MORE HOUSING CHOICES FOR GROWTH CENTRES

Thousands of homebuyers and the construction industry will benefit from proposed planning changes to deliver more diverse and affordable housing in Sydney’s Growth Centres.

“The proposed changes which centre on smaller lot development and a variety of medium density housing choices is a win-win situation,” Minister for Planning and Infrastructure Brad Hazzard said.

“Homebuyers, the building industry and councils will now have the tools to deliver the mix of housing that people want.

“Not everyone wants a large and elaborate house - as our population grows, there are empty nesters wanting to downsize, and first homebuyers who need affordable homes.

“Until now, planning rules restricted more affordable new homes on smaller lots.

“That is why we’re proposing changes to the Growth Centres State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP).

“We want to ensure the North West and South West Growth Centres – which will be home to 500,000 people over the next 25 years – provide the range of housing types that the community desires, including terraces, small homes and even ‘Fonzie flats’,” Mr Hazzard said.

The changes will facilitate:

- Townhouse and villa-style housing across a wider range of areas;
- Studio dwellings – known as ‘Fonzie flats’ – located above garages in new housing developments that are strata subdivided from the main house so they can be sold separately;
- The introduction of Manor Homes on corner lots – a new building type that presents to the street as a large two-storey home, but actually contains four separate units’
- Standard minimum lot sizes of 225m² in low density areas, compared to between 250-360m² at present; and
- The minimum lot size to be varied down to 125m² in areas capable of supporting higher densities. High quality dwelling designs must be lodged with the subdivision applications.
Mr Hazzard said the proposed changes would modify current rules in some areas where developers are required to construct a house before they can subdivide a block of land to under 450m², making it easier for the housing industry to fund developments.

“All of the proposed changes will add to new housing opportunities in the Growth Centres by making building homes more financially feasible,” Mr Hazzard said.

“These changes will also help to ensure council planners get the right information they need to consider subdivision layouts, built form and streetscapes.

“Importantly, the NSW Liberal and National Government is delivering the infrastructure needed to support the Growth Centre communities - close to new rail lines, employment areas and other new infrastructure including the upgrading of major roads and water and wastewater projects.”

Mr Hazzard said the changes were in line with proposals under the new planning system for planning controls to be developed using economic evidence, along with the long-term vision for the region in the draft Metropolitan Strategy.

“Labor’s 16 year legacy to Sydney was a housing supply shortfall and the NSW Liberals and Nationals inherited a housing industry which was operating at a 50 year low.

“The new planning system which will go before Parliament later this year is a once in a generation change which is vital for Sydney’s new home supply.

“It will streamline approvals and cut costs and delays, helping homebuilders and renovators realise their dreams.”

Mr Hazzard said the Department of Planning and Infrastructure had commissioned an economic analysis of why various housing types couldn’t proceed in the Growth Centres, which found changes to the controls were needed.

The department has also prepared a guide demonstrating how different housing types can deliver higher density housing without relying on apartment buildings – showing that additional housing could go hand in hand with an attractive streetscape.

“The current constraints have meant we were not achieving our dwelling targets for the Growth Centres – these changes will help get us back on track,” Mr Hazzard said.

“And if this model is successful in the Growth Centres, these changes could be adopted in other parts of Sydney or the State.”

The changes are on exhibition until Monday, 14 October and can be viewed at: www.planning.nsw.gov.au/on-exhibition