and Acceptable Development Standards contained in this Brief will be applied to the planning, design and development phases of each project. The Qualitative Brief will be used to inform subsequent Design Review and Planning Approvals.

Who is the Qualitative Brief for?

This Brief is intended to be used by consultants, including builders, designers and architects, involved in the design and delivery of Department of Communities, Housing projects.

How will the Qualitative Brief be used?

All projects must demonstrate compliance with the Design Objective of each element. This can be achieved through compliance with the Acceptable Development Standard checklist in a manner that addresses the Design Objective for each element. However innovative and site-specific approaches that do not comply with the Acceptable Development Standard checklist may be approved under the Performance Criteria.

If approval is sought under the Performance Criteria for an element, the consultant must provide a design rationale and justification that addresses the associated Design Objective and Performance Criteria and attach this to the submission.

Gaining Approval

All submissions made for review, comment or approval must be in the format of legible architectural drawings with a scale bar and minimum scale of 1:200 when printed at A3. Drawings must show contextual information including street names, lot number, indicative adjacent building wall locations, north point, key setbacks, building, and window dimensions.

Related Guidelines

This Brief Complements National and State strategic policy on planning, design and construction. This document must be complied with in addition to the following guidelines and policy:

- DCH 'Part B: Functional Brief'
- DCH 'Part C: Construction Specification'
- DCH 'Affordable Housing Strategy; Opening Doors 2010-2020'
- SPP 3.1 'Residential Design Codes'
- Operational Policy 'Liveable Neighbourhoods'
- National Construction Code (BCA)
- Australian Standards
- Local Planning Schemes and Policies
- Local Development Plans (DAP) and associated Design Guidelines

Multiple Dwellings Typology

A dwelling in a group of more than one dwelling on a lot where any part of the plot ratio of a dwelling is vertically above any part of the plot ratio area of any other but does not include a grouped dwelling; and includes any dwellings above the ground floor in a mixed-use development.

The low-rise multiple dwelling typology refers to residential complexes that are typically three levels (with scope for loft or split level upper floors), have limited communal facilities, at grade car parking and are either walk-up or lifted.

1.0 Form, Massing and Height

1.1 Design Objective

- To ensure that development of multiple dwellings occur with due regard to existing development context and the desired future built form, massing and height for the locality is achieved.
- To ensure areas can develop with an equitable access to daylight for all developments and the public domain without causing adverse wind impact and over-shadowing.

1.2 Performance Criteria

- Articulated building facades with varied depth of walls, architectural elements, roof lines and major openings addressing the street.
- Varied or stepped building bulk to generate visual interest and respond to adjacent development and existing topography.
- Reduced appearance of building bulk through fine grain architectural elements.
- Generous private open space for each dwelling to accommodate a functional furniture layout.
- Site orientation to optimise daylight access to interior of all dwellings.

1.3 Acceptable Development	yes	no	n/a
1.3.1 Building frontages comprise varying setbacks to primary and secondary streets	○	○	○
1.3.2 Development reduces building bulk through a combination of: (a) balconies and recesses; (b) fine grain building rhythm to ensure human scale at ground level; (c) variations in horizontal and vertical profile; (d) recessions and projections in the roof and wall planes; (e) architectural elements that are of a finer scale than the building's main structural framing to provide detail and modulate the elevation	○	○	○

2.0 Façade & Interface

2.1 Design Objective

- To contribute toward the character of streetscapes with legible building facades and interfaces between public and private space.
- To ensure that buildings are designed to operate efficiently within the public realm through easily identifiable entryways that offer security for occupants and passers-by in an attractive setting.
- To promote originality and identity through personalised dwelling features.

2.2 Performance Criteria

- Clearly identifiable entryways into the building and ground floor dwellings from the street with a functional, convenient entry sequence from footpath.
- Convenient location of letterboxes for each dwelling.
- Maximised opportunities for major openings to habitable living areas addressing streets and communal open space for passive surveillance and community interaction.
- Utilisation of rear lane access from rear loaded lots for on-site parking. Passive surveillance of the lane provided through major openings addressing the lane.
- Variation in building façades through articulation and integration of architectural features.

- Non-permeable roofing over dwelling entrances that provide protection from weather conditions.
- Front fencing to complement the built form design and enable passive surveillance of footpaths and public areas.

2.3 Acceptable Development	yes	no	n/a
2.3.1 Entryways define the threshold between public and private space and provide: (a) safe, secure and convenient access to the site for residents and visitors; (b) a sufficiently scaled and sheltered entry and meeting space; (c) clear building signage and numbering for emergency access; (d) lighting; (e) Individual letter boxes provided for dwellings fronting and accessed directly from the street, located adjacent to front entries. Consolidated letterbox bank provided for remaining dwellings, located adjacent to private access way.	○	○	○
2.3.2 Legible, separate entrances provided with direct street access for ground floor dwellings	○	○	○
2.3.3 Opportunities for passive surveillance maximised through more than one major opening per dwelling addressing all streets and communal areas	○	○	○
2.3.4 Discrete parking entrances provided to avoid unappealing street frontages	○	○	○

3.0 Details & Materials

3.1 Design Objective

- To ensure that buildings are constructed from materials which contribute toward the character of the streetscape through appropriate construction details and techniques.
- To promote materials and colours that reduce heat gain in summer.
- Where buildings are to be constructed within a designated bushfire prone area, the buildings, building materials and building performance comply with the relevant requirements of the Building Code of Australia (BCA) and Australian Standard AS3959.

3.2 Performance Criteria

- Balanced mix of materials, textures and finishes to building facades that are complementary to the local area and streetscape.
- High quality materials and design features devoted to building frontages and facades addressing public space, particularly highly visible sections of the building at street level that warrant a fine level of detail.

3.3 Acceptable Development	yes	no	n/a
3.3.1 Building design, roof form, detailing and materials visible from public realm and adjoining properties are not in strong visual contrast with the character of attractive neighbouring buildings	○	○	○

3.3.2 High quality facades are a balanced composition of building elements, textures, materials and colour selections	○	○	○
3.3.3 The building finishes and materials to be used are compliant with the Building Code of Australia (BCA) Construction requirements and Bush Fire Attack Level (BAL) that applies to the site, where the site is located within a designated bushfire prone area.	○	○	○

4.0 Building Performance & Amenity

4.1 Design Objective

- To ensure buildings are appropriately situated on site for optimal, climatic responsive design for improved internal comfort and reduced heating and cooling demand.
- To ensure that building design maximises opportunity for prevailing cool breezes to be efficiently utilised for cross ventilation and shading devices are optimised for the shading of summer sun and deep winter sun penetration into habitable rooms.
- To reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reduced building waste and energy intensive materials.
- To ensure solar access and ventilation is maintained between neighbouring dwellings.

4.2 Performance Criteria

- Optimal climatically responsive design through appropriately oriented dwellings to facilitate cross ventilation and passive solar design principles.
- Suitable shading devices to allow for winter sun penetration into dwelling and shade windows from summer sun.
- Efficient dwelling floorplans and use of space that can adapt to future uses, conversions and extensions. Circulation space reduced and open plan living promoted.

4.3 Acceptable Development	yes	no	n/a
4.3.1 Building siting and design maximizes opportunity for all dwellings to have north oriented internal and external living areas, unless there are major site constraints or desirable views that require a different orientation	○	○	○
4.3.2 Shading devices and operable architectural features integrated to allow for winter sun penetration into dwellings, fully shade openings from summer sun and provide privacy	○	○	○
4.3.3 Natural cross-ventilation for dwellings is optimised through location and maximised number of openings; natural ventilation is provided to all habitable rooms and as many non-habitable rooms, common areas and circulation areas as possible	○	○	○
4.3.4 Efficient planning of circulation by stairs, corridors and through rooms to maximise amount of usable floor space	○	○	○
4.3.5 A minimum of 1200mm x 400mm recess in each dwelling must be provided if the communal entry passage is less than 1200mm.	○	○	○

4.3.6 Ramping for accessibility minimised by building entry location and setting ground floor levels in relation to footpath levels	○	○	○
4.3.7 Bathrooms, wash closets, drying areas and laundries separated and screened from living areas and public realm	○	○	○
4.3.8 Service equipment and utilities screened from public realm behind the front façade	○	○	○
4.3.9 All noise generating equipment is designed to protect the acoustic privacy of residents and neighbours	○	○	○

5.0 Parking & Landscape

5.1 Design Objective

- To ensure landscape design optimises functionality, useability, privacy and amenity and provides for practical establishment and maintenance.
- To reduce the economic, environmental impacts associated with site works to facilitate housing.
- To ensure that each development makes a contribution to the streetscape by respecting the natural topography of each site, reducing the visual impact of car parking and enhancing existing landscape amenity.
- To ensure covered access to car parking from residences and public spaces.
- To enhance the streetscape and provide shading through landscaping.

5.2 Performance Criteria

- Clear delineation of public and private space through landscaping and visually permeable fencing.
- Provision of landscaping area for mature trees to grow to shade and cool hardscapes.
- Existing, mature trees over 3m in height retained on verge. Building design to accommodate natural site features, trees and topography.
- Water sensitive design implemented through water permeable hardscapes and appropriate plant selection.
- Passive surveillance enhanced through well illuminated car parking, visible from dwellings.
- Integrating mature trees along the streetscape that provide canopy coverage for pedestrians.
- Efficient floorplans with reduced outdoor circulation space, replaced by landscaping in residual spaces/setbacks where possible.
- Where possible, planting should be maximised to shade walls, windows and outdoor living areas on the ground floor.

5.3 Acceptable Development	yes	no	n/a
5.3.1 Open, uncovered car parking areas and the setback to ground level car parking is landscaped to provide: (a) shade for pedestrians; (b) legibility and enhanced safety; (c) improved urban landscape amenity	○	○	○

5.3.2 Courtyard gardens and communal garden areas incorporated to support mature trees and shade. In addition to soft landscaping provide 100L tree for every ground floor dwelling and any communal area.	○	○	○
5.3.3 Amenity of open space areas improved with a landscape design that provides for accessible routes within the site and between buildings	○	○	○
5.3.4 Existing trees over 3 metres in height retained where possible and integrated into building design and outdoor areas where lot size permits. Where existing healthy trees have been removed from within the lot, replacement trees of 100L are to be provided where practical. Removed trees will be assumed to have been healthy unless evidence is provided.	○	○	○
5.3.5 Water permeable hardscapes provided and water management maintained onsite	○	○	○
5.3.6 On-site retaining minimised and direct pedestrian access to street prioritised	○	○	○
5.3.7 At grade car parking located behind building and not visible from the public realm	○	○	○
5.3.8 Landscaping of open spaces in accordance with the following: at least 50% of the area not covered by the building is soft landscaping	○	○	○
5.3.9 Site layout separates, by way of barriers and/or distance, active recreational areas, parking areas, vehicle access ways and service equipment areas from bedroom areas of dwellings and minimises high levels of external noise entering dwellings	○	○	○
6.0 Compliance			
6.1 'Residential Design Codes' Compliance	○	○	○
6.2 Local Town Planning Scheme Compliance	○	○	○

6.3 List areas of non-compliance or where performance provisions have been applied:

7.0 Submission Requirements				
Requirement	**Details**	**yes**	**no**	**n/a**
Existing Site Plan 1:200	**Street name & lot number**	○	○	○
	North point & scale bar	○	○	○
	Existing site dimensions, levels, 0.5 m contours & boundary spot levels	○	○	○
	Indicative position & dimension of existing & adjoining buildings where possible including finished floor levels to each level of the building. Provide height to the top and bottom of existing retaining walls & structures and type, height and condition of existing fencing.	○	○	○
	Indicative position of adjoining buildings outdoor living areas	○	○	○
	Position & size of any tree exceeding 3m in height	○	○	○
	Location of service connections & easements	○	○	○
	Street verge, including footpaths, street trees, crossovers, truncations, power poles, backstays & services	○	○	○
	Direction of prevailing cooling breezes in summer and areas exposed to winter sun, desirable views and sightlines.	○	○	○
Development Site Plan 1:200	Property details, site dimensions, north point, contours & levels	○	○	○
	Horizontal position, floor levels & positions of all openings of existing & proposed buildings where any building is within 7.5m of a side boundary	○	○	○
	Position & levels of all proposed buildings, walls, fences, retaining walls & other structures	○	○	○
	Position of paved vehicle, pedestrian access ways & parking spaces	○	○	○
	Structures & trees to be retained or removed	○	○	○

	Private Open Space areas, dimensions & areas to be landscaped	○	○	○
	Proposed finished site levels	○	○	○
	Shadow that would be cast at 12 noon on 21 June by any proposed building onto an adjoining property	○	○	○
	Provide overlooking drawings i.e. cone of vision	○	○	○
	Proposed site area boundaries of any strata lots	○	○	○
	Proposed trees and landscaping including details of species suited to intended location or area giving consideration to any Local Authority requirements.	○	○	○
Supporting drawings 1:100	All floor plans & their setbacks from the boundaries of the site	○	○	○
	All elevations to be shown in colour with the existing & natural ground levels, wall heights & roof heights related to the Australian height datum (AHD) as a permeant fixed datum point throughout the project life cycle.	○	○	○
	Cross-sections through any proposed areas of excavation or filling with relevant existing, natural & proposed levels relating to common datum	○	○	○
	Proposed materials, colours & finishes of the exterior of the building	○	○	○

8.0 Signature of Submitting Proponent

Date: _____

Name & Position: _____

Sign: _____

9.0 Signature of Project Manager

Date: _____

Name & Position: _____

Sign: _____