



Media release

The Hon Matthew Guy MLC
Minister for Planning

Tuesday 5 March 2013

Reformed residential zones bringing new certainty to Melbourne's neighbourhoods

Sweeping reforms of residential planning zones are one step closer as Planning Minister Matthew Guy announced the Victorian Coalition Government's final details on the reform of Victoria's residential planning zones.

After a detailed consultation process with over 2,000 submissions from individuals, businesses, councils and community groups, the Coalition Government will now establish the three reformed residential zones on 1 July this year.

A key feature will be the new Neighbourhood Residential Zone which will be the strictest planning zone in Australia, aimed at protecting existing suburbs' neighbourhood character.

"The Coalition Government's reforms to residential zones reflect what communities have been calling for, for many years – certainty for neighbourhoods and protection from inappropriate development," Mr Guy said.

"These reforms will protect what Melburnians love about Melbourne. Our streetscapes, our amenity and our liveability which are too valuable to ignore.

"At the same time the new zones will clearly define the appropriate locations where growth and density should occur," Mr Guy said.

The Coalition Government's Ministerial Advisory Council (MAC) on zone reform has suggested a number of improvements to the residential zones as initially proposed last year, to ensure the protection of community amenity and provide clearer rules and greater certainty for the community.

"The improvements recommended by the MAC further protect residential amenity and neighbourhood character and are supported by the Coalition Government," Mr Guy said.

"Today's announcement is about the right development in the right locations and the package of residential zones will deliver this for local communities."

The new Neighbourhood Residential Zone will provide the strongest protections for local neighbourhood character for the first time in Victoria's planning history. Key features of the zone include:

- implementing local neighbourhood character policy to provide increased weight to local planning policy;
- limiting increased residential development through lot size restrictions; and
- providing an eight metre mandatory height limit.

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In contrast, the Residential Growth Zone will be applied in areas determined appropriate for increased growth and density and provide for medium density developments.

Minor commercial uses will be permitted in the Residential Growth Zone to provide additional local services to the population, subject to strict conditions.

“Local communities will now know and clearly understand where growth can and will occur, unlike the previous haphazard approach that was allowed to foster under the previous Labor Government,” Mr Guy said.

“Importantly, these zones will be at the discretion of local council and it will predominately be the view of the local community that informs which zone should be applied where.”
The Coalition Government will work with local councils between March and May to further develop the implementation procedures and criteria. The Department of Planning and Community Development will also provide technical assistance to local council’s in implementing the residential zones.

Implementation of the residential zones will commence on 1 July 2013 and will be completed over a 12 month period.

A copy of the MAC report and the Coalition Government’s response can be found at:
www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/planning/reszones