

Don't box us inside soulless towers

There is a case against increased density of population in urban areas ("High-rise spin cycle", *News*, 17/11).

First, please we don't want to be a Melbourne or a Sydney. We are Perth, developed in different ways to those cities. They just grew like Topsy. Maybe look at the mayhem of those cities and learn from that.

Second, Look at the results of the high-density residential buildings in other countries. Start with London, but don't stop there. Europe's multistorey buildings side by side by side. How has the population been affected by the boxing of people into the smallest of spaces?

Third, check the research. Remember the experiments with rats. They crowded them and crowded them, and the result? They ate each other.

Fourth, consider for every 15 to 25-storey building, each will have at least one car ownership per flat. Now add the inadequate parking space provided, and top that with the appalling congestion on more and more of the roads.

Fifth, think of schools built for present numbers now being asked to take, what, twice or three times the number of students? Remember the rats experiment.

Sixth. The hospitals coping with a rise in the numbers of patients. Are you crying yet?

Human society does not do well in overcrowded, small space environments. Don't call it urban sprawl, rather develop new cities. Create more Joondalups, areas of space, fresh air, playing fields, and not living like stacks on the mill. Breeding grounds for the hell holes that the police contend with in England and Europe. By all means, develop a vision but with people in mind. We do not do well boxed-up, staring at TV sets ad nauseam. We were



Kids in a Melbourne high rise.

meant to enjoy our world with space to breathe and play. So, we might be the longest city in the world. Then make it into two cities, get creative. We are, after all, humans, not seeds to germinate under the hot lamps of political madness.

L. Barnett, Glendalough

Start at the right sites

A real estate agent belled the cat on high-rise apartments recently. Only Cottesloe and Swanbourne will make a profit — at \$1million per apartment, how will that help affordable housing?

Surely we should start at Balga or Butler where the high-rise will be welcomed — and perhaps partly funded by the State Government, rather than a racetrack, and make them affordable. Sounds like medium density is the way to go for cheaper construction costs.

Brian C. Povey, Churchlands

Reframe the issue

There is no housing affordability crisis. Houses are selling like hot cakes at ever increasing prices. If there was an affordability crisis, we'd see prices falling. If Australia wants to be a stupid country, then let's all stick to the mantra of there being an affordability crisis. The smarter reading of the situation is that Australia has a distributive justice crisis and it's serious because the

consequences will come home to roost with swaths of disenchanted cynical members of the community and crime born of despair all entrenched for generations. The wealthy salaried and the idle rich are buying up houses as investments because the tax concessions make it frankly stupid not to. The starting point to addressing any problem is to properly frame the problem in the first place — parroting that we have a housing affordability crisis completely misses the point.

Geoff Chambers, Fremantle

MPs must work for kids

As a grandparent who has skin in the game, the piece "Kids left in the diagnosis limbo" (*Opinion*, 18/11) by Rhianna Mitchell, hit a nerve. For years now, the Letters pages and Opinion pieces have expressed growing exasperation about the dire needs of neurodivergent children.

Imagine watching your seven-year-old relative wait four to seven years to obtain a diagnosis, before any medical intervention takes place. These kids need a diagnosis and assistance prior to them starting school, not years into their schooling, by which time they are years behind in their progress because the system doesn't care. I am not going to appeal to Anthony Albanese or Roger Cook, as many letter writers do. I am appealing to all the backbenchers in the Federal and State parliaments to do something decent, instead of nodding like pigeons behind their PM/premier, and demand urgent and immediate changes to their system, which is destroying so many families. As John F. Kennedy said, "Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future".

Doug Meikle, Quinns Rocks