



18 December 2018

Policy, Planning Systems and Reform
Department of Planning
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Sir/Madam

Subject: State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009

Thank-you for the opportunity to comment on the State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009. Lake Macquarie City Council staff (LMCC) support the proposed amendment to provisions for boarding houses in this policy, and provide the following comments.

Limits for Boarding Rooms in Low Density Residential Zones

It is understood that the proposed changes will limit the maximum number of boarding rooms to 12, for a boarding house in low-density residential (R2) zones. LMCC understand and agree that in some instances larger boarding houses may not be appropriate in the R2 - low density residential zone. However, it is also acknowledged that there may be other ways to ensure the future desired character of an area be recognised.

It may be more appropriate to provide specific proximity requirements (to ensure the site is well located near transport options, facilities and services) and a specific character analysis criteria, rather than exclude the possibility of a boarding house with more than 12 boarding rooms in this zone.

Recommendation: to support the intent to ensure the scale and bulk of a boarding house is in keeping with the desired future character of an area. This may or may not require a limit to the number of boarding rooms in the R2 Zone. LMCC would be satisfied with another alternative method of managing impacts on neighbouring properties such as overlooking, overshadowing and car parking that does not limit innovative designs that recognise the context of the environment.

Division 1 Development to Which In-fill Affordable Housing Applies

LMCC suggests that Clause 10 – Development to which this part applies is considered restrictive for the Lake Macquarie LGA. That is, the potential benefits of this Policy are very limited for the Lake Macquarie LGA, including only land within 400m of B2 or B4 zone. This excludes many suitable locations. A criteria for accessibility could be more effective.

Our Ref:

For example LMCC has assessed liveability and has mapped our more accessible locations. Thus development to which Division 10 applies could be “either 400m to a B2 or B4 zone or that the land is well located and in proximity to the daily needs such as employment, housing, shops, services etc” or similar.

In addition, Clause 10 does not provide particular benefit for development in LMCC, as the biggest bonus (FSR) does not apply to Lake Macquarie – that is LMCC does not plan via the use of FSR maps. Similarly, the provision of a height bonus would only be appropriate in limited circumstances i.e. within/near town centres.

Recommendation: for Clause 10 to provide a permissibility benefit as a more preferable, and possibly more effective way across all Councils allowing multi dwelling developments and RFBs for affordable housing in a wider variety of zones including for example the lower density R2 zone, but only if the site satisfies proximity and location criteria.

Such criteria could be limited to areas identified in regional/district plans including e.g. the catalyst areas and urban renewal corridors identified in the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan. Thus ensuring the location is in close proximity to services and infrastructure.

Local Plan and Development Controls would still apply and limit the possibility of unsuitable development.

Division 5 Residential Flat Buildings

Recommendation: Division 5 Residential Flat Buildings - social housing providers, public authorities and joint ventures is expanded in a similar way to that above, so that the clause applies to the same additional locations described above which have proximity to daily needs and services. This is likely to provide significantly improved scope in the provision of Affordable Housing stock in the accessible areas where it is most needed.

I trust these comments will be considered during the process of reviewing the Affordable Rental Housing SEPP. Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

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