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Your ref: DPI 09/01813/1

Director
Policy Co-ordination and Development
Department of Planning
Albert Facey House
469 Wellington Street
PERTH WA 6000

By email: muhc@planning.wa.gov.au

Dear Director

RE: MULTI UNIT HOUSING CODE

The Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA WA) is pleased to provide comment on the Multi Unit Housing Code (MUHC), November 2009 proposed by the Department of Planning. UDIA would like to commend the Department on the quality of the discussion paper which clearly outlines the operation and application of the draft code.

Specific Comments

- UDIA supports the removal of minimum site area and more emphasis on built form controls.
- UDIA supports the separation of the multiple dwelling and mixed-use controls from the single and grouped dwelling types. This should create less confusion when designing such developments.
- The onsite visitors parking (section 6b3.4) should be made clearer. UDIA suggests expressing visitors parking requirements as the rate of one bay for 1 to 4 dwellings rather than as 0.25 bays per dwelling. This tends to confuse designers as developments with, for example 7 dwellings, will need to provide 1.75 visitors bays. It would be clearer if the requirement could be amended to 1 visitor bay required for 1 to 4 dwellings provided, 2 visitor bays for 5 to 8 dwellings and so on.
- The reference to 1.7m vertical screening under section 6b4.1 could be amended to 1.6m to remain consistent with the definition of a Minor Opening under the Residential Design codes. The windows with a sill height of not less than 1.6m above the floor level (as referred to in the R-Codes under the Major Opening definition), provides an acceptable visual screen to adjoining properties. To maintain consistency and remove potential confusion, they should both reflect 1.6m.

The MUHC should reduce the disincentive for smaller dwellings and have a positive impact on housing affordability, particularly in established areas where the viability of infill and high density projects has been compromised by the existing code. The emphasis on built form controls

should result in better designed multi unit housing leading to improved urban outcomes and community acceptance. The MUHC should also improve local government's ability to apply and promote multi unit housing and mixed use development.

I trust you will give due consideration to the comments above.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Debra Goostrey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping tail.

Debra Goostrey
Chief Executive Officer