

The built environment domain and physical activity

Key messages

The built environment should support walking. This can be done through urban design that:

- Makes active transport safe, attractive, affordable and desirable
- Prioritises wide pedestrian paths and cycling lanes over motorised transport
- Makes neighbourhoods safe, pleasant and accessible
- Locates jobs, residences and schools where they can be accessed via active transport
- Supports 'density for liveability', that is, a critical mass of population to support local services, amenities and infrastructure.

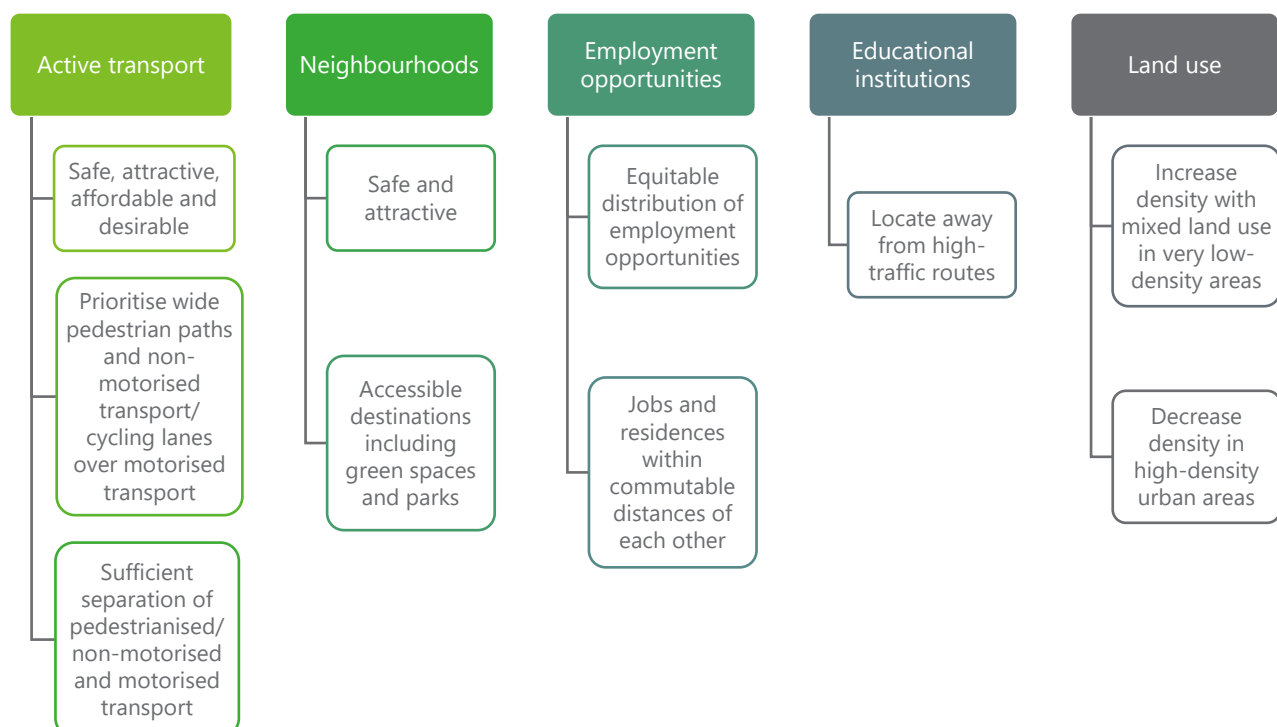
Why is it important to address the built environment domain?

People's physical activity is embedded in the built environment surrounding them. The built environment includes workplaces, schools, home, shops, and the space between these places. Urban design and infrastructure also includes public open space and green areas, footpaths, cycleways, and public transport systems. A better built environment encourages walking – the most common form of physical activity which is accessible across sociodemographic groups and has good potential to influence the most inactive in society in an equitable manner.

Note: The Transport Domain is addressed separately in Chapter 3.2 of the Getting Australia Active III (GAA III) report and in the corresponding Summary on the Transport Domain and physical activity.

What are the recommendations for action and investment?

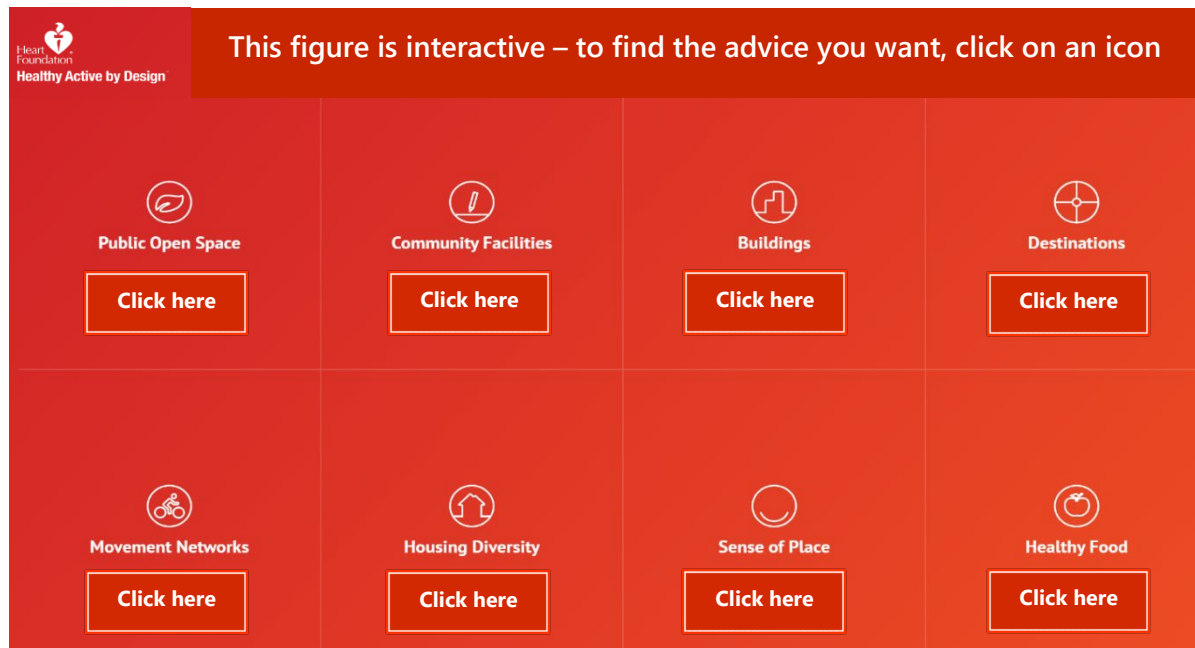
Active built environments should consider the following areas (refer to Table 16 in GAA III for further details):



Useful toolkits and resources

Healthy Active by Design

The Heart Foundation's 'Healthy Active by Design' web-based toolkit provides a one-stop-shop of useful advice, resources and case studies on how to plan environments in Australia for more physical activity and better health overall. Access it here, in this interactive 2 x 4 matrix:



Community sport infrastructure



Sport and recreation are covered by a range of standards. Facility requirements and standards are available from the governing body for each sport. The [Australian Sports Directory](#) provides a list of National Sporting Organisations recognised by the Australian Sports Commission.

In NSW, the [Community Sport Infrastructure Resource Library](#) provides a guide for the planning, design and construction of innovative, sustainable and fit-for-purpose community sporting infrastructure. This includes a web portal with resources to assist with best practice design specification.

Getting Australia Active III (GAA III) is an Australian guide for policy makers to support the implementation of a whole-of-systems approach to increasing population physical activity. This policy brief summarises key points from **Chapter 3.3** of this guide. For more detailed guidance and supporting evidence, you can access the full report at: preventioncentre.org.au



Funding for this research has been provided from the Australian Government's Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF). The MRFF provides funding to support health and medical research and innovation, with the objective of improving the health and wellbeing of Australians. MRFF funding has been provided to The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre under the MRFF Boosting Preventive Health Research Program. Further information on the MRFF is available at www.health.gov.au/mrff