Strata Reforms Redefine Lot Owner Renovations

The Strata Schemes Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Act 2026 has now passed Parliament. However, the relevant provisions in relation to cosmetic, minor and major works have not yet commenced and remain subject to proclamation. In particular:

What are the approval requirements for lot owner works?

Amendments indicate that a new approach is to be applied to works. This will be impacted by regulations which are not yet available, but for now the proposed amendments suggest the following categories:

- "Cosmetic Work" (not requiring approval) has narrowed in scope and will mean work (not excluded by the regulations) involving attaching fixtures to, applying coverings to, or the decoration of, the surface of walls, floors or ceilings within an owner's lot or otherwise prescribed by the regulations to be cosmetic work.

- "Minor Work" (requiring approval by general meeting resolution) will replace "minor renovations" and has narrowed in scope, meaning work (not excluded by the regulations) involving the repair, replacement or alteration of an owner's lot that does not affect a building element or otherwise prescribed by the regulations to be minor work.

- "Major Work" (requiring approval by general meeting special resolution, although a majority vote may be sufficient for sustainability or accessibility infrastructure) will mean work by an owners corporation or owner involving adding to the common property, altering the common property or erecting a new structure on common property for the purpose of improving or enhancing the common property, whether or not work is carried out in connection to the owner's lot.

These changes will require strata managing agents to refine their approach to approval workflows and documentation practices. Agents should prepare to:

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- Reassess work classifications to ensure committees understand which category a proposed work falls into and the correct approval pathway. Please click more information to find out if your works require council approval or more information to find out if your works needs to comply with the Design and Building Practitioners Act 2020.

- Revise template motions and by-laws to align with the new categories and ensure motions accurately describe the nature of the work.

- Inform committees on the reduced scope of cosmetic and minor work, and the heightened compliance risk of misclassifying works.

- Strengthen record-keeping to demonstrate that the correct approval process was followed, particularly where building elements or common property may be affected.

We have considerable experience with these reforms and could assist you with any practical issues you may be experiencing or expect.

If you are a Compliance Pack member, please click here to download the Strata Reforms Guide.

Key takeaways

- The upcoming strata reforms will change how cosmetic, minor, and major works are classified and approved.
- Cosmetic work will have a narrower definition and does not require approval.
- Minor work will require approval by general meeting resolution and has also been redefined.
- Major work will require special resolution approval and may include alterations to common property.
- Strata managing agents will need to adjust their workflows and documentation practices in response to these changes.

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****The information contained in this article is general information only and not legal advice. The currency, accuracy and completeness of this article (and its contents) should be checked by obtaining independent legal advice before you take any action or otherwise rely upon its contents in any way.*

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