

PLANNING — GRANNY FLATS

219. Ms E.J. KELSBIE to the Minister for Planning:

I refer to the Cook government's commitment to bolstering housing supply throughout Western Australia.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how recent amendments to the residential design codes are making it easier for Western Australians to build granny flats on their residential properties?
- (2) Can the minister describe how this nation-leading planning reform, which cuts unnecessary red tape, will boost housing diversity, choice and supply in Western Australia?

Mr J.N. CAREY replied:

- (1)–(2) I want to thank the member for her question. It is well known that Western Australia is leading the nation in planning reform and cutting red tape. Other states look to the reforms that we have introduced as a way of boosting housing supply. Of course, the medium density codes are now in. We revised those to ensure that they recognise that affordability is the key issue—for all states, but of course in Western Australia. Those revisions to the R-codes also provided me an opportunity as the Minister for Planning to further cut red tape around granny flats.

The old idea of granny flats being some sort of shonky product that is put together with sticky tape and a few staple guns is no longer the case. We have a high-quality granny flat industry in Western Australia. We made significant changes that are now in play to relax the rules around granny flats. Those changes include removing the minimum 350-square-metre size requirement, relaxing the requirement for granny flats to be compatible with the design of the existing home, allowing granny flats to be built on group dwellings and strata lots, and removing the requirement to provide an additional car bay for most granny flats. This is significant because it means many more Western Australian households will be eligible to consider a granny flat and many more granny flats will be exempt from planning approval. This is a clear demonstration of us cutting red tape—cutting the rules to help boost housing supply. There has been significant interest. I have met with the industry and they will tell members—it has been in the media—they have had significant interest. They are saying there are uplifts of 500 per cent in interest.

It is interesting that when we bring out this reform and our commitment, the opposition is all over the place. The Leader of the Liberal Party clashes with the housing spokesperson. The leader of the Liberals was asked her position on this and she said they will support any measure that takes the pressure off housing. However, the housing spokesperson was also asked and he criticised the proposal. He said it is no good and it is not going to address any issues surrounding housing supply. That is an example of an opposition that has no policy positions—when journalists go to two different spokespeople and get contradictory statements. That is a classic example of a policy vacuum in the opposition. Around the same time, the shadow Minister for Housing said I am obsessed with social housing. I will repeat that. He said I am obsessed with social housing. I want to explain to the opposition that I am the Minister for Housing! I am responsible for social housing delivery. That demonstrates two things. Firstly, it demonstrates that the opposition has no interest and no commitment to housing the most vulnerable.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

Mr J.N. CAREY: Name your policy; leader of the Liberals, name your policy.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

Mr J.N. CAREY: I am waiting for your policy.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

Mr J.N. CAREY: No, that is not the case. You are wrong!

The SPEAKER: Order, please. Minister, can I draw you back to the question. Thank you.

Mr J.N. CAREY: It is very interesting that the Liberal leader gets very agitated because the Liberal Party has not one policy on social housing or homelessness. The other part of the criticism I find extraordinary from the shadow minister is, yes, I am obsessed with social housing but I am also obsessed about affordable housing. I am also obsessed about general housing supply. That is why we are reforming granny flat planning. That is why we are doing planning reform. That is why we are doing an infrastructure fund to boost key workers' accommodation. That is why members are seeing the housing diversity pipeline, to utilise lazy land for affordable, social and general housing. Across the board, we are driving large numbers of measures to boost social and affordable housing and to boost housing supply. It is very clear that there is a divide in this house. On that side, after seven and a half

years, there is not one policy on social housing, affordable housing or any housing. On this side, there are ongoing reforms and commitment to drive and boost housing supply in Western Australia.

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