

I strongly believe that environmental sustainability in urban development should be a top priority. We can certainly find ways to maintain environmental sustainability whilst ensuring we provide affordable housing to lower income earners. Affordability should not be at the cost of environmental sustainability.

Traditionally , we Australians have built detached houses on large blocks of lands. Due to low population, we have been able to provide open spaces, parks and reserves whilst supporting affordable housing. However, as population grows the demand for housing also grows, and we cannot continue to build detached housing which only accommodates one family per detached house. If we continue doing that the demand for dwellings will overtake supply.

One of the ways in which we can increase supply of housing is by mandating construction of multi storey dwellings such as townhouses, villas and blocks of units. This way, we can accommodate more residents without having to increase supply of land by clearing the bush. Care must be taken to build a variety of such dwellings to ensure that people with different levels of income can afford to buy or rent the dwellings.

Furthermore, federal, state and local governments must mandate these changes for all new developments to clear the way to deliver more affordable housing. The governments should provide incentives to housing developers and lower income earners to ensure such changes are successful.

In conclusion, it requires systemic changes that include strong will of governments at all levels, strong skills of developers and incentives to lower income residents to continue providing more sustainable housing and fulfill the needs of rising population without compromising on environmental sustainability.