



# Public Works



## How it's relevant to the Housing Authority/ Department of Communities



### What are public works?

Public works include government work on sewerage, public buildings, public hospitals and public housing. They also include work undertaken by a State Government department or local government authority (LGA) authorised by an Act (such as the Housing Act 1980). A full list of public works is included in the Public Works Act 1902.

### What public works do the Housing Authority provide?

The Housing Authority is the statutory body which provides public housing on behalf of the Department of Communities (Communities).

Communities works in partnership with the private, government and not-for-profit sectors to deliver housing in Perth, and in Western Australia's regional and remote locations.

When the Housing Authority delivers public housing, it does so in accordance with:

- the Housing Act 1980, which provides powers and functions to the Housing Authority
- the Public Works Act 1902, which was amended in 2009 to include public housing as a public work.

The Housing Authority delivers a wide range of dwelling types including single houses, grouped dwellings (villas and townhouses), multiple dwellings (maisonettes, walk-up apartments and multi-storey apartments) and residential buildings (including refuges from domestic violence and accommodation for people with disability).

### Why are Housing Authority public works important?

The Housing Authority provides a range of public housing including:

- crisis and emergency accommodation services
- social housing that offers subsidised rental accommodation to low-to-moderate incomes
- community housing providing subsidised accommodation for individuals with high or complex needs such as people with disability or compromised health.



## What approvals are required for public housing works?

### Building permit

All public housing requires a valid building permit.

### Development (planning) approval

Public works do not require approval under a local planning scheme but do require approval under a region scheme (unless specifically exempt). Region schemes include the Metropolitan, Peel and Greater Bunbury region schemes.

Within region scheme areas, public housing developments are approved either by the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC), a Development Assessment Panel or by the Housing Authority under delegation from the WAPC.

The Housing Authority can approve development applications for public housing for a maximum of 10 dwellings, no higher than two storeys and strictly in compliance with the applicable local planning scheme. If a proposal does not meet the above criteria, approval from the WAPC or a Development Assessment Panel is required. Strict compliance with the local planning scheme means conforming with the scheme provisions and WA Residential Design Codes (R-codes) deemed-to-comply or design principle standards.

Public works proposals for housing are referred to the LGA for comment prior to a decision being made. This is required by section 6 of the Planning and Development Act 2005.

Further information is contained within Planning Bulletin 94 – Approval requirements for public works and development by public authorities.

## This infographic shows the process for Housing Authority development applications:



All development applications are subject to an internal design review process on design quality and functionality before the application is formally lodged, assessed and approved. A team of qualified town planners and urban designers is involved in assessing all applications against all planning requirements.

## Can I provide feedback on a public works proposal?

Yes, community members can provide feedback on a proposal where an LGA (or the Housing Authority) seeks public comment on the proposed development, in line with local planning scheme or R-codes requirements.

## For more information

- Housing Act 1980
- Public Works Act 1902
- Planning and Development Act 2005
- Planning Bulletin 94
- Department of Communities website

## Enquiries

Contact your local government authority/council.