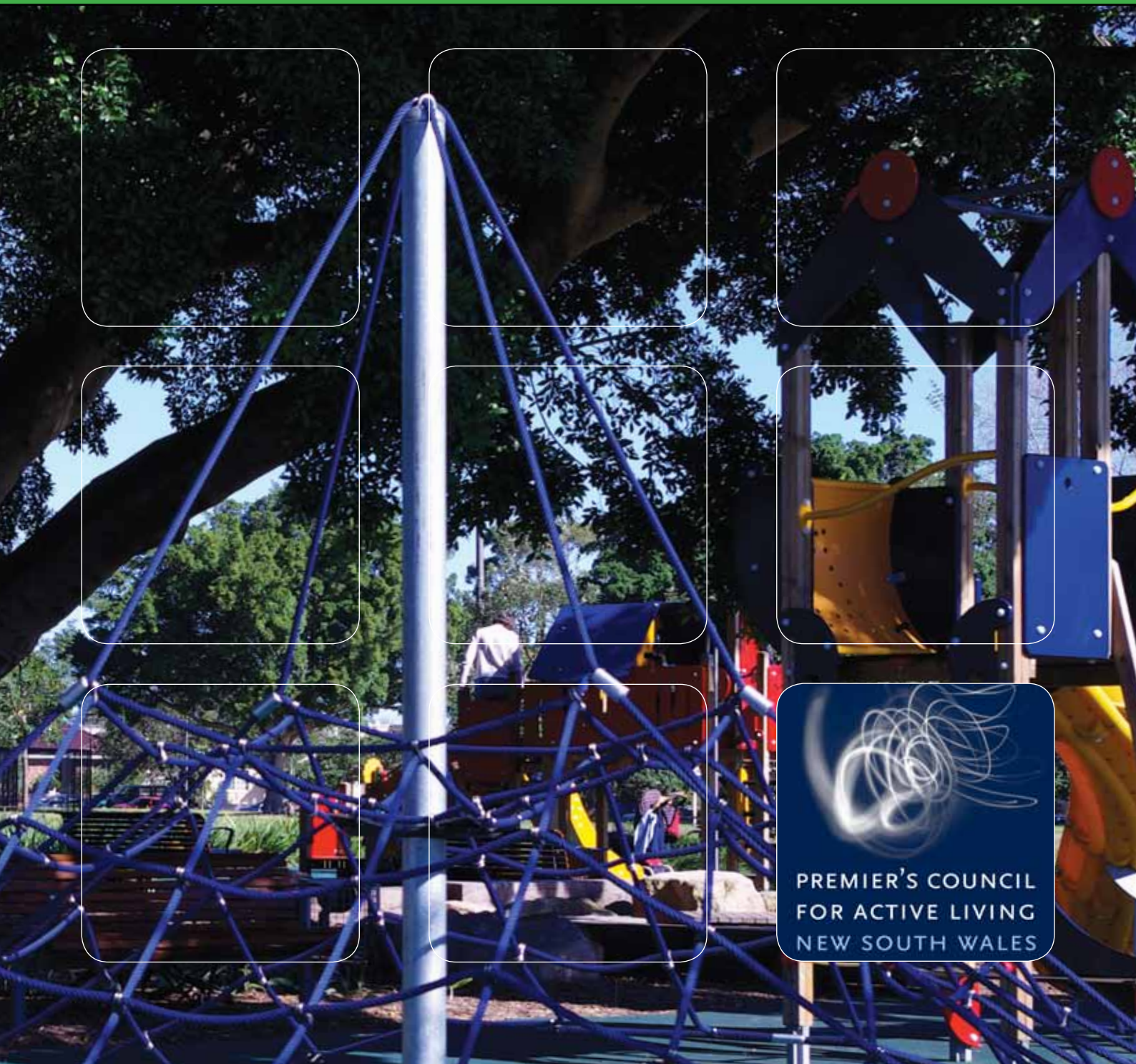


Development & Active Living:

Designing Projects For Active Living

Developer's Checklist



PREMIER'S COUNCIL
FOR ACTIVE LIVING
NEW SOUTH WALES

Why Active Living?

Active living refers to opportunities for incorporating physical activity into the routines of daily life, as well as for sport and recreation. Examples of Active Living include walking or cycling with children to school; walking, cycling or catching public transport to work; or replacing short car trips to corner shops and parks by walking or cycling.

Across all aspects of their lives, most people are less physically active than they need to be. As well as the burden this places on the health of individuals, a growing body of evidence also demonstrates the social costs are significant – active communities are more likely to be strong and connected communities showing greater participation in activities.¹

Evidence clearly demonstrates that the built environment of our cities and local neighbourhoods can either facilitate or discourage Active Living.² Studies show that communities designed with Active Living-friendly design considerations in mind (e.g. good access to destinations (including public transport), connected street networks, higher residential densities, and access to quality open space) benefit from reduced car trips, increased walking trips³ and reduced overall housing costs.⁴ Active people make their neighbourhoods safer and more liveable. Walking, cycling and public transport provide opportunities for social connection and inclusion.

So designing urban spaces that help us incorporate physical activity into our everyday lives not only helps us, it also helps our environment and our communities. **Increasingly, it is a point of differentiation being sought by new home buyers. Active communities are more sustainable, liveable and desirable places to be.**

Much of what is required is relatively straightforward, being easy to incorporate within most developments. Not just cost-neutral, designing for Active Living can add value to development when done up-front through the planning process.

The advice in this Checklist will assist you to make your development an active one.

For more information see PCAL's "Why Active Living" Statement (<http://bit.ly/PCAL-WhyAL>).

The PCAL Development & Active Living Resource

This Checklist is a companion document to the Premier's Council for Active Living (PCAL) publication "Development & Active Living: Designing Projects For Active Living – A Development Assessment Resource & Navigational Tool." The PCAL Development & Active Living Resource brings together existing material already available from a wide range of sources and aims to assist councils (and the State Government) address Active Living within their plans and policies (such as Development Control Plans) and provide specific advice on matters for consideration in development assessment that will promote Active Living.

The PCAL Development & Active Living Resource is also a useful reference for the private sector, providing a wealth of more detailed information about the concepts and principles of Active Living. The Development & Active Living Resource also provides a more detailed guide to specific Active Living issues which arise within a wide range of land use types.

The PCAL Development & Active Living Resource can be found at:
<http://bit.ly/PCAL-DA>



Home Buyers Prefer Liveable Communities

Opinion polls and recent government community consultations have shown consistently that people place great importance on their health, their independence, their happiness and a feeling of wellbeing. People want a sense of community and social connectedness. They want more freedom to move, and places to move in. They want cleaner air, greener streets and a greater sense of well-being.

In October 2009, the Heart Foundation (NSW) commissioned a telephone survey of 1403 randomly selected adults in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth seeking to identify what is important to people in deciding where to live.

The following Active Living features were rated as important or very important -

- being within walking distance to public transport (69%);
- being within easy walking distance to local services such as shops or cafés (64%);
- having a paved or concreted footpath in every street (51%); and
- being within easy walking distance to a local park (46%),

And were all deemed to be higher priorities than:

- having a two-car garage (44%); and
- having a large backyard (39%).

Research from overseas and Australia has concluded that **the provision of open space and access to transport can attract higher housing prices.**^{5,6}

Purpose of the Checklist

This tool has been developed by PCAL to advise on urban design factors that will promote active living in your development.

As a best practice resource for developers to self assess their developments, the checklist will be a useful starting point for discussions with Consent Authorities about how Active Living has been incorporated in the formulation of your development proposal. It will also help to demonstrate how your development has responded to the **NSW Department of Planning Position Statement: Planning for Active Living** (<http://bit.ly/PCAL-DoP>).

This Checklist is not a set of prescriptive requirements, rather it aims to provide a voluntary menu of ideas which can be realistically incorporated by developers into their developments for maximum effect. Not all measures will be able to be achieved in every instance, as this will depend on the nature of the development, the site, and its local context. Responses will vary for example between greenfield and urban renewal sites. Some measures may only apply to large-scale projects. An innovative, rather than prescriptive approach is required.

How to Use this Checklist

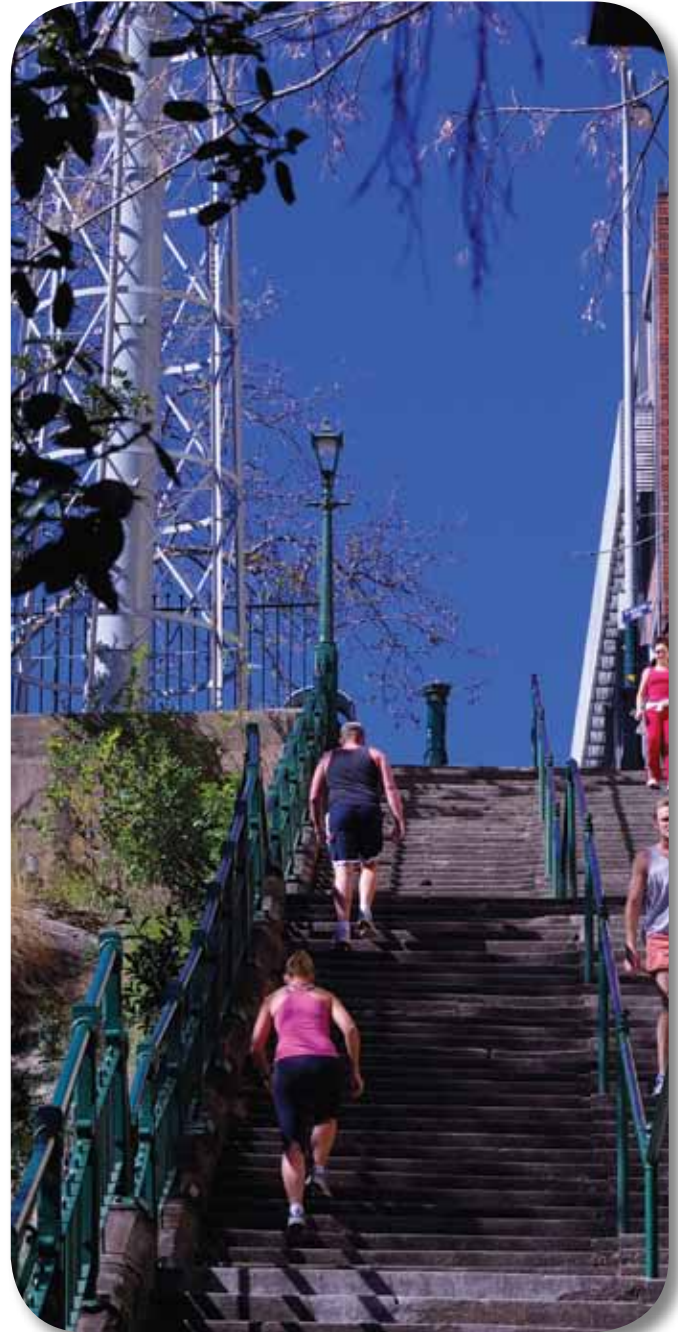
The Developer's Checklist has summarised **key design outcomes** according to five Active Living Principles outlined within the PCAL Development and Active Living Resource. The principles are:

- W**alkability & Connectivity
- A**ctive Travel Alternatives
- L**egibility
- Q**uality Public Domain
- S**ocial Interaction & Inclusion

The Checklist describes key **Outcomes Sought** from developments within each Active Living Principle and provides a number of **Performance Measures** to help demonstrate their application.

While this advice is ordered by Active Living Principle, it is important that the movement framework for a development proposal, prioritising pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, is established early in the design process. This is represented in Figure 1, which indicates how the hierarchy of users should be prioritised throughout the design.

As you work through the Checklist, tick the boxes which you consider your development achieves. Where a measure cannot be achieved, space is provided for justification and comment.



User Hierarchy

Consider First



Consider Last

- Pedestrians
- Cyclists
- Public transport
- Specialist service vehicles, car share, and taxis
- Private motor vehicles

Source: Department for Transport (UK), 2007, "Manual For Streets", Thomas Telford Publishing

Figure 1. User Hierarchy

Walkability And Connectivity Checklist

| Performance Measure | Yes | n/a | Justification & Comments |
|---------------------|-----|-----|--------------------------|
|---------------------|-----|-----|--------------------------|

Outcome Sought: Walking is Convenient, Safe and Attractive

- | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| W1 | Footpaths are provided at all street frontages (both sides where possible). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| W2 | Movement past and through the site is facilitated (including possible through-site connections). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| W3 | Public facilities are provided for the comfort of walkers (i.e. shade, shelter, seating). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| W4 | Appropriately located pedestrian entrances (i.e. direct and convenient access from streets and adjacent uses; separated from traffic; prominent and well-lit, with passive surveillance). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| W5 | Speed of vehicles is controlled through the design of the development (for example, narrower road widths, intersections, shorter straight lengths, pedestrian friendly car park entries), rather than by relying on retrofitting traffic calming devices. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Outcome Sought: Streets and Pathways Integrate with the Adjoining Urban Structure to Improve Connectivity and Reduce Local Travel Distances

- | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| W6 | Streets and pathways connect logically to existing vehicle, pedestrian and cycle networks and do not simply stop at the site boundary. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| W7 | A choice of routes are provided, leading to local destinations and focal points (such as shops, schools, parks and public transport stops). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| W8 | Routes are unobstructed, continuous and direct. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| W9 | Safe and easy access across streets is provided (e.g. pedestrian crossings and other aids, close to the direct line of travel). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Active Travel Alternatives Checklist

| Performance Measure | Yes | n/a | Justification & Comments |
|---------------------|-----|-----|--------------------------|
|---------------------|-----|-----|--------------------------|

Outcome Sought: Walking and Cycling is Supported and Promoted

- | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| A1 | Appropriate walking and cycling infrastructure is provided. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking and cycling pathways provided to all building entrances. Shared paths are carefully designed, with sufficient width, adequate sightlines, gentle gradients and turns, and marked centrelines. Space provided on streets for cyclists, with appropriate signage and road markings where dedicated cycle lanes aren't provided. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| A2 | Design reduces conflict with traffic. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatment of building entrances. Roundabouts are minimised as an intersection treatment. Dedicated cycle lanes provided on high volume roads. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| A3 | Provision of conveniently located, safe bicycle parking areas which satisfies the rate of provision specified in NSW Guidelines. ⁷ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| A4 | Provision of amenities (e.g. changing rooms and showers) for men and women. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Outcome Sought: Public Transport is Available and Accessible

- | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| A5 | Pathways directly link to the nearest public transport stops. Ideally public transport stops should be located within walking distance (i.e. 400 metres along a connected pathway) of all dwellings, workplaces, and businesses. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| A6 | Where the development proposes new streets, major streets are designed to accommodate bus access. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| A7 | Where the development is located adjacent to a bus route, bus stops are provided or upgraded along the street frontage (i.e. shelter and seating). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Outcome Sought: Reduce the Need to Travel by Car

- | | | | | |
|-----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| A8 | Trip generating land uses which meet local need are incorporated in the development (e.g. convenience shopping facilities, workplaces, and community facilities). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| A9 | Residential densities near public transport corridors and service nodes are maximised appropriately. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| A10 | Prioritisation of pedestrians and cyclists over vehicular access routes. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| A11 | TMAP / Travel Plan / Transport Access Guide prepared to encourage the use of alternative forms of transport. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| A12 | Priority parking provided for car pooling and car sharing. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| A13 | Car parking levels provided are appropriate to the location and nature of the development and its accessibility to public transport. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Legibility Checklist

| Performance Measure | Yes | n/a | Justification & Comments |
|---------------------|-----|-----|--------------------------|
|---------------------|-----|-----|--------------------------|

Outcome Sought: Streetscape and Pedestrian Environment are Recognisable and Coherent

- | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| L1 | Design encourages user familiarity (e.g. the development's design statement defines a coherent local identity and character; consistent themes are embraced). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| L2 | Legible street and pathway layout proposed (i.e. streets are of a modified grid layout, with a regular, permeable block structure and smaller block sizes). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| L3 | Orientation features (such as landmarks and key sites) incorporated into public domain planning (e.g. streets and pathways). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Outcome Sought: Residents, Employees and Visitors are Informed

- | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| L4 | Localities, pathways and junctions are well signposted. Directional signage provided to key points, such as bus stops and cycle routes. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| L5 | Way Finding Strategy proposed for larger scale development. Wayfinding incorporates the processes of knowing where you are, where you are going to, the best way to get there, recognising when you have arrived at your destination and knowing how to leave the area. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Quality Public Domain Checklist

| Performance Measure | Yes | n/a | Justification & Comments |
|---------------------|-----|-----|--------------------------|
|---------------------|-----|-----|--------------------------|

Outcome Sought: Places which are Welcoming, Activated and Stimulating

- | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| Q1 | Attractive and welcoming building frontages proposed, which address the street. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Q2 | Building form contributes to the character of the streetscape. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Q3 | Active frontages incorporated where possible. Non-residential land uses are co-located in focal points at places of high accessibility. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Q4 | Preparation of/ contribution to a Public Domain Plan. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Q5 | Landscape design creates an attractive and distinct identity (via street trees, landscape elements and street furniture). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Outcome Sought: Places which are Safe

- | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| Q6 | Adherence to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, demonstrated by Crime Risk Assessment (i.e. surveillance, territorial reinforcement, access control and space management). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Q7 | Design minimises conflict between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. For example, cyclists and pedestrians are separated on major routes. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Q8 | Public domain is well-lit. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Outcome Sought: Access to Usable Open Space, with Facilities for different Ages, Abilities and Ethnicities

- | | | | | |
|-----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| Q9 | Adequate levels of usable open / communal space located in prominent and accessible locations. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Q10 | The size, layout and facilities within open / communal space provide for socialisation and activity and are capable of accommodating a variety of uses which reflect the likely demography and social needs of residents. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Social Interaction & Inclusion Checklist

| Performance Measure | Yes | n/a | Justification & Comments |
|---------------------|-----|-----|--------------------------|
|---------------------|-----|-----|--------------------------|

Outcome Sought: Opportunities to Interact

- | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| S1 | Provision of an on-site focus for social interaction (e.g. communal open space, meeting room, communal garden (possibly roof-top/ podium)). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| S2 | For larger scale development, access provided to facilities which satisfy residents' social, cultural, recreation and health needs (on-site where possible). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| S3 | Provision of visually interesting, safe places to stop and rest - internally and along frontages in the public domain. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| S4 | Provision of a new residents' "Welcome Pack". | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| S5 | Promotes a street focus (e.g. active land uses, building addresses the street). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Outcome Sought: Barrier Free Movement and Entry

- | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| S6 | Compliance with Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements and local accessibility standards, demonstrated by an Accessibility Assessment. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
|----|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|

References

1. NSW Premier's Council for Active Living (2010), Why Active Living Statement.
2. National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), UK 2008 *Promoting and creating built or natural environments that encourage and support physical activity*. NICE public health guidance 8.
3. Khattak and Rodriguez 2005 *Travel behavior in neo-traditional neighborhood developments: A case study in USA* Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice Volume 39, Issue 6, July 2005, Pages 481-500.
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5. Benjamin, JD. et al., 1996. Mass Transportation, Apartment Rent and Property Values. *Journal of Real Estate Research* 12 (1), 1-8.
6. Song, Y. et al., 2003. New urbanism and housing values: a disaggregate assessment. *Journal of Urban Economics* 54, 218-238.
7. NSW Government (2004) Planning Guidelines for Walking and Cycling.

Need Advice?

www.pcal.nsw.gov.au

The Premier's Council for Active Living (PCAL) aims to build and strengthen the physical and social environments in which communities engage in active living.

It comprises senior representatives from across government, industry and the community sector. It was established in 2004 and follows on from the NSW Physical Activity Taskforce, which met between 1996 and 2002.

Acknowledgements

Development & Active Living: Designing Projects For Active Living - Developer's Checklist

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Copies of this document are available at <http://www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/>

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