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Jacka Small Footprint Housing – an SLA demonstration precinct

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a 'micro block' or 'micro lot?'

Although a 'micro block' or 'micro lot' is not defined in the Territory Plan, for this project we are using these terms to describe super-compact single-residential blocks with a typical land area of 90m^2.

What size are the small footprint homes?

The proposed small footprint housing designs all feature a private landscaped yard, deck and carport on separately titled blocks of 90m^2, with access to a common landscape space for connection to community and nature. There is a mix of:

- two storey, two bedroom homes (around 76m^2 living area excluding carport and deck)
- two storey, two bedroom with study homes (around 82m^2 living area excluding carport and deck)
- three storey, three bedroom homes (around 110m^2 living area excluding carport and deck).

Why is Suburban Land Agency piloting small footprint housing?

Suburban Land Agency (SLA) is piloting 8 separately titled homes on more affordable 'micro blocks' as an alternate option that could enable more people to find a home suiting their needs and budget.

These homes demonstrate lower upfront land costs than typical single dwelling blocks; more private outdoor space than an apartment; and lower ongoing costs than typical unit titled townhouses.

Feedback from residents, industry and community will be used to evaluate the suitability of micro blocks for potential replication in future subdivision design.

What is MMC and why is Suburban Land Agency building an MMC Display Home?

Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) refers to a wide variety of construction methods that are different to traditional on-site construction. This includes prefabrication, off-site manufacturing and modular or non-volumetric building systems, as well as new technologies such as 3D printing, robotics and artificial intelligence.

The Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) states MMC has the potential to support the delivery of higher quality buildings and increase productivity in the construction sector. These technologies encourage efficient building processes, with greater speed and accuracy to promote an increase in productivity.

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SLA is building a display home showcasing MMC to home buyers, builders and industry with a focus on scalable, non-volumetric prefabrication systems. The display home will be used as an interim space for SLA's Mingle community development programs for the growing Jacka community.

What sustainability features does the project include?

The small footprint housing has been designed by DNA Architects to have:

- 7 to 8 Star energy efficiency rated performance (NatHERS) featuring passive solar design, airtight and insulated building envelopes to be comfortable and cost-effective to run
- rooftop solar (3kW minimum) and energy monitoring, battery and electric vehicle charging ready
- reduced environmental impact through reduced land and building materials requiring less energy, carbon emissions and resource use
- fully landscaped shared common and private yard spaces, using reclaimed timber and permeable paving treatments.

The MMC display home has been designed by Heyward Lance Architecture to:

- showcase the benefits of MMC including renewable, low-carbon materials, energy-efficient, comfortable home build targeting less than 5 Air Changes per Hour and a minimum 8-star energy efficiency (NatHERS)
- have rooftop solar and an all-electric system, including provision for electric vehicle charging
- have flexible, future-ready design that serves as a sustainable display home, temporary Mingle community hub, and ultimately, a quality residential dwelling (for later release).

What landscaped open space will residents in the small footprint homes get?

Residents will enjoy living in a landscape- and community-oriented precinct with restorative, regenerative and heat-mitigating initiatives and a dedicated shared space for social connection. Each home on a separately titled 'micro block' of 90m^2 will feature a deck for outdoor lifestyles, a private garden designed by a landscape architect and single carport.

A landscaped common space is being built for the future resident community to share, creating a space for social and nature connection, play, shade and seating.

The landscape and plant selections for both the shared common space and individual homes have been designed based on First Nations design advice, to optimise canopy coverage and permeable surfaces.

When will the homes be built?

Subject to planning, building and subdivision design approvals, it is anticipated construction will begin in early 2026 and be complete in mid-2027.

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How much will the homes cost to purchase?

SLA will sell the homes at market value, to be determined by independent qualified valuation closer to the time of sale (expected to be around mid-2027).

How can I find out more?

Sign up to our **"Move-in-ready homes"** mailing list and be the first to hear updates on the Jacka Small Footprint Housing.

Are the homes accessible?

The MMC display home will feature a fully accessible ground floor design to meet Australian Standard 1428 (Design for Access and Mobility).

The small footprint housing is being built to Livable Housing Australia (LHA) Silver standard. The seven core design elements in the LHA Silver standard are:

1. A safe continuous and step free path of travel from the street entrance and / or parking area to a dwelling entrance that is level.
2. At least one, level (step-free) entrance into the dwelling.
3. Internal doors and corridors that facilitate comfortable and unimpeded movement between spaces.
4. A toilet on the ground (or entry) level that provides easy access.
5. A bathroom that contains a hobless shower recess.
6. Reinforced walls around the toilet, shower and bath to support the safe installation of grabrails at a later date.
7. Stairways are designed to reduce the likelihood of injury and also enable future adaptation.

What engagement has been undertaken on this project?

SLA established a Stakeholder Advisory Group with community, industry, peak body and First Nations representatives who were involved during the design process to deliver this alternative housing typology.

How will Jacka residents benefit from the project?

The demonstration precinct is contributing a range of benefits for the growing Jacka community, including improved housing choice and affordability, community development, social connection, innovation and sustainability.

The MMC Display Home will be used temporarily for SLA's Mingle community development programs in Jacka. Mingle encourages new residents to get to know each other, feel a sense of belonging and become more involved in their community. In Whitlam, the SLA's Innovation Precinct is used as a temporary Mingle space and the SLA is pleased to be able to continue this in Jacka.

Is small footprint housing an example of the 'missing-middle' planning reforms?

The ACT Government is responding to the demand for greater housing choice by reforms to our planning system. Changes to the Territory Plan in RZ1 and RZ2 areas are proposed to make it easier to build well-designed, sustainable homes in our existing suburbs. Find out more: Missing Middle Housing Reforms - Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate - Planning

To explore more opportunities for housing choice in new suburbs, the SLA is piloting small footprint housing on micro blocks on a site in Jacka zoned RZ4 – Medium Density Residential Zone in the Territory Plan.