

**Submission  
No 48**

## **INQUIRY INTO APARTMENT DESIGN STANDARDS**

**Organisation:** City of Greater Bendigo

**Date Received:** 31 October 2021

Enquiries: A. Petherbridge  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

31 October 2021

Dear Madam/Sir

## **INQUIRY INTO APARTMENT DESIGN STANDARDS**

Thank you for your email to the City's CEO on 22 September 2021, and the opportunity to respond to the Inquiry into Apartment Design Standards.

The City of Greater Bendigo (the City) currently receives a small number of applications that require assessment under the Better Apartment Design Standards, however this expected to change as the city targets 200,000 residents by 2050. As a growing regional city, Greater Bendigo will experience a large amount of urban infill and apartment buildings will be key in achieving sustainable population growth in high amenity areas. Of relevance to this Inquiry, the City welcomes and supports the proposed changes to the Better Apartment Design Standards, and this support is elaborated further below.

Our residents currently enjoy a high quantity and quality of private and public outdoor spaces, and Greater Bendigo is well known for outstanding public gardens, play spaces and recreational parks. The City has adopted many strategies that seek to protect and further the success of our outdoor spaces, including the Greater Bendigo Public Space Plan and Greening Greater Bendigo, and has had great success in implementing actions. The proposed changes to the Standards will ensure this continues in future developments.

The proposed changes to the Better Apartment Design Standards will improve built form outcomes for small(er) scale apartment development, which is likely more applicable given the City's regional context and rich heritage and history. They will also strengthen the ability to assess the design quality of facades and impacts on the streetscape proposed in future apartment developments. The proposed new clauses provide rigour when assessing building materials, presentation to the street, access, street activation and visual permeability.

As the Better Apartment Design Standards are both prescriptive and allow for appropriate interpretation by the assessor, additional education and training will be required to assist Statutory Planners when assessing applications.

The City is a member of the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE). CASBE is a collaborative alliance of Victorian councils committed to the creation of a sustainable built environment within and beyond their municipalities. CASBE's focus is on applying widely accepted Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) principles to the built environment through the Victorian planning system.

CASBE has developed the Built Environment Sustainability Scorecard (BESS) - an online tool for assessing the sustainability of development proposals at planning stage. BESS provides a consistent assessment methodology for CASBE's Sustainable Design Assessment in the Planning Process (SDAPP) framework – an approach adopted by numerous Victorian councils.

The City is collaborating with 30 other Victorian councils and the MAV (representing CASBE) on a joint research project that aims to elevate ESD targets. The first stage of the process aims to build on the existing ESD policies and elevate ESD targets for new development, including targets for zero carbon developments. Once completed, the councils will seek to introduce respective amendments into their planning scheme to elevate existing ESD requirements. CASBE's response to this Inquiry highlights the need for improved ESD in apartment designs, which is supported by the City.

Please contact me on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] if you'd like to discuss any of the above information in more detail.

Yours faithfully

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**Anthony Petherbridge**  
Manager Strategic Planning