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## ‘Good housing, not any housing’: Design critical for Housing Australia

The Australian Institute of Architects has called for design innovation and sustainability to be at the heart of the rollout of the planned \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF).

Following this week’s political deal to pass the proposed HAFF legislation, Institute National President Stuart Tanner said the development of the planned 30,000 new social and affordable homes should meet climate and livability requirements, as well as cost, to ensure the housing was appropriate for the future.

“We have called for more social and affordable housing for many years,” he said. “However, we need good housing, not any housing.

“People deserve livable housing that is more than just a roof over one’s head. These dwellings must be high-quality builds that will not only serve this generation but the generations to come. That is a fundamental aspect of sustainability.”

The key to ensuring appropriate design is to have registered architects critically involved in the development of any social or affordable housing proposals, Mr Tanner said.

“Architects develop housing that focuses on livability,” he said. “Our members are design professionals, they know how to make the most of a budget through orientation, cost-effective and sustainable materials and design. Architects also have the professional expertise to steward the entire process, including construction.”

The Institute also rejected calls from some sectors of the construction industry to water down design, energy efficiency and accessibility requirements, saying substandard homes would not meet the needs of our current and future population.

“It will not save money if the building requires substantial retrofitting because of poor material choice, orientation or execution in the building stage,” Mr Tanner said. “Scrimping now will cost more in the long run.”

The Institute would welcome the opportunity to show the Prime Minister and the Housing Minister examples of social and affordable housing from members that incorporate best practice sustainability and design principles.

“Having grown up in government housing himself, the Prime Minister would be amazed at what architect-designed social and affordable housing can provide today,” he said. “We will invite Anthony Albanese and Julie Collins to visit the great work our members are doing. The value of good design goes beyond aesthetics. Good design ensures resilient communities.

“Architects are positive, innovative and adaptable. We strive to future proof our built environment to lead to quality and longevity. Do it once and do it well.”



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