

TOWNHOUSE AND LOW-RISE CODE GUIDE FOR RESIDENTS



WHAT IS THE TOWNHOUSE AND LOW-RISE CODE?

The Townhouse and Low-Rise Code is the name of the new code that has replaced ResCode.

On 6 March 2025, the Minister for Planning, amended all Victorian planning schemes, via amendment VC267, to replace the existing Clause 55 (ResCode) with the new [Clause 55](#) (known as the Townhouse and Low-Rise Code).

Any planning permit application for two or more dwellings up to and including three storeys in a residential and mixed use zone, lodged (or amended) on or after 6 March 2025, must be assessed against the new Code.

The biggest difference with the new Townhouse and Low-Rise Code is it has 'deemed to comply' standards. This means, if the standard is met, then the objective is automatically met.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?

If you have concerns with the proposed planning permit application, you can still lodge an objection to this application. See our [Guidance on making an effective planning application submission](#).

But please be aware, that when a standard is met, Council is no longer allowed to consider any other policy or decision guideline in the planning scheme and/or any specified matters under s60 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Also, where all the standards are met (and there are no overlays or other permit triggers), we have been advised by the state government that we cannot refuse the application. Therefore, a planning permit would be issued. This means there is no longer third-party rights of appeal (objector appeal) to the Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

WHAT IS DIFFERENT IN THE NEW CODE?

- Neighbourhood character is assessed differently. If the standard for street setback (B2-1), building height (B2-2), side and rear setbacks (B2-3), walls on boundary (B2-4), site coverage (B2-5), access (B2-6), tree canopy (B2-7) and front fence (B2-8) are met, then the application satisfies the neighbourhood character.
- Street setback (B2-1) – no longer the average of the two adjoining dwellings. It is now the shorter setback of an adjoining dwelling or 6 metres, which is lesser.
- Site coverage (B2-5) – now 65% in a General Residential Zone and 70% in Residential Growth and Mixed Use Zones.
- Private open space (B3-5) – now reduced from 40m² for each dwelling to 25m² at ground level for each dwelling.
- Overshadowing secluded open space (B4-3) – reduces allowable overshadowing to 50% or 25m² with a minimum dimension of 3m, whichever is the lesser area, for a minimum of five hours between 9am and 3pm on 22 September.
- Overlooking (B4-4) – under this standard a habitable room no longer includes a bedroom. So, we cannot consider overlooking from a proposed bedroom into neighbouring secluded open space or habitable rooms (including bedrooms).
- Overshadowing domestic solar energy systems (B5-2) – a new standard to protect existing rooftop solar from overshadowing.
- There are various new ESD standards relating to rooftop solar energy generation (B5-3), waste and recycling (B5-5) and natural ventilation (B3-10).