9 August 2016

Director
Codes and Approval Pathways
Department of Planning & Environment
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Re: Simplified Housing Code

The Planning Institute of Australia is pleased to take this opportunity to comment on the exhibition of the new simplified Housing Code.

We note that the proposed new Code does not involve significant changes to the policy settings of the current Code and therefore we will restrict our comments to the general approach that the Department is seeking to achieve through the proposed changes.

In brief, the Institute supports the following principles embodied in the new Code:

• The general simplification of its provisions;
• The greater use of diagrams to explain its provisions; and
• The potential to translate its provisions to an e-planning platform.

The Institute has been a strong supporter of all of these principles as necessary elements of reform to the NSW planning system and believes that they should be progressively applied to all planning instruments within the State.

The Institute also strongly supports any measures that will improve the up take of complying development for low risk, low impact development and considers that the proposed simplified Housing Code will contribute to that cause.

Housing, both in terms of supply and affordability, is an area of major policy concern for NSW at present and we support initiatives such as this that may assist in reducing approval times and costs for housing.
The Institute remains of the view that a comprehensive review, rationalisation and simplification of all State Environmental Planning Policies is required and looks forward to more information from the Department on the work that we understand is currently underway in this regard. In the interim, however, we are pleased to support any incremental steps in this direction, as embodied in the proposed amendments to the Housing Code.

Yours Sincerely

Marjorie Ferguson MPIA CPP
NSW President