

Extract of 'Schedule 1 – Design Principles' from Draft State Planning Policy 7- Design of the Built Environment:

1. Context and character

Good design responds to and enhances the distinctive characteristics of a local area, contributing to a sense of place.

The distinctive characteristics of a local area include its prominent natural and built features, the overall qualities of its built environment, significant heritage elements, as well as social, economic and environmental conditions.

Good design responds intelligently and sensitively to these factors, interpreting rather than replicating existing features and enhancing the identity of the area, including the adjacent sites, streetscape and neighbourhood.

Good design also responds positively to the intended future character of an area. It delivers appropriate densities that are consistent with projected population growth, and are able to be sustained by existing or proposed transport, green networks and social infrastructure.

Consideration of local context is particularly important for sites in established areas that are undergoing change or identified for change.

2. Landscape quality

Good design recognises that together landscape and buildings operate as an integrated and sustainable system, within a broader ecological context.

Good landscape design protects existing environmental features and ecosystems, enhances the local environmental context and regenerates lost or damaged ecosystem functionality, where possible. It balances consideration of environmental factors such as water and soil management, ground conditions, solar access, microclimate, tree canopy, habitat creation and preservation of green infrastructure with social, cultural and economic conditions.

Good landscape design employs hard and soft landscape and urban design elements to create external environments that interact in a considered manner with built form, resulting in well-integrated, engaging places that contribute to local identity and streetscape character.

Good landscape design provides optimal levels of external amenity, functionality and weather protection while ensuring social inclusion, equitable access and respect for the public and neighbours. Well-designed landscape environments ensure effective establishment and facilitate ease of long term management and maintenance.

3. Built form and scale

Good design provides development with massing and height that is appropriate to its setting and successfully negotiates between existing built form and the intended future character of the local area.

Good design achieves an appropriate built form by responding to its site, as well as surrounding built fabric, in a considered manner, mitigating negative impacts on the amenity of neighbouring properties and public realm.

Good design considers the orientation, proportion, composition, and articulation of built form elements, to deliver an outcome that is suited to the building's purpose, defines the public domain,

respects important views, contributes to the character of adjacent streetscapes and parks, and provides a good pedestrian environment at ground level.

4. Functionality and build quality

Good design meets the needs of users efficiently and effectively, balancing functional requirements to deliver optimum benefit and performing well over the full life-cycle.

Designing functional environments involves ensuring that spaces are suited to their intended purpose and arranged to facilitate ease of use and good relationships to other spaces. Good design provides flexible and adaptable spaces, to maximise utilisation and accommodate appropriate future requirements without the need for major modifications.

Good build quality is achieved by using good quality and robust materials, finishes, elements and systems. Projects should be well-detailed, resilient to the wear and tear expected from its intended use, and easy to upgrade and maintain.

Good design accommodates required services in an integrated manner, without detriment to the overall design outcome.

5. Sustainability

Good design optimises the sustainability of the built environment, delivering positive environmental, social and economic outcomes.

Sustainable buildings utilise passive environmental design measures that respond to local climate and site conditions by providing optimal orientation, shading, thermal performance and natural ventilation. Reducing reliance on technology for heating and cooling minimises energy use, resource consumption and operating costs over the whole life-cycle of the project.

Other sustainable design measures include the use of sustainable construction materials, recycling, material re-use, harnessing of renewable energy sources, appropriate water management. Good design considers the ease with which sustainability initiatives can be maintained and managed.

Sustainable landscape and urban design adheres to established principles of water-sensitive urban design, and minimises negative impacts on existing natural features and ecological processes, as well as facilitating green infrastructure at all project scales.

6. Amenity

Good design optimises internal and external amenity for occupants, visitors and neighbours, contributing to living and working environments that are comfortable and productive.

Good design provides internal rooms and spaces that are adequately sized, comfortable and easy to use and furnish, with good levels of daylight, natural ventilation and outlook.

Delivering good levels of internal amenity also includes the provision of appropriate levels of acoustic protection and visual privacy, adequate storage space, and ease of access for all.

Well-designed external spaces provide welcoming, comfortable environments that are universally accessible, with effective shade as well as protection from unwanted wind, rain, traffic and noise. Good design mitigates negative impacts on surrounding buildings and places, including overshadowing, overlooking, glare, reflection and noise.

7. Legibility

Good design results in buildings and places that are legible, with clear connections and memorable elements to help people find their way around.

Good urban design makes places easy to navigate, with recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks while being well-connected to existing movement networks. Sightlines are well-considered, with built form responding to important vantage points.

Within buildings, legibility is served by a clear hierarchy of spaces with identifiable entries and clear wayfinding. Externally, buildings and spaces should allow their purpose to be easily understood, and provide clear distinction between public and private spaces.

Good design provides environments that are logical and intuitive, at the scale of building, site and precinct.

8. Safety

Good design optimises safety and security, minimising the risk of personal harm and supporting safe behaviour and use.

Safety and security is promoted by maximising opportunities for passive surveillance of public and communal areas and providing clearly defined, well-lit, secure access points that are easily maintained and appropriate to the purpose of the development.

Good design provides a positive, clearly defined relationship between public and private spaces and addresses the need to provide optimal safety and security both within a development and to adjacent public realm.

Designing for safety also involves mitigating any potential occupational safety and health hazards that might result from a development during its construction, maintenance and operation.

9. Community

Good design responds to local community needs as well as the wider social context, providing buildings and spaces that support a diverse range of people and facilitate social interaction.

Good design encourages social engagement and physical activity in an inclusive manner, enabling stronger communities and improved public health outcomes.

In residential developments, good design achieves a mix of dwelling types, providing housing choice for different demographics, living needs and household budgets, and facilitating ageing-in-place.

10. Aesthetics

Good design is the product of a skilled, judicious design process that results in attractive and inviting buildings and places that engage the senses.

Good design resolves the many competing challenges of a project into an elegant and coherent outcome. A well-conceived design concept informs all scales, from the articulation of building form through to materiality and detail, enabling sophisticated, integrated responses to the complexities of local built form and landscape character.

In assessing design quality, consideration of aesthetics should not be limited to style and appearance; it should also account for design integrity, creativity, conceptual coherence and cultural relevance in a proposal.