

Housing Activity Report 2026

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July 2026



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The report details housing activity across the Sorell LGA.

The population of the Sorell LGA has the fastest rate of growth of any Tasmanian LGA. That growth is enabled by a supply of reasonably affordable houses and land, proximity to the coast, natural areas and Greater Hobart, access to employment and services and the range of amenties and services in each town. The rate of growth has been constant for the past 20 years and is projected to remain so for the next 20 years.

Understanding housing activity is key to maintaining sufificent land supply. Releasing land for housing requires strategic identification, infrastructure alignment, rezoning, subdivision and builders. The process is long. The supply of land is less today than it once was and is one of a range of factors driving declining housing affordability in Sorell and across Tasmania.

Data in this report includes planning and building approvals for dwelling units, including single and multiple dwellings. Building approvals will differ from planning approvals as not all planning approvals proceed and as there may be lagged between planning approval and building commencement. Building approvals are the most accurate available* data on housing activity.

Subdivision activity including number of lots approved and number of lots 'sealed'. There is a time lagged between subdivision approval, subdivision construction and the 'sealing' of lots which enables titles to be issued and lots released to market. The data presented on the number of lots sealed will contain inaccuracies for years prior to 2025-2026 as this was not formally recorded.

- Number and type of planning applications made.
- Planning appeals
- Planning Scheme Amendments
- Policy reviews and initiatives for the prior 12 months.

*Note: Housing occupancy or completion data is not currently available, although it is the preferred metric for analysis of actual housing activity as it represents the final product.



Housing Activity

Chart 1 shows planning and building approvals for the number of individual housing units across the LGA. The planning approvals show both the approval of single dwellings (light green) as well as the number of housing units in multiple dwelling projects (dark green). Approvals peaked in 2021 but remain strong and consistent across the timeframe.

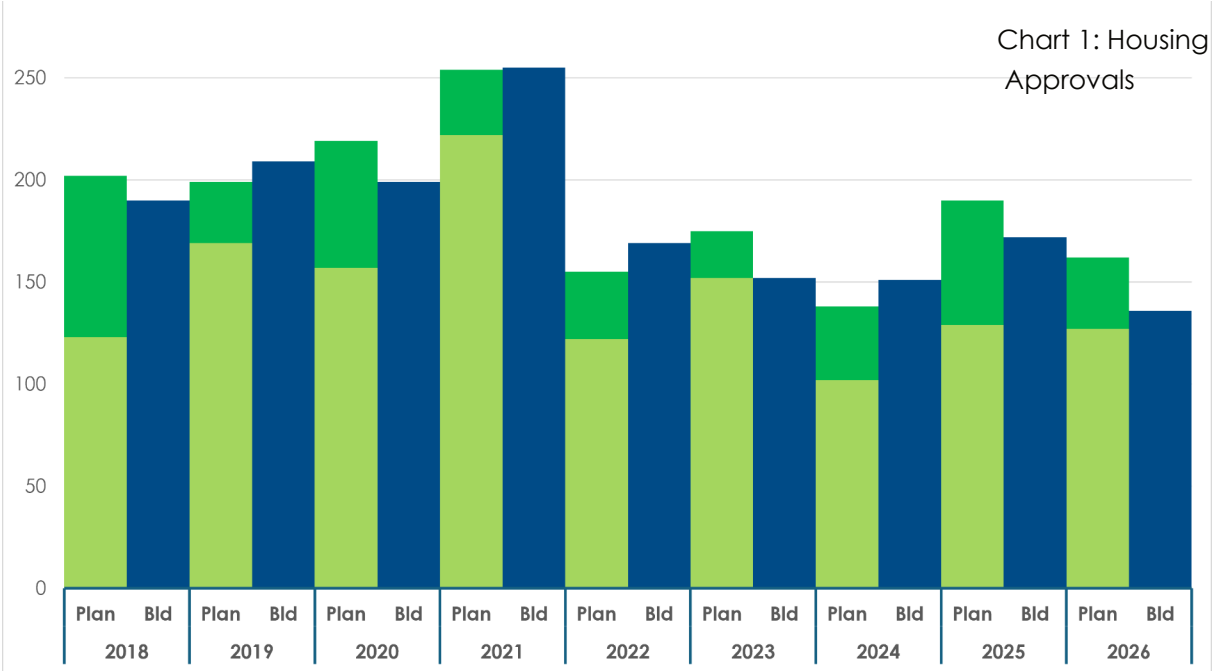


Chart 1: Housing Approvals

Chart 2 shows building approvals by Sorell, Midway Point, Southern Beaches and all other areas. Noticably, approvals in the Southern Beaches have reduced over time while others remain consistent, albeit is year-to-year variation. Most dwellings are constructed in Sorell and the rate is relatively consistent over time, averaging 80 per year over the period.

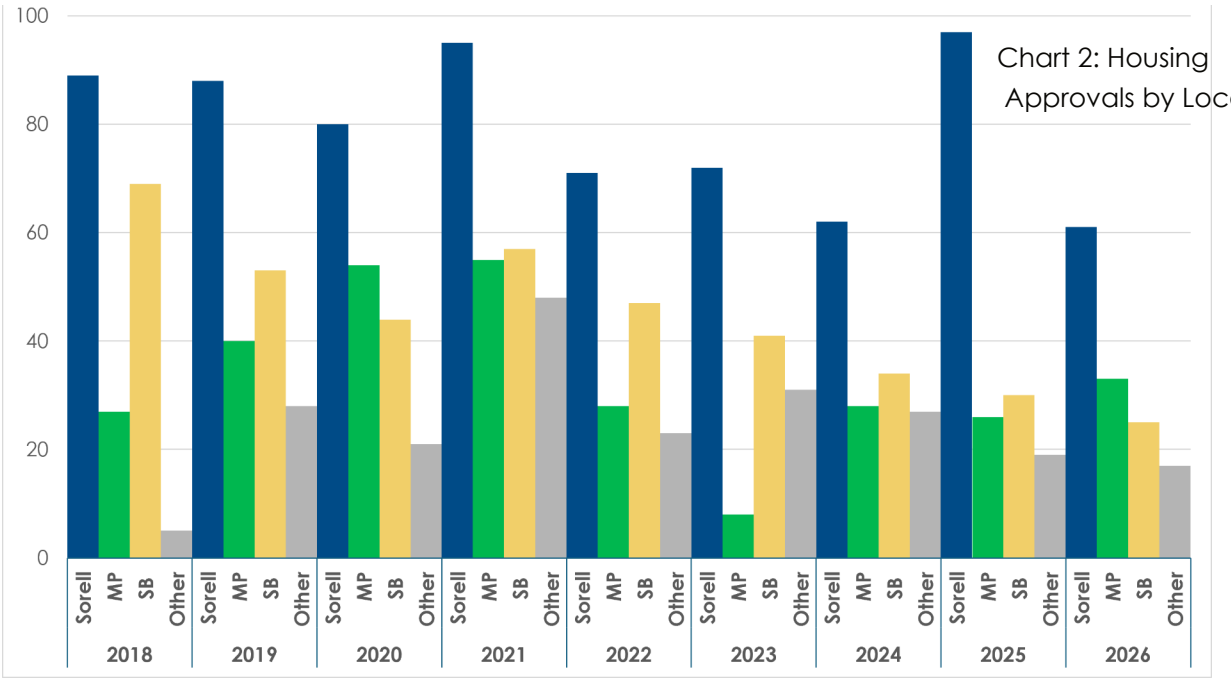


Chart 2: Housing Approvals by Locality

Chart 3 shows secondary residence buidling approvals. Secondary residences (i.e., Granny flats) are self-contained structures in addition to a 60m^2 footprint. Activity is minimal although it has increased under Tasmanian Government reforms and incentives.

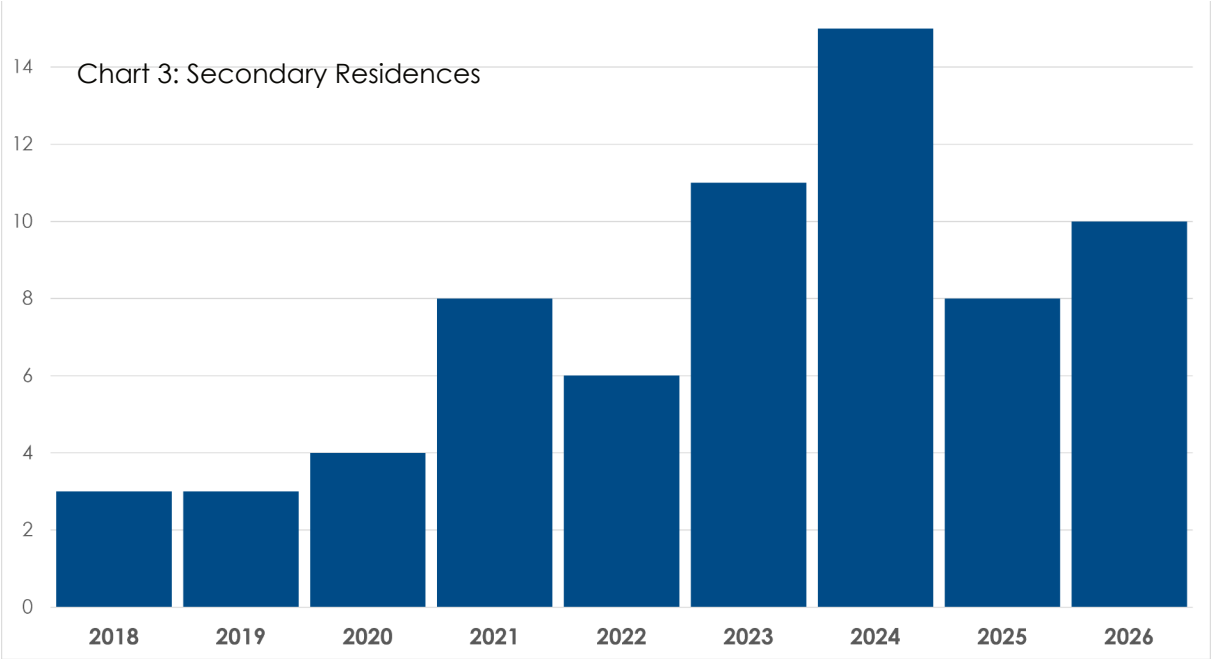




Chart 4 shows the number of lot approvals overall and by the General Residential Zone (GRZ), the Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ), the Rural Living Zone (RLZ) and all other zones.

It is clear that lot approvals are highly variable with large numbers reflecting approvals of large estates that are released over time into the market.

In 2026 FY, a modest number of lots were approved with a increasing foucs in the GRZ relatively to very low numbers in 2023 and 2025.

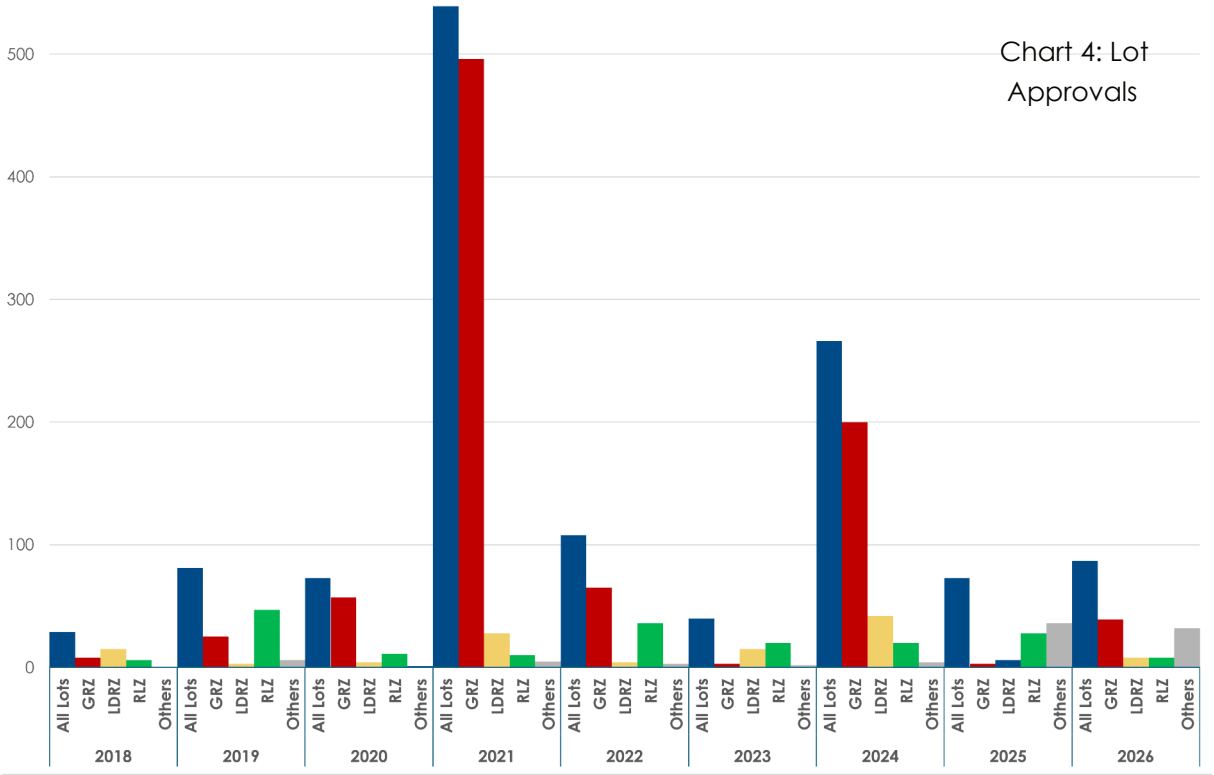


Chart 4: Lot Approvals

Chart 5 shows the number of lots sealed per financial year. For 2026, 123 lots were sealed of which 96 where in the General Residential Zone, 5 in the Low Density Residential Zone, 20 in the Rural Living Zone and 2 in all other zones.

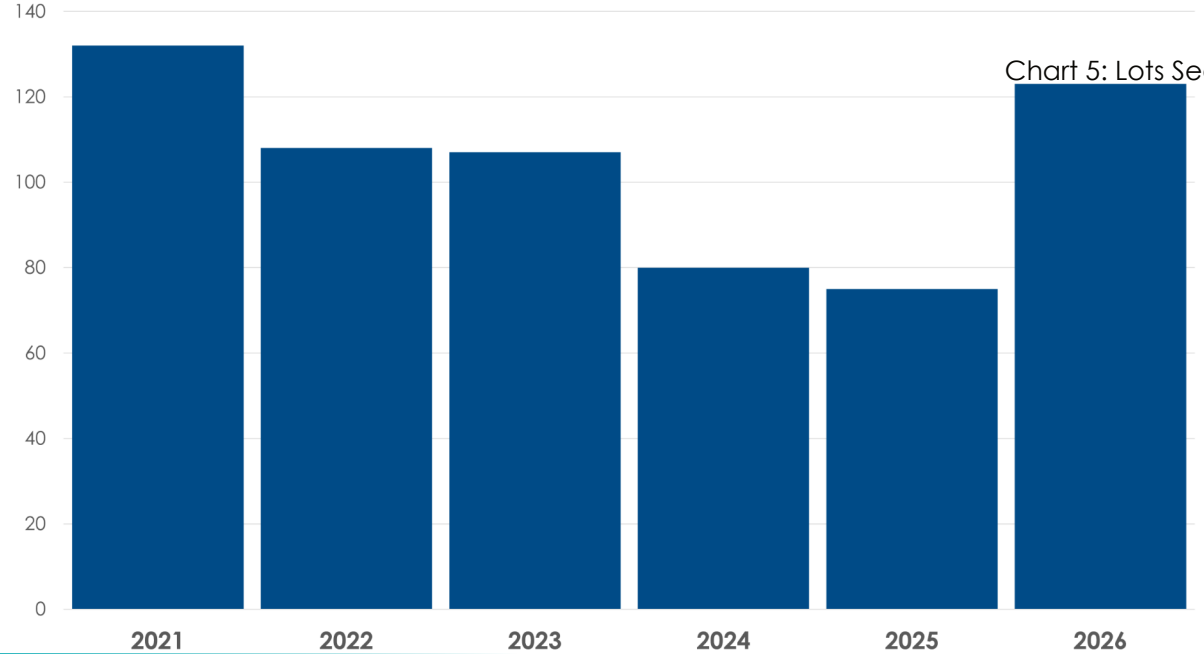


Chart 5: Lots Sealed

Chart 6 shows the number of vacant lots. This information is sourced from land descriptions used for rating purposes and is further assessed to exclude lots with dwellings under construction and more well established shacks.

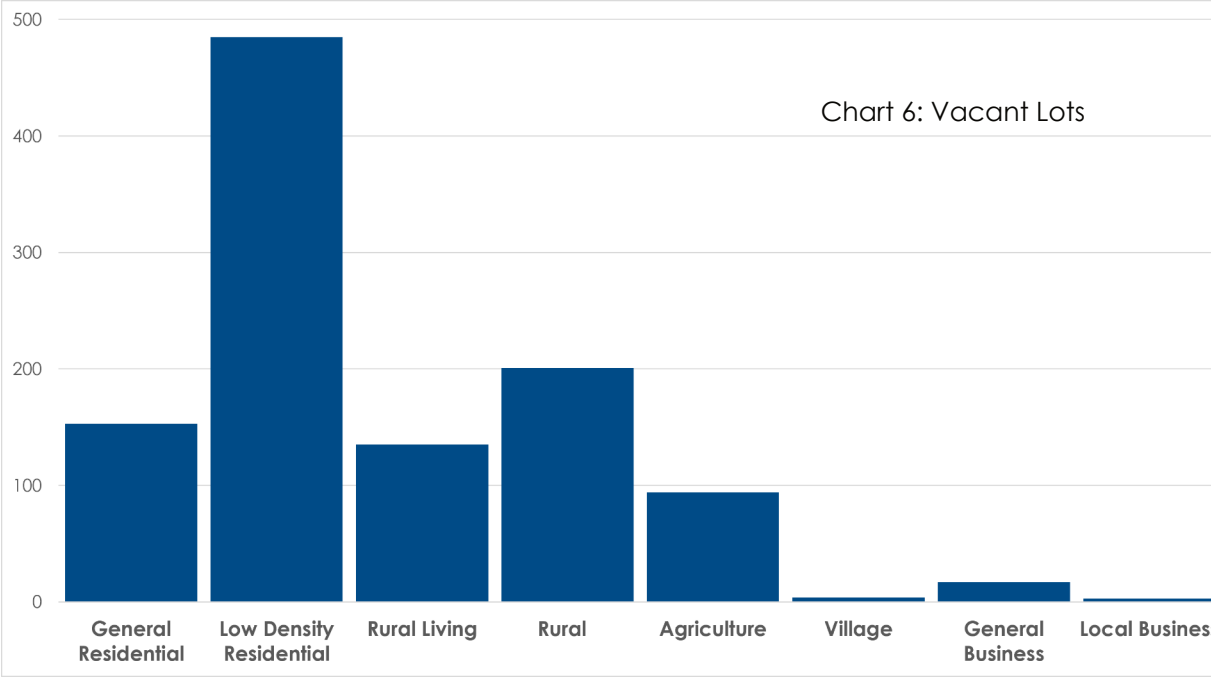


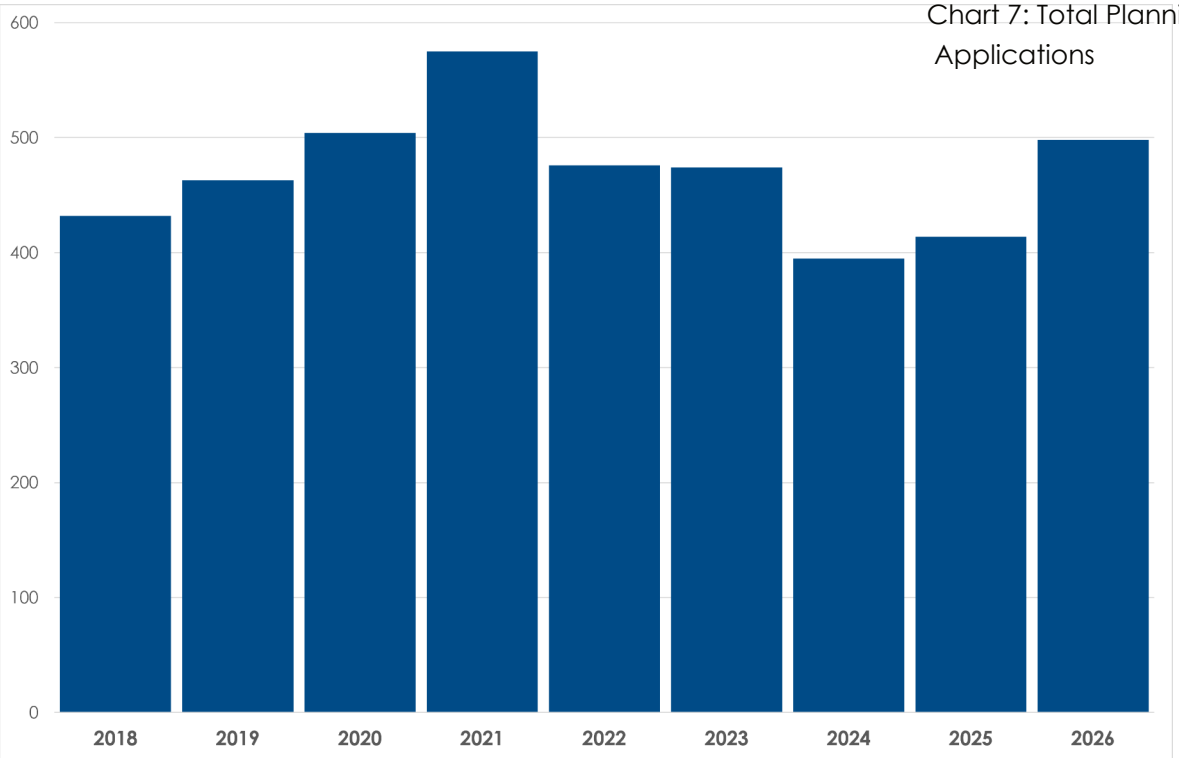
Chart 7 provides details on application numbers. The most recent financial year has shown a significant increase in applications, being the second highest of any time over this period. The chart captures the following types of applications:

- Discretionary, permitted and no permit required applications
- Subdivision applications
- Adhesion orders
- Planning scheme amendments
- Strata applications
- Minor amendments, and
- Final plan sealing.

For applications in the last financal year, 76% are discretionary, 8% are permitted and 16% are no permit required.

The rate of discretionary applications, while not the highest, is substantially higher than some other Councils. For instance, for 2024-2025 the ratio was 53% in Brighton Council and 62% in Huon Valley Council. The high rate in Sorell can be explained by the higher complexity of the unserviced Southern Beaches but could still indicate that the planning scheme is too restrictive in its approach.

Chart 7: Total Planning Applications



Appeals

Five appeals were lodged in the last financial year; three by applicants and two by representors. One appeal was withdrawn while all others are yet to be resolved.

Planning Scheme Amendments

During the financial year, one planning scheme amendment was initiated to rezone land at Primrose Sands to the Local Business Zone and was approved by the Tasmanian Planning Commission (TPC). The TPC also approved the extension of the General Business Zone at Sorell along Weston Hill Road and Pawllena Road.

Policy

The Sorell Planning Authority made submissions on:

- Development Assessment Panel Reviews
- Amendments to State Planning Proviions regarding secondary residences
- Miscellaneous reviews to the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993, and
- Draft Regional Land Use Strategy.

Planning staff provided submissions on:

- Improving Medium Density Housing; and
- Preventing Delays in Assessment Timeframes.

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