

Reformed Residential Zones

Neighbourhood Residential Zone

Changes to the Neighbourhood Residential Zone

What is the Neighbourhood 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 Neighbourhood Residential Zone is applied to land that has been identified as having specific neighbourhood, heritage, environmental or landscape character values that distinguish the land from other parts of the municipality or surrounding area.

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

- Increasing the maximum building height from 8 metres to 9 metres with a new 2 storey height limit. Provisions to allow for slightly higher buildings on sloping land will remain. Councils will still be able to set an alternative maximum height, which must be more than 9 metres.
- Allowing the maximum building height to be increased where applicable flood levels affect land
- Removing the limit on the number of dwellings that can be built on a property and replacing it with a new mandatory minimum garden area requirement
- A new requirement for relevant neighbourhood, heritage, environmental or landscape character objectives to be specified in the schedule to the zone
- Updating the exempt development and transition provisions

Why is the limit on the maximum number of dwellings being removed?

Limiting the number of dwellings on a lot was an ineffective way of protecting the identified character values of land in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone. It did not achieve the protection of these values in every instance.

It is the impact of the development of land on the identified values, not the number of dwellings, that should determine whether a development is acceptable or not. Modest forms of multi-unit development should be able to be considered.

A new minimum garden area requirement is being introduced to replace the limit on the maximum number of dwellings on a lot to ensure that land in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone is not overdeveloped.

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.

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

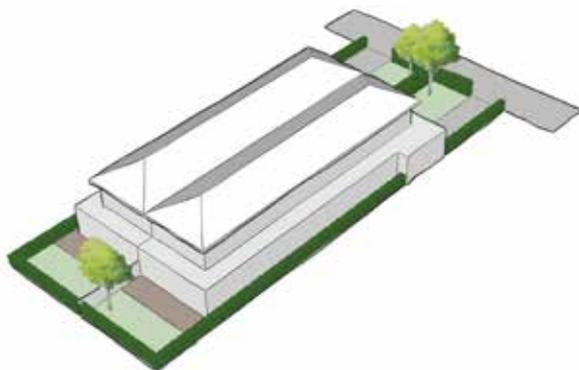


Figure 1: Typical dual occupancy constructed without the new 35% minimum garden area requirement

After

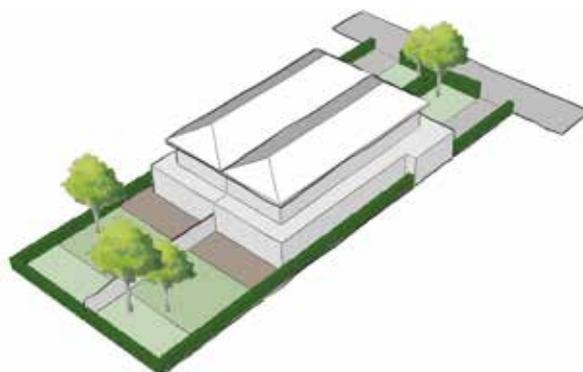


Figure 2: Dual occupancy constructed with the new 35% minimum garden area requirement

Are there transitional provisions?

The Neighbourhood 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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