46. ECO-INFO
IMPLEMENTATION OF DCP 100 – QUALITY HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

Following the introduction of Council's Development Control Plan No. 100 – Quality Housing on January 1 2003, Council has identified that certain issues regarding the implementation of the requirements of the DCP require clarification.

The main areas of concern raised by building companies are in relation to requirements for:

- Eaves;
- Rainwater tanks;
- No unbroken lengths of walls to exceed 10 metres (Bulk and Scale issue); and
- Waste control on building sites.

The following advices are intended to clarify the requirements and the details relating to their implementation and will be taken into account during the scheduled review of the DCP by June 30, 2004.

EAVES:

The majority of dwelling designs include the provision of eaves, as required by the Development Control Plan. It specifies that "eaves with a minimum width of 450mm shall be provided on all facades", excepting that the requirement "does not apply to gables over garages or prevent the incorporation of "under eave" articulation of the building façade."

However, there are designs which do not include eaves as a standard part of the design, and advice has been sought as to the circumstances in which eaveless designs can gain approval.

The DCP currently has provisions for development without eaves, requiring the "use of structural rather than mechanical means to control solar access, temperature and ventilation and to provide weather protection to openings" on all dwelling designs. This means the integration of control devices such as awnings, pergolas, roofed decks, and other permanent shading structures, etc., into the dwelling design.

As eaveless designs would otherwise poorly provide for weather protection and shading of glazed areas, the use of these structural measures together with a minimum NatHERS rating of 4 stars is the minimum goal for compliance for any eaveless design.

RAINWATER TANKS:

Size and Location of Tanks: A concern has been raised that tanks will take up valued space within rear yards of dwellings. Council has no requirement for the tank to be exclusively located within the rear yard.

Various locations and designs can be considered having regard to the site conditions, e.g., within the dwelling walls or slab, above ground, below ground or partially in-ground tanks (screened from view in front setback areas).

Tanks can be a single unit, or alternatively a series of smaller tanks, linked together to achieve the 5,000L capacity required by the DCP.

Cost: Feedback received by Council indicates a common belief that the cost of the rainwater tank together with the installation costs is too excessive for the average homebuyer, with building companies stating that the average 5,000L tank is costing between $6,000 and $9,000, and that the installation is costing between $3,000 and $5000. This is said to result in an average cost for the tank fully installed of approximately $9,000 to 14,000.

However, this does not agree with the independent quotes received by Council from the HIA, the MBA and independent plumbing contractors. Quotes received for the supply of a 5,000L colourbond tank, sited above ground on a concrete slab, including installation in accordance with Council's Plumbing Guidelines, were between $4,000 - $6,000, at retail supply prices. Actual installation of an 8,000L retrofitted rainwater tank has been verified at $4,000, supplied at retail prices. Further, indications are that costs are likely to reduce as demand increases.

Additional expenses may be justifiable for underground or underslab tanks, or due to particular site constraints, however the important issue is that applicants (including building companies) should "shop around" to find better prices for the tanks and their installation if quoted prices appear excessive.

A separate contractor can install the tank, prior to the issue of an Occupation Certificate, provided this is negotiated with the builder to clearly define contractual obligations and the ability and appropriate timing for the contractor to gain access to the site.

BULK AND SCALE:

10m Unbroken Length of Wall: Concerns have been raised as to Council's initial application of this requirement, particularly to all facades of single storey dwellings. The requirement in the DCP is worded as follows:

- The building design uses architectural treatment including articulation of facades and horizontal elements to reduce the appearance of bulk, particularly for 2 storey dwellings; and

- Monotonous and unbroken lengths of walls facing the street and other boundaries are to be avoided. As a general rule, an unbroken length of wall exceeding 10m will not be permitted.

The objective of the requirement is to afford interest within the design and to avoid the construction of long and monotonous walls facing the street or adjoining developments.

Two Storey (or greater) Dwelling designs: As the first point of the Requirement emphasises, the principle is especially relevant for dwellings of a two storey (or greater) design, as the dwelling has a higher level of visibility from the street and neighbouring allotments.

Council will require the use of physical design elements in two storey (or greater) designs, to provide visual interest to the building, particularly for all facades greater than 10m in length. These elements may include the positioning of rooms to provide roof and wall projections and indentations (min. 0.45m x 1.5m run), roofed decks, pergolas, awnings, and other permanent shading structures, etc., in order to prevent bland expanses of wall or brickwork.

Single Storey Dwelling Designs: Concerns have been expressed that the requirement to provide breaks in walls of 10m or more in length is an unnecessary requirement with single storey dwellings as the majority of the side and rear walls are not visible from the street, or neighbouring allotments due to the dividing fence height. Council has determined, following consultation with industry groups, that for the side and rear facades of single storey dwellings that do not front another street or laneway, the placement of windows and doors to break up the 10m run of wall will be considered to provide the required articulation.

For all dwellings, the facade facing the street shall provide physical breaks, as described above, if the facade wall is greater than 10m in length.

Corner Allotments: Where the dwelling is proposed on a corner allotment, then the building facade facing each street shall address each of the streets by providing physical breaks in walls and design elements to articulate the frontage.

Other controls, e.g., on fencing, planting, sight distances, etc., are required by the DCP for corner allotments, in addition to the setback requirements identified in DCP 99 – Building Lines and reproduced in s.5: Attachments. These should be considered during the design phase of the dwelling, with any variations proposed to these requirements justified in the DA submission, for their merits to be determined.

WASTE CONTROL ON BUILDING SITES

Concerns have been raised with the requirement for the provision of a covered metal waste skip on site for the duration of construction. These concerns are due to the difficulties in maintaining separation of materials within the skips to enable recycling, their poor general availability (particularly with lids), difficulties in adequately servicing the skips, the cost impact on the overall contract and the ability to better achieve the stated objectives through alternative means.

The objectives of this control are to:

- maintain orderly and safe working environments;
- prevent wind and waterbourne wastes escaping the site;
- enable and encourage waste separation and recycling of building materials; and
- minimise the volume of wastes disposed to landfill.

Council has considered these issues and determined that in lieu of the provision of a covered metal waste skip, Council will **trial** the effectiveness of the provision of at least one (1) steel mesh waste cage:

- e.g., 100mm x 100mm steel mesh cube;
- maximum size of 1.5m x1.5m x1.5m;
- securely staked to the ground;
- provided with securable lid, secured nightly;
- lined with shadecloth or similar material to all sides, top and bottom;
- located wholly within the site;
- located so as not to impact sediment control fencing or tree protection measures; and
- serviced at appropriate intervals to dispose of the accumulated waste.

Builders are encouraged to provide several cages on site to enable and encourage the separation and recycling of construction wastes. Locations and firms accepting recyclable materials are listed in the "Recycling Guide" published by Resource NSW. Clean fill is required to be separate from other waste.

Site supervisors are reminded that Council may issue on the spot fines for littering and Penalty Notices for storage of material on public roads (footpaths).

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further enquiries can be directed to Council's Customer Services Centre on ph: 43 505555.
H&D February 3, 2004