



Glossary of Key Terms

Design Excellence Fast Tracked: Using the Seven Principles to Deliver High-Quality Urban Homes

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Adaptable Homes:** A design principle focusing on housing that can meet changing needs over time, supporting ageing-in-place, universal access, and functional reconfiguration.
- **Ageing-in-Place:** Designing homes or communities to allow residents to continue living there comfortably and independently as they age.
- **Build-to-Rent (BTR):** A housing model where developments are purpose-built for long-term rental, often featuring professional management and shared amenities.
- **Canopy Cover:** The proportion of ground area covered by the crowns of trees, contributing to urban cooling, shade, and visual amenity.
- **CLT (Cross-Laminated Timber):** An engineered wood product used as a structural building material, known for its sustainability and speed of construction.
- **Co-living:** A residential model offering private bedrooms within a larger building with shared communal spaces and amenities, promoting social interaction and affordability.
- **Context-Responsive Development:** Building design that is sensitive to the existing character, scale, materials, and patterns of its surrounding neighbourhood.
- **CPD Certification:** Continuing Professional Development certification, required for maintaining professional licenses or memberships.
- **Cross Ventilation:** Designing buildings with openings on opposite sides or corners to allow natural airflow through the structure, aiding cooling and air quality.

- **Deep Soil Zones:** Areas of land free from underground services and basement encroachment that are deep enough to support the healthy growth of large trees and vegetation.
- **Design Excellence:** High-quality architectural and urban design that delivers superior outcomes across environmental, social, and economic criteria.
- **Embodied Carbon:** The greenhouse gas emissions associated with the production of building materials and the construction process.
- **Entry Thresholds:** The physical and visual transition points between public spaces (like streets or footpaths) and private or semi-private residential areas.
- **Great Design Fast Track Pathway:** A Victorian Government planning initiative providing streamlined approval processes for eligible residential developments that demonstrate high-quality, design-led outcomes based on seven principles.
- **Healthy Homes:** A design principle focused on optimising indoor environmental quality, including access to daylight, ventilation, noise mitigation, and good air quality.
- **Heating/Cooling Load Limits:** Maximum amounts of energy a building can use for heating and cooling to maintain internal comfort, enforced under NCC 2022.
- **Landscaped Homes:** A design principle emphasising the integration of greenery, deep soil planting, and canopy cover to enhance livability, cooling, and climate resilience.
- **Livable Housing Design (Part H8, NCC Volume Two):** National standards (now often mandatory in the NCC) requiring key design features in new homes to support accessibility, safety, and usability for people of all ages and abilities.
- **MMC (Modern Methods of Construction):** Innovative construction techniques and systems, such as prefabrication or modular construction, aimed at improving efficiency, quality, and sustainability.
- **Modular Adaptability:** Designing homes or systems that allow for future changes or upgrades using modular components without extensive demolition.
- **NatHERS:** The Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme, used to assess the thermal performance of residential buildings in Australia.

- **NCC (National Construction Code):** Australia's technical building code, outlining minimum requirements for health, safety, amenity, accessibility, and sustainability in buildings.
- **Neighbourly Homes:** A design principle focused on ensuring new development enhances local identity and responds sensitively to the character of its surrounding neighbourhood.
- **Passive Solar Design:** Designing buildings to take advantage of the sun's energy for heating in winter and excluding it for cooling in summer, reducing reliance on mechanical systems.
- **Passive Surveillance:** Designing spaces to be overlooked by habitable rooms or active areas, enhancing natural security and safety without the need for explicit security measures.
- **Permeability:** The degree to which a site allows visual or physical connection and movement between the development and its surroundings.
- **Planning Scheme Variations:** Requests to deviate from standard planning controls (e.g., height limits, setbacks) which require justification based on design quality or other policy objectives.
- **Public Realm Integration:** Designing buildings and sites to positively interact with and contribute to surrounding public spaces like streets, parks, and footpaths.
- **Sustainable Homes:** A design principle focused on reducing environmental impacts through passive design, energy efficiency, sustainable materials, and renewable energy integration.
- **Universal Access:** Designing environments and products to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.
- **Urban Cooling:** Strategies, particularly through green infrastructure, to reduce ambient temperatures in urban areas and mitigate the urban heat island effect.
- **Urban Heat Island Effect:** The phenomenon where urban areas are significantly warmer than surrounding rural areas due to built surfaces absorbing and retaining heat.
- **Welcoming Homes:** A design principle focused on creating safe, inclusive, and social entry points and communal spaces within a residential development.

- **Whole-of-Home Energy Efficiency:** An assessment approach under NCC 2022 that evaluates the total energy performance of a dwelling, including building fabric and fixed systems (appliances, hot water, lighting, renewables).