

**LGPMC**

Local Government and  
Planning Ministers' Council



# National Low Risk Low Impact Assessment Single Residential Development Template

Prepared by



Planning

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## Introduction

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and Local Government Planning Ministers Council (LGPMC) Development Assessment Sub Group commissioned the New South Wales (NSW) Department of Planning to prepare National “Low Risk Low Impact” Assessment Development Templates for single residential, multi unit residential, commercial and industrial developments.

The National “Low Risk Low Impact” Assessment Development Templates project is one of 5 projects within the National Development Assessment Reform Program. The templates will provide a clear and simple national approach for low risk low impact developments.

This template sets out development categories and standards for low risk low impact **single residential dwellings** across Australia so that participants in this development market can easily compare development categories and standards no matter where they choose to invest in Australia.

## Development of the template

The templates will be a useful tool to implement microeconomic reform and reduce the regulatory burden on participants in the development industry by saving time and reducing the cost of development.

To develop the templates a review was undertaken of the current approaches to single residential dwelling development approval in each jurisdiction, identifying areas of consistency and inconsistency across the jurisdictions and the current proportion of code assessed development approvals versus merit assessment approvals. Consultation with all jurisdictions was undertaken to ensure a reasonable consensus on the final reporting to the LGPMC and COAG.

The template is based on the following principles:

- Reduce red tape in planning and development in all jurisdictions
- low-risk development is approved under a fast-track ‘as of right’ process with nationally consistent time frames between 5 to 10 days

- market participants require only one certificate for code-assessable development from and authorise or registered certifier that is authorised or registered through nationally consistent rules
- no notification requirements or third party merit appeals
- transparent data collection and performance monitoring consistent across jurisdictions
- linking to an e-planning process where market participants can efficiently and effectively access and utilise planning information, requirements, and processes and can access details for private and public certifiers.

### NATIONAL RESIDENTIAL LOW RISK LOW IMPACT ASSESSMENT CODE TEMPLATE

The template provides the following:

- a draft National Low Risk Assessment Development Template for single residential development to provide a harmonised approach to low risk residential developments across Australia
- Outlines the purpose, role and function and application of the Templates which primarily is to provide a harmonised approach to low risk single and multiple dwelling residential developments
- Compiles a list of harmonised definitions for each development category
- Provides the development categories, their purpose and quantified standards
- Lists principles that have been developed to deal with local variability including:
- Heritage street facing developments in designated heritage zones, rules about increasing heritage zones
- Character areas that is the dominant urban form which is unique and is related to a period, type of building design
- Designated bushfire, hazard or buffer area.

# Objective of a National Code Template

The objective of a National Low Risk Assessment Development Template is to enable efficient approval of low risk residential developments in established residential zones and that no jurisdiction is left behind. Failure to do so will mean inefficient national investment in dwelling construction.

## Introduction

### OBJECTIVES

This National Low Risk Assessment Development Template for Single Residential Development seeks to harmonise the development standards for siting and designing low risk single residential developments in established residential zones across Australia so that market participants have comparable standards no matter where they choose to invest in Australia.

### STRUCTURE OF THE TEMPLATE

This Template consists of the following parts.

- Part 1 provides the purpose, role and function, application and definitions of the Template.
- Part 2 provides the development categories and quantified standards.
- Part 3 provides the principles for dealing with local variability.

## Part 1 – Role, Function, Application and Definitions

### ROLE AND FUNCTION

The National Low Risk Assessment Residential Development Template is to provide consistent and predictable national objectives, elements and definitions for low risk single dwelling residential developments. This is aimed at providing a clear and simple harmonised national approach to support initiatives that support national micro economic reform and reduce regulatory burden for planning officials and market participants by saving time and cost for these low risk developments.

The National Low Risk Assessment Residential Development Template will provide four key functions:

- support the principle of ‘as of right’ for single dwelling residential development;
- support established regulatory processes for code assessable development;
- support efficient dwelling investment that contributes to national economic growth over the long-term; and
- support the strategic housing policies and targets contained in jurisdictional planning strategies.

### APPLICATION

This National Low Risk Assessment Residential Development Template applies to the development of single residential dwellings that are no more than two storeys on minimum lot sizes ranging from 300m<sup>2</sup> to 500m<sup>2</sup>.

The National Low Risk Assessment Residential Development Template applies to the following assessment tracks adopted in the Australian jurisdictions:

- **exempt development track** – This track is for development that has low impact beyond the site and does not affect the achievement of any policy objective. Proposals in the exempt track should not need to submit an application;
- **self assessment track** – This track is for development that can be assessed against clearly articulated quantitative criteria that if met development approval will always be given. This type of application is suitable for certification by a qualified person. No public notification would be required nor a review mechanism as the proposal would either meet the criteria or not; and
- **code assess track** – This track is for development that can be assessed against objective criteria and performance standards which are essentially quantitative. Assessments in this track are more complex than the Self Assess track however, private sector certification is possible but would require an expert assessor to make judgements. Under this track standard consent would be given provided the criteria are met and there would be scope for review of the decision but no other parties would be involved.

## DEFINITIONS

**Building height** – The height of the building from the highest point of the roof to the ground level immediately below. [Edit Note: Some jurisdictions do not include certain roof projections (i.e. mast antennas, chimneys, flues etc). Some jurisdictions also vary the lowest point at where the measurement is taken (i.e. the lowest point of the site)]

**Car parking** – The number of off-street car parking space required for single residential dwelling. Off-street car parking may include open hardstand spaces, carports, garages or a combination of all structures.

**Cut and fill** – The maximum extent and depth of excavation and filling works that is permitted with the construction of a building (usually applies to slab-on-ground construction).

**Daylight to existing adjoining windows** – The criteria applicable to maintaining solar access to windows in habitable rooms on adjoining properties.

**Daylight to new habitable rooms** – The criteria applicable to maintaining solar access to windows in habitable rooms in the building.

**Front fences** – The criteria applicable to the height of fences permitted on the street boundary.

**Front street setback** – Distance from the primary street frontage to the furthestmost point of the single residential dwelling on the dwelling site.

**Garage and driveways** – The location and access restrictions that apply to the site of garages and off-street car parking spaces.

**Landscaping** – The minimum landscaping area required for a site (see also permeability).

**Overshadowing of adjoining of private open space** – The criteria applicable to maintaining solar access to private open space on adjoining properties.

**Permeability** – The area of a site that cannot be built upon and allows for the infiltration of rainwater.

**Private open space** – The criteria for private open space associated with a single residential dwelling.

**Privacy** – The criteria applicable to privacy screening where a new window (or other opening) has direct line of site into a window of a habitable room or private open space on an adjoining property.

**Rear setback** – Distance from a rear boundary to the furthestmost point of the single residential dwelling on the dwelling site.

**Service connections** – The applicable criteria or requirements that apply to essential service connections (i.e. water, sewerage, electricity, gas, etc).

**Significant trees** – The protection measures or permit provisions that apply to protect or remove significant trees.

**Side setback** – Distance from a side boundary to the furthestmost point of the single residential dwelling on the dwelling site.

**Side street setback** – Applies to properties on corner allotments and is the distance from the secondary street frontage to the furthestmost point of the single residential dwelling on the dwelling site

**Single residential dwellings** – Single residential dwellings are no more than two storeys, on minimum lot sizes ranging from 300m<sup>2</sup> to 500m<sup>2</sup>

**Site coverage** – The total area of the building measured as a percentage of the site area.

**Solar access to adjoining private open space** – The criteria applicable to maintaining solar access to private open space on the site.

**Solar access to adjoining north facing windows** – The criteria applicable to maintaining solar access to north facing windows in habitable rooms on adjoining properties.

**Streetscape** – The design features that must be employed in the front facade of the building facing the street.

**Wall height (other than permitted walls on boundaries)** – The maximum wall height, in addition to the maximum building height, of a building.

**Walls on boundaries** – The criteria applicable for boundary construction.

## Part 2 – Development Categories

DWELLING STANDARD CATEGORIES	PURPOSE AND INTENT	DEVELOPMENT STANDARD RANGES
<b>Building envelope covering the general footprint and building form of residential dwellings</b>		
Front street setback	The purpose of the front street setback is to contribute to the desired neighbourhood character of the street and the amenity and scale of the building form	4.0m – 7.5m
Side street setback	The purpose of the side street setback is to enable corner block sites separation distance between the dwelling and the street and contributes to the amenity and scale of the building form	0.9m – 6.0m
Side setback	The purpose of the side setback is to enable site separation distance between dwellings and contributes to the amenity and scale of the building form	0.9m – 1.5m
Rear setback	The purpose of the rear set back is to enable utilisation of the rear yard given the increased desire for residents to recreate at home and contributes to the amenity and scale of the building form	1.0m – 4.0m
Building height	The purpose of the height of the building contributes to the amenity, building form and the impact of the building on the public domain and views to and from the building	8.0m – 9.0m
Wall height	The purpose of walls height is to provide opportunities for greater design flexibility and efficient use of the site	3.5m – 6.0m
Walls on boundaries	The purpose of walls on boundaries is to provide opportunities for greater design flexibility and efficient use of the site	3.0m – 3.6m high and 8.0m – 9.0m in length
Cut and fill	The purpose of cut and fill is to enable the building form to complement the natural constraints of the land	At least a maximum 1.0m cut and maximum 600 mm fill
Site coverage	The purpose of site coverage is to define the boundaries of the building envelope	50 per cent – 60 per cent
Site coverage including private open space	The purpose of site coverage including private open space is to define the horizontal boundaries of the building envelope	At least 50 per cent of site area
<b>Streetscape covering the street address of residential dwellings</b>		
Front fences	The purpose of front fences is to provide a physical boundary between the property and the street domain as well as providing a level of safety and privacy	1.0m – 2.1m
Streetscape facade	The purpose of the streetscape façade is to provide minimum surveillance for occupants and provides a direct and safe access to the dwelling from the street	Provide at least a window to a habitable room and a front door to face the street

DWELLING STANDARD CATEGORIES	PURPOSE AND INTENT	DEVELOPMENT STANDARD RANGES
<b>Car parking and access</b>		
Car parking	The purpose of car parking is to provide a range of car parking requirement standards to contribute to the amenity and to enable jurisdictions the flexibility to adopt requirements based on access to public transport	1 space – 2 spaces
Garage and driveways	The purpose of the garage and driveways is to provide car parking requirement standards to contribute to the amenity and contribute to the scale of the building form	Garage door opening of 6.0m – 7.0m  Garage setback from building 0m – 1.0m
<b>Landscaping</b>		
Landscaping (includes permeability)	The purpose of the landscaping is to ensure the overall amenity of the residential site and encourage greening of residential areas	At least 20% of open space
<b>Solar access to residential dwellings</b>		
Daylight to existing adjoining windows	The purpose of daylight to existing adjoining windows is to contribute to the amenity of occupants and may also influence thermal dynamics relative to its energy efficiency within a given climate	At least 25 per cent of site area at June 21
Daylight to new habitable rooms	The purpose of daylight to new habitable rooms is to contribute to the amenity of occupants and may also influence thermal dynamics relative to its energy efficiency within a given climate	At least 3 hours of direct sunlight to living area on June 21
Solar access to adjoining north facing windows	The purpose of solar access to adjoining north facing windows is to contribute to the amenity of occupants and may also influence thermal dynamics relative to its energy efficiency within a given climate	At least 25 per cent of site area at June 21
Solar access to adjoining private open space	The purpose of solar access to adjoining POS is to contribute to the amenity of occupants and may also influence thermal dynamics relative to its energy efficiency within a given climate	At least 5 hrs sunlight on September 22
Overshadowing of adjoining private open space	The purpose of overshadowing of adjoining POS is to contribute to the amenity of occupants and may also influence thermal dynamics relative to its energy efficiency within a given climate	At least 25 per cent of site area at June 21
Privacy	The purpose of privacy is to provide a level of security to occupants	At least to windows in habitable rooms (other than bedrooms) 1.0m above ground level, setbacks less than 3.0m from boundary and decks 1.0m above ground level

DWELLING STANDARD CATEGORIES	PURPOSE AND INTENT	DEVELOPMENT STANDARD RANGES
Other matters		
Significant trees	To ensure the amenity afforded by significant trees is protected or enhanced	Subject to state / territory requirements
Service connections	The purpose of service connections is to ensure utility service connections are provided for those sites proposed or already established without such connections	Residential dwellings must be connected to water, sewer and electricity

## Part 3 – Local Variations

In order to manage local variations the following three matters will be subject to local variation:

- heritage street facing developments in designated heritage zones, rules about increasing heritage zones;
- character areas that is the dominant urban form which is unique and is related to a period, type of building material design; and
- designated bushfire, hazard or buffer area.

### VARIATIONS:

- must be quantifiable and involve metrics that do not involve subjective interpretation;
- must be sought by a local government authority and subject to a independent panel's recommendation to a Minister;
- must (with the exception of bushfire or buffers) be confined to street facing development; and
- must not trigger a merit assessment; rather test compliance with a new set of metrics in the code.
- 127 standards identified at DAF meeting August 2008