

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION — AFFORDABILITY

386. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Premier:

I refer the Premier to an article in *The West Australian* dated 9 June 2023 regarding rental values in the western suburbs, which are typically around \$800 for a small unit.

- (1) Does the Premier regard rentals at around \$800 a week as affordable housing?
- (2) Why does the Premier not admit that the high-rise developments being rushed through approvals by his government are targeting higher priced areas to maximise developers' profits while doing nothing to deliver affordable housing for average income earners?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

- (1)–(2) I will not reflect on the rather poorly worded parts of the member's question, which is essentially a personal attack on myself and my wife. We understand the standard of those opposite who are ready to goad. This government has made a record investment of \$2.2 billion into social housing and homelessness measures that includes the delivery of over 4 000 additional social homes. In addition, just yesterday the Minister for Housing and the Deputy Premier announced the first tranche of the infrastructure development fund for housing, targeting one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments, particularly in the electorates of the member for Cannington and the member for Victoria Park. That is all about continuing to make a diversified pipeline of housing available to everyone. With a median weekly rental at the moment of around \$550, we need to continue to ensure that a diverse range of social and affordable housing product is available. Unfortunately, part of the difficulty is getting companies to commit to building multi-dwellings—units, townhouses and small blocks of flats. We know that they produce the best possible outcomes in terms of volume, and also good social context. We also note that the member for Cottesloe opposes multi-dwelling housing. He hates it. I do not know whether the particular units he refers to interfere with his view of the ocean at Cottesloe. I am very sorry for you, sir, if that is the problem. But the fact of the matter is that we need to continue to develop a diverse range of housing so that people from all walks of life can have the opportunity to have secure housing and a place to call home. We will continue with our bold and courageous program to ensure that we increase the number of social and affordable homes and increase the funding towards construction and spot purchase of houses across the metropolitan area and in regional areas, and continue to drive up the stock of housing so that more people can find a home and live happy and rewarding lives.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please! I am taking the supplementary question.