

HOUSING — AVAILABILITY — R-CODES REVISION

Statement by Minister for Planning

MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Minister for Planning) [1.23 pm]: I rise today to update the house on the Cook government's commitment to boosting housing supply and choice in Western Australia. Our government has recently published the revised *Residential design codes volume 1*, which will facilitate increased housing supply and choice, while also improving design standards across the state. The revised R-codes strike a balance between keeping the cost of delivering affordable housing down, facilitating greater housing choice and lifting design standards. Effective from 10 April, the revised R-codes will usher in a new era for housing development in WA.

One notable aspect of these changes is the incorporation of the 2023 draft medium-density code provisions, which will apply to single houses coded R50 and above, grouped dwellings coded R30 and above, and multiple dwellings coded R30 to 60, with minor modifications to certain provisions. The revised R-codes support delivery of greater housing diversity through a new deemed-to-comply pathway for terrace-style homes and site area concessions to incentivise small dwellings; ageing in place, by incentivising the development of gold-level accessible homes and removing occupancy restrictions; improved design standards, with new requirements around private open space, minimum garden sizes and the orientation of new homes to deliver improved energy efficiency and natural light; and improved tree canopy and greening across suburbs, with incentives for the retention of existing trees and a requirement for new trees, deep soil areas and minimum soft landscaping for all new medium-density developments.

Our commitment to housing supply and diversity is further demonstrated by the delivery of more granny flat exemptions. Amendments to granny flat provisions include the removal of the previous minimum 350 square metre lot size provision, reduced car parking requirements for most granny flats, removal of the requirement for the granny flat to be compatible with the design of an existing dwelling and extension of the existing exemptions to grouped dwelling sites. By providing additional exemptions, we are making it easier for more Western Australians to build a granny flat.

The revised R-codes will take effect from 10 April 2024, with a 24-month transition period in place to support the implementation of some of the new provisions in areas subject to existing planning instruments, such as structure plans. Consequential amendments to the existing *Residential design codes: Volume 2 — apartments* have also been made to maintain consistency with the revised R-codes volume 1. Detailed guidance on the new policy provisions and transitional arrangements is available online.

WA planning reforms continue to lead the nation, and our revised R-codes are another example of our commitment to the national planning reform blueprint agreed to by national cabinet.