




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

Record of Proceedings, 11 May 2022

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Social and Affordable Housing; HomeBuilder

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.43 am): The Palaszczuk Labor government understands the needs of Queenslanders in our rapidly growing state. We develop plans for the infrastructure Queenslanders need and we deliver on those plans. That is why in last year's budget our government announced ongoing funding to develop more social and affordable housing for Queenslanders including our \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund. Investment returns on the \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund will create an ongoing source of funding, which will be delivered through partnerships with property developers and community housing providers. Those returns will enable our government to deliver an ongoing pipeline of housing projects. Last week I was delighted to announce the first two along with the Minister for Housing and the member for Redcliffe. By working with the Brisbane Housing Company we will deliver 118 new affordable and social homes in Redcliffe and Chermside. This is an announcement that I know is also welcomed by the member for Stafford.

These demonstration projects under the Housing Investment Fund are just one element of the Palaszczuk Labor government's comprehensive plan to deliver the largest single, concentrated investment in social and affordable housing in Queensland's history. It is just the start, with many more projects to come working with partners like the Brisbane Housing Company, which was established by the then Beattie Labor government some two decades ago. It complements the work we are doing to bring on more affordable build-to-rent projects, like the units currently under construction for Frasers Property's Brunswick & Co. build-to-rent development in the Valley, supported by our government and the member for McConnel.

Another program designed to get more Queenslanders into a home is HomeBuilder. Members will be aware that this federal government program is administered by the states. As Scott Morrison might say, 'That's not my job.' Unfortunately, Scott Morrison did a bad job of designing the program. Because he did not work closely with the states, Scott Morrison ended up introducing a definition of 'new home' that was contrary to the longstanding and well-understood arrangements that apply for first home owners grants. Scott Morrison's approach, along with restrictive guidance from the federal government, meant that the Queensland Revenue Office was required to refuse some applications on the basis that work had commenced prior to the start of the program. This affected around 200 of 29,000 applicants, who have been left in the lurch by these federal rules.

With the Assistant Minister for Treasury, the member for Jordan, we have worked with industry bodies including the Property Council of Australia and the UDIA to push the federal government to fix their mistake. I am pleased to announce today that, after that relentless advocacy, the Commonwealth has now relaxed its guidance to allow the bulk of these rejected applications to be approved. That eligibility will also apply to other relevant applicants who may have applications pending. The Queensland Revenue Office will be writing to those applicants from this week to inform them that their cases are being reviewed.

As I indicated, this whole problem could have been avoided had Scott Morrison simply applied the definition of 'new home' that everyone has used for years for first home owner grant schemes. Once again, just like with flood support, Scott Morrison's failure to work collaboratively has led to unnecessary heartache for ordinary Queenslanders. In closing, I particularly recognise those MPs who raised this matter with me, including the members for Algeria, Barron River, Bundamba, Capalaba, Cooper, Hervey Bay, Mansfield, Mount Ommaney, Mulgrave, Nicklin, Noosa, Nudgee, Redlands, Stafford and Thuringowa.