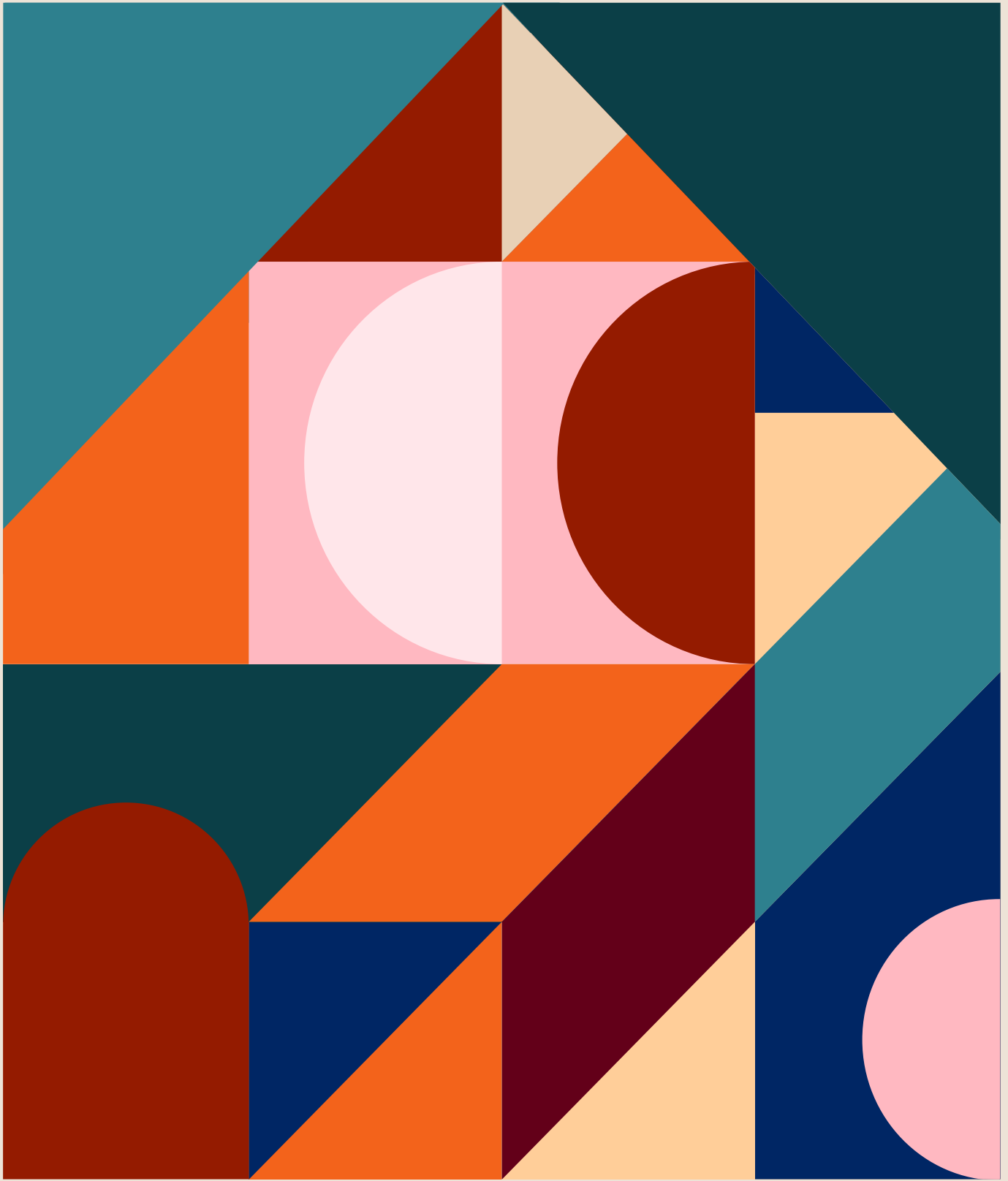# Seniors Housing Design Guide

November 2023

Seniors Housing
Design Guide

2023

NSW GOVERNMENT

Planning & Environment

SENIORS HOUSING DESIGN GUIDE 2023

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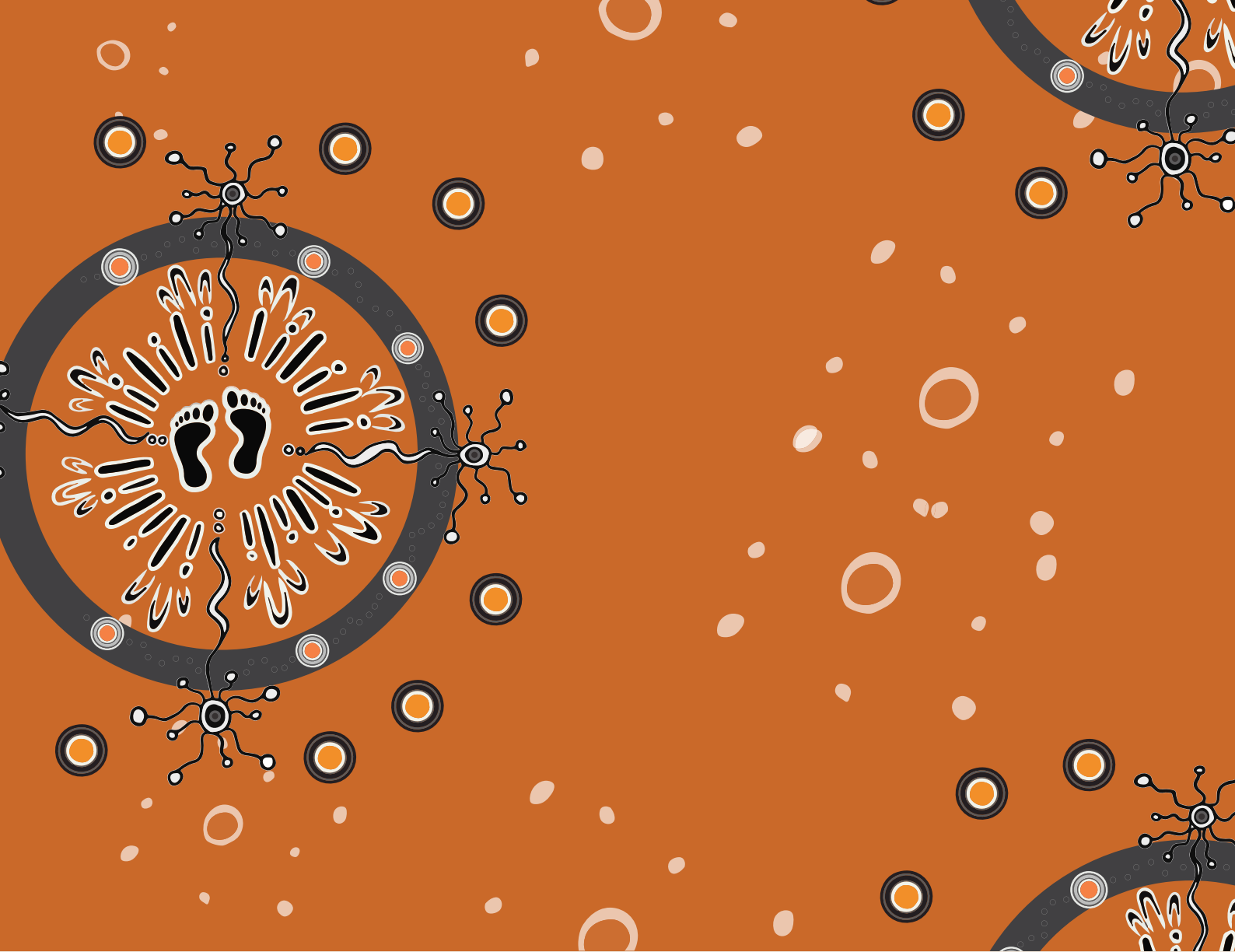
Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning and Environment acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land and pays respect to Elders past, present and future.

We recognise Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to place and their rich contributions to society.

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Overview

Part 1

Introduction

Designing and developing quality, affordable and accessible accommodation for senior people within familiar neighbourhoods addresses one of society's critical needs.

The NSW Government is committed to creating a pipeline of safe and suitable homes to meet housing needs, and supporting councils to improve their local areas for future communities.

One of the ways it is doing this is through this guide, which is intended to make it easier for designers and councils to design and assess purpose built seniors housing.

While many older people remain in their family home, there are many who have difficulty accessing services and managing daily needs and become socially isolated and fearful.

Housing that is designed to build socially connected communities, where people feel safe and secure, where new friendships can flourish, where the building maintenance is managed, where the hazards of stairs and cramped bathrooms are no longer present, promote healthy ageing and longevity and enable care and reassurance to be delivered.

As human beings we are instinctively programmed for survival and the obvious outcome of this is a long life. Living a long life and reaching old age is what most people aspire to.

It is common for active people of all ages to feel uncomfortable with the undignified side of care and in particular, collective communal accommodation of senior people in 'care environments'.

While people generally hope to remain independent and strong, ageing is a natural stage in life and we need to provide communities that support healthy ageing.

Aged care has evolved and continues to evolve from the institutional models of the past, to a much wider offering including luxurious care homes that offer hotel-like services, home-like environments offering the comforts and scale of a domestic house, or simple budget driven pragmatic care spaces that are elegant and strongly connected to sustainable design principles.

There is no doubt that 'residential aged care' as a building type has become a recognisable form of development at scale.

These Guidelines are for planners, designers and council authorities to gain understanding of this housing typology.

Aged care and retirement living is no less significant than any other housing type, and it can be argued that it is potentially more so because unlike most other phases of life, older people spend more time in their homes, and sometimes seldom leave.

The term seniors housing is used as an over-arching description to identify the different types of accommodations for older people.

Seniors housing includes residential care facilities which are also known as among other identifiers, a residential aged care facility (RACF), residential care (RC), residential aged care (RAC), nursing home or care home or hub and is a place where residents are provided with full time care and assistance with daily life. These residents are typically frail and have high care needs often including advanced progressive dementia.

Seniors housing also includes apartments or villas for older people who are able to continue to live independently and 'age in place'. Residents are often focused on their health, wellbeing and socialisation and typically seek out like-minded communities to move to when they feel the need to plan for long term support.

This housing type known as independent living units, are also referred to as ILU's, retirement living, RL's, and 'ageing in place' accommodation.

'Co-located care' broadly describes a development that includes both residential care facility and independent living units.

Looking to the future, the purpose of this guide is to inspire developers and design professionals to improve building design and delivery that will contribute positively to neighbourhoods and be recognised as noteworthy contributions to the built environment. Well considered urban design and good architecture have the power to influence the common preconceived negative perceptions of aged care, to create a wider acceptance of this building type and the essential good they provide to communities.

The SEPP (Housing) 2021, of which seniors housing is a component, identifies seniors housing as another type of housing and not as institutional development.

This guide has been prepared, written and compiled by architects who specialise and are experienced in the design and delivery of all forms of seniors housing.

Valuable input has been provided from the aged care community and care providers, and developers of seniors housing, as well as other disciplines of the design team, including planning, social engineering, landscape design, environmentally sustainable design and marketing.

User group workshops and post occupancy studies have been undertaken to provide real-life feedback from built projects that are occupied.

Why seniors housing needs **guidelines**

Seniors housing, by its nature, must be designed to deliver improved health and social outcomes for the occupants.

Australians are going to be living much longer and seniors housing developers need to provide a built environment that encourages wellness with the greater purpose of bringing people together.

These buildings are structured around a service model that often includes staff. Designers of seniors housing are encouraged to imagine what it is like to live and work within these developments.

The provision and delivery of care is changing. Residents choose the care they want to receive in their home and designers are obliged to recognise that homes for older people require to be setup to enable carers to safely dispense care duties.

These homes also need to be designed to support the physical needs of older, often frail people, to support them to continue to live either independently or with adaptive assistance.

A residential care facility is a highly serviced building providing 24-hr care and assistance to residents. This building type is typically made up of individual bedrooms with ensuites.

Communal lounges and dining areas are shared by residents in small groups, and staff utilities are available to deliver care services. Back-of-house operations, together with kitchen and laundry services, maintenance, storage and staff amenities typically make up a sizeable component in the development.

These guidelines identify four parts that will inform and assist developers, their consultant teams and planning authorities to understand the specific character and accommodation types that occupants need from this housing type.

This design guide highlights that seniors housing is different from other housing types because it needs to meet the physical and social challenges of ageing.

Why
seniors housing
is desired

Many older people want to move to seniors housing communities for the following reasons

BELONGING

To develop a sense of community between the occupants of the building.

SOCIAL SUPPORT

For opportunities to create new friendships, and to reduce loneliness & isolation.

ENGAGEMENT

To have the choice to participate in events and group activities.

SECURITY

To provide a safe and secure environment.

AGEING IN PLACE

To have space that enables and supports ageing at home with assistance and care as required.

LOCALITY

To be able to live near their familiar neighbourhoods and families.

COMMUNITY

To be able to enjoy daily life, companionship and shared experiences in a familiar local environment.

NOURISHMENT

To have convenient access to a café, dining or food service.

PEACE OF MIND

To know that building maintenance, gardening, utilities management is taken care of.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

To have convenient access to wellness and allied health services located in the development.

How to use this **guide**

The SEPP (Housing) 2021 refers to the following types of seniors housing:

- Independent living units
- Residential care facilities

RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITY

INDEPENDENT LIVING UNITS
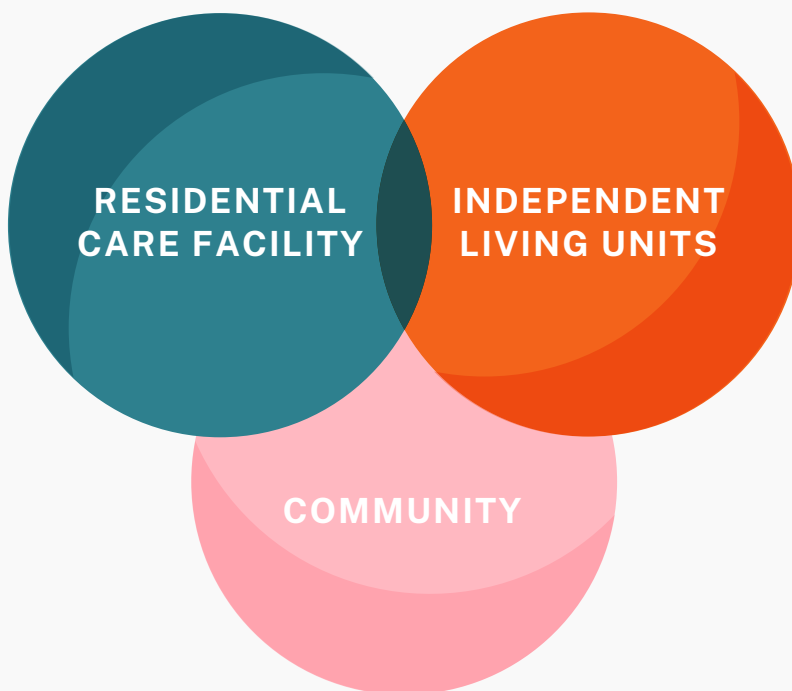
COMMUNITY

The guide uses colour coding to explain and differentiate the types of seniors housing throughout the document, with the residential care facility highlighted in **TEAL**, the independent living units depicted in **ORANGE**, and community spaces in **PINK.**

Diagrams utilise the colour coding to highlight types of seniors housing in the examples provided. Where practicable, diagrams and images have been provided to illustrate design guide objectives.

Differences in the two main building types

RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES

- High care needs but it is a home, not a hospital.

- Comprise of individual room modules (bedroom + ensuite) with shared living spaces.

- Residents are housed in shared 'care households' or 'care wings' of typically 7 - 20 beds each, with care households frequently operating side by side in pairs for efficiency.

- Each floor plate needs to be a continuous, consistent flat level.

- Repetition of individual room types often defines exterior façade and character.

- Balconies and upper level terraces require extra safety measures to prevent falling from climbing of confused residents.

- Security and safety for residents with dementia is usually required.

- Serviced care accommodation requires central back-of-house commercial kitchen and laundry services, as well as single main front entry and front-of-house services, typically with reception, offices and wellness facilities.

- Care and operational staff require car parking and facilities.

- Buildings are developed, owned and managed for the long term by the care provider.

INDEPENDENT LIVING UNITS

- Low to high care needs for ageing in place.

- Comprise of apartment style accommodation with communal and shared areas.

- Residential apartments or villas are designed for accessibility and adaptability.

- Ageing in place promoted by Government funding to encourage ageing residents to remain in place and receive in-home care.

- Mix of unit types include care apartments with the provision of serviced areas and communal dining.

- These are supported communities that require the provision of generous and varied shared communal recreation spaces to promote social inclusion, activities and wellness.

- Residents often have their own cars, also increasingly share cars or concierge car service provided.

- These developments are usually procured, owned and managed for the long term by the retirement village operator.

The purpose of these guidelines is to expand on the intent outlined in the State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021 in the provision and delivery of this sector specific housing typology.

This design guide is not an exhaustive study of every scenario for seniors housing, but touches on the complexities of inserting an atypical form and scale of housing in developing and established neighbourhoods.

The guide is comprised of four parts.

Introduction on seniors housing and why this is a specific typology of accommodation.

**PART 01
Seniors housing
guide overview**

This part explores site analysis, environmental and urban responses. It outlines the importance of understanding the context, setting, local character, size and configuration of a development site. It addresses recognition of cultural heritage and connection to the land. The guidance chapters also introduce the focus around care and wellbeing and lay the foundations for understanding physical ageing and the challenges of living with dementia.

**PART 02
Guidance
Chapters**

Land zoning is the primary determining factor for the allowable density of seniors housing developments under the SEPP (Housing) 2021. The allowable use, building height and FSR will guide the density on a particular site. The guide refers to the different types of density; low, medium and high, and provides real examples and diagrams of how different density can be applied to a site. Design principles relevant to each density type are provided.

**PART 03
Density
and related
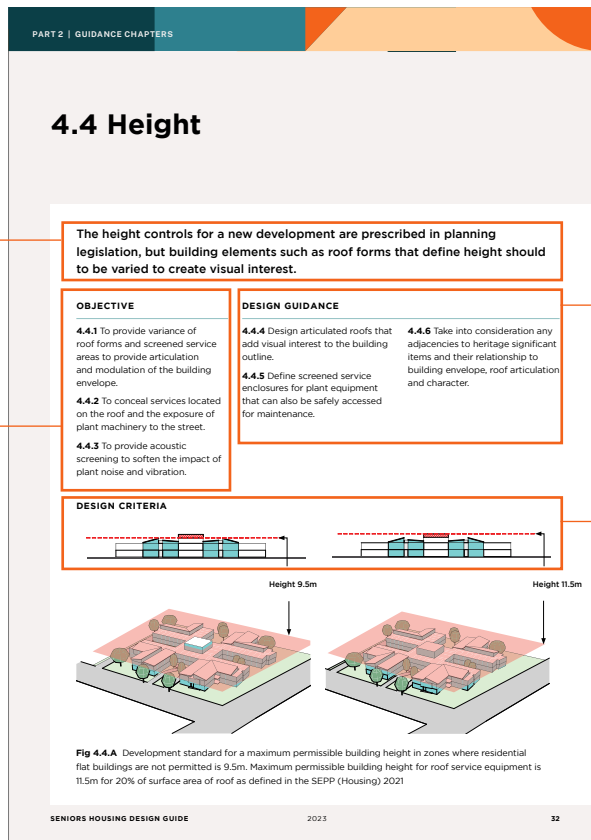design
principles**

Checklists are intended to assist with the planning and approvals pathway.

**PART 04
Checklist**

The next 10-20 years will see much change in the expectations and the general acceptance of housing that is provided specifically for older communities. It is anticipated that regular reviews and updates to the design guide will be undertaken to keep it current and relevant.

The Seniors Housing Design Guide is to be used in conjunction with the State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021, which sets out the NSW Government's policy direction for seniors housing in NSW.

Description
A overview of the subject matter and an explanation its role and significance

Objective
Outcomes to be achieved by the seniors housing development

Design Guidance
Design advice on how the objective can be achieved through particular design approaches

Design Criteria
Illustrations of measurable criteria to achieve the objective for seniors housing development.

Achieving the objectives:

Parts 2 and 3 of the Seniors Housing Design Guide provide, objectives, design guidance and design principles.

1. **A description** of the topic and an explanation of its role and importance

2. **Objectives** that describe the desired design outcomes

3. **Design guidance** that provides advice on how the objectives and design criteria can be achieved through appropriate design responses

4. **Design criteria** is illustrated with diagrams and figures that illustrate how an objective can be achieved.

The information provided in Parts 2 and 3 set the framework for how a new development needs to demonstrate that it meets the objectives.

The design guidance provides a practical way in which an objective can be achieved. Where design criteria is not illustrated, the design guidance should be referred to when demonstrating how an objective is being achieved.

Diagrams illustrate key issues and provide examples of how the design guidance can be applied when considering the design response, siting, context, setbacks, compliance with the SEPP (Housing) 2021 controls, heritage etc.

This Guide responds to the challenges, innovations, provision of care, post-occupancy studies and the latest research. The guidance provided references a range of social, environmental, technical, sustainable and aesthetic considerations that will assist the user in their design process.

Designers and consent authorities only need to consider the part or parts of the guide that is or are relevant to the type and density of a seniors housing proposal.

Guidance
chapters

Part 2

Guidance chapters

Designing housing solutions for seniors, guidance is provided in the following 7 chapters to understand the site, the context and future resident needs;

CHAPTER 1.0

Design for Country

CHAPTER 2.0

Care for the planet

CHAPTER 3.0

Site analysis - environmental response

CHAPTER 4.0

Site analysis - urban response

CHAPTER 5.0

Heritage

CHAPTER 6.0

Care, wellbeing and community

CHAPTER 7.0

Design for physical ageing and dementia

CHAPTER 1

1.0 Design for Country

1.0 Design for Country

Country is living, constantly changing, and evolving. Many ecosystems exist across different realms of Country including both living and non-living elements.

Country has purpose, operating at multiple scales from the cosmic to the molecular and everything in between. *Connecting with Country (GANSW, 2023)* is a framework providing good practice guidance on how to respond to Country in the planning, design, and delivery of built environment projects, including seniors living, in NSW.

The framework is intended to help project development teams by advocating ways they can develop cultural awareness, respond to changes and new directions in planning policy relating to promoting the sustainable management of Aboriginal built and cultural heritage, as well as suggesting place-led design approaches. It also aims to help project teams gain a better understanding of, and to better support, a strong and vibrant Aboriginal culture in our built environment.

The framework provides guidance on designing with Country through:

- Focusing on practices for enabling new ways of working, actions for implementing the framework, outcomes and design considerations

- Sharing case studies across the scales of precinct, individual buildings and small projects

- Outlining five key outcomes for Country,

1. Healthy Country

2. Healthy Community

3. Protecting Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

4. Cultural Competency

5. Better Places
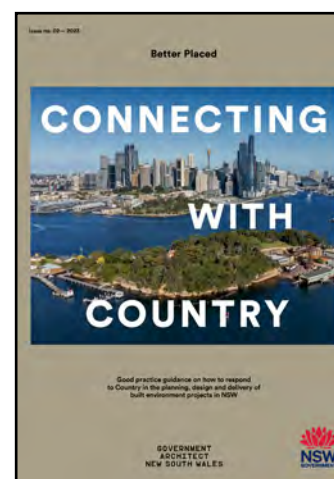
RESPECT FOR ELDERS

RESPECT FOR LAND
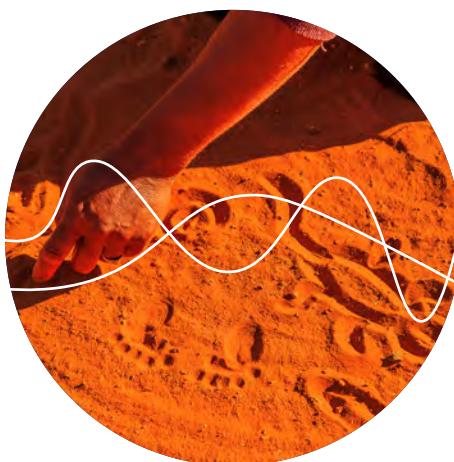
RESPECT FOR PLACE

CHAPTER 2

2.0 Care for the planet

2.1 Leadership

Environmental responsibility and leadership from the whole development team for seniors housing is critical in addressing climate change.

Sustainably designed buildings will generate long-term value for building owners. Developers who cater to the demands of the growing demographic of older people will be expected by their stakeholders to reduce energy and water consumption, reduce waste generation and increase renewable energy use for powering all seniors housing types.

OBJECTIVE

2.1.1 To demonstrate initiatives for implementing sustainable design and construction practices.

2.1.2 To take responsibility for minimising harmful outcomes on the natural environment and its resources.

2.1.3 To reduce long term running costs.

2.1.4 To reduce carbon emissions.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

2.1.5 Implement technologies and systems that reduce the demand and costs of energy.
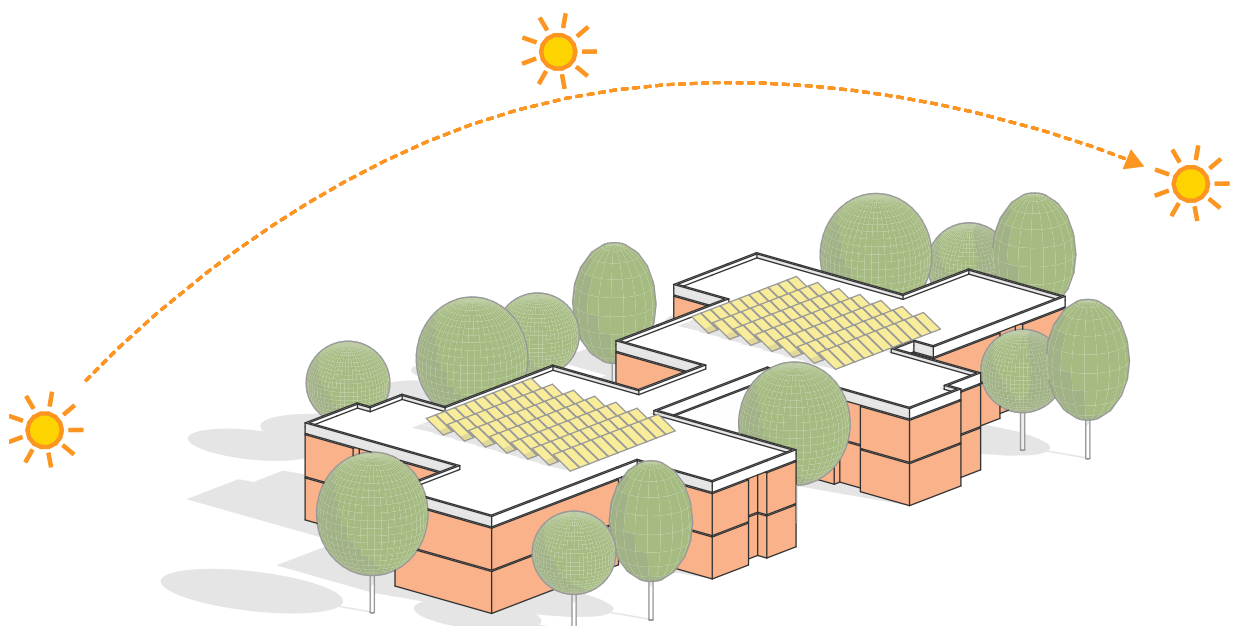
Fig 2.1.A Optimise roof surface area and orientation for solar collectors

2.2 Construction impacts

New construction will have an impact on the environment through outcomes such as air and water pollution, potentially harmful atmospheric emissions, generation of landfill waste and disruption of the natural topography, flora and fauna.

OBJECTIVE

2.2.1 To implement actions for sustainable construction practices that reduce environmental degradation, and depletion of essential natural resources of energy, water, land, air and raw materials.

2.2.2 To reduce environmental pollution and to minimise waste.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

2.2.3 Apply construction processes to cut down on waste during construction and manage the use of building materials and resources economically.

2.2.4 Choose sustainably manufactured building materials.

2.2.5 Source locally manufactured building materials over imported products.

2.2.6 Reduce plastic use during construction.

2.2.7 Protect existing on-site vegetation.

2.2.8 Recycle demolition and construction waste.

Fig 2.2.A Commencement of construction for a new residential care facility

2.3 Life-cycle and maintenance

Consider the long term impact of the completed building on the environment post-construction.

OBJECTIVE

2.3.1 To create buildings that have longevity and are comfortable, liveable and safe throughout their life cycle.

2.3.2 To extend the natural life cycle of buildings.

2.3.3 To provide safe access for regular maintenance and upkeep.

2.3.4 To preserve the integrity of the building and prevent deterioration.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

2.3.5 Use pre-finished and low maintenance robust materials.

2.3.6 Use quality and sustainable products such as door hardware for continued ease of use.

2.3.7 Use quality materials that endure to reduce landfill, replacement costs and wastage.

2.3.8 Design for end of life; disassembly, recycling and minimising waste from demolition.

Fig 2.3.A Life cycle graphic of a building

2.4 Sustainable design

Good design embodies sustainable design elements.

OBJECTIVE

2.4.1 To make building environments that are healthily connected to the outdoors, and that use natural passive principles to reduce the demand on energy by applying sustainable design features.

2.4.2 To manage water usage and avoid depletion of fresh water resources for maintenance and services.

2.4.3 To reduce the impact on the environment, by recycling materials and/or reusing existing buildings that may be suitable for adaptation or reuse.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

2.4.4 Design buildings that have operable windows, other measures may include high performance insulation, double glazing and generous shading to glazed windows and doors.

2.4.5 Design for natural cross ventilation and provide ceiling fans.

2.4.6 Design systems that capture and recycle rainwater for use in landscape irrigation as well as for building services.

2.4.7 Where possible adapt or reuse existing buildings, in particular those with heritage values to lower the impact on the environment.

Fig 2.4.A Stand alone residential care facility with extensive photovoltaics on the roof and shading to the building envelope

CHAPTER 3

3.0 Site analysis - environmental response

3.1 Environmental conditions

Sites for seniors housing developments can be large scale properties in existing urban and suburban zones which are often overlaid with multiple environmental sensitivities that will influence the planning response.

OBJECTIVE

3.1.1 To fully understand the natural physical characteristics of a site in order to formulate an appropriate built response for the development of the land.

3.1.2 To provide increased protection from extreme climatic or environmental events in buildings occupied by people who are particularly vulnerable because of age, illness and acute disability.

3.1.3 To manage and preserve existing natural features such as trees, overland flow paths, riparian corridors, and sensitive environments.

3.1.4 To identify the historical character of the site and preserve the heritage significance of the area.

3.1.5 To deliver seniors housing that acknowledges and respects Aboriginal cultural heritage.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

3.1.6 Engage expert consultants for specific advice (bushfire, flooding, riparian, arborist, heritage and traditional knowledge holders etc), reports and actions affecting and informing the initial design as part of the primary site analysis.

3.1.7 Identify and map the size and required protection zone for flood and bushfire safety.

3.1.8 Identify and map the size and required protection zone of all mature and valuable trees, with the intent to keep as many mature trees as possible. Aim to achieve a generous, mature tree canopy cover over the site for the completed development.

3.1.9 Provide opportunity for regeneration of natural environments by allowing suitably sized setbacks to accommodate restorative planting to a scale that reflects the original treescape.

3.1.10 Consider existing stormwater systems and overland flow paths and provide robust stormwater management strategies to protect ecosystems, manage run-off and pollutants, and to protect vulnerable residents from flooding.

Fig 3.1.A Riparian corridor

3.2 Planning for environmental constraints - Case study examples

SIGNIFICANT VEGETATION - CASE STUDY

In this example, remnant rare forest and significant Aboriginal meeting place tree clusters were identified on site.

1 Significant tree cluster and tree protection curtilage required

Design outcome found in positioning buildings around tree protection areas,forming courtyards, recording the heritage place making on the site while preserving remnant trees.

1 Views through development to significant trees

Fig 3.2.A Design for tree preservation

BUSHFIRE AFFECTED LAND - CASE STUDY

In this example, expert bushfire advice determines that only half of the site can be used for seniors housing.

1 National park and bushfire threat

2 Road for evacuation path

3 Extent of Bushfire Attack Levels (BAL)
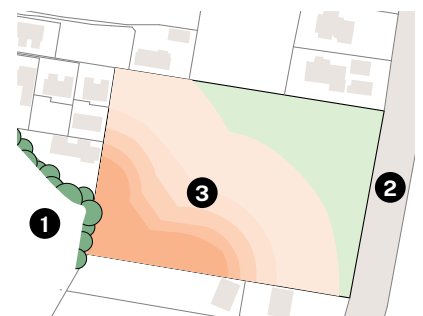
Design outcome positions residential care facility close to the main road with generous landscaped curtilage which is maintained as Bushfire Asset Protection Zone.

1 National park and bushfire threat

2 Landscaped gardens as Bushfire Asset Protection Zone
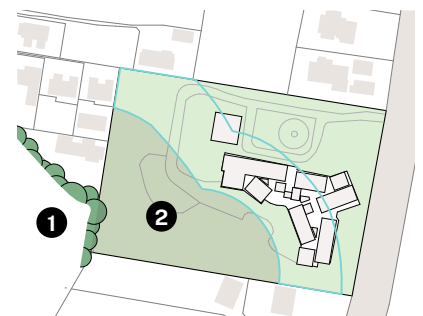
Fig 3.2.B Design for bushfire event

3.2 Planning for environmental constraints - Case study examples
continued

FLOOD AFFECTED LAND - CASE STUDY

In this example, flood studies indicate potential flooding from extreme rain events which will impact the location of future buildings on the site.

1 Flooding
(from severe stormwater over existing site)
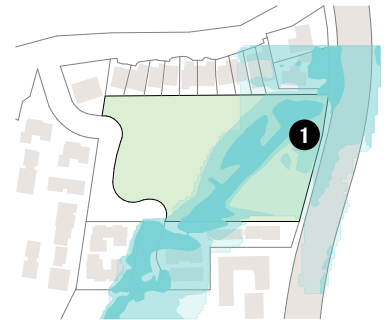
Solution to design stormwater catchment channel connected to stormwater system to manage peak maximum flood event and to determine location of possible building footprint.

1 New drainage channel

2 Location of future building
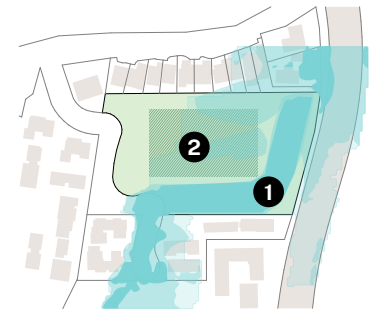
Fig 3.2.C Design to contain and re-direct stormwater

Fig 3.2.D Aerial view of completed development showing dry creek bed to channel stormwater into culvert located under carpark

CHAPTER 4

4.0 Site analysis - urban response
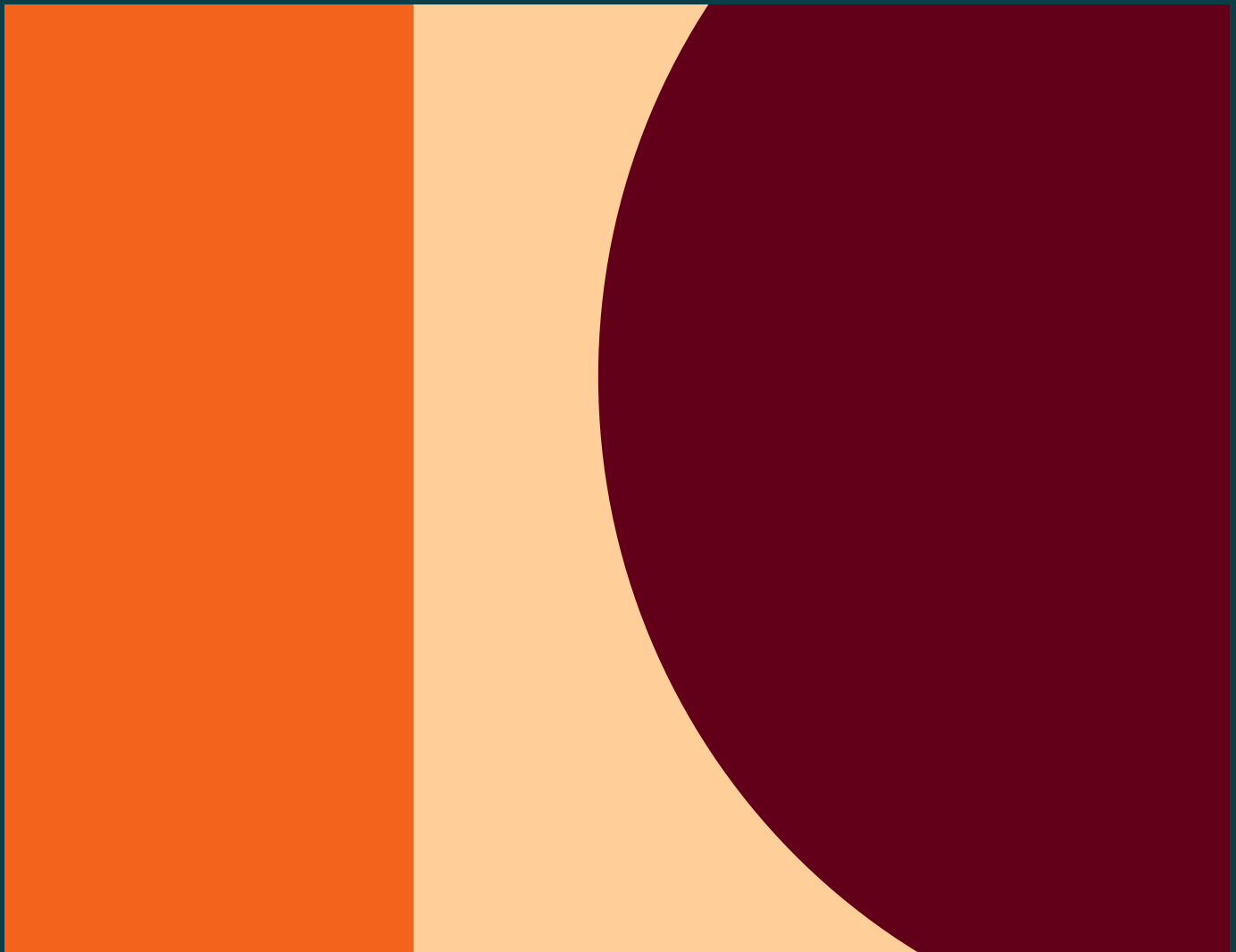
4.1 Urban identity

Seniors housing can introduce an atypical building type into the locality with a different scale and street presentation from neighbouring properties.

New seniors housing developments should be sympathetic and responsive to it's context and local environment and uplift the quality of the neighbourhood.

OBJECTIVE

4.1.1 To take cues from the surrounding neighbourhood to introduce a materiality and articulated built form that is complimentary but provides a building with it's own unique character and identity.

4.1.2 To acknowledge any heritage values in the surrounding environment, and respond with a considered design solution.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

4.1.3 Provide design excellence that inspires and is proudly integrated with the local neighbourhood.

4.1.4 Design to uplift existing and future qualities and character of the neighbourhood.

4.1.5 The design response should create a relationship between the existing context, heritage significant site or building and the proposed new work.

Fig 4.1.A Stand alone new residential care facility integrates sympathetically with neighbourhood character

4.2 Typology and scale

Seniors housing as a specific type of development can introduce a different scale and form into a surrounding area.

The modulation of the bulk and form of new buildings of larger scale than the surrounding context should reference the local character and urban arrangement to acknowledge its surroundings.

OBJECTIVE

4.2.1 To compliment the existing surrounding built character.

4.2.2 To sensitively integrate a new development into its surrounding area and to ensure the building scale and form supports the local context and future character of the area.

4.2.3 To determine the significance of land surrounding a heritage item or place, and the extent of curtilage that is essential to retain for the interpretation of its heritage significance.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

4.2.4 Map the pattern of existing adjacent development and key features surrounding the site and determine their influence on the articulation of the built form.

4.2.5 Reference front setbacks of neighbouring development and acknowledge the established street pattern.

4.2.6 Manage the scale of large building floorplates with pragmatic internal planning that sensibly informs the façade and external articulation.

4.2.7 With expert guidance, identify any heritage significant sites or buildings and consider how heritage significant view corridors or curtilages can be preserved.

① **Driveways to front entry forecourt and to side service access**

② **Wide street frontage compared with neighbouring properties**

③ **Generous combined side setback** (between new development edge and neighbouring houses)
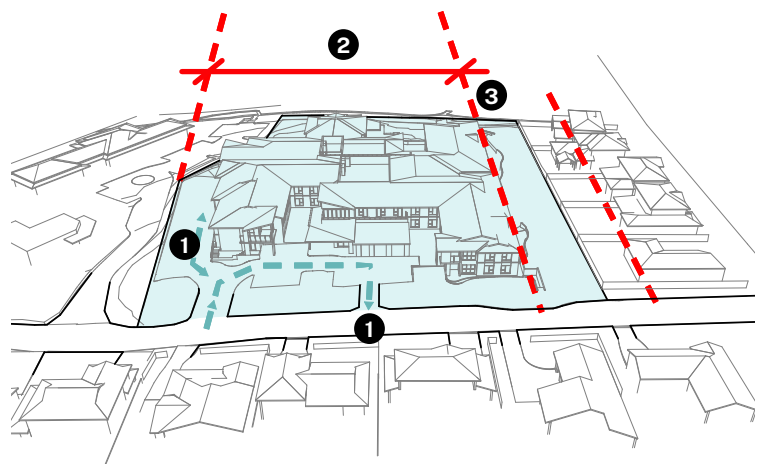
Fig 4.2.A Large site area for a new stand alone residential care facility with large floor plate introduces an atypical scale to the neighbourhood relative to smaller neighbouring properties

4.3 Setbacks

Generous setbacks are opportunities to enhance the landscape setting for the enjoyment and participation of residents within purposeful landscape spaces. Setbacks also observe the privacy of the adjacent neighbouring properties.

OBJECTIVE

4.3.1 To maximise the landscape curtilage around the site for quality planting, establishment of tree canopies and creation of useful outdoor spaces in addition to boundary screen planting.

4.3.2 To develop new buildings in an established historic context, within a heritage conservation area, adjacent to a heritage item, or on a heritage site, that complements the existing urban character and adds value.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

4.3.3 Determine setbacks from the location of neighbouring properties, their private outside open space and primary views to and from the development.

4.3.4 Provide setbacks to respect neighbours privacy, overshadowing and existing amenity.

4.3.5 Investigate and respond to any heritage context or values, and provide considered setbacks that are complimentary to significant buildings, views or natural features, and that preserve curtilages needed for heritage interpretation.

Provide setbacks to respect neighbours' privacy.

Fig 4.3.A Landscaped setback includes screen planting and wide footpath

1 Screen planting
2 Usable outdoor space also enables mature tree growth
3 Resident and neighbour privacy
4 Neighbours private outdoor space

Neighbour

Exceed minimum setbacks

New residential care facility
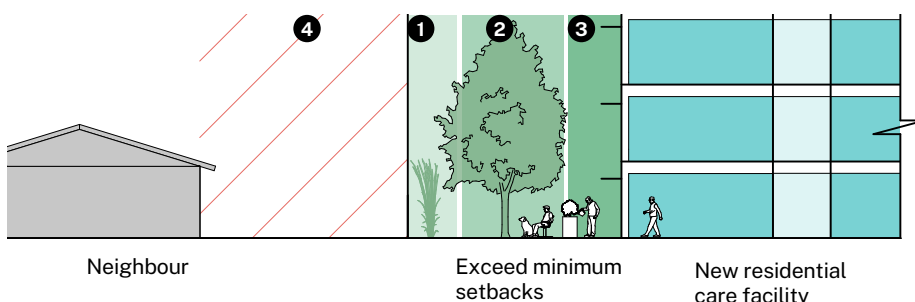
Fig 4.3.B Generous setback provides improved amenity for both neighbours and new developments

4.4 Height

The height controls for a new development are prescribed in planning legislation, but building elements such as roof forms that define height should to be varied to create visual interest.

OBJECTIVE

4.4.1 To provide variance of roof forms and screened service areas to provide articulation and modulation of the building envelope.

4.4.2 To conceal services located on the roof and the exposure of plant machinery to the street.

4.4.3 To provide acoustic screening to soften the impact of plant noise and vibration.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

4.4.4 Design articulated roofs that add visual interest to the building outline.

4.4.5 Define screened service enclosures for plant equipment that can also be safely accessed for maintenance.

4.4.6 Take into consideration any adjacencies to heritage significant items and their relationship to building envelope, roof articulation and character.

DESIGN CRITERIA

Height 9.5m

Height 11.5m
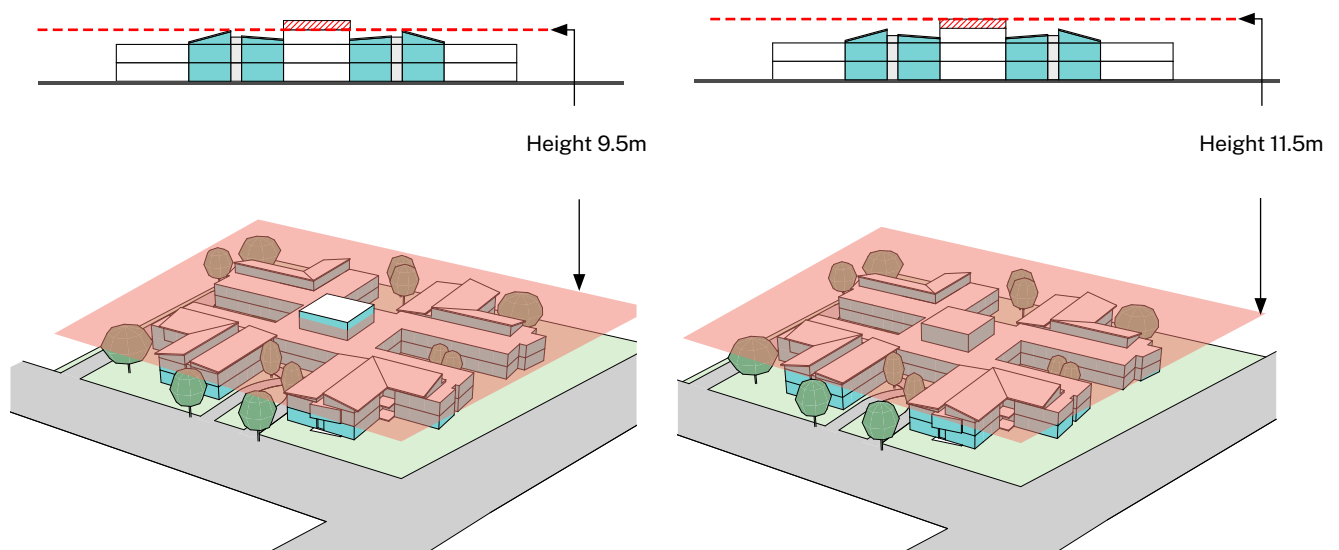
Fig 4.4.A Development standard for a maximum permissible building height in zones where residential flat buildings are not permitted is 9.5m. Maximum permissible building height for roof service equipment is 11.5m for 20% of surface area of roof as defined in the SEPP (Housing) 2021

4.5 Storeys

A third storey in zones where residential flat buildings are not permitted must be set back from the side and rear boundaries.

OBJECTIVE

4.5.1 To prevent overlooking, and to preserve the privacy of neighbouring properties.

4.5.2 To provide a generous side and rear setback for landscaping and creation of meaningful outdoor space.

4.5.3 To avoid overshadowing to neighbouring properties.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

4.5.4 A third storey must be set back within a 45 degree plane measured from the ground line on the side and rear boundaries.

4.5.5 All storeys can align with the setback of the third to provide a generous landscaped space.

DESIGN CRITERIA
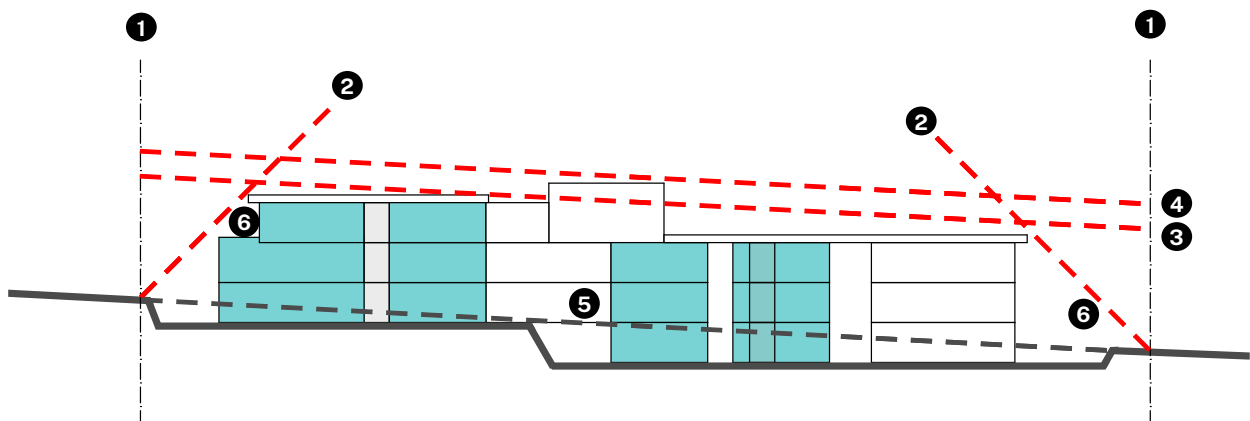
Fig 4.5.A Development standard for a third storey setback in zones where residential flat buildings are not permitted as defined in the SEPP (Housing) 2021

❶ Site boundary

❷ 45 degree line to establish position of third storey setback

❸ Height 9.5m

❹ Height 11.5m for 20% of roof area for service plant

❺ Natural ground line

❻ Step third storey back OR align building wholly within 45 degree setback to provide a generous landscaped outdoor area in the setback

4.6 Social infrastructure

People experience the characteristics of their neighbourhood differently according to their values and social, cultural and economic references. The diversity of a neighbourhood needs to be researched for neighbours to be comfortable with new seniors housing development.

OBJECTIVE

4.6.1 To provide development that is acceptable to neighbours and the local community, considers existing and desired future character.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

4.6.2 Research and obtain informed feedback regarding local traffic patterns, community expectations and insights.

4.6.3 Be informed about and integrate new development with future developments and local community projects.

4.6.4 Understand the social context and consult the local community.

Fig 4.6.A Seniors housing must be relevant to culturally diverse communities

4.7 Local character

The location of seniors housing is one of the most important factors considered by residents when downsizing and moving to supportive care communities.

OBJECTIVE

4.7.1 To deliver new facilities within established suburbs and to provide a diversity of retirement living and aged care options for senior residents.

4.7.2 To support Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and Indigenous people.

4.7.3 To make it possible for older people to remain living in their familiar neighbourhood near known health and community services, friends and family.

4.7.4 To give older people a variety of choice in where they live.

4.7.5 Observe and understand the uniqueness of the character, identity, and heritage values of the surrounding built environment.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

4.7.6 Ensure that the development has a point of difference and individual identity.

4.7.7 Avoid the 'cookie cutter' or 'one size fits all' generalist type of seniors housing.

4.7.8 The design should respond to any heritage values whether natural, built, or cultural.

Understand the uniqueness and character of the surrounding built environment.

Fig 4.7.A CASS (Chinese Australian Services Society) aged care

CHAPTER 5

5.0 Heritage

5.0 Heritage

Items, sites and localities listed or noted as having heritage significance are important and may cover heritage values beyond the built environment that include natural heritage values, Aboriginal cultural values, gardens, landscapes, archaeology etc. It is important to identify and conserve these heritage values through a well considered design response that takes into account the heritage significance, character, texture, grain, massing, story and nature of a particular site to ensure the conservation of the these values into the future.

OBJECTIVE

5.1 To identify and protect items with heritage significance and value that are listed on the State Heritage Register or in a local environmental plan.

5.2 To investigate and understand what is important about a place, by undertaking an analysis of a place, building, archaeological site, garden, landscape, or place of heritage or Aboriginal cultural significance, and to identify significant fabric.

5.3 To determine the significance of land surrounding a heritage item or place, and the extent of curtilage that is essential to retain for the interpretation of its heritage significance.

5.4 To develop new buildings in an established historic context, within a heritage conservation area, adjacent to a heritage item, or on a heritage site with heritage values, that complement the existing urban character and adds value.

5.5 To preserve the integrity, character and fine detail of heritage significant buildings. Adaptation or adaptive reuse offers new uses for heritage or culturally significant places. The new use needs to be compatible with the heritage values, retain its heritage character and conserve significant fabric, while still being able to introduce new services, as well as modifications and additions.

5.6 To refurbish heritage buildings to extend their useful life, and reduce the environmental impact of new construction.

5.7 To repurpose heritage buildings and places to be accessible, safe and to meet required compliance standards without compromising the existing built character.
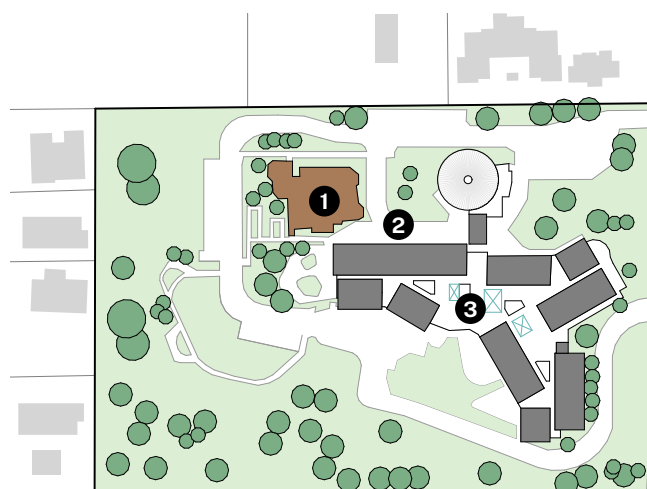
Fig 5.0.A Site plan

1 Heritage item

2 Curtilage around heritage item

3 New development

5.0 Heritage continued

Developments that embrace existing heritage values and creatively adapt and reuse a heritage significant site or building, facilitate a link from the past to the present and project into the future, and in their own way, contribute to the constantly changing historic environment.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

5.8 Identify and protect the heritage values of identified heritage significant items.

5.9 Research and understand the heritage significance, era and importance of maintaining detailing and materiality.

5.10 Identify and map the heritage curtilage and sightline view corridors to and from heritage items, and develop a strategy to retain significant views and landscape buffers between the existing and proposed.

5.11 Design with expert guidance to establish an appropriate strategy for the preservation of heritage significant items or places and the appropriate design response for new developments.

5.12 Refer to *The Burra Charter – the Australia ICOMOS charter for the conservation of places of cultural significance* for appropriate conservation strategies that aim to retain relationships that contribute or are sympathetic to the heritage or cultural significance of the site, place or building.

Fig 5.0.B High density independent living and aged care development including heritage item and significant landscape

Fig 5.0.C Independent living in refurbished heritage item with new adjacent independent living development

5.0 Heritage continued

Repurposing heritage significant sites or buildings for adaptive re-use provides a rich and meaningful built context for older people to enjoy and live with.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

5.13 New developments in a heritage conservation area, adjacent to or on a heritage significant site should address the predominant scale (height, bulk, density, grain) of the setting and then respond sympathetically. Consider reducing scale by breaking long stretches of wall with openings, or indentation that reflects the general surrounding typology. Understanding existing street setbacks, and in particular setbacks on upper levels could help reduce bulk and create a transitional link between different building scales.

5.14 The design response needs to take into consideration the identified heritage values, context, character, setting, form, scale, bulk, massing etc and cross reference the design guidance provided in the relevant chapters and parts of this document.

5.15 The design response should seek to adapt a heritage place or item to a new use while conserving the heritage values and significance.

5.16 With expert guidance, appropriately and sensitively overlay new work, so as to differentiate between old and new. Consider the connection between the heritage significant fabric and the new development and provide a clear and sympathetic transition that allows for the interpretation of where the heritage component begins and ends.

Fig 5.0.D Sightlines from the street through the developed site to the heritage item

CHAPTER 6

6.0 Care, wellbeing and community

6.1 Care

"The power of community to create health is far greater than any physician, clinic or hospital"

MARK HYMAN

Seniors housing is required to cater for a range of care levels. Usually low levels of care services are required for independent living units, but as residents age, their care requirements increase to potentially very high levels, to manage issues such as dementia and high physical dependency, and often both.

Seniors housing providers have 'models of care' that define the way they deliver care services to their residents. The model of care can also be influenced by social factors such as the demographic of the residents-cultural, ethnic or religious.

OBJECTIVE

6.1.1 To realise the purpose of the building and the development.

6.1.2 To provide contemporary buildings for residential care or independent living units that support ageing in place.

6.1.3 To understand and translate the care model into spatial and organisational maps to optimise utilisation of the site.

6.1.4 To meet regulatory compliance for safety and accessibility as well as to provide high quality design and building character.

6.1.5 To provide culturally appropriate accommodation for care and supportive services.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

6.1.6 Design buildings that promote health and have good cross ventilation, access to sunlight and fresh air.

6.1.7 Integrate landscape planting with the building to capture the positive health benefits of nature.

6.1.8 Design for social connection and opportunities for people to meet and interact easily.

6.1.9 Design to exceed minimum standards to achieve optimal living and working environments.

6.1.10 Acknowledge the specific identity of the organisation.

Fig 6.1.A Resident room with generous views and operable windows

6.2 Physical and mental wellbeing

Good design results in a healthy building and has positive psychological benefits for its occupants.

OBJECTIVE

6.2.1 To design buildings that reduce stress and promote wellbeing to support physical and mental health.

6.2.2 To provide opportunities and places for residents to be socially connected, to reduce loneliness and isolation.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

6.2.3 Design generous spaces that offer comfort, can adapt to flexible furnishing layouts and ease of movement and have abundant daylight and views out.

6.2.4 Create buildings that balance proportion and scale with enduring materiality and performance.

Fig 6.2.A Provide meaningful outdoor space that residents will use and enjoy

6.3 Mobility and access

As we age, our mobility generally diminishes and consequently opportunities for wellbeing and social activities may become limited.

OBJECTIVE

6.3.1 To encourage mobility of residents outside of their immediate private space.

6.3.2 To design for all levels of ability focusing on what people can do and not what they cannot.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

6.3.3 Design to maintain positive connections between resident communities and the outdoor environment.

6.3.4 Design for safe and barrier free access to encourage residents to get outside.

6.3.5 Circulation paths and corridors are also places for social interaction and should include places to sit and gather in small groups.

Fig 6.3.A Designing for seniors includes level floor finishes and thresholds

6.4 Environmental connection

Diminished mobility can mean longer periods indoors.

OBJECTIVE

6.4.1 To provide healthy interior environments that provide good daylight, natural ventilation and that support connections with the outside environment.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

6.4.2 Design for optimal connection to the outside environment for views, daylight and for residents to be able to experience atmospheric and sensory changes in the outdoor world.

6.4.3 Design for good solar orientation, openable windows and access to terraces, balconies and roof gardens.

Fig 6.4.A Residential care facility with skylit corridor to vary quality of light inside, provides glimpses of the sky and maximises access to daylight

6.5 Universal design

Inclusive design considers and works for all people. It is inclusive of mobility, dexterity, sensory, and communication impairments; learning disabilities; continence needs; and people whose mental well-being benefits from being supported by thoughtfully crafted environments.

OBJECTIVE

6.5.1 To provide buildings that promote dignity, respect and pride of place.

6.5.2 To provide equitable design for all.

6.5.3 To de-institutionalise the character of the building with good design.

6.5.4 To provide a place that inspires joy and offers moments of delight.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

6.5.5 Provide frequent rest points in corridors, lift lobbies and on outside walking paths.

6.5.6 Public and shared communal areas should have toilets that are easy to identify and reach.

6.5.7 Promote quality interior design using a variety of materials, colours and textures.

6.5.8 Provide clearly legible and identifiable signage.

6.5.9 Provide level thresholds between inside and outside.

6.5.10 Provide good lighting and luminance of signage and graphics.

Provide places that inspire joy and offer moments of delight.

CHAPTER 7

7.0 Design for physical ageing and dementia

7.1 Design for physical ageing

Empathetic design is to understand the connection between physical aspects of ageing and the emotional needs of an older person.

Some of the outcomes of physical ageing include:

- Diminishing eye-sight
- Loss of balance
- Confusion
- Muscle weakness
- Poor sleep leading to anxiety, vagueness or poor concentration

- Hearing impairment
- Loss of confidence
- Continence problems
- Loss of dexterity
- Sensitivity to cold

OBJECTIVE

7.1.1 To provide easily navigable spaces for the safety of aged residents and to help reduce fear of falling.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

7.1.2 | Design for safety from falling with:

- Slip-resistant, level floor surfaces with particular attention to exterior door thresholds and junctions where flooring material changes.
- Good colour and/or tonal contrast around doors to clearly delineate the openings.
- Use of single colours for surfaces. Avoid heavily contrasted patterned surfaces.

- Considered lighting to manage changes in lighting ambiance and intensity, to minimise deep shadows and provide a variety of light sources.

Provide easily navigable spaces for aged residents to reduce fear of falling.
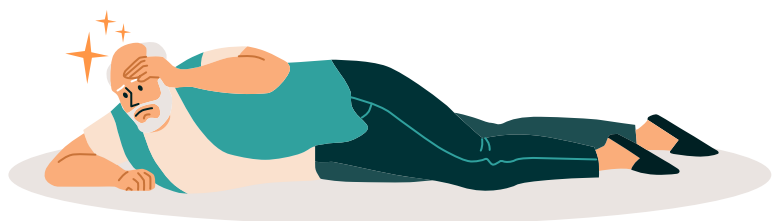
7.1 Design for physical ageing continued

OBJECTIVE

7.1.3 To provide environmental comfort.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

7.1.4 | Design for environmental comfort with:

- Excellent thermal insulation
- High performance glazing
- Window coverings
- Orientation-specific external shading
- Ceiling fans
- Cross ventilation
- Passive ventilation
- Weather seals and draught minimisation
- Provision of entry door air-locks

OBJECTIVE

7.1.5 To reduce stress from noise and to support hearing.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

7.1.6 | Design for auditory comfort:

- Provision of acoustic and non-reverberant surfaces, particularly in communal and gathering areas.
- Use of acoustic linings to walls and ceilings; and soft furnishings and window coverings to soften sound reverberation.
- Minimise the use of excessive hard surfaces.
- Examination of varied and complex noise sources of mechanical services, appliances, televisions and other audio in a single space.
- Fitting doors and cabinets with soft-close hardware to avoid slamming.

Reduce stress from noise and support hearing.
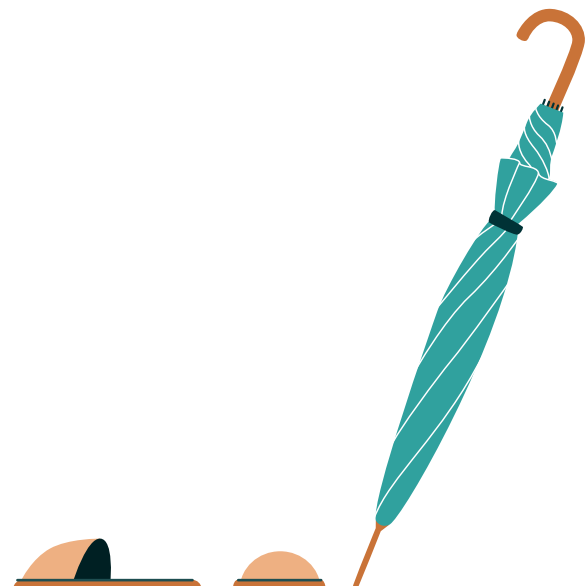
7.2 Governmental review

The Royal Commission into Aged Care promotes (amongst other things):

- Care, dignity and respect
- Valuing care workers
- Dementia support

OBJECTIVE

7.2.1 To respect cultural uniqueness for all aged residents.

7.2.2 To transition away from large institutional design settings and create small scale domestic settings.

7.2.3 To follow the 'small household' model of care, housing 6-16 people in a cluster.

7.2.4 To provide primary health, allied health services and wellness for residential aged care.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

7.2.5 Design Home-like environments with:

- De-institutionalised interiors, comfortable and inviting spaces and warm textures.
- A domestic character and scale.
- Meaningful artwork without reflective glass.
- Multiple places for rest and reflection.
- Easy and unrestricted access to the outside, gardens and landscape.
- Inspired design quality that shows respect for lives long lived.

7.2.6 Design buildings with familiar domestic character:

- Use verandahs for shading to encourage residents to use the outside. The verandah or porch, with or without posts and railings is also a recognizable feature of 'home' and provides shading to the building.
- Use exterior textures and finishes that have a recognisable and familiar residential character.
- Provide fenestration and external doors that align with residential homes and are not predominantly commercial.
- Consider deep eaves and overhangs that provide shade, shadow patterns and rain protection for physical comfort and interest.

7.3 Design for dementia

In addition to physical ageing, people with dementia can experience the following difficulties:

- Fear arising from feeling an unfamiliarity or not recognising things, activities, places or people
- 'Inappropriate' behaviours
- Intense emotional outbursts
- Wandering and the need to keep moving around
- Heightened confusion
- Frustration
- Heightened anxiety
- Breakdown of daily routines
- Loss of ability to speak
- Loss of ability to read or interpret visual images

- Lost or poor communication skills
- Personality changes
- Loss of enjoyment
- Depression
- Apathy
- Difficulty understanding spatial relationships
- Poor judgement
- Social withdrawal

OBJECTIVE

7.3.1 To provide easily navigable spaces for aged residents with deteriorating perception.

7.3.2 To observe the needs of people with impaired cognition, to:

- Alleviate anxiety and confusion.
- Support Wayfinding.
- Provide safe environments.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

7.3.3 | Design to aid visual perception with:

- Selection of floor surfaces – avoid shiny or reflective surfaces, avoid contrasting patterns in flooring.
- Avoidance of sharp changes in contrast and colour at borders and junctions between floor finishes.
- Provision of colour and tonal contrasts between walls and floor junctions, and doorways, benchtops and floors.
- Sufficient lighting levels.

7.3 Design for dementia continued

OBJECTIVE

7.3.4 To provide legible environments that minimise confusion and fear of getting lost.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

7.3.5 | Design for wayfinding with:

- Visual cues and/or clear sightlines for services facilities such as toilets, bathrooms, laundries, kitchens, lifts and entrances.

- Planning clarity between spaces.

- Clear legible signage – maintain eye level position, large font sizes, contrasting text and background and well lit.

- Keep signage simple with supporting, relatable graphic icon.

OBJECTIVE

7.3.6 To provide engaging environments with opportunities to experience environmental stimuli.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

7.3.7 | Design to support memory with availability for sensory interaction with the environment with:

- Strong connection with the outdoors for feeling the warmth of the sun, summer breezes, humidity of summer, chill of autumn etc.

- Access to smell the rain, herb gardens and atmospheric changes in the climate and season.

- Access to sounds such as water, birds, crunch of gravel underfoot, rain falling etc.

- Encouragement for enjoying food with the accompaniment of fresh air and daylight.

- Provision of strong colour and visual contrast.

- Provision of activity gardens, vegetable growing, potting etc.

- Provision of textural interest in surfaces, warm and cool finishes, use of natural materials such as stone and meaningful soft furnishings.

7.3 Design for dementia continued

DESIGN GUIDANCE

7.3.8 | SMALL HOUSE MODEL

This model is for a small group of residents to share a 'household' that reflects the character and scale of a domestic house.

There is often a 'front door' and entry hallway and the familiar sequence of spaces and privacy gradients that make up a typical house.

1 Entry door to individual households differentiated by colour

2 Entry door to individual households differentiated by colour

Fig 7.3.A Small household model

> A small group of residents sharing a 'household' that reflects the character and scale of a domestic house.
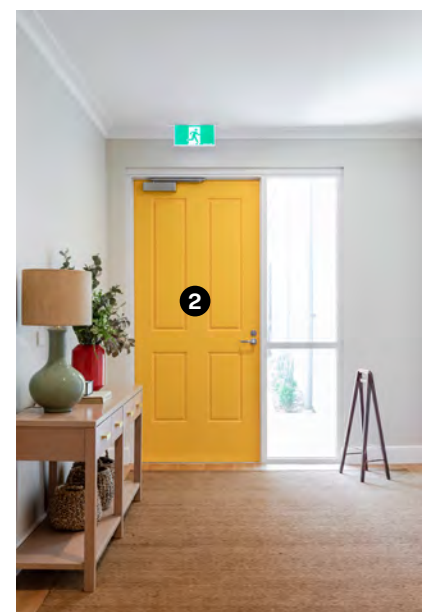
Fig 7.3.B Familiar residential character to household entries and use of colour

7.3 Design for dementia continued

Example of small house model comprised of 4 households with 8 residents in each, grouped around a common service spine.

Fig 7.3.C Concept aerial view of households grouped around courtyards

In this example, each 'household' group is arranged around an internal courtyard to let natural light into the corridors and common spaces.

Fig 7.3.D Courtyard concept

7.3 Design for dementia continued

Example of a small house model comprised of 4 households with 8 residents in each, grouped around a common service spine.

1 Verandah

2 Service driveway to common service core

3 Front entry door

4 Pedestrian access to front door entrances

5 Central courtyard with glazing

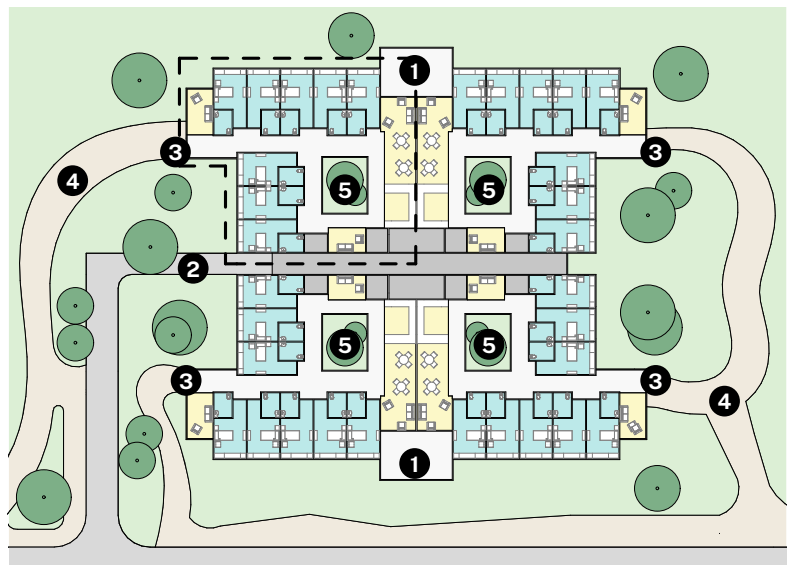⌐ ⌐ Single household

Fig 7.3.E Concept plan of household groups and courtyards

In this example, the back-of-house services area connects two households with service driveway access.

1 Verandah

2 Service driveway to shared service core

3 Front entry door

4 Pedestrian access to front door entrances

⌐ ⌐ Single household
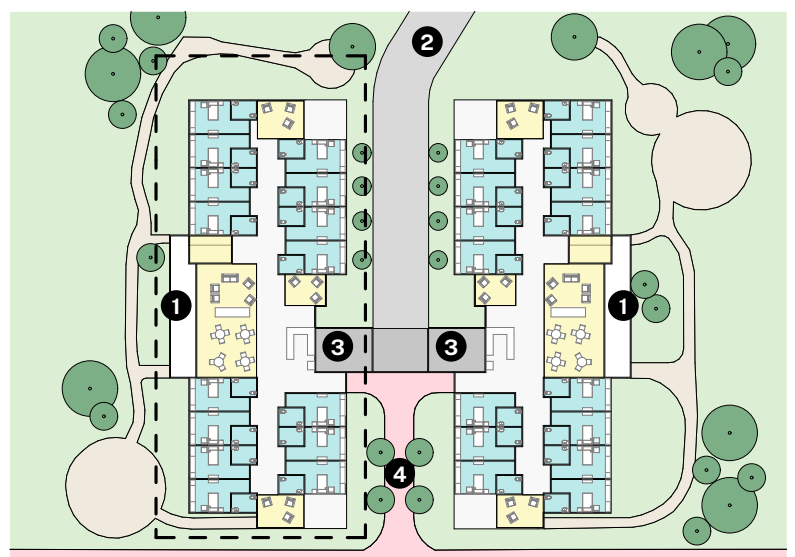
Fig 7.3.F Concept plan of household layout

7.3 Design for dementia continued

Fig 7.3.G Verandahs offer shade and protected access to the external environment to entice residents outdoors as well as providing familiarity in the Australian context

Fig 7.3.H Resident laundry (can also be used for commercial operations) with access to outdoor washing line

7.3 Design for dementia continued

Fig 7.3.I Resident room with window seat and balcony access to maximise daylight and views out

Fig 7.3.J Resident-friendly kitchen

Fig 7.3.K Living room with domestic character and scale

Density
and related design principles

Part 3

8.0 Options for different types and configurations of densities
for seniors housing

Every seniors housing project of any scale or size will challenge design teams to consider the appropriateness of the development in the chosen locality.

A seniors housing development is generally either:

01 A stand-alone residential care facility, or

02 Independent living units as:

   A Low density

   B Medium density

   C High density

OR

A combination of 01 and 02, as a co-located development as either:

03 A separate residential care facility building surrounded by single storey villas or apartment buildings, or

04 A multi-storey development with integrated residential care facility on dedicated floors

05 A mixed use development that may include a combination of apartments, residential care, community facilities, retail and commercial uses.

COMMUNITY

RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITY

INDEPENDENT LIVING UNITS

Seniors Housing
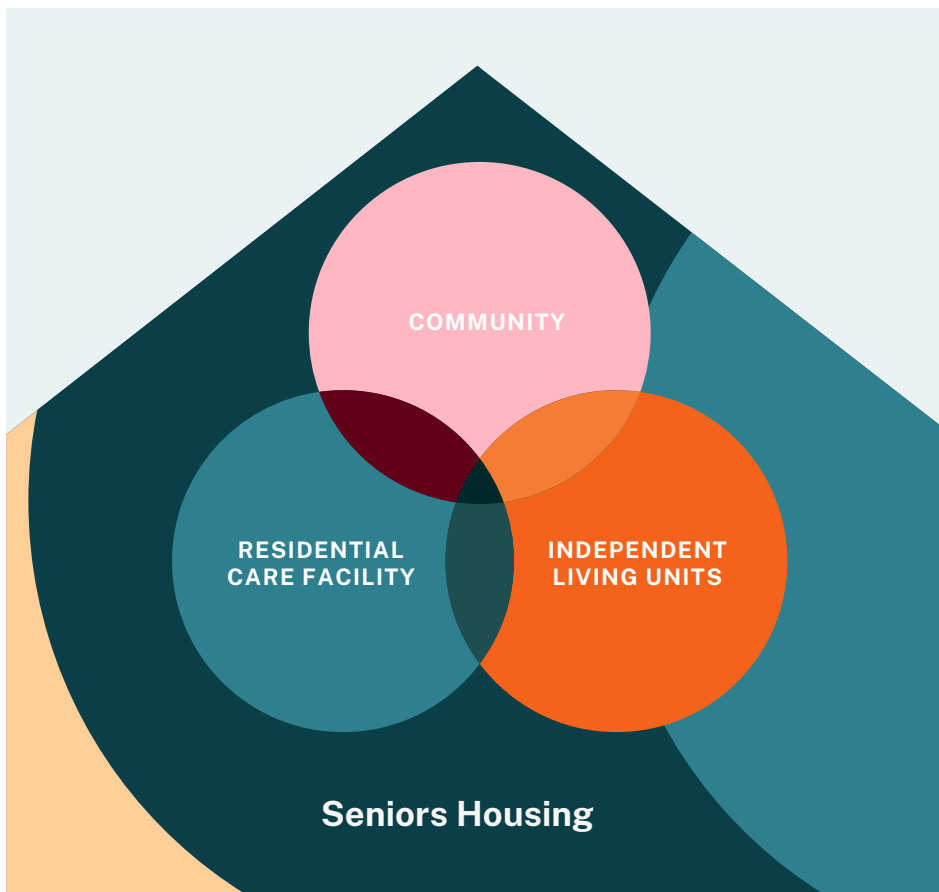
A community component of internal and external shared spaces for group activities and socialising is typically included alongside the above configurations and provides essential opportunities for social connection for residents.

9.0 Determining density

The land zoning of a site will inform the allowable density for the development and provide a framework for calculating the maximum site potential for seniors housing under the SEPP (Housing) 2021. The density is partly determined by the permissible floor space ratio or FSR, which is based on the type of development and if the zoning permits residential flat buildings and/or shop top housing. The density level can either be **low, medium,** or **high,** and can be assessed with the help of the zoning checklist in Part 4 of this guide.

Low density seniors housing is generally single storey, with generous landscaping. Low density FSR is typically 0:5:1 or less.

Fig 9.0.A Single storey residential care cottage

Medium density seniors housing is often found in residential localities with residential zonings. Medium density FSR is typically 0:5:1 or more.

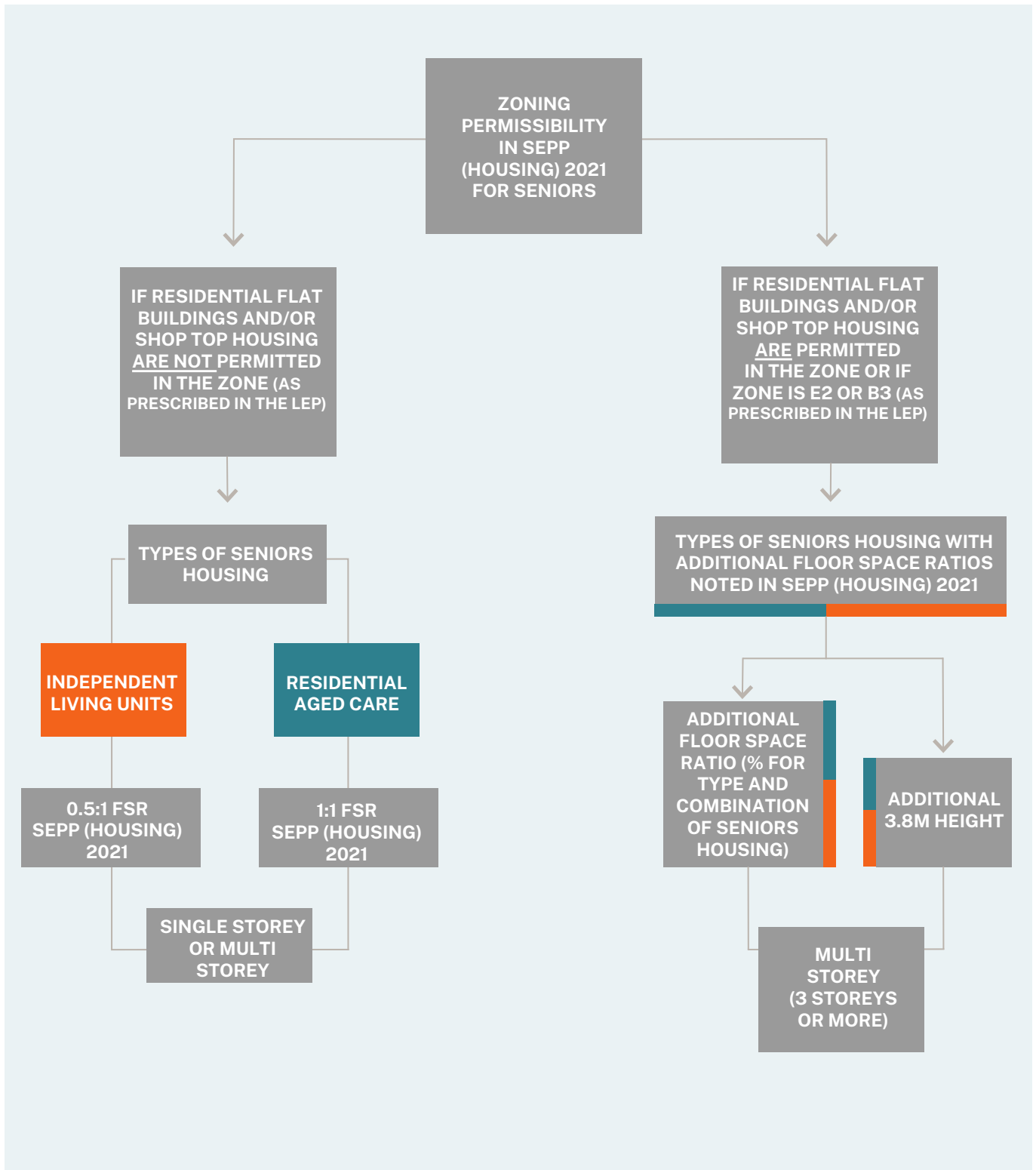**Fig 9.0.B** Two storey independent living units

High density seniors housing can be developed on land with zoning that permits multi storey residential buildings or is an E2 or B3 commercial zone. High density FSR is typically more than 1:1.

Fig 9.0.C 6 storey co-located residential care and independent living apartments

9.0 Determining density continued

The density of a development is governed by the land zoning of the site

```
                    ZONING
                    PERMISSIBILITY
                    IN SEPP
                    (HOUSING) 2021
                    FOR SENIORS

  IF RESIDENTIAL FLAT                IF RESIDENTIAL FLAT
  BUILDINGS AND/OR                   BUILDINGS AND/OR
  SHOP TOP HOUSING                   SHOP TOP HOUSING
  ARE NOT PERMITTED                  ARE PERMITTED
  IN THE ZONE (AS                    IN THE ZONE OR IF
  PRESCRIBED IN THE LEP)             ZONE IS E2 OR B3 (AS
                                     PRESCRIBED IN THE LEP)

  TYPES OF SENIORS                   TYPES OF SENIORS HOUSING WITH
  HOUSING                            ADDITIONAL FLOOR SPACE RATIOS
                                     NOTED IN SEPP (HOUSING) 2021

  INDEPENDENT    RESIDENTIAL         ADDITIONAL
  LIVING UNITS   AGED CARE           FLOOR SPACE      ADDITIONAL
                                     RATIO (% FOR     3.8M HEIGHT
                                     TYPE AND
  0.5:1 FSR      1:1 FSR             COMBINATION
  SEPP (HOUSING) SEPP (HOUSING)      OF SENIORS
  2021           2021                HOUSING)

        SINGLE STOREY                        MULTI
        OR MULTI                             STOREY
        STOREY                               (3 STOREYS
                                             OR MORE)
```

10.0 Designing for different densities

OBJECTIVE

10.1 To deliver a range of developments of varying size, scale and typology that will provide choice for ageing communities to move to.

10.2 To deliver seniors housing developments of significant scale that are becoming more common and sought after in urban areas.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

10.3 Independent living unit developments can be multi-storied buildings, two or three storey medium density duplexes or single storey low density clusters of villas.

10.4 Low density villas are single storey attached or detached dwellings often with integrated carparking, accessed from an internal road network.

10.5 Medium density independent living development is often two or three storey on sites where residential flat buildings are not permitted and has multiple dwellings, usually accessed from a single driveway to carparking.

10.6 High density developments are usually on sites where residential flat buildings are permitted and, in instances where the Chapter 4 of SEPP (Housing) 2021' to align with upcoming amendment to consolidate SEPP 65 into Housing SEPP is applied, they will be assessed against criteria in the Apartment Design Guide.

Some flexibility with the Apartment Design Guide will be required for independent living unit developments for seniors housing.

10.7 Residential care facilities are often multi-storied large level floorplates that require the external building form to be carefully articulated and managed.

Fig 10.0.A Co-located residential care and independent living with a community centre with a range of different heights and building forms

11.0 Guidance examples
for seniors housing configurations with different densities

01   **Stand-alone residential care facility**

02A   **Stand-alone independent living unit development low density**

02B   **Stand-alone independent living unit development medium density**

02C   **Stand-alone independent living unit development high density**

03   **Co-located residential care facility and independent living unit development low density village**

04   **Co-located residential care facility and independent living unit development high density**

05   **Mixed use development**

Guidance examples for
seniors housing configurations

01

Stand-alone residential care facility

Characteristics of typical residential care facility:

- Large continuous floor plates for accessibility

- Articulated into care wings/households to deinstitutionalise the scale of the accommodation

- Shared common core and centralised services for efficiency

- Landscaped exterior living spaces

- Prominent front entry and street address

- Separate service driveway to loading and services entry

FIG. EXAMPLE
3 Storey building used solely for residential care facility occupies the whole site as a stand-alone building.

🔵 Residential care facility

🟠 Independent living units

---

1 In this example, each floor is comprised of four resident care wings arranged around a central core

2 Entry forecourt

3 Service driveway

Fig 11.0.A Plan

1 Central core
(with service equipment & lift over-run on roof)

2 Entry forecourt
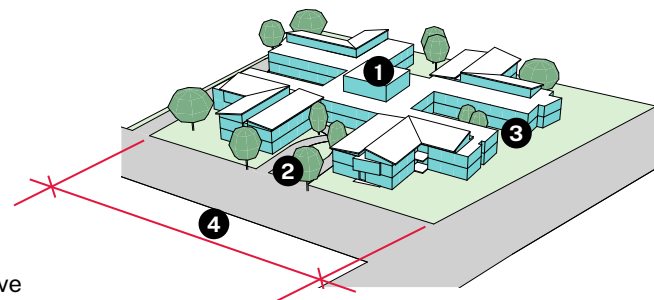
3 Courtyard

4 Street frontage

Fig 11.0.B Perspective

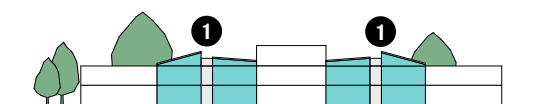**1** Resident care wings

Fig 11.0.C Section

Guidance examples for
seniors housing configurations

02A

Independent
living unit development
Low Density

Characteristics of small scale independent living unit cluster. Suburban and regional model:

- Small scale attached or detached villas
- Small land parcel, low density
- Internal driveway and landscaping
- Observes neighborhood scale

1 Single storey independent living unit

2 Internal driveway

Fig 11.0.D Plan

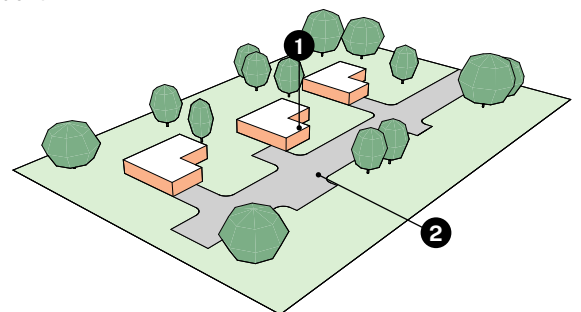**1** Single storey independent living unit

2 Internal driveway

Fig 11.0.E Perspective

FIG. EXAMPLE

Small clusters of independent living units connected with internal driveway and landscape.

1 Single storey independent living unit

2 Landscape

Fig 11.0.F Section

● Residential care facility
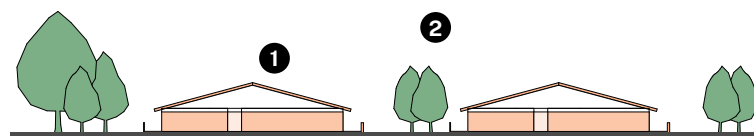
● Independent living units

Guidance examples for
seniors housing configurations

02B

Independent
living unit development
Medium Density

Characteristics of small scale independent living unit cluster. Suburban and regional model:

- 2 or 3 storey attached or independent living units
- Small Land parcel, medium density
- Internal driveway and on-grade carparking
- Observes neighborhood scale

FIG. EXAMPLE

Small clusters of independent living units connected with internal driveway and landscape.

● Residential care facility

● Independent living units

1 2 or 3 storey independent living units
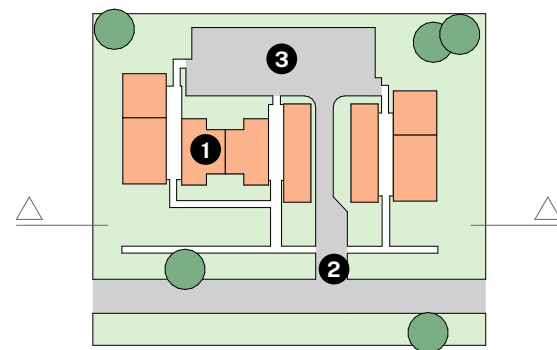2 Internal driveway
3 On-grade carparking

Fig 11.0.G Plan

1 2 or 3 storey development with single level independent living units
2 Internal driveway
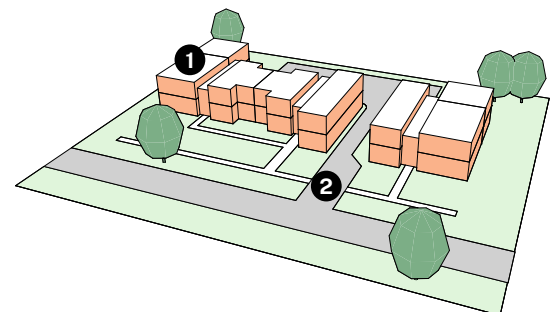
Fig 11.0.H Perspective

1 2 or 3 storey independent living units
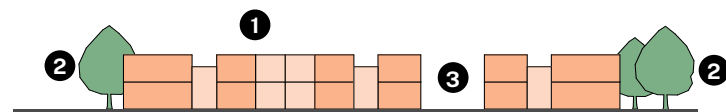2 Landscaped setbacks
3 Driveway to on-grade carparking spaces

Fig 11.0.I Section

Guidance examples for **seniors housing configurations**

02B continued..

Independent living unit development
Medium Density

Characteristics of stand-alone independent living unit low rise development. Suburban and regional model:

- Common clubhouse or community centre

- Large suburban and parcel, medium density

- Basement parking and landscaping

- Medium density zoning

FIG. EXAMPLE

Small clusters of independent living units connected with open walkways around landscaped central courtyard and clubhouse with basement carpark.

● Residential care facility

● Independent living units

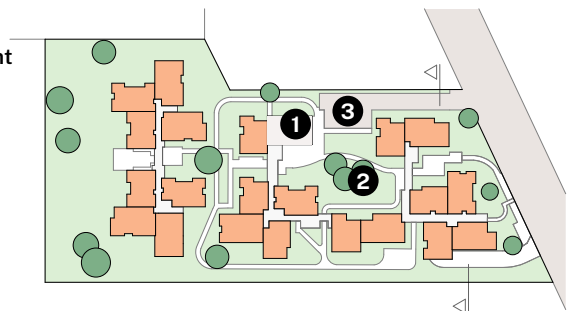1 Clubhouse
2 Central courtyard
3 Driveway to basement carpark
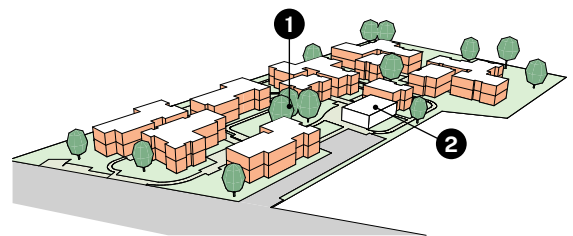
Fig 11.0.J Plan

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1 Landscaped setting
2 Clubhouse

Fig 11.0.K Perspective

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1 Clerestory to corridors
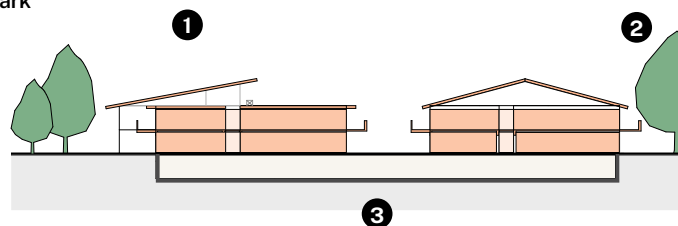2 Central courtyard
3 Basement carpark

Fig 11.0.L Section

Guidance examples for
seniors housing configurations

02C

Independent living unit development
High Density

Characteristics of stand-alone independent living unit multi-storey development:

- Urban living model
- Makes use of additional floor space bonuses permitted under the SEPP (Housing) 2021
- Independent living units with shared communal and social spaces
- High density or business zoning

FIG. EXAMPLE

Compact floor plan with single central core.

● Residential care facility

● Independent living units

1. Deep soil landscaping
2. Community space
3. Independent living units
4. Driveway to basement carpark
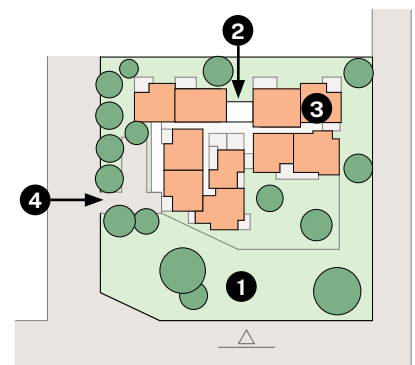
Fig 11.0.M Plan

1. Service area on roof
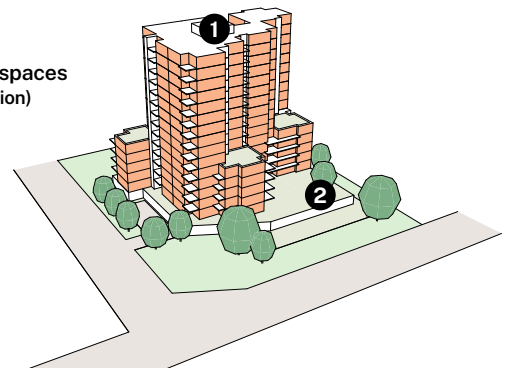2. Ground floor community spaces (for socialisation and recreation)

Fig 11.0.N Perspective

1. Staggered height in response to site context
2. Additional 3.8m height, to accommodate floor space bonus, allowed over LEP height control if residential flat buildings are permissible in the LEP zone
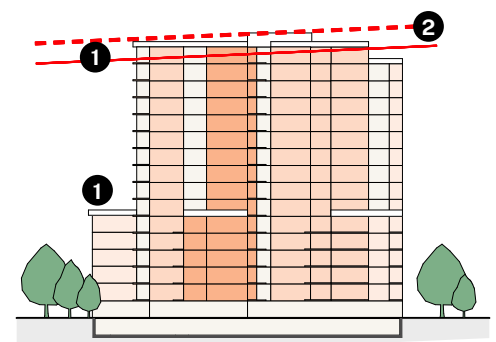

Fig 11.0.O Section showing height bonus available under the SEPP (Housing) 2021

Guidance examples for **seniors housing configurations**

03

Co-located residential care facility and independent living units
Low Density

Characteristics of co-located residential care facility with independent living units (in the form of villas):

• Small scale attached or detached villas with attached carparking

• Common clubhouse or community centre

• Large land parcel, low density

• Internal road network and landscaping

• Residential care facility building introduces a different scale and form

FIG. EXAMPLE

Combined community development with central clubhouse and bowling green surrounded by independent living units and residential care facility.

● Residential care facility

● Independent living units

1 Single storey independent living units
2 Residential care facility
3 Bowling green
4 Clubhouse
5 Internal road network

Fig 11.0.P Plan

1 Entry to internal road network
2 Single storey independent living units
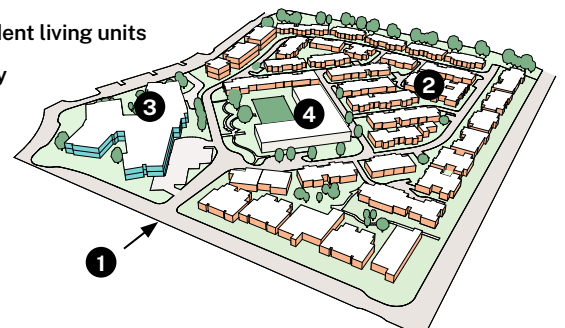**3** Residential care facility
4 Clubhouse

Fig 11.0.Q Perspective

1 Residential care facility two storey
2 Single storey independent living units
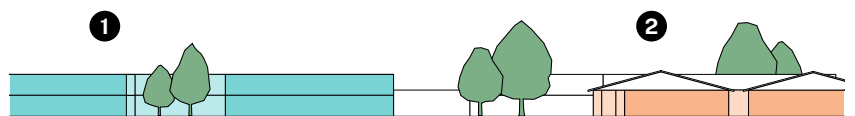
Fig 11.0.R Section

Guidance examples for
seniors housing configurations

04

Co-located residential care facility and independent living units
High Density

Characteristics of co-located residential care facility with independent living units:

- Urban living model
- Makes use of additional floor space bonuses where residential flat buildings are permitted
- Independent living units with shared communal and social spaces
- Residential care facility is integrated into the multi-storey form
- Basement carparking

FIG. EXAMPLE

6 storey development over basement with 4 separate lift and service cores.

- Residential care facility
- Independent living units
- Community

1. Residential care facility
2. Independent living units
3. Roof terrace
4. Internal courtyard

Fig 11.0.S Plan

1. Residential care facility (above independent living floors)
2. Independent living units

Fig 11.0.T Perspective

1. Residential care facility (above apartment floors)
2. Independent living units
3. Roof terrace
4. Central courtyard (with deep soil for quality landscape)
5. Community
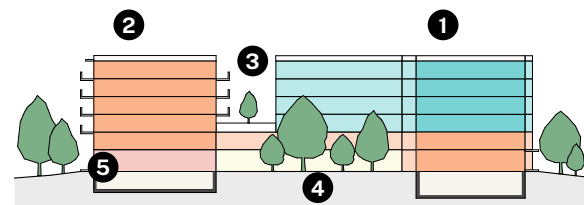
Fig 11.0.U Section

Guidance examples for
seniors housing configurations

05

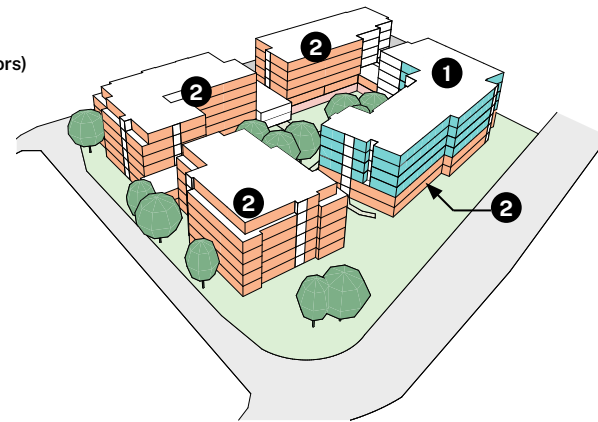## Mixed use development
High Density

Characteristics of co-located residential care facility with independent living units and mixed use ground level:

- Urban living model

- Makes use of additional floor space bonuses where residential flat buildings or shop top housing are permitted

- Independent living units with shared communal and social spaces

- Residential care facility integrated into the multi-storey form

- Basement carparking

- Ground floor with an active street frontage does not permit residential accommodation if business zone

FIG. EXAMPLE

9 storey development over basement with 4 separate lift and service cores.

● Residential care facility

● Independent living units

● Community

● **1** Residential care facility
● **2** Independent living units
● **3** Communal open space

Fig 11.0.V Plan

● **1** Residential care facility
● **2** Independent living units
● **3** Community/ commercial or retail
● **4** Communal open space

Fig 11.0.W Perspective

● **1** Residential care facility
● **2** Independent living units
● **3** Community/ commercial or retail
● **4** Communal open space

Fig 11.0.X Section

12.0 Design principles for residential care facilities

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.1 General planning
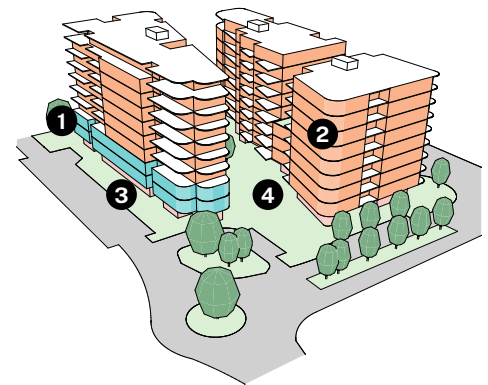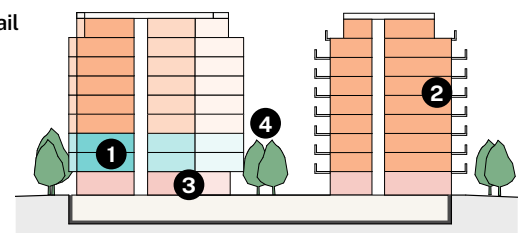
'Respect, care and dignity' and 'aged care that puts older Australians front and centre', are key messages from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality & Safety which aims to deliver once in a generation reform of aged care.

A building designed for long or short term residential care accommodation is made up of:

1 Accommodation modules - single room or small apartment

2 Communal shared spaces - dining, lounges and activities

3 Front-of-house, entry, wellness, allied health, recreation and social spaces

4 Back-of-house, staff and service operations – kitchens, laundry, stores, cleaning and maintenance, mechanical and electrical services and staff amenities and administrative offices
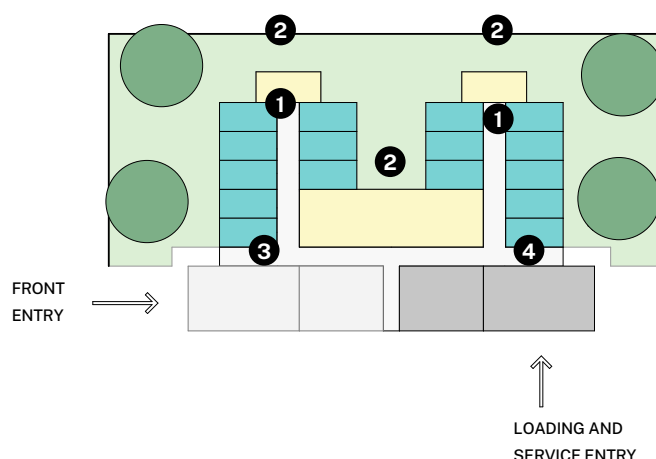
Fig 12.1.A General arrangement for residential care facility

OBJECTIVE

12.1.1 To accommodate older people who are no longer able to live independently and who need high levels of full time assistance and care.

12.1.2 To create environments where staff can work efficiently to care for groups of people in a communal living setting.

12.1.3 To enable efficient workflows and to separate resident and service areas for safety and amenity.

12.1.4 To create new non-institutional looking buildings that acknowledge their surroundings sensitively and showcase design excellence.

12.1.5 To understand how different building components and spaces can positively influence the exterior character of the external form of the building.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

12.1.6 Review and identify the Care provider's processes, staffing, workflows and vision for the care of their residents, and incorporate as a planning strategy into the design response.

12.1.7 New research or innovation into seniors housing, that could enhance the human experience, increase efficiency or comfort, etc should be observed and considered.

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.2 External form

The internal layout of spaces and arrangement of resident wings in this example informs the articulation of external forms and the break up in the external façade.

1 Generous setback includes driveway to basement and provides sightline through the site

2 Glazed walkway elements provide transparency to see through the building and provide a break in the solid forms of the building

3 Adjacent neighbouring properties

4 Entry forecourt

5 Street frontage and vehicular access
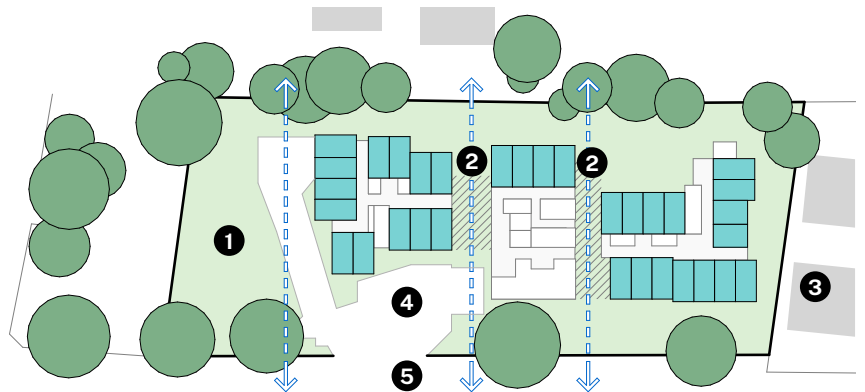
Fig 12.2.A Plan of design outcome

1 Generous landscape setback also provides sightline through the site

2 Glazed walkway elements provide transparency to see through the building and provide a break in the solid forms of the building
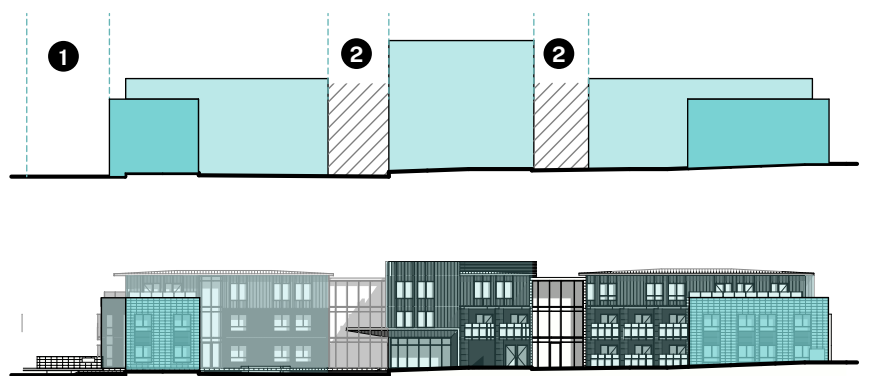
Fig 12.2.B External form and character in this example of a residential aged care, shows building articulation and transparency

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.3 Neighbourhood amenity and streetscape

Street presentation is a result of good spatial planning that informs exterior form articulation and façade design.

OBJECTIVE

12.3.1 To de-institutionalise seniors housing in the provision of quality contemporary buildings.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

12.3.2 Design articulated façades that have a considered palette of external finishes.

12.3.3 Articulate the internal planning to determine modulation in the external façade that provides shadow variations that change throughout the day.

Fig 12.3.A Stand alone residential care facility with texture, shadows, recessive elements and colour

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.3 Neighbourhood amenity and streetscape continued

Articulate and modulate new built forms and setbacks to align similarly with the scale + pattern of the surrounding built character.

1 Building articulation and roof forms respect the local surrounding built character

2 Existing wide street view corridor
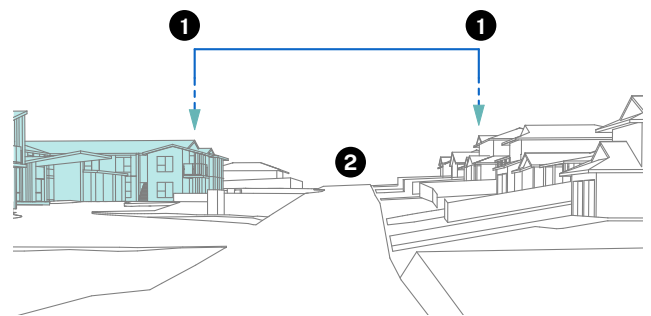
Fig 12.3.B Integrate new development into the existing context

1 Established, articulated front street setback
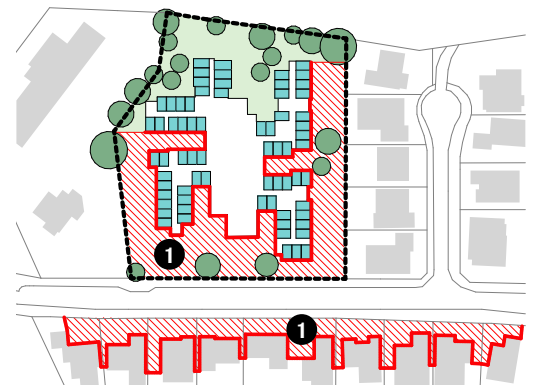
Fig 12.3.C Identify and reference the established street pattern of setbacks and scale

Fig 12.3.D Stand alone residential care facility comfortably integrated into streetscape

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.3 Neighbourhood amenity and streetscape continued

OBJECTIVE

12.3.4 To provide articulation and interest, to contribute to the character of the local area and to define the streetscape.

1 Small scale roof forms assist the building to step with the natural topography and manage overall height.

2 Multi storey building with gabled façades and smaller roof forms is a sympathetic approach with the local streetscape character in this example.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

12.3.5 This example shows how a large-scale residential care facility building can be broken down into smaller elements to respond to the scale and pattern of the local streetscape and surrounding built character.
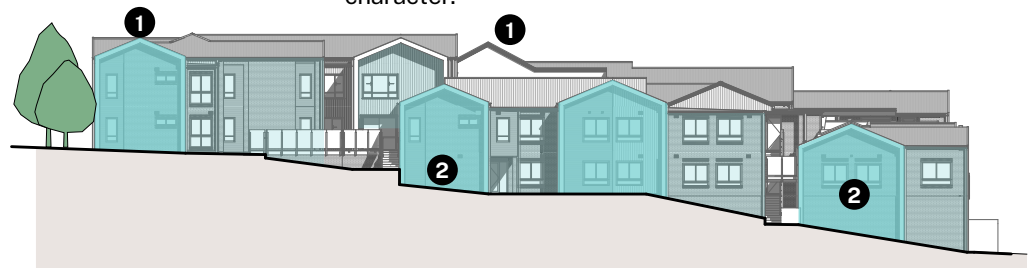
Fig 12.3.E External façade is articulated with smaller façade elements

1 Screen shading, vertical fins and stepped eave line add further shadowing detail and façade articulation

2 The use of different external material finishes for the upper and lower levels establish horizontal layers

3 Break in the row of resident rooms for communal spaces and terrace provides a physical break in the building and elevation

4 Upper storey overhangs lower level with different configurations to provide shading and weather protection to walkway
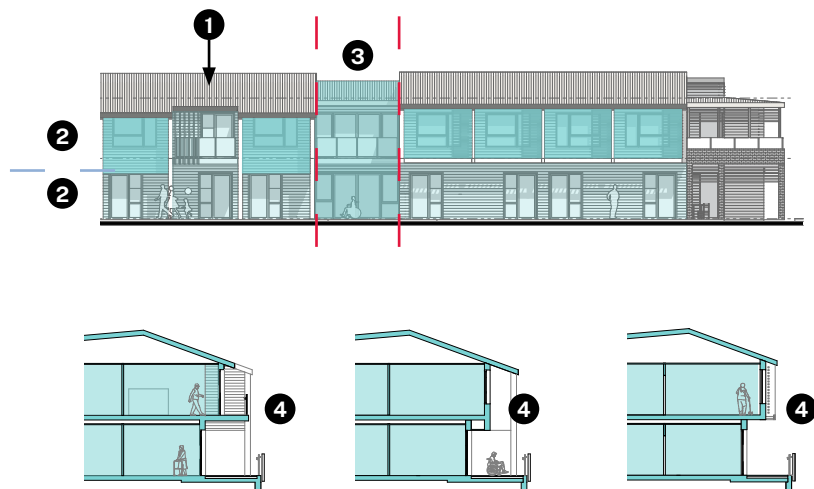
Fig 12.3.F External façade is informed by variance in resident room layout configuration

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.3 Neighbourhood amenity and streetscape continued

1 Mechanical roof plant on roof can be safely accessed from top terrace

2 Courtyard between wings

3 Basement carparking and back-of-house services
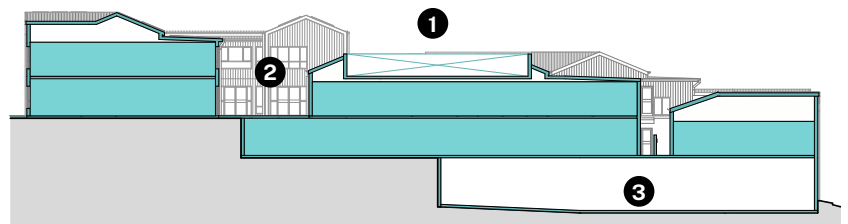
Fig 12.3.G Roof plant screened from view within roof forms

Concealed service area

Fig 12.3.H Service plant concealed from view by roof structure

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.4 Entrances

Clarity around entries for pedestrian and vehicular access is important, as is a clear differentiation between service entry and the public and visitor entrances.

OBJECTIVE

12.4.1 To separate large service vehicles away from the front entrance.

12.4.2 To provide safe carparking and access into the building for visitors.

12.4.3 To respect the vehicular and traffic movements in the street.

12.4.4 To clearly identify the points of arrival for visitors and deliveries.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

12.4.5 Identify safe and appropriate points off the street to access the site with vehicular driveways and points of entry.

12.4.6 Provide a clearly identifiable front entry.

12.4.7 Separate the service driveway and back-of-house service access from public and resident paths.

12.4.8 Provide safe and clearly identifiable pedestrian access to the building.
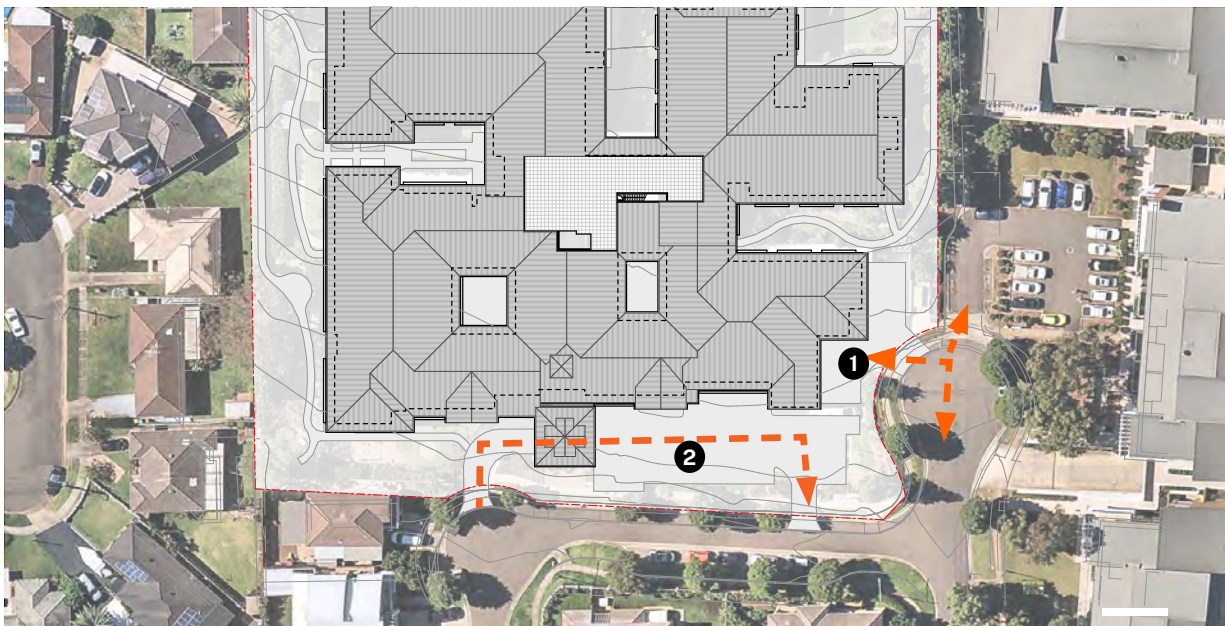
❶ Back-of-house with service area accessed from side road

❷ Front entry driveway with portecochere and visitor carpark along street frontage

Fig 12.4.A New stand alone residential care facility showing separation of front-of-house and back-of-house servicing and presentation

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.4 Entrances continued

OBJECTIVE

12.4.9 To identify the point of arrival and where visitors and residents come and go from.

12.4.10 To make the entry visible from the street for clarity and way-finding as it is often the only point of access for visitors.

12.4.11 To provide a safe protected place to stop and drop off and pick up a resident.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

12.4.12 The entry is typically identified and protected from the elements by a porte cochere roof, where a vehicle or ambulance can temporarily stop to pick-up or drop-off someone.

12.4.13 The porte cochere will need to have sufficient height and cover to accommodate a bariatric ambulance, however this feature roof should be well considered and integrated into the building design to not look out of character or institutional.

Fig 12.4.B Entry point is identifiable with generous and well-protected roof cover

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.5 Public space and front-of-house

OBJECTIVE

12.5.1 To provide a visible, welcoming and safe place for entry for staff, residents and visitors.

12.5.2 To provide an attractive place for residents to sit, wait or socialise.

12.5.3 To provide a control point for visitors.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

12.5.4 Spaces provided near the front entry can include a café, children's play area, multi-purpose room, chapel, wellness and allied health services.

12.5.5 The arrangement and presentation of these areas to the public and wider community can offer welcoming and inviting features such as food and drink, places to meet and sit and things to do.

These elements also provide an opportunity to add visual interest to the expression of the building and its connection with the wider community.

Fig 12.5.A Multi-generational playground adjacent to driveway entry

Fig 12.5.B Cafe space in entrance lobby

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.6 Resident accommodation

OBJECTIVE

12.6.1 To articulate the form, scale and presentation of buildings that are long and consist of repetitive and often identical room modules.

12.6.2 To arrange resident rooms with manageable corridor lengths.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

12.6.3 Resident neighbourhoods are comprised of resident rooms and shared areas. Resident rooms are usually single or double occupancy rooms with ensuites and are identified in the façade with a similar repetitive style of window or terrace door.

Resident rooms with external glazed doors to terraces or balconies will help articulate the façade however the need to ensure safety and prevent residents falling from balconies often requires very high balustrade enclosures on upper storey balconies.

Façade articulation should take into consideration the orientation for solar protection and meaningful window shading.

Position and frequency of visual breaks in a façade can also be informed by the scale and character of the surrounding building types.

Fig 12.6.A Resident room balcony

Fig 12.6.B Use screening to shade windows and articulate the façade

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.6 Resident accommodation continued

The repetitive layout of the resident room module strongly informs the character and design of the façade. The room can be configured in different ways.

1 Terrace
2 Outboard ensuite with window
3 Corridor
4 Window seat with built-in joinery
5 Inboard ensuite
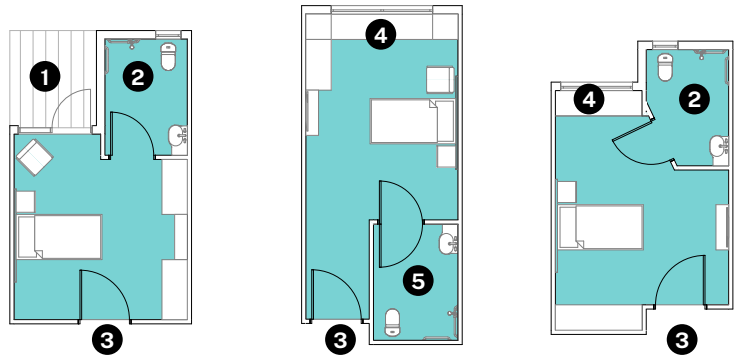
Fig 12.6.C Example layouts for individual resident room module

1 Large window with low sill gives good sightline for resident in bed
2 Access to daylight and views to nature
3 Window seat and built in joinery provides storage, extra seating for visitors and adds character to the room
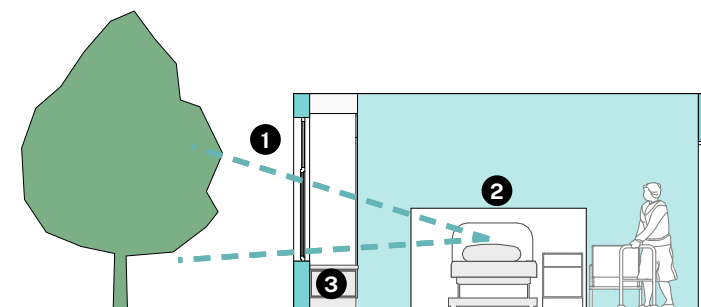
Fig 12.6.D Section through resident room

Fig 12.6.E Resident room with window seat

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.7 Visual and acoustic privacy

Successful seniors housing development must observe and respect the privacy and amenity of neighbouring properties as well as resident communities.

OBJECTIVE

12.7.1 To respect the visual and acoustic privacy of neighbours and occupants.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

12.7.2 Provide generous setbacks that are informed by the position and location of neighbour's outdoor open space and windows.

12.7.3 Plant screen planting that acts as acoustic buffers as well as providing privacy and separation from the boundary fence.

12.7.4 Provide deeper courtyards for elevations or resident wings to face in towards to reduce overlooking to neighbours. Provide landscaping against open rail fences to screen resident spaces for privacy.

Fig 12.7.A Building and windows are angled away from neighbour's house and separated by generous landscaped setback and landscaping provides screening to courtyard spaces

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.8 Solar access and design for climate

Work with the local environment to deliver a climate-appropriate building.

OBJECTIVE

12.8.1 To design buildings that suit the climate zone of the development.

12.8.2 To design for:
- thermal comfort
- humidity
- air-movement
- shading
- daylight
- solar access

12.8.3 To optimise the building envelope's thermal protective qualities to maximise efficient use of energy for heating and cooling.

12.8.4 To maximise access to natural daylight to reduce dependence on electric lighting.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

12.8.5 Undertake a detailed site analysis to determine the direction of cross breezes, types of weather patterns and path of the winter and summer sun.

Orientate the building to capture breezes and to optimise solar access.

12.8.6 Insulate roofs and avoid dark roof colours that absorb excessive heat.

12.8.7 Provide ceiling fans and design for natural cross ventilation. Provide window shading for protection from summer sun and allow winter sun to penetrate the building.

12.8.8 Use appropriate glazing to insulate glazed areas and maximise glazing for access to daylight.

Fig 12.8.A Lightwells bring daylight and variance in light quality through the day into deep parts of the building in this residential care facility

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.8 Solar access and design for climate continued

Fig 12.8.B Shading and deeply recessed fenestration articulate the external façade and provide interest with dynamic movement of shadow patterns through the day

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.9 Stormwater

Extreme rain events can result in destructive overland flow of stormwater which can cause damage to the landform, landscape and exterior surfaces which can also compromise safety and access.

OBJECTIVE

12.9.1 To minimise erosion and the potentially damaging effects from stormwater run-off on landscape and stability of pathways.

12.9.2 To provide effective filtration of stormwater to remove some sediment and pollutants.

12.9.3 To prevent flooding.

12.9.4 To slow the flow of fast moving water and debris.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

12.9.5 Provide opportunities to increase the catchment and/or absorption of stormwater with systems such as vegetated swales, sediment basins, detention pits and porous landscape paving.

12.9.6 Maximise areas for deep soil landscape so that plants can mature into dense stormwater catchment areas and absorb ground water.

Fig 12.9.A Sensitively landscaped stormwater detention in the gardens of a residential care facility

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.10 Accessibility

One of the main functions of providing housing for seniors and people with a disability, is to provide living environments that are easy to move around for those with, amongst other things, compromised mobility and sensory function, reduced spatial awareness or poor stability and balance.

OBJECTIVE

12.10.1 To observe and implement the design standards for accessibility in new building design.

12.10.2 To understand the specific needs of older people and people with a disability.

12.10.3 To de-stigmatise environments that cater for disabilities and that need considered design features to support mobility, wayfinding and safety.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

12.10.4 Meet the required accessibility standards with compliant but non-institutional design solutions.

12.10.5 Integrate accessible design requirements with public access and pedestrian pathways for all, and not create the duality of 'us and them' access routes.

Design principles
for residential care facilities

12.11 Waste management

OBJECTIVE

12.11.1 To provide a loading dock, main outdoor service area and a utility zone designed for large vehicle turning, waste collections and deliveries of goods.

This aspect of the building needs to be sizeable to accommodate commercial operations but should be clearly separated from the front entry, public and resident zones.

12.11.2 To provide waste management systems that manage health, safety and environmental issues.

12.11.3 To provide easy to access waste disposal points for independent residents to use.

12.11.4 To facilitate recycling of waste.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

12.11.5 Where practicable, the service area should be concealed from view from the road, and the access driveway to the service area should be independent from the front entry forecourt.

The service area should be located away from residential neighbour boundaries if possible.

Fig 12.11.A Service driveway showing loading dock area and back-of-house utilities

13.0 Design principles for independent living

Design principles for independent living

In response to the Royal Commission, the Australian Government is investing to support older Australians to remain in their home. The provision of appropriate housing is needed for this to happen.

13.0 Building communities

An independent living unit development is not just an apartment building or a group of units, or villas but is equally about building a community.

Residents who choose to buy and move into a retirement living development are seeking companionship and to be a part of a community who have similar interests and needs and who can support one another.

Socialising and participation in events in communal areas outside of individual apartments is a significant aspect of life in an Independent living seniors community.

Fig 13.0.A Residents socialising in a communal area

OBJECTIVE

13.1 To provide housing to accommodate for a mix of older people who may be active and independent and others who may be frail and in need of 'at home' care.

13.2 To create environments where owner/occupants of the units can get together for activities, socialising, events and celebrations.

13.3 To provide a place of safety, wellbeing and connection.

13.4 Provide a wide variance of character and densities of developments for seniors communities to find a suitable place to choose to belong to.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

13.5 Places where 'like-minded people' can live together will help build social cohesion and strong connections.

14.0 Design principles for independent living for low density

Independent living for low density – design principles

14.1 Neighbourhood amenity and streetscape

OBJECTIVE

14.1.1 To provide single storey villa style accommodation with on grade carparking in a generous landscaped setting.

14.1.2 To integrate with the surrounding built form context and local character.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

14.1.3 Introduce a high standard of design quality to the neighbourhood.

Low density independent living provides a landscaped setting with internal shared pedestrianised roads. Residents can have attached garages or carports.

1. Community gardens
2. Shared roadway access
3. Landscaped setbacks
4. Streetscape with individual entries and landscaped front gardens

Fig 14.1.A Site plan
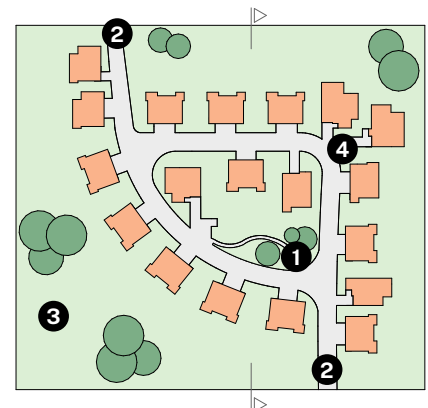
The provision of community gardens and shared outdoor activity spaces bring residents together.

1. Community gardens
2. Shared pedestrianised road
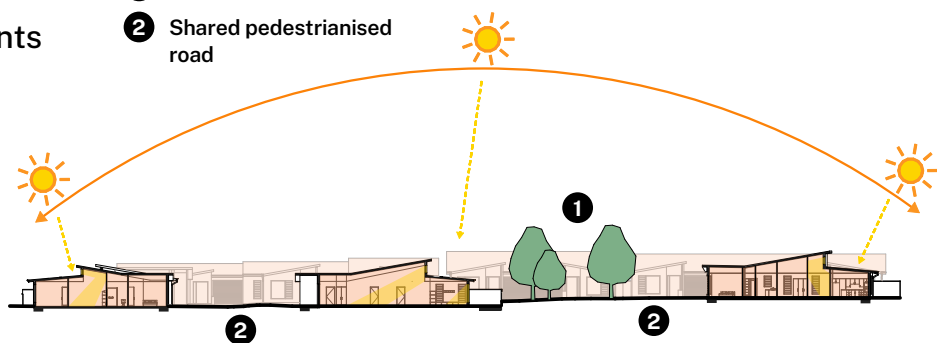
Fig 14.1.B Section

Independent living for low density –
design principles

14.2 Visual and acoustic privacy

OBJECTIVE

14.2.1 To provide separation between communal open space and private open space.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

14.2.2 Provide generous landscape buffers for screening and acoustic privacy.

Fig 14.2.A Private outdoor space with landscaping and privacy screen

Fig 14.2.B Shared communal gardens located between private villas provide an acoustic buffer between dwellings

Independent living for low density – design principles

14.3 Solar access and design for climate

Designing for natural passive cross ventilation reduces demand on energy consumption.

OBJECTIVE

14.3.1 To design dwellings that reduce the demand on energy.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

14.3.2 The design and location of windows and shading should respond to the building orientation, site constraints or opportunities in order to maximise good solar access and meaningful cross ventilation.

14.3.3 Provide natural, passive ventilation, well insulated building envelope, and avoid using dark roof colours to reduce heat absorbance.

14.3.4 Consider the use of overhangs, eaves, awnings, pergolas or verandahs to provide shading to reduce heat gain in summer.

1. Accessible entry and walkway
2. Ventilated roof space
3. Natural passive cross ventilation with ceiling fans.
4. Rainwater harvesting for re-use in landscape
5. Good solar orientation
6. Shading to building
7. Thermal mass of concrete slab
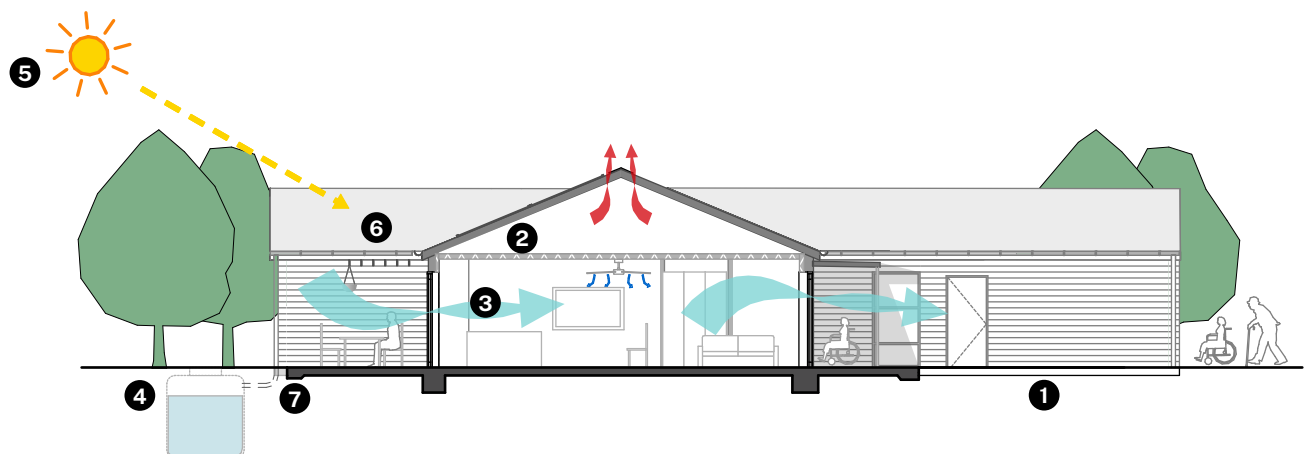
Fig 14.3.A Cross section through a typical single storey villa

Independent living for low density –
design principles

14.4 Stormwater

Manage safe stormwater run off and drainage

OBJECTIVE

14.4.1 To safely manage stormwater run off and drainage systems without compromising pedestrian safety.

14.4.2 To minimise erosion and the potentially damaging effects from stormwater run-off on landscape and stability of pathways.

14.4.3 To provide effective filtration of stormwater to remove some sediment and pollutants.

14.4.4 To prevent flooding.

14.4.5 To slow the flow of fast moving water and debris.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

14.4.6 Provide grates and drainage pits away from pedestrian pathways.

14.4.7 Manage stormwater with landscape design and gentle gradients of hard surfaces.
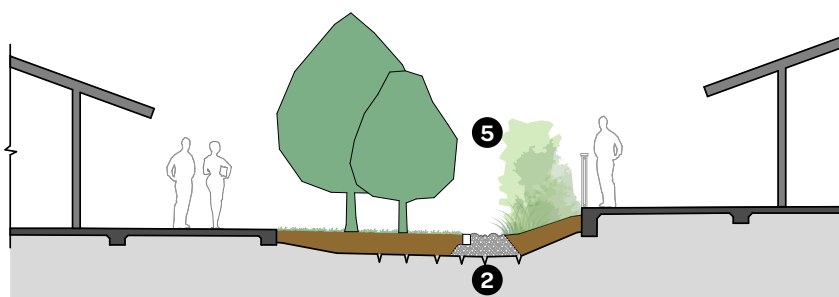
1 Driveway gradients designed to direct stormwater into landscape

2 Drainage swale

3 Detention basin

4 Drainage pipe connects swale to detention basin

5 Landscaped stormwater catchment zone

Fig 14.4.A Cross section through landscaped stormwater catchment zone
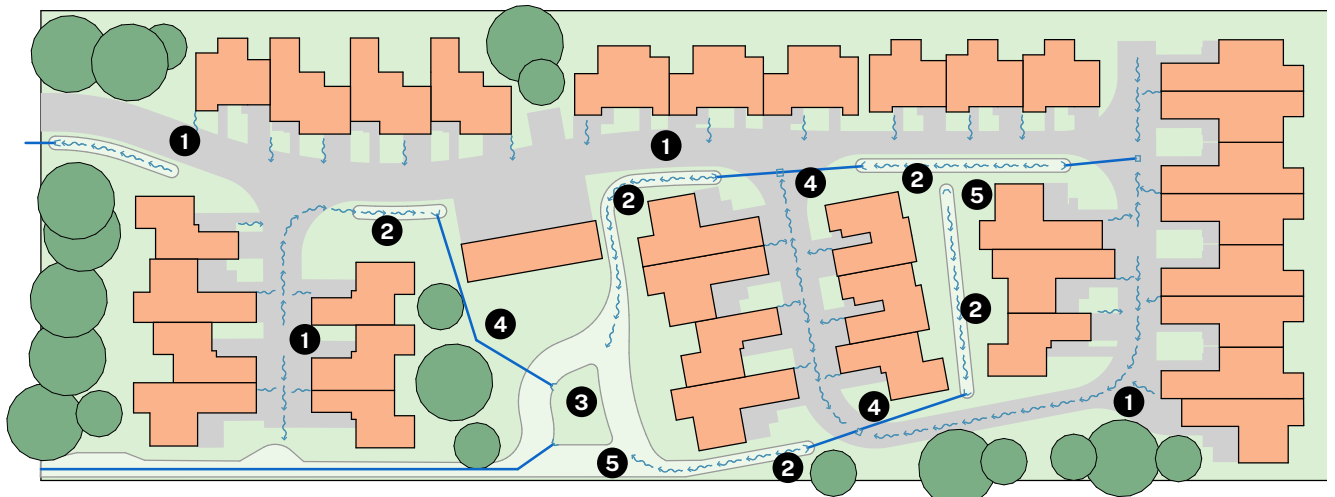
Fig 14.4.A Site plan showing driveways, landscape and stormwater catchment

Independent living for low density – design principles

14.5 Accessibility

One of the main functions of providing housing for seniors and people with a disability, is to provide living environments that are easy to move around for those with, amongst other things, compromised mobility and sensory function, reduced spatial awareness or poor stability and balance.

OBJECTIVE

14.5.1 To observe and implement the design standards for accessibility in new building design.

14.5.2 To understand the specific needs of older people and people with a disability.

14.5.3 To de-stigmatise environments that cater for disabilities and that need considered design features to support mobility, wayfinding and safety.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

14.5.4 Meet the required accessibility standards with compliant but non-institutional design solutions.

14.5.5 Integrate accessible design requirements with public access and pedestrian pathways for all, and not create the duality of 'us and them' access routes.

Fig 14.5.A Accessible pathway with generous width

Independent living for low density - design principles

14.5 Accessibility continued

The accessibility requirements for seniors housing are set out in Schedule 4 of the SEPP (Housing) 2021 and in the National Construction Code.

1 Private open space
2 Garage and visitors carspace
3 Front entry
4 Street
5 Drying yard
6 Landscape setting

Fig 14.5.A Example layout for three bedroom accessible independent living villa with adjacent carparking or garage
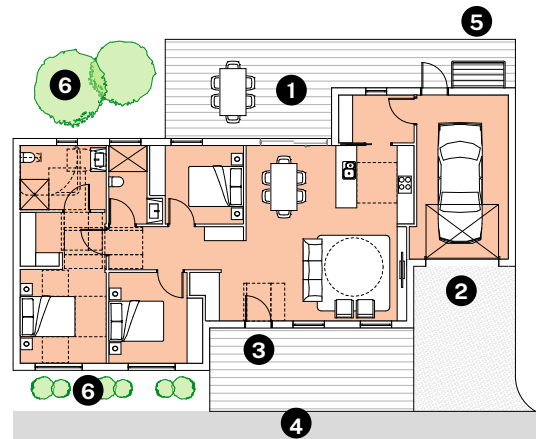
1 Private open space
2 Garage entry
3 Front entry
4 Street
5 Drying yard
6 Landscape setting

Fig 14.5.B Example layout for two bedroom accessible independent living villa with adjacent carparking or garage
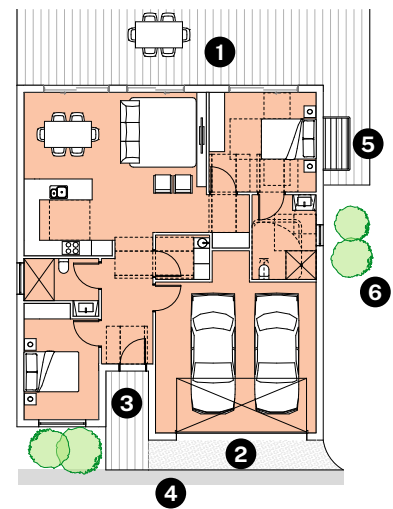
1 Private open space
2 Garage entry
3 Front entry
4 Street
5 Drying yard
6 Landscape setting

Fig 14.5.C Example layout for two bedroom plus study accessible independent living villa with adjacent carparking or garage
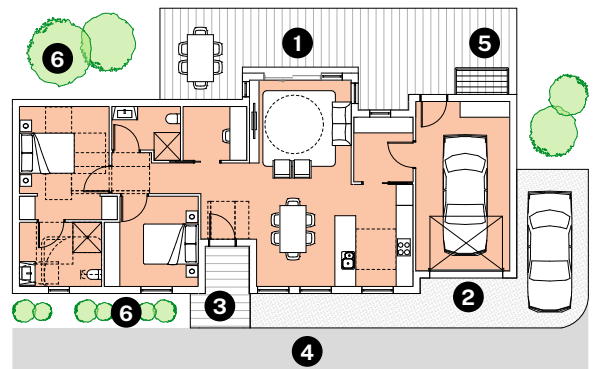
Independent living for low density –
design principles

14.6 Waste management

The nature and volume of waste generated from retirement living communities can potentially include medical waste.

OBJECTIVE

14.6.1 To provide waste management systems that manage health, safety and environmental issues.

14.6.2 To provide easy to access waste disposal points for independent residents to use.

14.6.3 To facilitate recycling of waste.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

14.6.4 Provide appropriately sized disposal points that can accommodate bins for the various waste types including recyclables.

14.6.5 Ensure that waste collection points are safely located away from resident areas, should be screened, easy to access and preferably covered.

Fig 15.4.A Garbage bin enclosure shared by individual dwellings with screening

15.0 Design principles for independent living for medium density

Independent living for medium density - design principles

15.1 Neighbourhood amenity and streetscape

OBJECTIVE

15.1.1 To provide two or three storey housing clusters where the scale and massing is articulated and separated to respect the character and pattern of the suburban surroundings.

15.1.2 To positively enhance the streetscape and uplift the quality of built form in the neighbourhood, and provide a landscape buffer to soften the development.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

15.1.3 Where practicable, preserve existing mature trees to maintain the landscape character of the streetscape.

15.1.4 Consider opportunities for meaningful landscape, usable outdoor spaces, and vegetation to soften the built form and provide privacy.

Fig 15.1.A Duplex development with generous front landscaped setback and mature tree preservation

Independent living for medium density - design principles

15.1 Neighbourhood amenity and streetscape continued

OBJECTIVE

15.1.5 To provide clearly identifiable and accessible shared pedestrian and vehicular entries, driveways and paths.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

15.1.6 Provide a safe, well lit accessible path to an easily identifiable entrance lobby.

1. Landscaped side setback
2. Entrance lobby
3. Shared driveway
4. Pedestrian path

Fig 15.1.B Street elevation
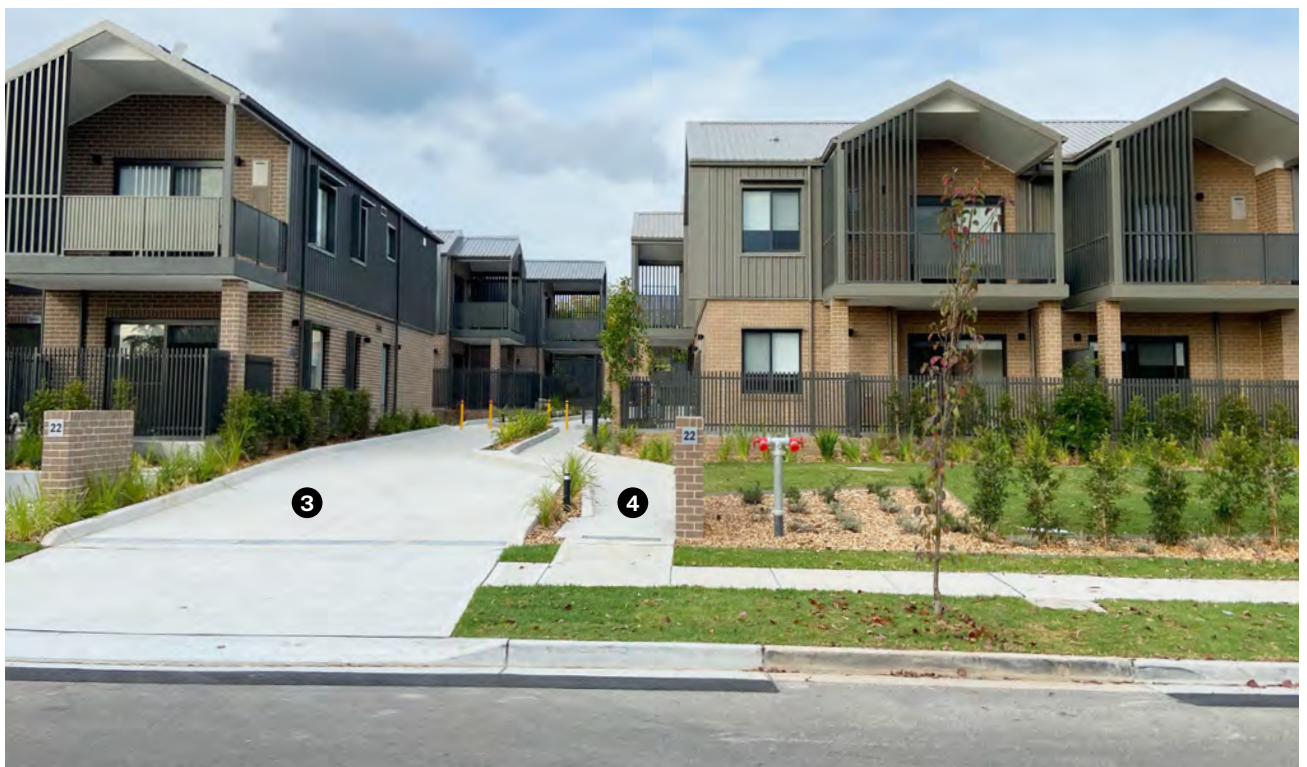
Fig 15.1.C Shared driveway provides vehicular access to onsite carparking for the whole development

Independent living for medium density - design principles

15.2 Solar access and design for climate

OBJECTIVE

15.2.1 To design buildings that suit the climate zone of the development.

15.2.2 To design for:
- thermal comfort
- humidity
- air-movement
- shading
- daylight
- solar access

15.2.3 To optimise the building envelope's thermal protective qualities to maximise efficient use of energy for heating and cooling.

15.2.4 To maximise access to natural daylight to reduce dependence on electric lighting.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

15.2.5 Undertake a detailed site analysis to determine the direction of cross breezes, types of weather patterns and path of the winter and summer sun.

Orientate the building to capture breezes and to optimise solar access.

15.2.6 Provide ceiling fans and design for natural cross ventilation. Provide window shading for protection from summer sun and allow winter sun to penetrate the building.

15.2.7 Insulate roofs and avoid dark roof colours that absorb excessive heat.

15.2.8 Make opportunities to enable natural cross ventilation through apartments. Where possible, include single loaded open walkways to facilitate this.

The significant benefits of single loaded open walkways around a courtyard garden include;

1. The ability to provide optimal cross ventilation,
2. A safe enclosed outdoor garden,
3. Opportunities for occupants to interact casually and to see one another across the courtyard,
4. Health benefits of a covered outdoor exercise path, and
5. Connection to nature

❶ Protected courtyard

❷ Natural cross-ventilated apartments

❸ Open walkways

Fig 15.2.A Section
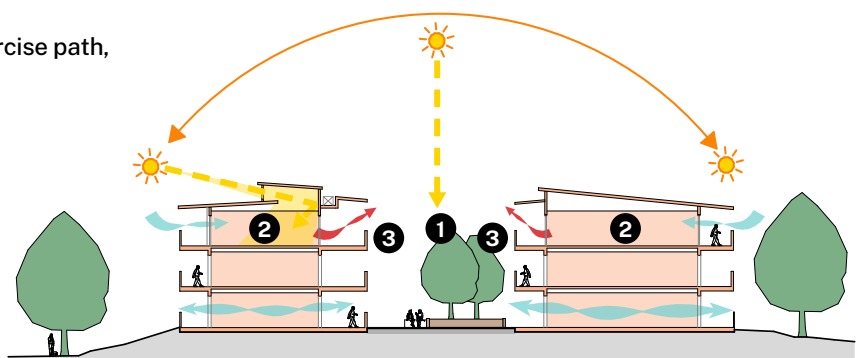
Independent living for medium density - design principles

15.2 Solar access and design for climate continued

DESIGN GUIDANCE

15.2.9 Provide a range of outdoor and semi-outdoor settings that provide appropriate seasonal responses e.g. shaded outdoor space in summer, and sunny outdoor space in winter.

Provide private balconies for fresh air that allows cross breeze and natural light. On ground levels, provide communal green spaces for gardening and walking to promote health and activity.

Aim to provide generous natural light and natural ventilation to interiors by keeping floorplates narrow.

Single-loaded open walkways around a common courtyard space enables healthy cross ventilation of apartments and a connection to nature and other residents.

Single-loaded open corridors around an internal courtyard space provides a safe external environment where casual surveillance and 'looking out for each other' can occur easily.

This type of configuration supports exercise and socialising with protected outdoor spaces.

'Keep it real' wherever possible. Real views, real daylight.

Fig 15.2.B Independent living units showing benefits of a courtyard design with single loaded walkway

Independent living for medium density - design principles

15.3 Stormwater

OBJECTIVE

15.3.1 To minimise erosion and the potentially damaging effects from stormwater run-off on landscape and stability of pathways.

15.3.2 To maintain safe access through the site.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

15.3.3 Provide opportunities to increase the catchment and/or absorption of stormwater with systems such as vegetated swales, sediment basins, detention pits and porous landscape paving.

15.3.4 Maximise areas for deep soil landscape so that plants can mature into dense stormwater catchment areas and absorb ground water.

Fig 15.3.A Existing mature tree defines generous landscaped area and open space which creates improved privacy and separation

Independent living for medium density - design principles

15.4 Crime prevention

OBJECTIVE

15.4.1 To encourage crime awareness and passive community surveillance to deter crime.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

15.4.2 Front entries to shared lobbies can be glazed to give transparency and visual links through.

15.4.3 Design to facilitate/allow surveillance from dwellings to the street.

15.4.4 Provide access control to shared communal lobbies.

15.4.4 Provide lighting to common areas and walkways and ensure any basement parking is well lit 24 hours a day.

Fig 15.4.A Clearly identifiable accessible entry to shared lobby is visible from the street. Glazed doors provide visual access to the outside

Independent living for medium density - design principles

15.5 Accessibility

OBJECTIVE

15.5.1 To provide clearly identifiable and accessible shared pedestrian entry for small clusters of dwellings.

15.5.2 To provide accessible and adaptive housing to meet the needs of physical ageing and mobility issues.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

15.5.3 The design of shared entries, letterboxes and lift lobbies should be accessible, and provide adequate circulation for small groups of people.

15.5.4 Design apartments with adequate circulation, clearances and overall room dimensions, so that they can be adapted to the individual needs as mobility levels decrease.

15.5.5 Provide level access to private or communal outdoor spaces and gardens and consider incorporating places to sit, rest or meet with other residents.

Fig 15.5.A Accessible pedestrian access

Independent living for medium density - design principles

15.5 Accessibility continued

Example unit layouts

The accessibility requirements for seniors housing are set out in Schedule 4 of the SEPP (Housing) 2021 and in the National Construction Code.

1 Private open space
2 Front entry
3 Drying area

Fig 15.5.B Example layout for two bedroom accessible independent living unit

1 Private open space
2 Front entry
3 Drying area

Fig 15.5.C Example layout for one bedroom accessible independent living unit

1 Private open space
2 Front entry
3 Drying area

Fig 15.5.D Example layout for two bedroom accessible independent living unit
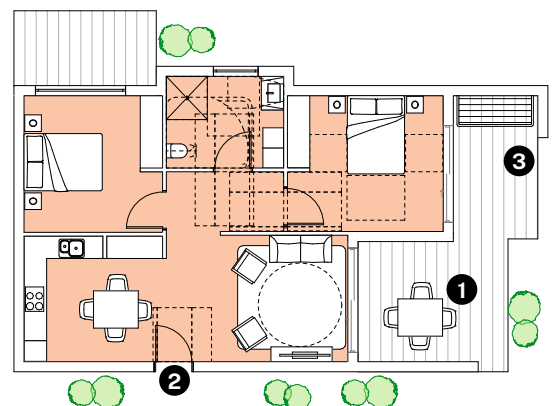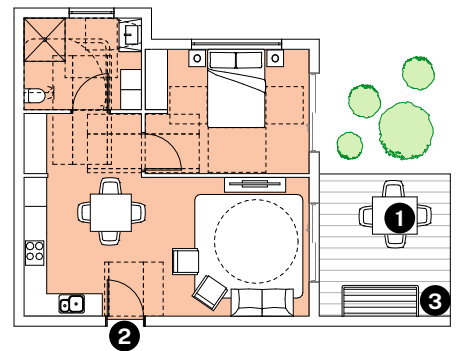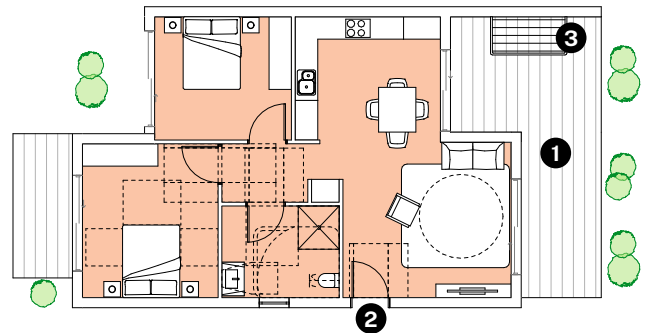
Independent living for medium density - design principles

15.6 Waste management

The nature and volume of waste generated from retirement living communities can potentially include medical waste.

OBJECTIVE

15.6.1 To provide waste management systems that manage health, safety and environmental issues.

15.6.2 To provide easy to access waste disposal points for independent residents to use.

15.6.3 To facilitate recycling of waste.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

15.6.4 Provide appropriately sized disposal points that can accommodate bins for the various waste types including recyclables.

15.6.5 Ensure that waste collection points are safely located away from resident areas, are covered and easily accessible.
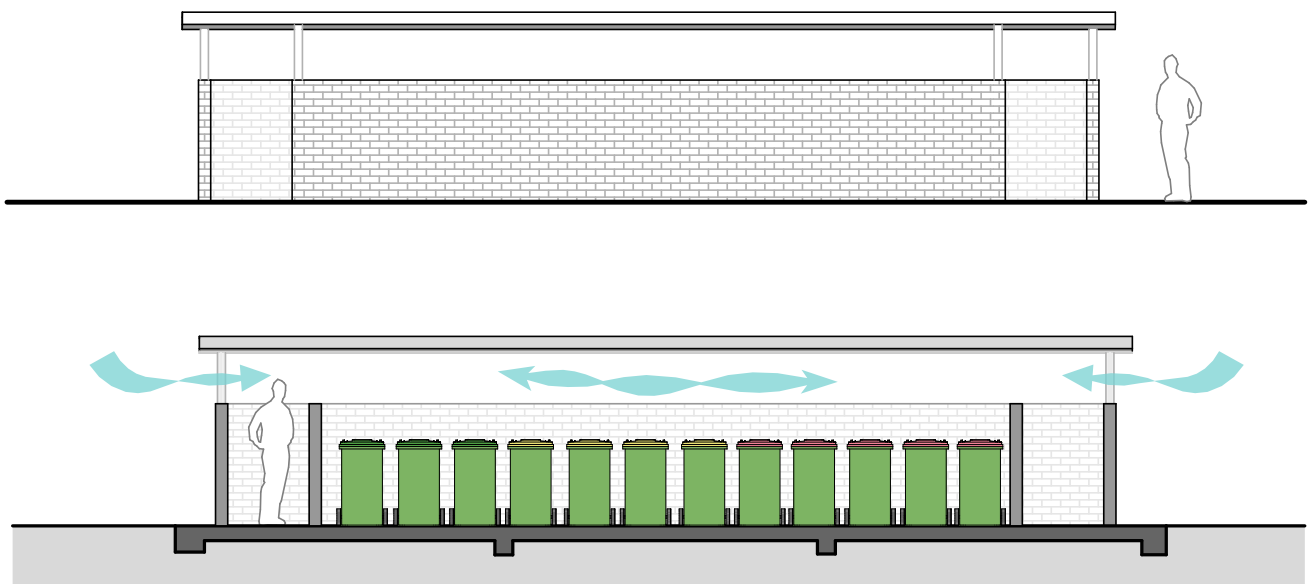
Fig 15.6.A Recycling in basement back-of-house

16.0 Design principles independent living for high density

Independent living for high density –
design principles

16.1 Neighbourhood amenity and streetscape

" To understand good design, is to understand people. Design is made for people."

DIETER RAMS

OBJECTIVE

16.1.1 To diminish or remove the negative stigma around aged care and retirement living, and identify it as a desirable and sought out place to live and work.

16.1.2 To positively enhance the streetscape.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

16.1.3 The design should enhance the streetscape and proudly integrate into the existing context.

16.1.4 Provide a development that embodies design excellence to uplift the future attributes of the local area.

16.1.5 Introduce new landscaping and shade trees.

Fig 16.1.A Articulated façades and prominent front entry

Independent living for high density –
design principles

16.2 Solar access and design for climate

Example floor plate layouts

Healthy independent living communities are formed between residents who are able to share a communal environment outside of their own private space.

1 Maximise use of north aspect to shared resident spaces outdoor on each floor

2 Communal shared outdoor gardens connect communities and also provide casual surveillance and security

3 Drying room/ breezeblock terrace

4 Car parks
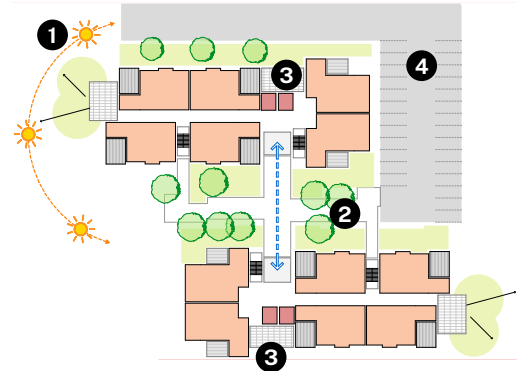
Fig 16.2.A Example independent living unit arrangement

A common outdoor terrace provides an alternative aspect from resident's own independent living unit. A shared naturally ventilated drying area reduces reliance on mechanical driers and brings people together.

1 Communal shared outdoor terrace on each floor, ideally with northern aspect

2 Drying room/ breezeblock terrace
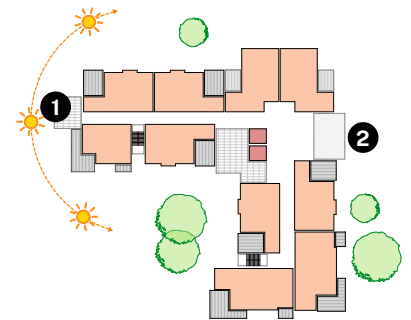
Fig 16.2.B Example independent living unit arrangement

Clusters of independent living units on each level enable social cohesiveness and manage corridor distances from the lifts. Maximum daylight accessed in corridors from shared terraces reduces the need for artificial lighting.

1 Shared communal terraces at corridor ends can bring daylight into corridors

2 Drying room/ breezeblock terrace
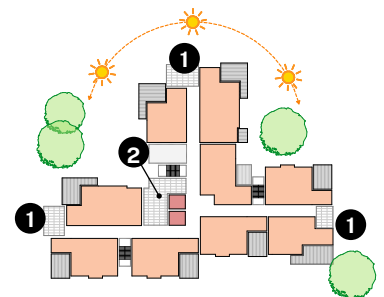
Fig 16.2.C Example independent living unit arrangement

Independent living for high density –
design principles

16.3 Stormwater

OBJECTIVE

16.3.1 To minimise erosion and the potentially damaging effects from stormwater run-off on landscape and stability of pathways.

16.3.2 To provide effective filtration of stormwater to remove some sediment and pollutants.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

16.3.3 Provide opportunities to increase the catchment and/or absorption of stormwater with systems such as vegetated swales, sediment basins, detention pits and porous landscape paving.

16.3.4 Maximise areas for deep soil landscape so that plants can mature into dense stormwater catchment areas and absorb ground water.

Fig 16.3.A Wide landscaped drainage swale with drainage pits to building perimeter

Independent living for high density –
design principles

16.4 Crime prevention

The design of buildings, their visibility, presentation and the spaces around them influence the sense of safety and opportunity for intrusion. There is documented evidence that crimes against people and property are connected to the design of built environments.

OBJECTIVE

16.4.1 To safely manage the transitions between inside and outside and between public and private spaces.

16.4.2 To ensure residents, visitors and staff feel visible and seen.

16.4.3 To provide accessways and connections that are protected.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

16.4.4 Facilitate opportunities for casual passive surveillance in multi-storey independent living buildings with views from balconies to public areas below.

16.4.5 Provide well lit pathways, thresholds and transitions between inside and outside and at property boundaries.

16.4.6 Install movement sensor lighting.
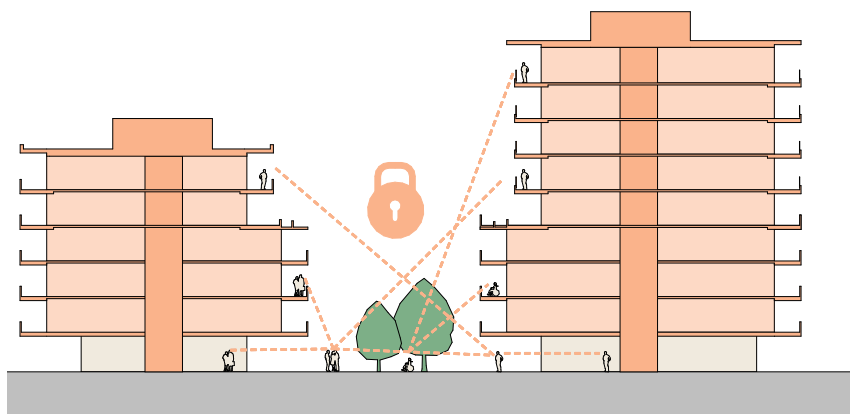
Fig 16.4.A Passive surveillance of ground plane from balconies

Fig 16.4.B Outdoor walkway with good lighting and sightlines

Independent living for high density -
design principles

16.5 Accessibility

OBJECTIVE

16.5.1 Independent living units are to be designed to be accessible or able to be adapted for accessibility, if required.

Independent living units are intended for 'ageing in place' - an adaptive home where older people can continue to live, even with considerable frailty, accessing care services and using assistive technologies as needed.

Independent living units need to be designed with the spatial dimensions to support the use of these technologies, including mobility equipment, while providing a safe environment for personal carers to attend to their client.

It can be efficient to connect groups of units and their lift cores across a floor level for safe access and connections for staff and residents.

Smaller studio-sized units clustered together as a care community can help care staff to manage residents effectively.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

16.5.2 Arrange independent living units on each floor with clear sightlines to and from lifts.

Manage corridor lengths and cluster groups of units around a common core.

Number of units which are accessed by each lift core may need to suit the provision of care and serviceability for staff and carers. Lifts need to be sized to accommodate mobility equipment and also ambulance stretcher.

Articulate corridors with indents at unit thresholds to allow residents to personalise their own entries and for wheelchairs and walkers to park.

Fig 16.5.A Allow wide space between kitchen benches for wheelchair, walker or mobility scooter

Independent living for high density - design principles

16.5 Accessibility continued

The accessibility requirements for seniors housing are set out in Schedule 4 of the SEPP (Housing) 2021 and in the National Construction Code.

Opportunities for passive cross ventilation.

Fig 16.5.B Example layout for one bedroom accessible independent living unit (located on corner)
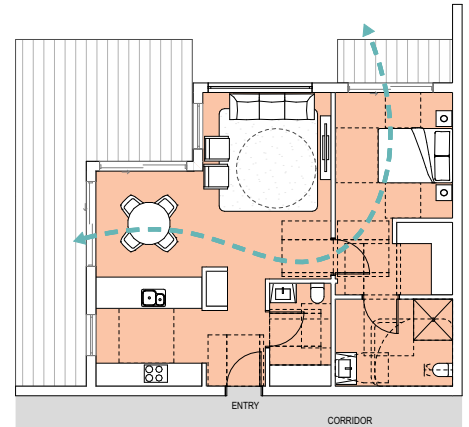
Opportunities for passive cross ventilation.

Fig 16.5.C Example layout for two bedroom accessible independent living unit
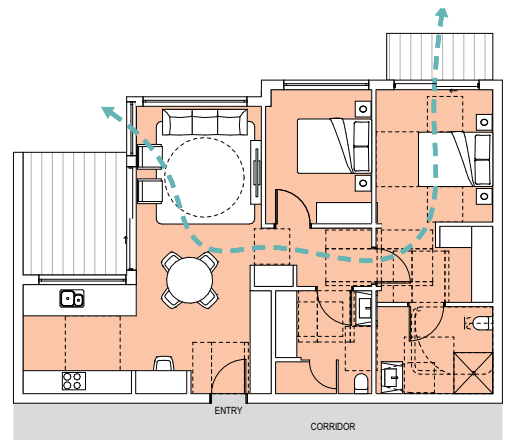
Opportunities for passive cross ventilation.

Fig 16.5.D Example layout for three bedroom accessible independent living unit (located on corner)
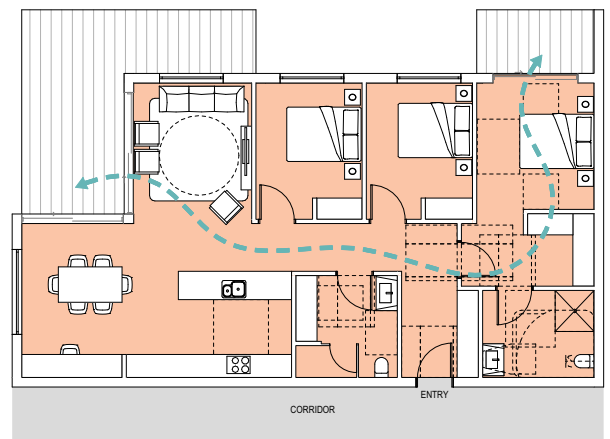
Independent living for high density –
design principles

16.6 Waste management

The nature and volume of waste generated from retirement living communities can potentially include medical waste.

OBJECTIVE

16.6.1 To provide waste management systems that manage health, safety and environmental issues.

16.6.2 To provide easy to access waste disposal points for independent residents to use.

16.6.3 To facilitate recycling of waste.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

16.6.4 Provide appropriately sized disposal points that can accommodate bins for the various waste types including recyclables.

16.6.5 Ensure that waste collection points are safely located away from resident areas, are covered and easily accessible.

Fig 16.6.A Recycling in basement back-of-house

Independent living for high density –
design principles

16.7 Entrances

OBJECTIVE

16.7.1 To provide a prominent and preferably covered front entrance with car drop-off space nearby. To provide space for an ambulance with sufficient height and cover.

16.7.2 To provide secure entry for pedestrian access into the building from street level. To provide entry lobbies that are easily identifiable and located for easy access from the street or on-grade carpark.

Fig 16.7.A Porte cochere entry with ambulance parking

Fig 16.7.B Covered front entrance with drop-off and covered ambulance space

Independent living for high density – design principles

16.7 Entrances continued

DESIGN GUIDANCE

16.7.1 A single main lobby with a reception and concierge desk is common in independent living unit developments as a point of contact and provides security. The entrance lobby facilitates social interaction between residents as well as staff. Mailboxes and parcel deliveries should be located near the entry. Mailboxes require a protected, secure, covered area, preferably indoors, yet close to the road, and must be wheelchair accessible.

Deliveries of supermarket orders and other goods can be managed through the concierge as a drop-off or security check-in point for visitors entering the building. Lifts and lift lobbies should be clearly visible and easy to locate.
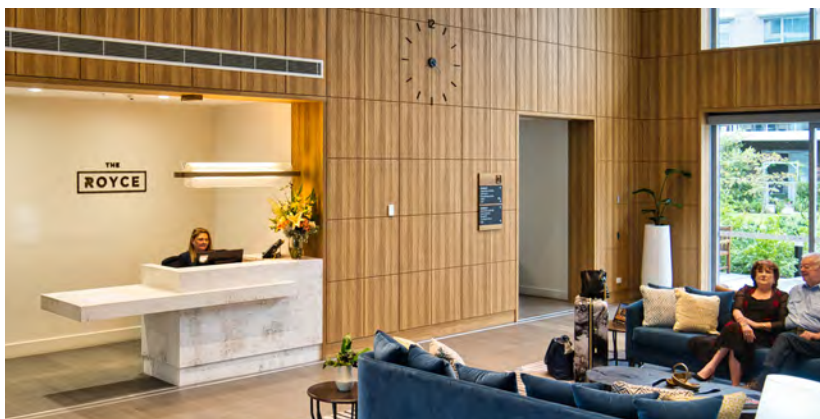
Fig 16.7.C Secure entry and reception with concierge controlling mail and deliveries

Independent living for high density –
design principles

16.8 Basement access and carparking

OBJECTIVE

16.8.1 To provide vehicular access in and out of a basement that is clearly identifiable, legible and well sign-posted.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

16.8.2 Ease of entry should be supported with a level stopping point for access to intercom and secure access at the security threshold.

Clear sightlines are required or separate driveways for each direction. Paths for pedestrian access to and from basement carpark must provide safe access away from vehicle movements.

16.8.3 Increasingly, resident car use is expected to become a combination of privately owned cars, share cars owned by the development, or a concierge car service, with or without a driver.

Car parking should be designed to be flexible to meet the changing needs into the future.

The amount of disabled car parking may increase with ageing in place becoming a common scenario.

Resident carparking should be designed to meet future need of electric vehicles with easy-to-reach car charging points.

Fig 16.8.A Accessible car parking with storage cages for each unit

Fig 16.8.B Legible signage in carpark basement

Independent living for high density -
design principles

16.8 Basement access and carparking continued

Fig 16.8.C Basement carpark entry with clear signage and level threshold

Independent living for high density –
design principles

16.9 Open space and landscape

OBJECTIVE

16.9.1 To integrate nature and landscape into the building's function — not only as decorative or passive elements, but as key programmatic aspects for healing and health.

DESIGN GUIDANCE

16.9.2 Stagger and articulate setback distances and maximise setbacks for meaningful use, including to utilise deep soil for mature shade trees to establish and flourish.

16.9.3 Use setback spaces for purposeful outdoor recreation, for screen planting and privacy and to maintain healthy biodiversity.

Fig 16.9.A Provision of meaningful outdoor spaces in a development with a co-located residential care facility and retirement living units, with common outside areas and generous landscaping

Checklist

Part 4

17.0 SEPP (Housing) 2021 Checklist

		ZONE	SELECT ZONE	RFB's PERMITTED IN THE ZONE	RFB's NOT PERMITTED IN THE ZONE	ADDITIONAL FLOOR SPACE RATIOS MAY APPLY	TYPE OF HOUSING	ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	SITE AREA	SITE FRONTAGE	ACCESS TO SERVICES AND FACILITIES	MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT	NUMBER OF STOREYS	SENIORS HOUSING ON GROUND FLOOR	FSR	RELATIONSHIP TO ADG	RELATIONSHIP TO NDIS/SDA Housing	RELATIONSHIP TO NDIS/SDA Housing	NOTE	EXEMPTIONS
PERMISSIBILITY	**ZONING**	RU2 Village																	REFER TO S 86	
		R1 General Residential																		
		R2 Low Density Residential																		
		R3 Medium Density Residential																		
		R4 High Density Residential																		
		E1 Local Centre																		
		E2 Commercial Centre																		
		E3 Productivity Support																		
		MU1 Mixed Use																		
		B1 Neighbourhood Centre																		
		B2 Local Centre																		
		B3 Commercial Core																		
		B4 Mixed Use																		
		B5 Business Development																		
		B6 Enterprise Corridor																		
		B7 Business Park																		
		B8 Metropolitan Centre																		
		SP1 Special Puposes																		REFER TO S 86	
		SP2 Infrastructure																		REFER TO S 86	
		SP4 Enterprise																		REFER TO S 79(o1)	
		SP5 Metropolitan Centre																			
		RE2 Private Recreation																		LAND MUST HAVE AN EXISTING REGISTERED CLUB, OR ADJOIN A PRESCRIBED ZONE. REFER TO S 86	
		LAND THAT IS USED FOR AN EXISTING REGISTERED CLUB																		SENIORS HOUSING AND CLUB FUNCTIONS TO BE SUITABLY SEPARATED	
	TYPE OF HOUSING	RESIDENTIAL CARE																			
		INDEPENDENT LIVING																			
		DISABILITY HOUSING																			
	PROTECTION	BUSHFIRE HAZARD																		REQUIRES CONSULTATION WITH NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICES	
		FLOOD AFFECTED LAND																			
		ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LAND																		REFER TO S 99	
		ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE																			
		HERITAGE																			
	SITE RELATED REQUIREMENTS	SITE AREA	IS SITE AREA GREATER THAN 1000sqm																REQUIRED FOR ALL SENIORS HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS	FOR APPLICATIONS MADE BY ABORIGINAL HOUSING OFFICE OR LAND AND HOUSING CORPORATION, OR ANOTHER SOCIAL HOUSING PROVIDER.
			IS SITE AREA GREATER THAN 1500sqm																REQUIRED FOR ADDITIONAL FLOOR SPACE RATIOS TO APPLY	
		SITE FRONTAGE	IS STREET FRONTAGE 20m OR MORE																REQUIRED FOR ALL SENIORS HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS	
		ACCESSIBILITY	FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING UNITS																ACCESSIBLE PATHWAY TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT WITHIN 400m OF THE DEVELOPMENT SITE	
			FOR RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE																PROVISION OF ON SITE SERVICES OR TRANSPORT SERVICE TO ACCESS SERVICES OFF SITE	
DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS	**HEIGHT**	IF RFB'S NOT PERMITTED IN ZONE																	9.5m TO TOP OF ROOF	
																			11.5m FOR SERVICE PLANT ON ROOF FOR MAXIMUM OF 20% OF ROOF AREA	
		IF RFB'S ARE PERMITTED IN ZONE																	ADDITIONAL 3.8m HEIGHT APPLIES OVER MAXIMUM PERMISSIBLE BUILDING HEIGHT	
		IF SHOP TOP HOUSING PERMITTED IN THE ZONE																		
		IF THE THE ZONE IS E2																		
		IF THE THE ZONE IS B3																		
	NUMBER OF STOREYS FACING REAR AND SIDE BOUDARIES	IF RFB'S NOT PERMITTED IN ZONE																	TWO, AND SUBSEQUENT STORIES MUST BE SET BACK WITHIN A 45 DEGREE PLANE FROM SIDE AND REAR BOUNDARIES	
	SENIORS HOUSING ON GROUND FLOOR	IN A BUSINESS ZONE																	NOT PERMITTED ON PART OF THE SITE THAT FRONTS AN ACTIVATED STREET FRONTAGE	
	FSR	FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING UNITS																	FSR 0.5:1 OR LESS	
		FOR RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE																	FSR 1:1 OR LESS	

18.0 Alignment with the
Apartment Design Guide (ADG)

This Guide outlines the intent of SEPP (Housing) 2021 and provides guidance for seniors housing developments. Some of the design principles in this guide align with the intent of the ADG for high density (3 or more storeys) Independent Living, and the Design Qualities outlined in the ADG and Chapter 4 of SEPP (Housing) 2021 are a good reference for common design challenges and can assist in the design of Seniors Housing.

The design of high density seniors housing may benefit from referencing the general good design guidance set out in ADG, and can be used in conjunction with seniors housing design guide where applicable. The summary below reviews the relationship between the ADG and the SEPP (Housing) 2021, and notes special considerations and/or deviations from the design principles in the ADG when it comes to seniors housing, such as approaches to privacy, building entries, accessibility, etc. This section of the Guide highlights the seniors specific design criteria and provides an explanation for the deviation from the ADG.

About this guide/ standard	**The Apartment Design Guide** is a resource to improve the planning and design of <u>residential apartment</u> development in NSW. The Apartment Design Guide used in conjunction with '<u>Chapter 4 of SEPP (Housing) 2021</u> sets out the NSW Government's policy direction for residential apartment development in NSW.	**Relationship with SEPP (Housing) 2021**
Aims	**This Apartment Design Guide** will help to achieve <u>better design and planning</u> for <u>residential apartment</u> development, by providing benchmarks for designing and assessing these developments. The design criteria set a clear measurable benchmark for how the objective can be practically achieved. If it is not possible to satisfy the design criteria, applications must demonstrate what other design responses are used to achieve the objective and the design guidance can be used to assist in this.	
	SEPP 65 and the **Apartment Design Guide** apply to residential flat buildings, shop top housing and the residential component of mixed use developments. They apply to buildings that are three or more storeys and that have four or more Independent Living or **Specialist Disability Accommodation** Units, where the unit is a separate dwelling.	
	Part 1 Identifying the context	Good guidance

	Part 2 Developing the controls	
	2a primary controls:	Good guidance
	2b building envelopes:	Good guidance
	2c building height	Good guidance
	2d floor space ratio:	Good guidance
	2e building depth:	Required accessible design standards may exceed specific unit and building depths prescribed in the apartment design guide.
	2f building separation:	Good guidance
	2g street setbacks:	Good guidance
	2h side and rear setbacks:	Good guidance
Criteria	Part 3 Sitting the development	
	3A Site analysis	Good guidance
	3B Orientation	Good guidance
	3C Public domain interface	Good guidance
	3D Communal and public open space	Good general guidance. In some seniors housing developments there may not be a requirement for public open space due to privacy and safety concerns.
	3E Deep soil zones	Good guidance.
	3F Visual privacy	Good guidance. When designing balconies consider that Seniors Housing developments may require different degrees of privacy. It can be beneficial for residents to be able to greet and acknowledge one another from their own balconies. 'Looking out for one another' is part of a supportive senior's community. When designing balconies, consider that Seniors Housing may require different degrees of privacy.
	3G Pedestrian access and entries	Good guidance, however consider that multiple building entries may be difficult to manage for security and resident interaction in Independent Living developments. It may be preferable to have one single point of entry to a concierge reception lobby where residents can connect and interact. A common lobby gives staff access to residents to monitor wellbeing and be available to assist.
	3H Vehicle access	Good guidance
	3J Bicycle and car parking	Good guidance

Criteria	Part 4 Designing the building	
	4A Solar and daylight access	Good guidance, however consider that Independent Living and Disability Housing cannot have mezzanine level apartments with stairs. Courtyards and lightwells could be used to provide daylight to bedrooms other than the primary bedroom as these are often for guests, workspace or temporary use.
	4B Natural ventilation	Good guidance
	4C Ceiling heights	Good guidance
	4D Apartment size and layout	Good guidance. Independent living units will typically exceed the minimum apartment sizes in the ADG to meet accessibility requirements.
	4E Private open space and balconies	Good guidance
	4F Common circulation and spaces	Good guidance. When designing independent living unit developments, consider that these are designed for ageing in place and need to facilitate care staff to be able to access many apartments on a floor and where possible, buildings can be linked on each floor for ease of access. Resident communities are encouraged to socialise and interact on each floor and circulation spaces can include lounges and sitting areas.
	4G Storage	Good guidance. Independent living units are typically greater in size than the minimum sizes in the ADG. The storage requirements in the ADG are desirable in seniors housing if it can be accommodated without increasing the apartment area yet maintaining accessibility standards.
	4H Acoustic privacy	Good guidance
	4I Noise and pollution	Good guidance
	4J Configuration	Good guidance
	4K Apartment mix	The apartment mix in seniors housing is typically driven by the retirement living operator and the market demand from downsizing. A suitable mix of market driven sizes and affordable smaller units is appropriate.

	4L Ground floor apartments	Good guidance. When designing consider that seniors housing needs to offer safety and security which may require seniors housing apartments on the ground floor to be accessed internally from a secure lobby or corridor. Outdoor gardens and terraces on the ground floor may also need to securely enclosed.
	4M Facades	Good guidance
	4N Roof design	Good guidance
	4O Landscape design	Good guidance
	4P Planting on structures	Good guidance
	4Q Universal design	Good guidance
	4R Adaptive reuse	Good guidance
	4S Mixed use	Good guidance
	4T Awnings and signage	Good guidance
	4U Energy efficiency	Good guidance
	4V Water management and conservation	Good guidance
	4W Waste management	Good guidance
	4X Building maintenance	Good guidance

19.0 Alignment with other design guides - SDA LHG

The Seniors Housing Design Guide provides guidelines for seniors housing developments, some of which may also fall under Specialist Disability Accommodation, or the Livable Housing Guidelines.

This section in the Guide provides a brief overview of the intent of the SDA Design Standards and Livable Housing Guidelines and their alignment and relationship with SEPP (Housing) 2021.

About this standard
The **SDA Design Standard** sets out the detailed design requirements that shall be incorporated into **new built** Specialist Disability Accommodation under the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
The **SDA Design Standards** have been crafted with the intention of improving the lives of participants by assisting them to live in their own home that meets their individual needs and is situated in communities that facilitate social connections and a sense of belonging
Consistent with accessible design standards

About this guide
The Livable Housing Design Guidelines provide useful information for consumers seeking to introduce livable design features into a new home or could be readily applied within an existing home during renovation or refurbishment.
Livable homes include key easy living features that make them easier and safer to use for all occupants including: people with disability, ageing Australians, people with temporary injuries, and families with young children.
Consistent with accessible design standards
A livable home is designed to: be easy to enter, be easy to navigate in and around, be capable of easy and cost-effective adaptation, and be responsive to the changing needs of home occupants
The Livable Housing Design Guidelines describe livable design elements which provide guidance on what performance is expected to achieve LHA's Silver, Gold or Platinum level accreditation