

sustainable settlement green infrastructure

HOUSING

The delivery of sustainable communities

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) supports the provision of affordable, good quality, accessible housing that protects the health, safety and well-being of the public together with the health of the broader natural environment for existing and future generations.

The AILA advocates the value of landscape as the underpinning framework for delivering sustainable housing and communities across Australia.

The AILA promotes integrated landscape and building design as a key mechanism for achieving more climate-responsive, socially equitable and affordable housing solutions at local, regional and national scales.

Australia currently faces significant challenges in providing sufficient, appropriate and affordable housing for a rapidly growing population.

Such challenges are inextricably linked to broader national sustainability challenges including the impacts of climate change, environmental degradation, population growth, economic development and demographic change on urban settlement dynamics.

Ensuring that all Australians have access to good quality, affordable housing in the future requires new strategies for residential planning and design.

Realising any currently underutilised asset potential is central to these new approaches including incorporating the value of landscape performance and integrated design strategies to boost sustainability outcomes.

AILA's vision is that the decision-making processes which impact on residential development should be underpinned by a genuine respect for the value of the associated landscape context, so that the landscape performance potential of our local and regional environments may be harnessed to inspire, enable and support residential design solutions which meet the needs of developers, homeowners and the broader community without compromising natural environmental integrity.



Australian Institute
of Landscape Architects

National Policy Statement

Applying The Landscape Principles in the context of residential development

The Australian Landscape Principles articulate an ethical decision-making framework for landscape planning, design and management within the built environment.

Their purpose is to strategically direct landscape interventions – both in our existing and future built environments -towards more sustainable, holistic outcomes. In the context of residential development, this means we need to:

- 1. Value our Landscape** – by employing detailed, inclusive and creative landscape assessment as a primary tool for sustainable residential design outcomes; prioritising the landscape values of the site and preserving the local/global commons of landscape beyond the property boundaries.
- 2. Protect-Enhance-Regenerate** – keeping healthy sites healthy, healing injured sites, protecting the water cycle and preserving the day/night cycle for vegetation and other species.
- 3. Design With Respect** – designing development to spatially and formally express the natural and cultural forces of the place, designing and locating buildings to respond to local climate conditions, favouring planning for human activity over large-scale planning patterns.
- 4. Design for the Future** – deriving power from renewable energy sources, considering origin and fate of materials, creating economically & socially viable projects, rationalising transport, work opportunities and essential resource supply & distribution – e.g. food.
- 5. Embrace Responsive Design** – favouring renewable, regenerative, adaptive materials and processes; managing food, water, materials and energy resources sustainably; designing for enhanced landscape performance of the public/private realm via integrated, climate-responsive green infrastructure strategies.

Delivering more sustainable Australian communities relies upon a collaborative response to design. Integrated landscape/building design approaches can provide improved overall outcomes in energy use and efficiency, food and water quality and security, biodiversity, human health and well-being – and create more functional and engaging places in which to live.

Key Actions for Housing

AILA recommends that Government acts at all levels to ensure that:

- Integrated, landscape-based sustainability assessment approaches drive strategic planning and management of housing design and delivery, and underpin decision-making across multiple scales.
- Green Infrastructure provision and performance is incorporated as an integral component of sustainability assessment approaches for housing development proposals.
- The role of Green Infrastructure is recognised and articulated in improving climate adaptation responses for all residential development – and mechanisms are put in place to fund, design and manage it accordingly.
- The Australian Landscape Principles are used to guide the planning, design and management of residential development across local, regional and national scales.

This Policy statement is part of the AILA's Sustainable Settlement suite of Policy Statements on Australian Landscape Architecture, the profession committed to the creation of meaningful and enjoyable outdoor places and to the sustainable management of our built and natural environment.

More details on AILA National Policy Statements: www.aila.org.au/policies

All queries on National Policy should be directed to the AILA's CEO.

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