

Essential workers set to benefit from new Sydney apartments

The housing crisis and increasing development funding difficulties have seen the essential worker housing sector gain popularity amongst institutional developers in Australia, offering them a unique potential for strong long-term investment.

The Meridian Miranda development, owned by Aware Real Estate and developed in partnership with Altis Property Partners, creates housing for essential workers at significantly reduced rents, allowing essential workers to live close to their place of employment.

The residential project, designed by Turner, reserves 50% of its 102 apartments for workers in essential industries such as aged care, health care, education, emergency services, police and childcare. The remaining apartments have been sold as private residential housing.

Miranda, approximately 30 kilometres south of Sydney's CBD, is increasing in popularity due to its access to public transport and retail.

Turner Director James McCarthy says successful essential worker housing is about delivering high amenity and security of tenure to attract and retain tenants.

"Essential worker apartments need to work well from an operational point of view, but they also need to be beautiful and appeal to the needs of their target demographics," he says.

"If a development is, for example, targeting specifically health workers, an ideal site would be in the vicinity of a hospital. Meanwhile, amenities should support a shift worker's lifestyle, and could include ease of access to key infrastructure and transport options and an onsite gymnasium. These factors are considered deeply during the design process, alongside planning regulations."

Meridian Miranda's allowance for essential workers activated floor space ratio concessions from the NSW State Government. The apartments vary in size from 62 square metres (one-bedroom apartment) to a generous 135 square metres for three-bedroom apartments. Meanwhile, the rooftops create a community space for ample entertainment and leisure.

Altis Property Partners Project Director Joseph Ajaka says essential worker housing shouldn't compromise on design, and this quality of design was a driving factor on the Meridian Miranda project.

"We were looking to create a luxurious feel to the apartments," he says of the project, highlighting an emphasis on space, finishes and detail throughout the entire design.

Turner is also currently delivering the Illoura Place Liverpool project for Aware Real Estate and Altis Property Partners, which has recently been granted Development Approval. Illoura Place comprises 312 apartments, of which a significant number are reserved for essential workers, and is in close proximity to Greater Western Sydney's Liverpool Hospital.

James says Aware Real Estate and Altis Property Partners' extensive research process with future residents of their projects means apartments are tailored to their users.

"Research informs our apartment design, including what residents want from their shared amenities. This results in projects that are highly in tune with the market's needs."

He says there are many learnings the practice applied to Meridian Miranda from its extensive portfolio of multi-residential projects.

"Creating community, attracting tenants and designing buildings that are easy to maintain in the long-term is paramount.

“It’s incredibly important for architects to understand the requirements from an operational perspective. And of course, essential worker housing should be well designed – seamlessly blending high amenity and function. Our design must draw tenants to the building in the first instance, but serve their needs and keep them happy there for many years to come.”

– Ends –

For more information and high resolution images please contact:

Martyna Kulczyk, Snr Marketing + Communications Advisor at Lindy Johnson

T +61 (0) 423 507 747 | martyna@lindyjohnson.com.au

James McCarthy

James McCarthy is a Director at Turner. He has a wealth of experience designing and delivering a wide range of project types including masterplanned communities, medium to high-density apartments, social and affordable housing, retail, hotel, and increasingly, hybrid combinations of these typologies.