What is floor space ratio?

Floor space ratio (FSR) is the ratio of the floor area of a building to its site area. FSR is one control used to define the size of a building and control the intensity of development on a parcel of land.

For example, a 1000m² site with an FSR of 0.5:1 allows a gross floor area (GFA) of 500m², and an FSR of 1:1 allows a GFA of 1000m².

By setting a maximum FSR the overall building size is limited; applying the same FSR to an area ensures buildings are of a similar scale.

Summary of the main FSR controls that apply in Draft WLEP 2013

R2 Low Density Residential zone
- No FSR controls apply

R3 Medium Density Residential zone
- Approximately 45% of the R3 zone has an FSR of either 0.65:1 or 0.75:1.
- Approximately 30% has an FSR of 1:1. For example, William Street in Double Bay has an FSR of 1:1.
- The minimum FSR in the R3 zone is 0.21:1.
- The maximum FSR in the R3 zone is 1.7:1.

B1 Neighbourhood Centre zone
- Most B1 centres have an FSR of between 1:1 and 1.5:1. For example, Five Ways in Paddington has an FSR of 1:1 and the Vaucluse Village has an FSR of 1.5:1.

B2 Local Centre zone
- Double Bay: 2.5:1 and 3:1 except Transvaal Avenue which is (1:1).
- Edgecliff Commercial Core: 2.5:1
- Rose Bay: 2:1

B4 Mixed Use zone
- Queen Street, Woollahra: 1:1
- Oxford Street, Paddington: 1:1
- Rose Bay North and South: 1.5:1 and 2:1 on most corner sites.
- Edgecliff Commercial Corridor: 1.25:1 to 1.5:1
Proposed changes to the existing FSR controls

R2 Low Density Residential zone

Using building envelopes instead of FSR

FSR controls have not been applied to the R2 zone. This is because we find that the Standard Instrument definition for GFA, and subsequently FSR, is not suitable to control low density residential development.

Our research indicates that if the current FSRs were applied to the R2 zone, the size of dwelling houses could increase, depending on the design of the building.

To provide predictable and consistent built form outcomes which fit in with our existing neighbourhoods, building envelope controls will be used instead of FSR.

The diagram shows an example of four controls that combine to establish a building envelope. Maximum building height is an LEP control. The setback and building depth controls will be in the new development control plan (DCP).

A DCP is a planning document that supplements the LEP. The DCP guides future development within a local context, and provides more detailed building requirements.

R3 Medium Density Residential zone

Increasing FSR controls to reflect FSR of existing built form

FSRs have been increased on approximately 30% of R3 zoned land because the current FSR controls do not reflect the size of the existing buildings.

The increases are not substantive and will not broadly increase development potential. Rather, the increases only seek to reflect the FSR of the predominant built form, desired future character, or the FSR of recently approved development applications in the surrounding neighbourhood.

For example, in parts of Bundarra Road, Bellevue Hill the current FSR control is 0.75:1. However, the average FSR of existing buildings is closer to 1:1. In response, we have increased FSR to 1:1 for those properties.

Site-specific FSRs

Some R3 zoned land has unique characteristics or existing site-specific planning controls. In these locations a site-specific FSR has been applied. For example:

- The former Babworth House Estate in Darling Point
- Sites where a second height limit is proposed. For example 10-14 Longworth Avenue, Point Piper.

How can I find out more?

Draft WLEP 2013

- Written instrument clauses 4.4 Floor space ratio, 4.4A Area 1 (Double Bay), 4.4B Areas 2 and 3 (Selected B1 and B4 centres), 4.4C Area 4 (Rose Bay) – height and floor space ratio incentives, and 4.4D Area 5 (188 Oxford Street, Paddington)

- Floor Space Ratio Map shows what FSR controls apply

Discussion paper

- Chapter 6 explains our approach to determining and applying FSRs
- Chapter 10 contains change layer maps showing where changes to FSR controls have occurred

Comparison map

- On our website the PDF comparison map contains the current and proposed FSR controls so you can see how the changes apply to you.


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