

Reformed Residential Zones

General Residential Zone

Changes to the General Residential Zone

What is the General Residential Zone?

Land that is suitable primarily for residential purposes is generally included in one of the three residential zones – the Neighbourhood Residential Zone, the General Residential Zone, or the Residential Growth Zone.

The General Residential Zone is applied to land in areas where growth and housing diversity is anticipated. It is expected that the type of housing provided will evolve over time to provide more diverse forms of housing, but not at the expense of existing open garden character.

Why are changes being made?

Changes are being made to the residential zones in response to the independent Managing Residential Development Advisory Committee's recommendations to the Minister for Planning.

The changes are the first step towards ensuring a consistent state-wide approach to residential development. The revised zones will improve housing diversity and choice across all council areas, while protecting the open and garden character of more sensitive residential areas.

Summary of key changes

- The discretionary maximum building height of 9 metres will be replaced by a new mandatory maximum building height of 11 metres, with a new 3 storey height limit
- A new mandatory minimum garden area requirement has been introduced
- Allowing the maximum building height to be increased where applicable flood levels affect land
- A new requirement for relevant neighbourhood character objectives to be specified in the schedule to the zone
- Updating the exempt development and transition provisions

What is the new garden area requirement?

The garden area requirement applies to all land in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone and General Residential Zone that is 400 square metres or more. It is a mandatory requirement.

The garden area requirement has been introduced to ensure that land in the General Residential Zone receives the same level of protection as land in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone.

It ensures that the green open character of our suburbs, towns and cities is protected by requiring a mandatory amount of garden area to be provided.

A minimum percentage of the land must be set aside for garden areas at ground level in accordance with the table below.

Lot size	Minimum percentage of a lot set aside as garden area
400 – 500 square metres	25%
501 – 650 square metres	30%
Above 650 square metres	35%

The minimum garden area includes areas that are normally associated with the use of a garden area, such as open entertaining areas, lawns, garden beds, swimming pools, and tennis courts. It does not include things like driveways, areas set aside for car parking, or any buildings or roofed areas.

Before

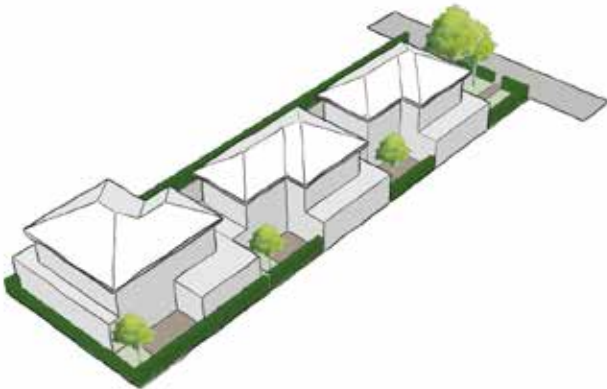


Figure 1: Typical townhouse development constructed without the new 35% minimum garden area requirement.

After

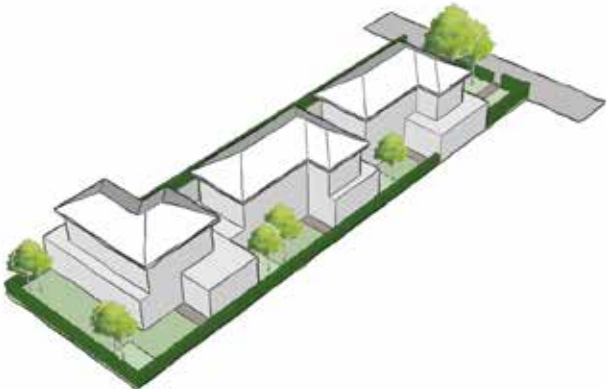


Figure 2: Townhouse development constructed with the new 35% minimum garden area requirement.

Are there transitional provisions?

The General Residential Zone includes transitional provisions for the garden area requirement and the changes to building heights and the number of storeys allowed. These will not apply to planning permit applications submitted before the requirements are introduced. They will also not apply where a planning or building permit has already been issued for a development, or where significant progress had been made towards obtaining a building permit.

More information

You can check the zoning of your property by using the Government's [Planning Maps Online](#) tool, or by contacting your local council.

You should contact your local council for any specific advice about the planning controls that apply to your land, or advice on developing your property.

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