

Tasman Council

Submission on the Draft Amendment 01-2026 – State Planning Provisions – Secondary Residences

Submitted by: Tasman Council (Tasmania)

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Date:

Tasman Council welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on Draft Amendment 01-2026 of the State Planning Provisions and strongly supports the proposed amendments to increase the maximum gross floor area of secondary residences from 60 square metres to 90 square metres, together with the associated amendments intended to clarify the operation of the planning provisions.

Council considers the proposed amendment to be a practical, proportionate and forward-looking response to the housing challenges currently facing Tasmania. It provides greater flexibility for property owners while maintaining the fundamental planning principle that a secondary residence remains ancillary to the principal dwelling and subject to existing planning controls.

For rural municipalities such as Tasman, the current 60 square metre limitation can unnecessarily constrain the functionality and usability of secondary residences. While suitable for a compact studio or one-bedroom dwelling, it often limits the ability to provide accommodation appropriate for couples, carers, ageing parents, young families or essential workers. Increasing the allowable size to 90 square metres would enable more practical and liveable layouts, including functional two-bedroom configurations and designs that better accommodate accessibility requirements for older residents and people with disabilities.

Council believes the amendment aligns strongly with broader State and local policy objectives aimed at increasing housing diversity, improving affordability and making better use of existing residential land and infrastructure. Rather than requiring new subdivisions or urban expansion, the proposal facilitates incremental growth within established communities and enables existing properties to contribute to addressing housing demand. Importantly, the amendment is also consistent with the objectives of the Tasmanian

Planning Policies by promoting efficient settlement patterns, supporting housing supply and diversity, and encouraging sustainable use of land and existing infrastructure. It recognises changing demographic trends, including smaller household sizes, an ageing population, increased demand for multigenerational living arrangements and the need for more flexible housing solutions that enable people to remain connected to their families and communities.

The Tasman municipality has approximately 2,700 permanent residents, with the population increasing to around 9,000 people during peak holiday periods. In addition, the municipality welcomes well over 500,000 visitors each year, placing additional pressure on local accommodation and increasing demand for workforce housing. Council is aware that employers across both the public and private sectors continue to experience challenges in attracting and retaining staff due, in part, to limited housing availability.

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Although it is difficult to precisely quantify the number of additional secondary residences that may be developed as a result of the proposed amendment, even modest uptake could have meaningful benefits. For example, if only 20 properties within the municipality were to construct or expand a secondary residence due to the increased flexibility, this could accommodate dozens of additional residents without requiring significant subdivision or costly new infrastructure. Across Tasmania, the cumulative impact of similar incremental development has the potential to make a valuable contribution to increasing housing supply.

Council also notes that larger secondary residences would provide significant social benefits by supporting:

- ageing in place and allowing older residents to remain within their communities while living independently;
- multigenerational living arrangements that reflect changing family structures;
- accommodation for carers and support persons;
- housing opportunities for key workers and local employees;
- greater housing choice for residents seeking alternatives to traditional detached housing; and
- improved opportunities for people with disabilities or changing mobility needs through more functional dwelling layouts.

Tasman Council also supports the associated amendments that clarify the planning treatment of secondary residences. In particular, Council welcomes measures that provide greater certainty regarding the planning status of a secondary residence and its relationship to the primary dwelling, as these changes will improve consistency in interpretation and administration across planning authorities.

Council further supports the clarification that a dedicated additional parking space is not required for a secondary residence. This is particularly appropriate in rural municipalities such as Tasman, where many properties have ample on-site parking and manoeuvring areas. Requiring additional dedicated parking in these circumstances could impose unnecessary constraints without delivering corresponding planning or community benefits. Importantly, the proposed amendment does not diminish existing planning safeguards.

Matters such as wastewater management, bushfire risk, environmental protection, neighbourhood amenity, site constraints, and infrastructure servicing will continue to be considered through the existing planning framework and, where applicable, development assessment processes. The amendment, therefore, provides additional flexibility while preserving the robust assessment mechanisms necessary to ensure appropriate development outcomes.

Council also supports the drafting amendments intended to improve clarity and consistency in the application of the planning provisions. Greater certainty for applicants, planning authorities and practitioners should reduce ambiguity, streamline assessment processes and improve confidence in the planning system.

From an economic perspective, the proposal has the potential to encourage additional private investment in housing, stimulate local construction activity and provide new

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accommodation options at relatively low public cost. Unlike major residential developments, secondary residences can generally be delivered relatively quickly, utilise existing infrastructure and services, and avoid the substantial costs associated with extending public infrastructure into new development areas.

Tasman Council considers that secondary residences represent one of the lowest-impact, highest-value forms of housing intensification available within the planning system. They increase housing capacity within established residential areas by making more efficient use of existing land and infrastructure while generally preserving neighbourhood character and avoiding the need for significant new public investment. Compared with broad rezoning initiatives or greenfield development, secondary residences can often be delivered more rapidly, with fewer environmental impacts and at substantially lower cost.

In this respect, the proposed amendment offers a balanced and pragmatic response to Tasmania's housing challenges. It supports gradual and sustainable growth while respecting local character, maintaining appropriate planning oversight and providing communities with greater flexibility to respond to changing housing needs.

Conclusion

Tasman Council strongly supports Draft Amendment 01-2026 and encourages the Tasmanian Planning Commission to progress the amendment.

The proposal strikes an appropriate balance between increasing housing choice and maintaining sound planning outcomes. It will deliver tangible social, economic and community benefits by supporting ageing in place, multigenerational living, workforce participation and greater housing diversity while retaining the planning safeguards necessary to protect environmental values, amenity and infrastructure.

By clarifying the operation of the provisions, reducing unnecessary regulatory barriers and increasing the maximum size of secondary residences to 90 square metres, the amendment will enable more practical and functional housing outcomes across Tasmania.

At a time when the State continues to face housing affordability and supply challenges, secondary residences provide one of the most efficient means of delivering additional housing within existing communities. They offer a scalable, cost-effective and low-impact solution that makes better use of established infrastructure and existing residential land.

For these reasons, Tasman Council respectfully submits that Draft Amendment 01-2026 is a sensible, evidence-based reform that will deliver lasting benefits for communities across Tasmania and should be adopted.

Kind regards,



Cr Rod Macdonald
Mayor