

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP
Acting Minister for Planning



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NEW APARTMENT DESIGN STANDARDS TO IMPROVE NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Andrews Labor Government will introduce new design standards for the outside of apartment buildings, to ensure new developments are built to a high-quality, and improve the look and feel of local neighbourhoods.

In 2017, the Labor Government introduced the Building Better Apartment design standards to ensure apartments have adequate daylight, storage, ventilation, acoustic performance, energy and waste efficiency.

The focus has now broadened to look at the standards for building exteriors, to ensure that apartment buildings are attractive, fit in with their neighbourhood, and provide more trees and green spaces.

The proposed changes will affect landscaping, external walls, vehicle access, site servicing, wind effects and the management of building construction impacts.

The new standards are designed to lower the cost of maintenance, replacement and repair, through the use of better-quality materials, while also making sure the building's construction matches the design proposed in both glossy brochures and the planning permit application.

Until recently, most apartment developments have been built in inner Melbourne, where there are established planning practices around the exterior of buildings.

As more apartment developments are built in the outer suburbs and regional cities, there is a greater need to ensure streets and neighbourhoods are well-built and accommodate the needs of residents and visitors.

Over the past six months feedback has been sought on the performance of the current apartment design standards, including one-on-one conversations with industry peak bodies and local government.

Community consultation on the Building Better Apartments design standards is now open at engage.vic.gov.au/building-better-apartments-in-neighbourhoods.

Quotes attributable to Acting Minister for Planning Lily D'Ambrosio

"As more and more people choose apartment living, we need to ensure these buildings are high-quality and ready for twenty-first century challenges such as climate change and our growing population growth."

"Melbourne leads the world in liveability and that should be reflected in our apartments – by increasing green space and wind protection and creating safer, more attractive neighbourhoods."

"Our buildings and public spaces are a defining feature of our city – it's vital that we get the planning right now to make sure it stays that way."