

HOUSING — MEDIUM DENSITY — R30 TO R40 ZONES

568. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Housing:

I refer the minister to an article in the *Claremont Post* dated 19 August 2023 that reported on the government's sudden last-minute change of position on new development rules that were due to apply to R30 to R40 zonings, described as the most commonly used zonings for development.

- (1) Who were the stakeholders whose feedback the minister listened to, as reported in the article?
- (2) What happened to Labor's talk of development that takes account of social needs for amenity, trees, space and heritage?

Mr J.N. CAREY replied:

I thank the member for his question.

- (1)–(2) Just to clarify, did the member support my decision?

Dr D.J. Honey: I think you've bailed on supporting amenity since you've been in this Parliament.

Mr J.N. CAREY: From that I assume he does not support my position.

Dr D.J. Honey: Answer the question.

Mr J.N. CAREY: No. For the public record, I think it is really important —

Dr D.J. Honey: Answer the question. It's my job to ask and your job to answer.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please, members. Minister, the member for Cottesloe has made it quite clear that he does not intend to respond. I ask you to continue with your answer.

Mr J.N. CAREY: I will say this: I think the implication from that question is that he does not support my decision. I want to be very clear that across Australia we face extraordinary circumstances. Those circumstances in relation to housing mean that we face a very changing situation. We know that there have been dramatic changes in the builders' market. Only recently, CoreLogic Australia provided key statistics that showed that builders in the housing market have seen their margins drop to less than five per cent. I take that seriously. I have watched the market and I have engaged the housing and industry sector, and the advice was very clear to me: proceeding with the medium density codes, given the current financial market that we face, would have an impact on housing supply and the cost of housing supply. I take that very seriously. My job and my resolute focus is to boost housing supply in Western Australia. At every opportunity in this chamber, I demonstrate the long list of reforms that we are doing and are driving to boost housing supply.

Dr D.J. Honey interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please.

Mr J.N. CAREY: It is absolutely critical that we use every lever possible to boost housing supply in Western Australia. Every state is grappling with this. National cabinet has made it a main agenda item. I will consider every policy decision within that very clear focus.

I listen to industry, including the Housing Industry Association, the Urban Development Institute of Australia and the Perth division of the Property Council of Australia, and people who are actually delivering the housing—small and medium builders in the housing market. What is very clear to me is that on this side, we are focused on housing supply; on that side, it is about more red tape for planning. Members opposite have made it very clear that big housing projects will face more red tape. They were the member for Cottesloe's comments in the local paper about abolishing a significant pathway. At the next election, I will be very happy to take to the people of Western Australia a clear agenda that is delivering affordable and social housing, in contrast to an opposition that has no policies on housing except to wind it up in red tape.