



Department of Planning,
Lands and Heritage



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DRAFT DC Policy 2.5

Special Residential zones

DRAFT Development Control Policy 2.5 Special Residential zones

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Background notes

1. In the past, Special Residential zones have been applied in local planning schemes in Western Australia with generally the following objectives:
 - to provide for lot sizes in the range of 2,000 square metres and 1 hectare;
 - to ensure development is sited and designed to achieve an integrated and harmonious character; and
 - to set aside areas where the retention of vegetation and landform or other features which distinguish the land, warrant a larger residential lot size than that expected in a standard residential zone.
2. This policy also relates to Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) policy, *State Planning Policy 2.5: Rural Planning*, *State Planning Policy 3: Urban Growth and Settlement* and Development Control policies (DCP) including:
 - DCP 1.1 – Subdivision of land - general principles
 - DCP 2.2 – Residential subdivision
 - DCP 2.3 – Public open space in residential areas

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In order to accommodate the various lifestyle requirements of all sections of the community, the WAPC is committed to the provision of a wide range of lot sizes.
- 1.2 In the past, Special Residential zones were created in local planning schemes to allow for lots of a size which offered a style of spacious living at densities lower than those characteristic of traditional single residential developments but higher than those found in Rural Residential zones.
- 1.3 This type of residential development, however, can have a range of negative impacts including potential conflicts with other land uses and rural resources such as water catchments, basic raw materials, conservation areas and significant landscapes. It also places pressures on State and local governments for services and infrastructure which are difficult to provide economically because of the dispersed pattern of subdivision. In the Perth and Peel regions and around cities and towns in the regions, such residential development can also limit opportunities for future urban development by fragmenting land, and making land assembly and the provision of services more difficult and costly.

- 1.4 Consequently, in recent times it has become evident that this type of residential development should only be supported on land that is zoned 'Urban' in a regional scheme and 'Residential' with a relevant Residential Code in a local planning scheme and identified for this purpose in a local planning strategy. Where there are existing zones and provisions in local planning schemes that facilitate this type of residential development, it needs to be located and designed in a sustainable way which is integrated with the overall pattern of settlement in the locality.

2. Policy objectives

- To provide for the creation of lots of between 2,000 square metres and one hectare in suitable locations.
- To ensure that the use and development of such lots are subject to appropriate standards and controls.
- To protect the character and amenity of adjacent rural areas.



3. Policy measures

3.1 Locational requirements

3.1.1 There is a presumption against planning for this type of residential land use and development because Special Residential zones are less efficient in both the use of land and utilisation of services when compared with conventional residential subdivisions.

3.1.2 In its consideration of a proposal, the WAPC will have regard for the following, although the list is not exhaustive and in particular locations other factors may be equally relevant.

- a) While Special Residential zones represent an intermediate zoning between residential and rural living, the WAPC considers that they are essentially residential. Such zones should be adjacent to existing or planned residential areas and have good access to schools, community facilities and other urban services.
- b) Special Residential zones should avoid good agricultural land, state forests and water catchment areas, and should not prejudice important mineral or basic raw material deposits.

c) Landscape worthy of preservation and/or which is clearly visible from roads of regional or national importance should be avoided.

d) Protection and retention of topographical features of the land (for example, hilly or undulating), distinct attractions such as creeks or water features, distant views or fine trees will be carefully considered.

e) Cadastral information so that, in areas of existing small lots, Special Residential zones may rationalise a poor existing layout and provide for road access where this is inadequate.

f) Advice from Main Roads WA will be considered where the subject land is adjacent to highways, main roads and proposed bypasses. Such areas should be avoided, and planned for in structure plans.

In the Metropolitan Region Scheme, Peel Region Scheme and Greater Bunbury Region Scheme, Special Residential zones will generally only be supported for land which is zoned Urban in these schemes. In local planning schemes such land will need to be zoned Residential and be supported by an endorsed local planning strategy.

3.2 Design and servicing requirements

3.2.1 Lots in Special Residential zones should have a range of sizes between 2,000 square metres and one hectare, related to the nature and purpose of the particular zone. The lower lot size generally equates to the lower density range provided for in residential subdivisions, while the larger lot size equates to the minimum acceptable to the WAPC in Rural Residential zones where reticulated water is provided. The relevant Residential Design Codes are those up to R 5.

3.2.2 The lot sizes selected for a Special Residential zone should reflect the topographical and environmental characteristics of the land concerned. A variety of lot sizes should be provided.

3.2.3 Design and servicing considerations which will be applied to Special Residential zones are as follows:

- a) Because they are essentially residential, the WAPC considers that Special Residential zones should be provided with the type and standard of services typical of normal Residential zones. In particular, reticulated water will be required as a condition of subdivision approval. Provided that the land is



- suitable for on-site effluent disposal, connection to a reticulated sewerage system may not be required.
- b) Because of their spacious character and large lot sizes, the WAPC does not specify a standard open space contribution for Special Residential zones. Land for public open space will be required, however, when the provision of recreational open space is considered desirable or when it can include an important topographical feature such as a creek, lake or group of trees which is to be retained as a recreational amenity for residents of the subdivision and the district as a whole.
 - c) Road networks should take account access and egress for fire management, the topography, be unobtrusive, and avoid long culs-de-sacs. Consideration should be given to the use of road networks as strategic firebreaks.
 - d) Lots should be designed to capitalise on the topography of the area and to achieve the best possible amenity by avoiding unnecessary regimentation in relation to size and design.
 - e) As far as practicable, direct access to a major road should not be permitted and new subdivisions should be designed so that individual lot access is from minor roads.
- Where access is proposed to a main road, advice from Main Roads should be sought. Development should be set back an adequate distance from the road reserve – this is generally governed within the scheme provisions.
- f) Subdivisions for Special Residential zones may result in the need to widen main roads. Provision should be made for such widening in the design since in some instances it may be required as a condition of subdivision.
 - g) Building setbacks, particularly to main frontage and subdivisional roads, should be varied to create a more interesting and spacious environment.
 - h) The WAPC will normally require the provision of underground power to lots within Special Residential zones. Where alternative power sources are proposed, the WAPC may agree not to impose a reticulated underground power condition where the service provider has submitted evidence as to the availability of reticulated supply and a notice is attached to the titles of the affected lots to forewarn prospective purchasers of the circumstances under which reticulated power would be made available.

4. Implementation provisions

- 4.1 The development of a Special Residential zone should be controlled through provisions contained in a local planning scheme or scheme amendment, which in general terms should provide the following:
 - a) that not more than one single dwelling house per lot shall be erected;
 - b) that buildings should be set back from the road by a specified minimum distance;
 - c) that permitted uses should be confined to those which are consistent with maintaining the amenity of the residential environment; and
 - d) that once a Special Residential zone subdivision has been established, further subdivision of lots created will not occur.
- 4.2 Structure plans may be required by the WAPC for the Special Residential zone as provided for in Schedule 2 (Deemed provisions), clauses 15 and 16 of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*.



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- 4.3 Special Residential zones should be considered to be the maximum density to which the land should be put. Further subdivision will not, in general, be approved by the WAPC unless the land is rezoned for residential purposes and all essential services are provided.
- 4.4 In its consideration of applications for the subdivision of land within a Special Residential zone, the WAPC will have regard for the relevant provisions of the local planning scheme under which the land is zoned. Accordingly, it will condition an approval in such a way as to give effect to these provisions.