

# Planning support needed for Affordable Apartments

Tuesday, 22 August 2017

The planning system in New South Wales must support apartments that are affordable, says the Urban Taskforce in a new research publication.

"Our research into the cost of apartments in Sydney has found that planning rules make them more expensive than in other Australian cities," says Urban Taskforce CEO, Chris Johnson. "We have outlined the results of our research in a publication titled 'Affordable Apartments' which looks at global trends to help reduce the cost of urban housing."

"In New York there has been a move towards 'Micro Apartments' that can be as small as 30 square metres as long as they are located close to jobs and amenities. Sydney can learn from the New York initiatives as part of a focus on housing affordability."

"One area where initiatives are being undertaken in NSW is the move towards New Generation Boarding Houses. A number of small studio apartments of around 25 square metres are able to share common facilities in buildings that are only built to rent. These smaller units are able to bypass many of the NSW planning rules on solar access and minimum sizes under the Affordable Rental Housing State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) 2009. The NSW Government should encourage a greater use of building like McCarthy Maisonettes as outlined in our publication."

"The Urban Taskforce research also compared the NSW Apartment Design Guide requirements with the Victorian equivalent Better Apartment Design Standards document and found that \$150,000 could be saved from the purchase price of a NSW two bed apartment if the Victorian rules were applied."

"The Urban Taskforce believes the NSW Government needs to seriously look at its well-meaning planning rules that apply to apartment design in the interest of affordability. A special category should be established for Affordable Apartments in urban locations where there are many amenities including public transport. Another category should be established for high rise city locations where it is difficult to achieve the winter sun access to 70 percent of apartments required by the Apartment Design Guide."

"The NSW Apartment Design Guide has 180 pages packed with micro details while the Victorian Better Apartment Standards which was produced after an analysis of the NSW version has only 40 pages with much more flexibility. The Victorian document took affordability into account in its approach to setting planning rules for apartments."

"The development industry in NSW is keen to help consumers with the delivery of more affordable apartments but this will need a number of planning standards to be amended."

The Urban Ideas publication on "Affordable Apartments" can be accessed [here](#).

The **Urban Taskforce** is a property development industry group, representing Australia's most prominent property developers and equity financiers.

Media Enquires: Chris Johnson, Chief Executive Officer: 0412 258 283.

Follow us on:   