



## SECTION 4 BOARDING HOUSES AND CO-LIVING HOUSING

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Boarding houses form a significant component of North Sydney's affordable housing stock, providing accommodation for a diverse range of people within the community. North Sydney Council has actively pursued the retention of and increase in provision of affordable housing stock in the LGA since the mid 1980s. Council's *Affordable Housing Strategy 2008*, identifies the retaining and increasing boarding house stock, to meet the need for local housing choice.

[State Environmental Planning Policy \(Housing\) 2021](#) also contains provisions pertaining to the provision and alterations and additions to existing boarding houses and co-living housing. This SEPP should be consulted in the preparation of any development application for a boarding house or co-living housing. The provisions contained within this section are in addition to those contained within the [SEPP \(Housing\) 2021](#).

#### 4.1.1 General Objectives

To ensure that boarding houses and co-living housing:

- O1 provide a principal place of residence for long term residents and are not used for tourist purposes such as hotel or motel accommodation, serviced apartments or backpacker accommodation,
- O2 differ from self contained accommodation by the provision of shared facilities,
- O3 are appropriately designed in terms of bulk and scale, and residential amenity including internal layout, and
- O4 operate without adversely interfering with the amenity on the local area.

#### 4.1.2 When does this section of the DCP apply?

This Section of the DCP applies to all development applications for:

- (a) Establishment of a new boarding house or co-living housing by the conversion of an existing building;
- (b) Construction of a new boarding house or new co-living housing; and
- (c) Alterations and additions to an existing boarding house or co-living housing.

### 4.2 INTERNAL BUILDING DESIGN

The design of boarding houses and co-living housing must consider the balance between the shared and private areas. Lodgers generally occupy only one room as their own space, so shared areas are a particularly significant component of the accommodation.

#### 4.2.1 Objectives

- O1 To ensure that communal facilities are designed to meet the needs of lodgers.
- O2 To ensure that lodgers are provided with a reasonable level of amenity.
- O3 To ensure the safety of lodgers and any associated staff.

#### 4.2.2 Provisions

##### Communal living areas

- P1 Where a boarding house or co-living housing is more than one storey, at least one communal living room should be provided on each storey of the building.



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- P2 Indoor common living rooms should be located:
- (a) on the ground floor near frequently used spaces (e.g. kitchen, lobby, laundry, mail area, manager's office); and
  - (b) directly adjacent to common outdoor areas; and
  - (c) such that at least one communal living room is capable of receiving more than 3 hours sunlight between 9.00am and 3.00pm at midwinter.
- P3 Internal doors to common indoor living rooms must contain glass to provide an outlook into the room from corridors or other shared facilities.

**Boarding rooms**

- P4 Each room is large enough to accommodate more than a single function (i.e. sleeping plus studying, watching TV etc).
- P5 All bedrooms must be provided with access to natural light and ventilation.
- P6 Windows must have a minimum area of 10% of the floor area of the room.
- P7 Adequate storage facilities for clothes, linen, and personal items must be provided within each bedroom.

**Shared facilities**

- P8 Shared facilities are to comply with the following minimum requirements:
- (a) Kitchen and dining area - 15m<sup>2</sup>, with an additional 1m<sup>2</sup> per resident over 6 lodgers; and
  - (b) Bathroom(s) - 5m<sup>2</sup>. Also refer to the BCA requirements.
- P9 A meal service may be provided.
- P10 Kitchen facilities can be used by lodgers 24 hours per day / 7 days week.
- P11 Provide one washing machine and one washing tub for every 10 lodgers.
- P12 Provide one electric clothes dryer or 20m of external clothes line for every 10 lodgers.

**Internal circulation**

- P13 No more than 8 rooms can share a stairway, corridor or deck.
- P14 Internal circulation areas are to be designed to enhance choices about privacy and interaction.

**Management office design**

- P15 Every boarding house or co-living housing is to be provided with a management office.
- P16 Management offices must be located at a central, visible point which is convenient to all users of the boarding house or co-living housing premises.
- P17 Where more than 20 lodgers are to be accommodated, a room or on-site dwelling is to be provided for a house manager.

**Personal security**

- P18 Ensure areas adjacent to shared entry lobbies are visible from the outside to the inside.
- P19 Communal and common areas are well lit and provide clear sight lines.
- P20 Provide a secure point for mail deliveries.

**Fire safety**

- P21 All boarding houses and co-living housing are to comply with all the fire safety provisions of the Building Code of Australia as they apply to Boarding Houses (Class 1b or Class 3).
- P22 Any required exit door from lobby must never be locked.

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### Accessibility

- P23 Access to the building must be designed in accordance with the provisions contained within Part D: Section 3 – *Accessibility*.

## 4.3 LANDSCAPED AREA

Lodgers generally occupy only one room as their own space. Therefore, the provision and design of open space and lodgers' access to this is particularly important.

### 4.3.1 Objectives

- O1 To ensure that access to communal open space areas is designed to meet the needs of lodgers.
- O2 To ensure that privacy is provided to communal open space areas from adjoining developments.
- O3 To ensure that any private open space provided is clearly separated from any communal open space.

### 4.3.2 Provisions

#### Landscaped area

- P1 Use fencing, screen planting and structures to define the landscaped area.
- P2 Set aside an area of the site, immediately adjacent to the main circulation route, rear entry or ground floor common living or activity areas, as landscaped area for the lodgers of the boarding house or co-living housing.
- P3 Use screen planting and trees to block views of the landscaped area from public places and views to and from nearby properties.

#### Private space

- P4 Use screening to provide visual privacy for private space (such as balconies and courtyards) attached to a particular lodger's room/s from any communal space.
- P5 If accommodation is provided for an on-site manager, a minimum 8m<sup>2</sup> private open space area must be provided directly adjacent to the dwelling.

## 4.4 MANAGEMENT AND REGISTRATION

### 4.4.1 Objectives

- O1 To ensure that boarding houses and co-living housing minimise impacts upon the local community.
- O2 To ensure that boarding houses and co-living housing continue to provide adequate and affordable accommodation to long term residents and not tourists.
- O3 To enable Council to monitor the operations of boarding houses.

### 4.4.2 Provisions

#### Management

- P1 Boarding houses and co-living housing are managed either on site or through arrangements outlined in a management plan submitted to Council.
- P2 Applications are to be accompanied by a Management Plan, which must address the following operational aspects of the boarding house or co-living housing:
  - (a) fees for residency;
  - (b) management and supervision through an on-site manager or regular visits;



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- (c) kitchen usage, the provision of meals or resident provision of meals;
- (d) noise inside and in adjacent private open space areas;
- (e) use of communal space and facilities;
- (f) parking for cars;
- (g) cleanliness and maintenance of the property and grounds; and
- (h) house rules (covering issues such as access to rooms, keeping shared facilities clean and tidy, visitors, pets, quiet enjoyment etc).

P3 Managers must be over 18 years of age.

P4 Occupiers of adjacent properties are to be provided with a 24 hour telephone number for a principal (for example owner or manager) so they can contact the premises.

P5 Separately meter each lettable room for electricity/gas and water.

**Note.** Council maintains a database on boarding houses within its LGA and may require the completion of a questionnaire on an annual basis. The questionnaire typically asks for information on number of lodgers, fees charged and lodgers' length of stay.

*Boarding houses may be subject to periodical inspections by Council, or its agent.*