



HIA Planning Blueprint

Scorecard

2026 Update

Assessing progress on delivery of the
National Planning Reform Blueprint

Version 2 - January 2026

Executive Summary

HIA Planning Blueprint Scorecard – 2026 Update

In August 2023, the Federal Government signalled a major shift in housing policy when National Cabinet endorsed the National Housing Accord, committing to deliver 1.2 million new homes over five years. A key initiative to support delivery of this ambition was the adoption of a 10-point National Planning Reform Blueprint, aimed at modernising Australia's fragmented and often inefficient planning systems.

To assess progress against this reform agenda, HIA released the *HIA Planning Blueprint Scorecard* with the first release in August 2024. The scorecard reviewed each state and territory, scoring jurisdictions out of five based on their implementation of key elements of the National Planning Reform Blueprint and other strategies intended to increase housing supply. The initial report revealed a significant disconnect between planning policy settings and on-the-ground housing delivery. Many jurisdictions continue to adopt a 'business-as-usual' approach to planning, despite the increasing visible social and economic consequences of a chronic undersupply of housing.

The 2026 update of *HIA Planning Blueprint Scorecard* again assess all Australian planning systems and highlights the scale and pace of planning reform occurring around the country. New South Wales (NSW) emerges as a standout reformer, undertaking some of the most substantial efforts to overhaul the planning system in decades. The NSW reform agenda targets various parts of the housing pipeline through state-led rezonings, expanded complying development pathways to reduce project timeframes, and the introduction of a pattern book for pre-endorsed designs. Additionally, a new development coordination authority will act as a single point of contact across several agencies to reduce delays.

Victoria is assessed as now gaining momentum in the 2026 Scorecard. Reforms to streamlined townhouse developments and small subdivisions have received some early positive feedback by providing greater upfront certainty on these projects. The Development Facilitation Program and changes to reduce the need for planning approvals for single dwellings have also improved some project timeframes. Despite these positive reforms, the commercial viability of new housing remains under pressure due to the introduction of additional taxes linked to affordable housing requirements and the Suburban Rail Loop.

In contrast to those jurisdictions undertaking significant reforms, Queensland continues to record the equal lowest score of any planning system, with limited progress since 2024. The re-established Queensland Productivity Commission has clearly identified the planning reforms required to lift housing supply, many of which align with HIA's prior recommendations, yet a number of these recommendations have been rejected, based on potential opposition from local governments.

Similarly, both Tasmania and the Northern Territory (NT) are reported to still require significant planning reforms to unlock housing supply and improve project timeframes. For Tasmania, this involves resolving PlanBuild implementation issues, integrating the final council into the single planning system, and finalising regional land use strategies. Meanwhile, the NT's progress hinges on passing proposed amendments for infill development and successful land delivery stemming from a simplified rezoning process. Across both jurisdictions, a stronger focus on strategic planning and infrastructure funding remains essential to ensuring a steady residential pipeline.

Western Australia (WA) and South Australia (SA) continue to achieve the highest overall score for 2026. WA's performance reflects successful streamlining initiatives including expanded Development Assessment Panels, increased exemptions for single dwellings, and significant rezonings to secure a future pipeline of shovel-ready land. SA similarly demonstrates a strong commitment to housing supply through its *Housing Roadmap*, supported by a modern, digital-first planning system designed to bring greater consistency and accelerate housing approvals.

While the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) is trending positively through 'missing middle' reforms and precinct rezonings, sustaining this momentum requires execution of a broader planning reform agenda. Addressing entrenched bottlenecks including tree canopy requirements, lease variation charges, and inter-agency delays which remain key barriers to new homes.

To restore housing affordability, planning systems must evolve to support, rather than hinder, the industry's capacity to build. HIA is calling for the removal of restrictive, legacy planning hurdles that undermine project viability and drive-up costs. Australia requires a steady pipeline of shovel-ready land and planning frameworks that empowers builders to deliver a diverse mix of housing—from granny flats to high-rise apartments and everything in between. As there is no single policy lever to solve the housing crisis, a total commitment to bold planning reforms remains the only path to increasing housing availability and affordability for all Australians.

Why planning reform is needed?

It is well established that Australia's planning systems are overwhelmed and in need of significant reform to enable the delivery of not only the Housing Accord housing targets, but to meet the long term demand for housing.

HIA is broadly supportive of the National Planning Reform Blueprint and its key reform measures including:

- Updating state, regional, and local strategic plans to reflect housing supply targets;
- Promoting medium and high-density housing in well-located areas close to existing public transport connections, amenities and employment;
- Streamlining approval pathways; and
- Undertaking zoning and land release amendments to meet housing targets.

By adopting the measure of the National Planning Reform Blueprint, state, territory and local governments would be able to substantially improve current planning approval processes which would in turn support more timely delivery of all forms of new housing including greenfield, infill and multi-dwelling housing.

Explanation of the HIA Planning Blueprint Scorecard

The HIA Planning Blueprint Scorecard benchmarks each state and territory according to four key themes based on the objectives of the National Planning Reform Blueprint including:

- Bringing more shovel ready land to market.
- Higher density housing.
- Cut red tape.
- Faster decisions.

Each state and territory is assessed on score out of five based on their planning strategies and other initiatives to achieve the new housing targets. HIA has conducted substantial, multi-faceted research to determine the allocated score which includes:

- Direct engagement with offices of members of parliament at the state and territory level;
- Direct engagement with relevant state/territory government employees;
- Liaison with HIA regional staff office executives, policy representatives and economics experts;
- Direct engagement with developers, builders, planning consultants, certifiers and other stakeholders of each planning framework at all scales of housing projects; and
- Research on proposed or adopted planning reforms compared with international best practice.

How can approvals be streamlined, and timeframes reduced?

Across the nation, for various reasons, it is taking far too long to get planning approval for a stand-alone house or an apartment.

Year on year this is severely compromising the nations required housing supply being achieved.

To achieve the National Housing Accord target of building 1.2 million homes by 2029 each state and territory must recognise the role they have to play and undertake true and meaningful planning reform to significantly reduce approval timeframes.

For a stand-alone house it is not uncommon for a planning approval to take in excess of 6 months to obtain and for an apartment 12 months plus has become an undesirable industry standard. These protracted timeframes have led to the gross undersupply of homes that Australians are currently experiencing.

The reasons can be explained such as local government being overly restrictive or conservative during decision making including requiring unnecessary and protracted consultation with neighbours and the broader community, through to inability to retain experienced planning staff.

Common reasons cited for delays in approvals include:

- Disconnect between planning rules and statutory implementation leading to regulatory duplication and unnecessary additional red tape.

- Continual requests for more documentation and reports as part of ‘box ticking’ exercise to obtain approval, adding to costs, time and uncertainty of projects.
- Simple standalone house approvals and more complex approvals being assessed in a similar fashion rather than having streamlined and simple approvals prioritising housing assessments.
- Inconsistent approaches to approvals across different local governments.
- Lack of resourcing in local governments for standard development approvals and inability for private sector to assist with faster decisions making.
- Statutory approval timeframes not being met or requests for further information, resulting in ‘starting the clock’ processes for approval timeframes.
- States and territories having a form a code-assess housing but local governments tweaking rules and placing additional conditions on approvals.

Where to from here?

The HIA Planning Blueprint Scorecard was launched to coincide with the commencement of the Housing Accord period and it is intended that the HIA Scorecard will be reviewed on an annual basis over the next 5 years to assess progress delivery of the Housing Accord 1.2 million homes target.

The HIA Planning Blueprint Scorecard is intended to be the start of an important national conversation about the content, structure, and performance of planning systems across the country.

It is vital that planning systems can deliver clear, consistent, and measurable outcomes that facilitate the greater delivery of housing supply.

All levels of government must be committed to developing and maintaining a robust planning system that can deliver housing in a timely manner, in the right location and at an affordable price point.

An ongoing conversation about the need for planning systems to commit to improvements that streamline assessment and decision making is a key component moving forward.

National Planning Reform Blueprint

HIA Planning Blueprint Scorecard – A plan to deliver greater housing supply

The Housing Industry Association (HIA) has undertaken an assessment of National Cabinet's 10 point National Planning Reform Blueprint including identifying, and in some cases re-defining, the key planning reform measures needed from the Blueprint to enable the delivery of National Cabinet's Housing Accord target of building 1.2 million homes over the next 5 years.

The HIA Scorecard provides an indicative assessment score out of 5 to rate each State and Territory's planning system and its current capacity to enable delivery of the National Housing Accord housing targets.



Bringing more shovel ready land to market

- Undertaking planning, zoning, land release and other reforms to increase housing density, to meet housing supply targets
- Updating state, regional and local strategic plans to reflect their share of housing supply targets



Cut red tape

- Reforms to address barriers to timely issuing of development approvals
- Reforms to support rapid delivery of social and affordable housing



Infrastructure provision

- Government funding for state and territory and local government and private developers to kick start housing supply
- Providing targeted activation payments for connecting essential services to support faster delivery of new housing developments

While infrastructure provisions were not part of the Planning Blueprint, they are critical for the timely delivery of shovel ready and build ready land and should be considered alongside the necessary planning reform measures



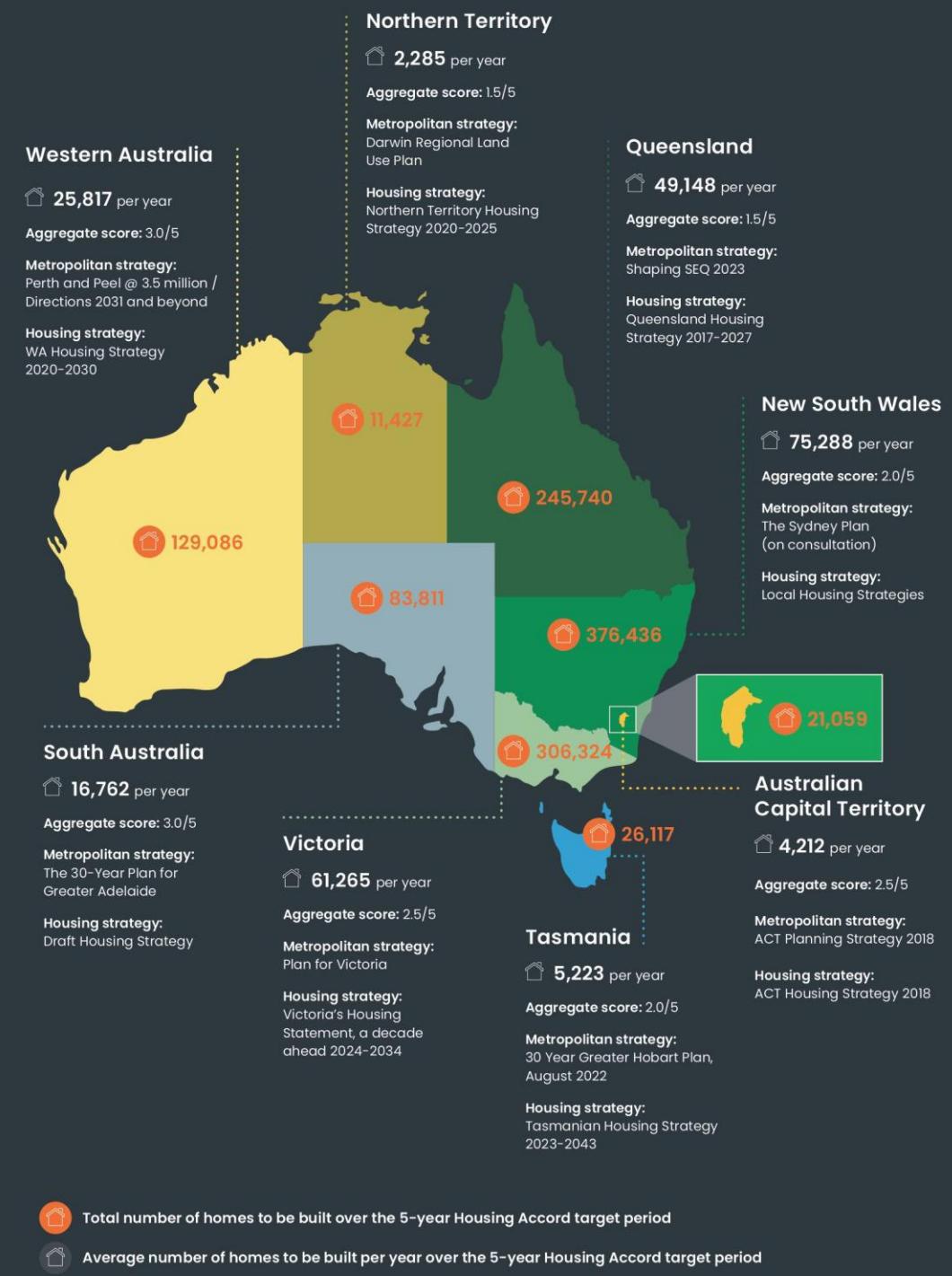
Higher density housing

- Promoting medium density and high-density housing in well located areas
- Addressing barriers to subdivision for appropriate medium density



Faster decisions

- Adequately resourcing built environmental professionals, including planners, in local government
- Streamlining approval pathways, including strengthened 'call in powers'
- Prioritising planning amendments to support diverse housing across a range of areas



Progress on 1.2 million homes in 5 years

Housing Delivery Targets and Update on Recent Dwelling Completions

To build 1.2 million homes nationally over a five-year period (July 2024 to June 2029) requires a significant uptick in new housing to be delivered in each state and territory.

Equally it will mean that each state and territory have the appropriate provisions and tools in place to meet their share of the 1.2 million homes.

The breakdown of the state-by-state share of the National Housing Accord target and recent dwelling completions over the last 12 months is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: State-by-State Housing Delivery Targets and Recent Dwelling Completions

State/Territory	Share of homes to be built 2024-2029	Average Annual Homes to be built to meet target	Expressed as %	Dwelling Completions in FY 2024/2025
Australian Capital Territory	21,059	4,217	2%	4,109
New South Wales	376,436	74,787	31%	42,005
Northern Territory	11,427	2,296	1%	407
Queensland	245,740	49,230	20%	33,448
South Australia	83,811	16,550	7%	12,625
Tasmania	26,117	5,022	2%	2,456
Victoria	306,324	61,483	26%	55,663
Western Australia	129,086	26,415	11%	22,519
Total Australia	1,200,000	240,000	100%	173,232

Dwelling Completions in 2024/2025 FY and impact on housing targets

In the financial year for 2024/2025, the following dwelling completions were recorded in each state and territory:

- ACT built 4,109 new homes reflecting a shortfall of 108 new homes.
- NSW built 42,005 new homes, reflecting a shortfall of 32,782 new homes.
- NT built 407 new homes, reflecting a shortfall of 1,889 new homes.
- QLD built 33,448 new homes, reflecting a shortfall of 15,782 new homes.
- SA built 12,625 new homes, reflecting a shortfall of 3,925 new homes.
- TAS built 2,456 new homes, reflecting a shortfall of 2,566 new homes.
- VIC built 55,663 new homes, reflecting a shortfall of 5,820 new homes.
- WA built 22,519 new homes, reflecting a shortfall of 3,896 new homes.

The completions for last financial year has resulted in a shortfall of 66,768 new homes nationally when compared with average annual target for the National Housing Accord. Consequence of the recent shortfalls, HIA estimates that around 260,000 new homes will need to be built per annum over the next four years to achieve the National Housing Accord target.

All forms of Housing Needed – Going up, out and in-between

A key part of the delivery of this volume of new housing is to substantially streamline approval processes to fast track all forms of new housing including greenfield, infill and multi-dwelling housing.

Focussing on only one form of housing such as multi-dwelling housing won't be sufficient. Rather all forms of new housing, and in all locations is needed, as are reforms necessary to enable their delivery in a timely manner.

Equally the delivery of this volume of new housing requires all areas and levels of government working together in a unified fashion and having increased housing delivery and driving cost of housing down as a key priority.

National Planning Reform Blueprint explained

The 10-point National Planning Reform Blueprint announced by National Cabinet in August 2023 included the following measures:

1. Collaborating on a national vision for urban and regional planning policy, including identifying common policy approaches, definitions and data sources.
2. Reporting on state, regional and local strategic plans that reflect their share of housing targets.
3. Updating state, regional and local strategic plans to reflect their share of housing supply targets.
4. Identifying well-located development ready land.
5. Streamlining approval pathways and prioritising planning amendments to support diverse housing including medium- and high-density housing in well-located areas.
6. Creating accelerated development pathways and streamline approval processes for eligible development types, particularly in well-located areas, including to support the rapid delivery of social and affordable housing.
7. Identifying and rectifying gaps in housing design guidance and building certification processes.
8. Improving community consultation processes.
9. Adequately resourcing built environmental professionals, including planners, in local government.
10. Ensuring the efficient use of government land and the delivery of best practice redevelopment projects to support housing supply, diversity and affordability.

The Blueprint enables the federal government to have greater oversight and coordination with state and territory and local governments in planning matters particularly as they relate to meeting the housing targets and funding measures as set out in the National Housing Accord.

It also signals a commitment by state and territory governments on the need for meaningful reform to support greater supply of housing in a timelier fashion.

HIA Scorecard Explained

Developing the HIA Scorecard involves each state and territory being assessed on score out of five based on their planning strategies and other initiatives to achieve the new housing targets. HIA has conducted substantial, multi-faceted research to determine the allocated score which includes:

- Direct engagement with offices of members of parliament at the state and territory level;
- Direct engagement with relevant state/territory government employees;
- Liaison with HIA regional staff office executives, policy representatives and economics experts;
- Direct engagement with developers, builders, planning consultants, certifiers and other stakeholders of each planning framework at all scales of housing projects; and
- Research on proposed or adopted planning reforms compared with international best practice.

The HIA Scorecard evaluates the 10-point National Planning Reform Blueprint by grouping its measures into four strategic themes:

- Bringing more shovel ready land to market.
- Higher density housing.
- Cut red tape.
- Faster decisions.

Table 3: HIA Scorecard Key Planning Reform Themes & Measures

THEME	DESCRIPTION	MEASURES
1	Bringing more shovel ready land to market	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updating state, regional and local strategic plans to reflect their share of housing supply targets.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undertaking planning, zoning, land release and other reforms, such as increasing density, to meet their share of housing supply targets
2	Cut red tape	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reforms to support the rapid delivery of social and affordable housing.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reforms to address barriers to the timely issuing of development approvals.
3	Higher density housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addressing barriers to subdivision for appropriate medium density.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting medium density and high-density housing in well located areas.
4	Faster decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Streamlining approval pathways, including strengthened 'call in powers'
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritising planning amendments to support diverse housing across a range of areas e.g., addressing barriers to subdivision for appropriate medium density housing.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adequately resourcing built environmental professionals, including planners, in local government.

What are the elements of a well performing planning system?

In developing the HIA Scorecard consideration was given to those elements that are integral to a well performing planning system. A well performing planning system must facilitate the delivery of affordable housing.

Efficient and effective planning systems should also include clear targets, measures of success, defined timelines and an agenda to review and determine performance.

Planning systems must also be bold enough to identify and reduce barriers and harness opportunities to address problems.

How can approvals be streamlined, and timeframes reduced?

Across the nation, for various reasons, it is taking far too long to get planning approval for a stand-alone house or an apartment. These protracted timeframes have in most cases led to a gross undersupply of homes in recent times.

To achieve the National Housing Accord target of building 1.2 million homes by 2029 each state and territory must recognise the role they have to play and undertake true and meaningful planning reform to significantly reduce these approval timeframes.

The reasons can be explained such as local government being overly restrictive or conservative during decision making including requiring unnecessary and protracted consultation with neighbours and the broader community, through to inability to retain experienced planning staff.

The most common factors HIA has determined by developing the Scorecard is that:

- Strategic planning objectives and statutory implementation do not align leading to regulatory duplication and red tape.
- Means in which the private sector can assist with faster decisions is not being seriously entertained by government.
- Many states and territories have now implemented a code assessment or deemed to satisfy process for assessing new housing projects to increase certainty on certain outcomes. However very few governments have been prepared to take this to the next step by allowing private private certification system to ease the burden on planning authorities and see improved performance of planning systems.

Grading each State and Territory Planning Systems

Based on the four themes identified each state and territories planning systems has been graded an aggregate score out of 5 which indicates its ability to deliver greater housing supply and progress on implementation of the key planning reforms measures in the National Planning Reform Blueprint.

The HIA Scorecard provides a qualitative assessment drawing current Metropolitan and Housing Strategies and their individual regulatory frameworks. This has been benchmarked against the 10-points of the Planning Blueprint as those measures are reflected in their current planning regimes.

Appendix 1 provides a summary of recent notable planning reforms, outstanding challenges for each jurisdiction and any changes to HIA's previous scorecard result.

Appendix 2 provides a breakdown of the grading for each state and territory as well as identifying measures that could be implemented to improve their systems and in turn housing delivery and supply outcomes.

Appendix 3 provides an assessment of each state and territories systems against the 10-points of the Planning Blueprint to determine whether that item is being satisfied or partially satisfied. This assessment is accompanied by a brief overarching comment.

Updated HIA Planning Blueprint Scorecard

Progress Scorecard

State/Territory Overview	Key Reforms and Initiatives	Further Improvements Needed	Score (out of 5)
 <p>Overview: Some positive direction to recent missing middle reforms. Greater focus needed on reducing delivery costs and timeframes.</p> <p>Update: Positive trajectory</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher density housing: Proposed Missing Middle Housing Reforms – intended changes to increase locations for gentle density housing types. Higher density housing: Rezoning key precincts including Thoroughbred Park and the Northern Gateway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher density housing: Review tree canopy requirements and also the Urban Forest Act 2023 which can be a barrier to new homes. Cut red tape: Lease Variation Charges remain a key barrier. These charges should be paused on housing projects. Faster decisions: Resolve agency delays and streamline post-approval processes. Faster decisions: Expand exemption declarations to streamline new projects. 	2.5/5
 <p>Overview: Commended for some of the most significant attempts to reform the planning system in decades. It is still uncertain if many recent planning reforms will successfully translate to increased housing supply. The adopted housing strategy could be improved by removing barriers and costs to delivering new land in greenfield areas.</p> <p>Update: Standout reformer</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faster decisions: Planning System Reforms Act expands complying development to allow minor variations. Higher density housing: Rezoning occurring through Low and Mid-Rise Housing Policy. Introduced pattern books for low-rise and mid-rise housing. Faster decisions: Housing Delivery Authority for State Significant Development and Targeted Assessment Pathway for local development. Cut red tape: Environment Planning and Assessment Act Reforms – Targeted Assessment Pathway and Model Conditions. Higher density housing: Transport Orientated Development rezonings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land to market: Ensure a steady pipeline of shovel-ready land (20+ years) in metro and regional areas. Land to market: Biodiversity reforms to review and cost of biodiversity offsetting in regional areas. Faster decisions: Simplify processes for ancillary approvals like driveways and works within footpaths. Cut red tape: Standardise stormwater drainage requirements across councils to improve productivity of the industry. Cut red tape: Prevent councils from imposing requirements regulated under the NCC, ensuring any conflicting provision is of no effect. 	2/5 Improved

State/Territory Overview	Key Reforms and Initiatives	Further Improvements Needed	Score (out of 5)
 <p>Overview: Revised design codes should support the commercial viability of new housing. Positive reforms include simpler approval pathways for single houses.</p> <p>Update: Positive trajectory</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faster decisions: Implemented delegated decisions for single houses, permanent Significant Development Pathways and Development Assessment Panel Reforms. Land to market: Region Scheme Amendments resulting in 130 hectares of land rezoned to urban purposes for future development. Cut red tape: Local Government reforms to ensure planning definitions are consistent across the state. Land to market: Infrastructure development fund for apartment development in key precincts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land to market: Introduce a frequently updated land and housing supply dashboard. Cut red tape: Residential Design Code (R-Codes) are being revised to streamlined infill development. Cut red tape: amend bushfire framework to remove unnecessary costs and burden for land under bushfire mapping overlay. 	3/5
 <p>Overview: There is a pressing need for greater standardisation across planning schemes to improve the productivity of the housing sector.</p> <p>Outdated planning scheme restrictions on lot sizes and housing types in most residential areas is limiting housing diversity and supply.</p> <p>Update: Significant reforms still required</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land to market: Residential Activation Fund (\$2 billion fund) for infrastructure that enables homes. Cut red tape: The Queensland Productivity Commission has released its final report on the construction sector. Implement all planning related reforms recommended by the independent commission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cut red tape: Introduce a mandatory state-wide design code for detached housing. Cut red tape: Collaborate with the industry to create a state-wide code for infill development to improve viability of new homes. Higher density housing: Rezoning is needed to allow gentle density on well-located properties. Land to market: Expand the urban footprint in SEQ and introduce a land supply monitoring program. Faster decisions: Reform Planning and Building Acts to reduce referrals to council. Cut red tape: Introduce standardised requirements for overlays. 	1.5/5

State/Territory Overview	Key Reforms and Initiatives	Further Improvements Needed	Score (out of 5)
<p>South Australia</p>  <p>Overview: Impressive housing supply monitoring dashboard, unified design code / online portal and a sound strategy for the largest ever release of new land. Avoiding any new policies that increase development costs will ensure SA is one of the best planning frameworks in Australia.</p> <p>Update: Positive trajectory</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land to market: Improve supply monitoring through the Land Supply Dashboard. Cut red tape: SA Planning and Design Code, a unified, single online portal for development plans. Land to market: Better Housing Future Plan includes largest ever land release across multiple locations. Faster decisions: Introduced a Land Division Assessment Panel to streamline assessment of new housing allotments. Higher density housing: Proposed City Building Heights Code Amendment to remove outdated building heights restrictions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cut red tape: Implement remainder of Housing Road Map including standardised infrastructure requirements for land subdivision. Cut red tape: Ensure any future development contributions framework, affordable housing overlays and new design standards do not increase the cost of new homes. 	3/5
<p>Tasmania</p>  <p>Overview: Future reforms need to prioritise land delivery processes and increase the viability of infill development.</p> <p>Update: Significant reforms still required</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faster decisions: Development Assessment Panels Bill – Proposed introduction of expert panels for major projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cut red tape: Integrate the remaining council into the single planning system. Land to market: Require regional land use strategies to have a greater emphasis on the status of residential land at all stages of the development pipeline. Cut red tape: Address implementation issues with PlanBuild as a single online lodgement and tracking of approvals through the system. Higher density housing: Implement the 'Improving Residential Standards' recommendations to the SPPs – increasing building heights and reducing car parking rates for townhouses and apartments. 	2/5

State/Territory Overview	Key Reforms and Initiatives	Further Improvements Needed	Score (out of 5)
 <p>Overview: Some substantial planning reforms proposed or adopted. Early feedback on Townhouse and Low-Rise Code has been positive but requires some amendments to improve implementation.</p> <p>The proposed introduction of new streamlined assessment pathways should improve the planning system, but the commercial viability of new homes is at risk with the proposed introduction of affordable housing and Suburban Rail Loop taxes.</p> <p>A more balanced strategy that encourages all types of housing is required.</p> <p>Update: Gaining momentum</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher density housing: Townhouse and Low-Rise Code introduced 'deemed to comply' standards to encourage infill housing. Proposed Mid-Rise Housing Code is a similar reform aimed at increasing housing density. Faster decisions: Amendments introduced to reduce the need for planning permits for single dwellings. Higher density housing: Pilot Activity Centres introduced increased density, building heights and design controls to encourage infill development in specific locations. Faster decisions: Expanded VicSmart Program (faster assessments) for small subdivisions and second homes. Faster decisions: Development Facilitation Program introduced for larger residential projects with affordable housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faster decisions: Introduce streamlined assessment pathways and procedures under the Better Decisions Made Faster Bill. Higher density housing: Partner with industry to improve recent low-rise reforms by amending site cover and canopy tree provisions. Land to market: Support new greenfield housing opportunities by finalising new structure plans. Land to market: Review the 70/30 target for infill and growth area housing based on market demand and affordability. Land to market: Partner with the Federal Government to resolve environmental delays in greenfield areas. Cut red tape: Abandon proposed new developer charges - inclusionary zoning as they will increase the cost of new homes. 	2.5/5 <i>Improved</i>
 <p>Overview: Some positive direction to infill housing reforms. A strategy to facilitate shovel-ready land is required.</p> <p>Update: Significant reforms still required</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher density housing: Proposed Infill Development and Subdivision in Low Density Residential to reduce lot sizes and unlock more homes. Faster decisions: Simplifying low-risk rezoning proposals through declarations for planning scheme amendments. Higher density housing: Draft Strategic Planning Policy released for future policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land to market: Introduce funding programs to support essential infrastructure for new land releases. Cut red tape: Implement outstanding recommendations from 2021 Land Development Initiatives. 	1.5/5

Grading each State and Territories Planning System against National Planning Reform Blueprint

Australian Capital Territory

Across the four HIA Scorecard themes ACT was given an aggregate score of **2.5 / 5**

The ACT's housing strategy and planning system suffers from significant deficiencies. While ambitious housing targets have been identified including the construction of 30,000 new homes by 2030 which HIA supports, there has not yet been the required planning reforms to the unlock new opportunities or streamline assessment processes.

Key planning reforms and initiatives

A focus on recent planning reforms has been on encouraging the 'Missing Middle' which HIA continues to support. The proposed changes seek to increase housing supply and choice in existing suburbs through infill development in the Suburban Residential Zone. This proposed reform includes:

- Expanding permitted housing types in this zone to include terrace homes, duplexes, townhouses and low-rise apartments.
- Removing minimum block size restriction for dual occupancies and size limitations for second dwellings.
- Rezoning key precincts including Thoroughbred Park and the Northern Gateway to support higher density housing.

Further improvements needed

The following matters should be considered to improve housing delivery in the ACT:

- Any proposed reforms for 'Missing Middle' should be developed in conjunction with builders and development industry to ensure provision are commercially viable. This would include reviewing mandatory tree canopy requirements which are more appropriately accommodated on verges.
- Removing lease variation charges for all residential projects while the housing shortage persists.
- Review the *Urban Forest Act 2023* to ensure tree protection forms part of a holistic planning assessment, rather than acting as a standalone barrier to the government's housing supply and affordability objectives.
- Streamline the land development process and improve transparency of performance, so that the pace of land release does not continue to fall below the levels required to meet housing demand, contributing to rising land values and reducing affordability.

New South Wales

Across the four HIA Scorecard themes NSW was given an aggregate score of **2 / 5**

The NSW Government is acutely aware of the severe undersupply of new homes and is undertaking a significant amount of planning reform which HIA strongly supports. Much of this reform has focused on increasing infill development. The introduction of Pattern Books with a focus on 'missing middle' development represents the most significant attempt in decades to diversify housing stock in established areas.

Key planning reforms and initiatives

The following planning reforms have been implemented or being progressed in NSW:

- Amending the planning framework through the *Planning System Reforms Act 2025* to encourage more housing approvals through rezonings and streamlined assessment pathways.
- Unlocking well-located sites through Transport Orientated Development Program.
- Introducing the Low and Mid-Rise Housing Reforms and the support NSW Pattern Book.
- Established a Housing Delivery Authority to streamline assessments of major projects.
- Introducing the Development Coordination Authority for multi-agency consideration of development applications when needed.

Further improvements needed

While there are some positive early indications from implemented planning reforms, it is still unclear whether the reform agenda will translate to a significant increase to housing supply. HIA notes the following matters related to the planning and development framework require greater focus:

- Planning for a long term (20+ years) and steady supply of shovel ready land across metropolitan and regional areas which would align with the market demand for detached houses with backyards.
- Placing greater emphasis in metropolitan areas on funding and delivery of enabling infrastructure.
- Continuing biodiversity offsetting reforms to reduce the prohibitive cost of residential development in regional parts of the state.
- Expanding complying development pathways and exempting further minor works from planning assessment.
- Simplifying processes for ancillary approvals like driveways and works within footpaths.
- Standardising stormwater drainage requirements and other engineering requirements across local government areas.
- Stopping councils from imposing building and technical requirements regulated under the NCC as planning conditions of consent.

Northern Territory

Across the four HIA Scorecard themes NT was given an aggregate score of **1.5 / 5**

The NT planning system lacks strong strategic direction and objectives to guide residential development. This has an adverse impact across all four of the HIA Scorecard themes. It significantly hinders the ability to implement suitable statutory planning instruments that provide certainty for industry and develop efficient decision-making processes.

As part of implementing the Planning Blueprint, a broad review of the NT planning system should be undertaken. Such a review must identify and address the connection that is required between strategic objectives and statutory planning instruments to bring about improvements and efficiencies into the planning system. The *Bringing Land to Market* report released in 2021 and the recommendations within it were agreed by government and have endorsed 12 of the 23 outlined in the report. It is imperative that the whole set of recommendations are embraced and implemented to provide an adequate supply of titled land to allow construction of new dwellings.

Key planning reforms and initiatives

The NT Government has proposed a new planning reform to unlock residential in Low Density Residential Zones. The proposal to allow for infill development and subdivision by reducing lot sizes in Low Density Residential zones is an extremely efficient and strategic measure to increase housing supply and diversity within existing urban footprints.

Further improvements needed

The following priority matters remain to improve the planning system in the NT:

- Greater investment in strategic planning to allow more areas for urban growth to be investigated. Like the Greater Holtze area plan and the Holtze to Elizabeth River strategic framework plan Increased strategic planning must be prioritized and brought forward to stimulate development.
- Improved implementation of planning assessment guidance documents, such as Designing Better to better facilitate streamlined approvals.
- Prioritise a land development strategy that adequately identifies future land supply and population needs for the next 20 years
- Set out an infrastructure delivery program that prioritises key trunk infrastructure to fast track the delivery of shovel ready land.

Queensland

Across the four HIA Scorecard themes Queensland was given an aggregate score of **1.5 / 5**

While development assessment timeframes in Queensland are generally adequate, there is a pressing need to undertake planning reform to unlock opportunities for new housing supply. The Queensland Government's lack of intervention allows all 77 local government areas to dictate unique planning requirements, which imposes a significant productivity cost on the building industry. This regulatory fragmentation forces the housing industry to navigate a complex, non-standardised system, delaying projects and directly inflating development costs. The State's reluctance to mandate state-wide codes is consequently viewed as a major policy flaw that exacerbates housing unaffordability for Queensland homebuyers.

Key planning reforms and initiatives

The Residential Activation Fund (RAF) is a recent positive initiative of the Queensland Government which is a \$2 billion fund designed to fundamentally address the housing supply deficit in Queensland. Funding has been allocated to developers and local governments to bring on trunk infrastructure within a specified timeframe to support new residential land. The Queensland Government has also declared some new Priority Development Areas which aims to increase land supply. Several major councils are progressing or have released new planning schemes but there is a concern that these new planning instruments will not empower the building industry to greatly increase housing supply. Other reforms have been targeted at community facilities zoned land which has had little impact on overall opportunities for the industry.

Further improvements needed

The following matters should be considered as a priority for the Queensland Government:

- Introduce a mandatory state-wide design code for detached housing.
- Collaborating with the industry to create a state-wide code for infill development that improves the commercial viability of small infill development.
- Rezoning is required to encourage higher density housing in the expanse low density residential areas that are predominantly restricted to detached houses on large allotments.
- Expansion of the urban footprint in SEQ and the introduction of a land supply monitoring program.
- Standardising environmental and hazard overlays which currently vary greatly across each local government area.
- Reforming the Planning and Building Acts to reduce referrals to council and empowering Building Certifiers to determine more low-risk projects.

South Australia

Across the four HIA Scorecard themes SA was given an aggregate score of **3 / 5**

South Australia's commitment to boosting housing supply is powerfully demonstrated by its strategic acceleration of land release and development approvals. The recently launched Housing Roadmap introduces bold planning reforms that are set to dramatically cut red tape, including measures projected to deliver houses up to 18 months faster through the radical streamlining of the code amendment and land division processes.

This efficiency drive is further supported by the new planning system's digital efficiency, allowing for online lodgement of applications. Crucially, these reforms are underpinned by the state's largest ever land release, providing the monumental, essential foundation required for unprecedented housing supply.

Key planning reforms and initiatives

Several important planning reforms and initiatives are underway in SA including:

- An improved Land Supply Dashboard for monitoring and tracking residential land.
- A unified, single online portal for development called SA Planning and Design Code.
- A significant forward planning agenda for the largest land release across multiple locations.
- Introduction of a Land Division Assessment panel to streamline the assessment of land subdivision projects involve 20 allotments or greater where councils have not met their statutory timeframes or there have been other assessment delays.
- Proposed amendments to building heights through coordination with the Airport authority to remove outdated building height limits to enable higher density housing.

Further improvements needed

The following matters are identified as priority for SA to realise additional improvements:

- Implementing the remainder of the Housing Road Map including standardised infrastructure requirements for land subdivisions.
- Ensuring any future development contributions framework does not unfairly burden new homebuyers with the financial costs of infrastructure upgrades.
- Reconsidering requirements for affordable housing overlays and new design standards that could increase the cost of new homes. For example, increasing the minimum permitted width of garages.
- Extending the 'accepted development' model that applies to detached homes in Master Planned Neighbourhood and Master Planned Township zones to other areas of the state, to help address resourcing issues experienced in the local government sector.
- Amending the scope of work for planning certifiers to help address resourcing issues experienced in the local government sector and decrease turnaround times for applications.
- Following recent holistic planning reform review strategic objectives and statutory implementation to ensure unintended barriers and constraints to development, such as tree and driveway provisions, are addressed.

Tasmania

Across the four HIA Scorecard themes Tasmania was given an aggregate score of **2 / 5**

Tasmania's planning system remains mediocre, lacking adequate focus on residential land, including identifying strategic development opportunities and provision of well-located higher density housing.

Whilst most of the fundamentals of a planning system are present, it requires refinement, development and further resourcing to deliver on its ambitions. Approval pathways need to be more clearly identified and streamlined. This should be done by cutting red tape and mapping out pathways for faster decisions.

Key planning reforms and initiatives

The Tasmanian Government has announced a number of significant planning reforms aimed at tackling structural barriers to housing delivery and economic growth. These include:

- The proposed introduction of expert Development Assessment Panels for eligible projects is a significant positive step aimed at de-politicising and accelerating the assessment of large, complex housing and infrastructure projects by shifting the decision-making to independent, expert-led panels.
- Abolishing outdated planning legislation (*Local Government Building and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1993*) to streamline subdivision approvals and embed them within the planning scheme.
- Introducing automatic 'deemed approval' rules for housing applications where councils miss deadlines.
- Limiting excessive council Requests for Information to reduce delays.
- Expanding ancillary dwelling size limits from 60m² to 90m².
- Modernising environmental and planning laws (EMPCA and LUPA Act).
- Limit third-party appeals to persons aggrieved by planning decisions.
- Finalising Tasmanian Planning Policies and reviewing State Planning Provisions.

Further Improvements needed

- Require regional land use strategies to have a greater emphasis on the status of residential land at all stages of the development pipeline.
- Provide for higher density housing by developing a targeted medium-density residential code.
- Commit increased resources to address issues with the delayed and maligned PlanBuild Tasmania portal, to cut red tape and provide for single online lodgement and tracking of approvals through the system statewide.
- Pass amending legislation to provide direct state government control over the Kingborough Council's adoption of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme.
- Amend the State Planning Provisions urgently to adopt the 'Improving Residential Standards' recommendations for increased building heights and reduced car parking for townhouses and apartments.
- Back reforms with investment, without adequate resourcing, the ambitious planning reform agenda is less attainable.

Victoria

Across the four HIA Scorecard themes Victoria was given an aggregate score of **2.5 / 5**

Victoria's planning framework is struggling to provide the predictable outcomes necessary for a stable housing market. Despite some recent initiatives aimed at 'deemed to comply' standards' there remains a heavy reliance on discretionary assessments rather than streamlined, code-based approvals which creates a persistent bottleneck. Housing supply is further restricted by the continued slowness in Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) approvals, with delivery rates for new communities falling well behind historical averages. There is little evidence that this will improve in the coming years as technical complexities and infrastructure coordination continue to stall the pipeline. Several promising new initiatives are also at risk by proposal to further increase delivery costs through affordable housing taxes or increased developer contributions.

Key planning reforms and initiatives

There have been several notable planning reforms and initiatives in Victoria over the last 12 months. There are some positive early indications relating changes to streamline townhouses. However, there are still some outstanding implementation issues to resolve which would assist industry in increasing housing supply. Significant focus has been placed on infill development which continues to suffer from commercial viability issues particularly in the high-rise apartment sector. A more balanced approach to the growth which unlocks new greenfield opportunities is vital to ensure sufficient housing supply.

- Townhouse and Low-Rise Code introduced 'deemed to comply' standards to encourage infill housing.
- Amendments completed to reduce the need for planning permits for single dwellings.
- A streamlined process under the Development Facilitation Program for large residential projects with an affordable housing component.
- Pilot Activity Centres to increase density, building heights and design controls aimed at supporting higher density development in specific locations.
- Expanded VicSmart Program (faster assessments) for small subdivisions and second homes.

Further Improvements needed

Key priorities to improve the planning system and development framework in Victoria more broadly include:

- Implementing the new streamlined assessment pathways, changes to restrictive covenants and the easing of notice and objection rules as detailed in the Planning Assessment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill.
- Introduce the Mid-Rise Code
- Partner with industry to improve the Townhouse and Low-Rise Code by amending restrictive site cover and canopy tree provisions.
- Prevent councils from imposing requirements regulated under the NCC.
- Review the 70/30 target for infill and growth area housing based on market demand and affordability outcomes to homebuyers.
- Partner with the Federal Government to resolve environmental delays on land intended for residential purposes.
- Support new greenfield housing opportunities by improving output of new precinct structure plans.
- Abandon proposed new infrastructure charges and inclusionary planning as this will increase the cost of new homes.
- Review and update the functionality and transparency of the Urban Development Program to provide real-time monitoring and reporting of the supply of greenfield residential land in Melbourne's Growth Areas. Currently the Urban Development Program is an annual report on supply of greenfield residential land and the pipeline of major residential redevelopment projects.
- Review the ResCode to codify subjective assessments such as neighbourhood character and make these assessments as objective and transparent.

Western Australia

Across the four HIA Scorecard themes WA was given an aggregate score of **3 / 5**

The WA planning system performs adequately, though is burdened in parts by red tape and lack of strategic assessment. Red tape prohibits a sensible approach towards private planning certification to facilitate faster decisions for various development types. Outside of the Perth and Peel region WA's environmental approvals system needs to be supported with greater strategic assessment to avoid regulatory duplication.

WA home building figures between 2019-2023 indicate a moderate shortfall compared to what is required to be built over the following five years for WA to meet its share of the Housing Accord target. If the elements of the WA planning system identified be reformed this would go some way to address this shortfall.

Improvements as outlined will assist in the provision of shovel ready land to market and to support higher density housing being provided in well located areas.

Key planning reforms and initiatives

The following planning reforms and initiatives have been beneficial for the housing industry by limiting unnecessary planning assessment, speeding up necessary assessments and unlocking new opportunities for homes:

- Implemented the Planning and Development Amendment Act 2023 including:
 - More exemptions for single houses;
 - A permanent Significant Development Pathways; and
 - Development Assessment Panel Reforms.
- Region Scheme Amendments resulting in 130 hectares of land rezoned to urban purposes for future development to support new allotments.

Further improvements needed

The following are priority matters which would improve the planning and development framework in Western Australia:

- Finalise amendments of the Residential Design Code (R-Codes) to streamline infill development and improve the commercial viability of projects through reduced car parking and increased building heights/densities.
- Introduce a regularly updated land and housing supply dashboard.
- Enabling Private Planning Certification, like WA's Building Permit Certification Application process. The pathway for planning determinations could retain Local Government as the decision-maker and offer similar and significant time-saving opportunities for Grouped and Multiple Dwelling developments, along with Single Houses that may be subject to a Design-principles assessment.
- Resourcing a Strategic Assessment for one-stop-shop for environment approvals, similar to WA's Strategic Assessment of the Perth and Peel Region (SAPPR).

Assessment of each state and territories systems against key points of the National Planning Blueprint

THEME 1:

Bringing more shovel ready land to market

Action item	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	HIA Comment
Undertaking planning, zoning, land release and other reforms, such as increasing density, to meet their share of housing supply targets.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	State and Territory governments should regularly report on the number of allotments available at key (seven) stages of the subdivision process. This can equally apply to infill and broad- hectare development, regional and major cities.
Updating state regional and local strategic plans to reflect their share of housing supply targets.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	The planning system should be led by a strategic and spatial planning approach which balances competing priorities and requires planning authorities to take a holistic approach to achieving planning outcomes, recognising a balance between economic, social and environmental factors.

Are they progressing this action?

Yes

● Partially

●

Action item

Undertaking planning, zoning, land release and other reforms, such as increasing density, to meet their share of housing supply targets

Planning, zoning, land release and density targets forms the beginning of a long process to addressing housing supply. Often this process, undertaken by State/Territory or local governments, lacks adequate strategic analysis and context as to the impact this will have in a national setting.

Local and State/Territory government housing supply targets are often considered and discussed only at a relatively small scale. It is paramount that the strategic planning applied when undertaking either of these planning functions becomes more cognisant of and in tune with the national housing agenda.

Recommendations:

- Federal Government to support and encourage State/Territory and local governments to explore the range of planning reforms that will enable each jurisdiction to expeditiously meet their share of housing supply targets.
- Federal Government funding be tied to delivery of meeting specified housing targets under the Housing Accord, with annual payments for meeting and exceeding these targets.
- State/Territory and local governments prioritise and publish a range of planning reform initiatives, including anticipated timeframes, which will assist their share of achieving the Housing Accord targets.

Action item

Updating state, regional and local strategic plans to reflect their share of housing supply targets

Demand for housing is outstripping supply which increases pressure on all parts of the system to deliver housing to meet current and future expected demand. A lack of adequate housing supply leads to housing affordability issues.

The Commitments made by National Cabinet on the National Housing Accord will put downward pressures on housing affordability. It is now critical that the Housing Accord Commitments need to move from being an aspirational objective to ensuring it's delivering on the ground.

Future housing supply and delivery and land releases need to be mapped against future population, migration and immigration levels.

The housing supply commitments under the Accord need to not only be delivered for a one-off five-year period but similar benchmarks need to be set for all future housing targets and commitments.

Recommendations:

- State/Territory governments be required to update and release their respective state, regional and local strategic plans to reflect their share of housing supply targets.
- State/Territory governments be required to report on benchmarking these land releases annually against these strategic plans throughout the life of the Housing Accord (five years).
- As a priority a long-term national agreement to land supply must be developed.
- A national dashboard for land and housing supply should be created to effectively monitor current activity and future growth.
- A national settlement strategy should be developed, and infrastructure should be appropriately funded to support housing in both metropolitan and regional areas.
- A suitable Federal Government agency, such as Housing Australia, must be tasked with the authority and responsibility to develop a mandatory strategic plans reporting process.
- Prioritise the establishment of new bilateral agreements, strategic assessments and bio-regional plans in all major growth areas across Australia.
- The reporting process must require all State/Territory governments to submit on a periodic basis the status of their strategic plan. The strategic plan must be identified with data and details provided regarding land and housing supply and reporting to be made publicly available.

THEME 2:

Cut red tape

Action item	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	HIA Comment
Reforms to support the rapid delivery of social and affordable housing.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	All State/Territory governments have too varying degree initiatives to address this action. Primarily these reforms are represented in Housing Statements (or similar) and require greater alignment with the planning system to have tangible results
Reforms to address barriers to the timely issuing of development approvals.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	In many instances reforms aimed at reducing barriers are undertaken on an ad hoc basis, typically on a council-by-council basis, and seldom have any significant impact. State/ Territory governments would benefit from a more holistic approach to reform to ensure greater benefits are achieved.

Are they progressing this action?

Yes

● Partially

●

Action item:

Reforms to support the rapid delivery of social and affordable housing

Most State/Territory governments already have policy and or planning controls in place to facilitate social and affordable housing in nominated locations. Typically, these measures remove common planning barriers and constraints to provide a smoother approvals pathway and or offer development bonuses which vary depending on the proportion of social or affordable housing being provided.

At times though these measures may not be satisfactory or favourable to a developer as they do not factor in many of the other commercial and economic factors that need to be considered.

Recommendations:

In conjunction with the private sector State/Territory governments be encouraged to continue developing and applying specific planning instruments to support the rapid delivery of social and affordable housing more efficiently, such as:

- Increasing land supply for affordable housing.
- Voluntary supply of affordable housing in exchange for negotiated development bonuses.
- Innovative funding mechanisms.
- Increasing the opportunity for 'joint venture' partnerships.
- Provision of tax concessions for developers.

Implementation:

- Disallow notification requirements (and appeal rights), call in requirements and consideration of secondary planning controls, such as neighbourhood character, where a nominated percentage of social and affordable housing is being delivered.
- Substantially reduce statutory decision-making timeframes for developments that comply with planning requirements.
- Discourage council's making decisions based on subjective design interpretation.

Action item

Reforms to address barriers to the timely issuing of development approvals

Addressing barriers and constraints to reduce decision making timeframes requires a coordinated approach involving ground truthing prior to implementation.

Intended benefits and outcomes must be identified. It is important industry is engaged to assist in determining if the intention of the proposed reforms will in reality lead to significant improvements to the timely issuing of development approvals.

It is also equally important, depending on the scale of reform, appropriate transition and review mechanisms are included. Review mechanisms should allow the reform to be reversed should implementation demonstrate the reform is not delivering on the intended benefits and outcomes.

Recommendations:

- State/Territory governments be requested to consider methods to fast track the assessment and determination process.
- Allowing private planning practitioners to certify elements of the applications process – such as; Pre Lodgement Endorsement or Assessment to Report Stage.
- Application categories be national standardised, with varying decision-making timeframes tailored to the application category.
- Clearly delineate planning approval requirements from building approval requirements in all states and territories and ensure technical building rules are removed from any form of planning approvals assessments.
- Identify and remove all technical design elements any form of planning approvals assessments. As this duplication is one of the many elements that leads to protracted decision-making timeframes and increased costs and uncertainty for approvals.
- Ensure the planning approvals system is not used as a means to provide all information and answers regarding a development proposal, other approval systems along the approvals continuum can be utilised.

THEME 3:

Higher density housing

Action item	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	HIA Comment
Addressing barriers to subdivision for appropriate medium density	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	It is important that superfluous planning controls must be removed and for planning systems to be contemporary and up-to-date
Promoting medium and high-density housing in well located areas	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	To varying degrees all states, have strategies promoting density requirements in particular locations to achieve desired planning outcomes.

Are they progressing this action?

Yes

● Partially

●

Action items:

- Addressing barriers to subdivision for appropriate medium density housing
- Promoting medium and high-density housing in well located areas close to existing public transport connections, amenities and employment

All capital cities throughout Australia have a Metropolitan strategy, most strategies nominate a required ratio of urban infill to broad-hectare development to satisfy population projections.

However, in some cases these strategies are not closely monitored, and the nominated ratio is not being met.

Recommendations:

- State/Territory governments closely monitor their respective metropolitan strategy.
- State/Territory governments require local governments to ambitiously nominate areas for development intensification.
- State/Territory governments implement periodic review processes (including industry consultation) of their respective metropolitan strategies.
- State/Territory government agencies engage and collaborate with local government to advise and facilitate master planning, precinct structure planning etc.
- Ambitious density requirements and dwelling types to be nominated at the strategic planning stage with minimal notification requirements and or appeal rights permitted as part of the development approval process.
- Significantly reduced decision-making timeframes for developments that comply with development approval requirements.
- The Federal Government should create a model code for medium density housing and incentivise state and local governments to adopt with as of right approvals.
- All States and Territories to implement a medium density housing code to provide as of right approvals.
- Provide fast tracked approvals for duplexes, triplexes and quadplexes to address the missing middle construction class and support greater urban consolidation.

THEME 4:

Faster Decisions

Action item	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	HIA Comment
Streamlining approval pathways, including strengthened 'call in powers.'	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	There are various means to streamline approval pathways. Firstly, any regulatory duplication must be avoided and reduced. Secondly, superfluous planning controls must be removed.
Prioritising planning amendments to support diverse housing outcomes across a range of areas	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Prioritising planning amendments/ applications is often a positive step toward streamlining planning approvals subject to suitable criteria being applied.
Adequately resourcing built environmental professionals, including planners, in local government.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	In many cases human resourcing appears adequate in most government sectors. It is the skillset, particularly local government, which requires review. Often the skillset of a local government planning (including elected representatives / Councillors) needs to be developed and broadened to fully understand and comprehend where regulatory duplication is taking place and the economic impact of their assessment and decision

Are they progressing this action?

Yes

● Partially

●

Action items:

- Streamlining approval pathways, including strengthened 'call in powers' and empowering building certifiers/surveyors and private planning consultants to determine more housing projects.
- Prioritising planning amendments to support diverse housing across a range of areas e.g., by addressing barriers to subdivision for appropriate medium density housing

State/Territory and local governments often implement various methods of reactive planning reform aimed at introducing efficiencies into the planning decision-making process.

In many instances these reforms are undertaken in isolation to address a particular barrier or constraint and are not considered holistically or with proper regard for process issues that may arise once implemented.

When streamlining planning approvals all relevant and inter-related parts of the planning system must be considered, including rigorous testing when proposed as to what might be likely unintended outcomes when implemented.

Recommendations:

- State/Territory governments be required to explore and report on opportunities for genuine planning reform that must clearly demonstrate a reduction of barriers and constraints to planning decision making.
- Consider alternative methods of decision making – such as development assessment panels, with professional and diverse representation.
- Include greater use of planning controls, such as nominating priority development areas for medium density housing.
- Develop national guidelines for State/Territory Ministers and local Councillors (Deed of Delegation) ability to 'call in' planning applications (including amendments to Planning schemes). Including when and in what circumstances an application may be 'called in', length of time to assess and determine the application and appeal rights for the applicant.

Action item:

- Adequately resourcing built environmental professionals, including planners, in local governments.

Built environment professionals, particularly local government planning staff are often burdened with a high administrative workload. Coupled with this is the need to engage with a broad range of associated technical disciplines to assess and determine an application.

Whilst it appears most government agencies dealing with the built environment, are well resourced in terms of numbers it is questionable whether the required on-the-job skill set is being adequately catered for.

There is a role to be played here between government, industry and academia. Collectively it is important to ascertain whether the inefficiencies in the planning system are largely due to resourcing or other factors such as a skills gap.

Recommendations:

- State/Territory governments be required to actively engage with industry, local government, and universities to better understand skill sets, resourcing needs and inter-disciplinary requirements of the residential built environment industry.
- Create job pathways and incentivise to bring more planners into system.
- Empower private certification of planning/delegated assessments to fast-track assessments to ease burden on councils.
- Develop pattern book designs to streamline and fast-track approvals to ease burden on councils and ensure these designs are cost effective and not overly prescriptive nor restrictive in housing designs.
- State/Territory governments to have 'flying squads' to proactively assist local governments avoid developing an application backlog that becomes burdensome and difficult to clear.
- Allowing private planning practitioners to certify elements of the applications process – such as Pre-Lodgement Endorsement or Assessment to Report Stage.
- Better resource and streamline processes at State/Territory appeal tribunals.

You're in
good hands

If you would like to know more about HIA Planning
Blueprint Scorecard contact us on **1300 650 620**

