

4 May 2026

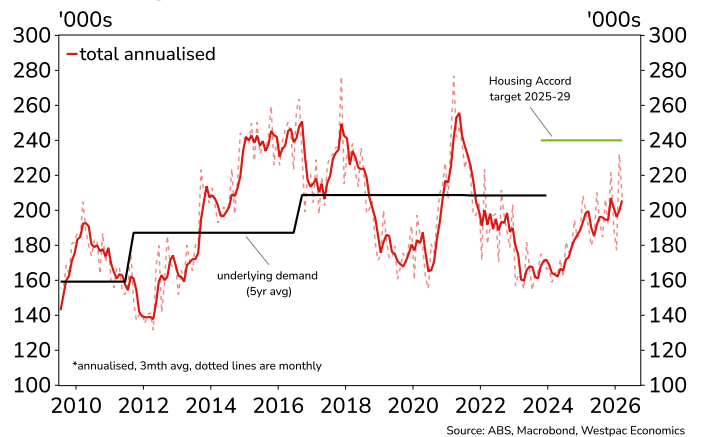
# AUSTRALIAN DWELLING APPROVALS BULLETIN

## Unit approvals reverse course

### Key points

- Total dwelling approvals partially unwound February's sharp gains, falling 10.5%*mth* in March. The annual pace eased to 9.0%*yr*, though the large lift in the previous month continues to leave approvals at an elevated level.
- As in recent months, private unit approvals drove the headline outcome, declining 26%*mth* following February's 101%*mth* surge. Private detached house approvals rose 0.9%*mth*. On a rolling three-month basis, house approvals increased 5.1%*qtr*, signalling a continued upswing in detached housing momentum.
- State-level outcomes remain uneven on a rolling three-month basis, with approvals strongest in Qld and WA, while NSW, Vic and SA recorded declines.
- Looking ahead, further expected RBA cash rate rises throughout 2026, alongside softer dwelling price growth are likely to temper the near-term recovery.

Dwelling approvals



## Total dwelling approvals -10.5%*mth*, 9.0%*yr*

# Detached dwelling approvals in a clearer upswing



**Luka Belobrajdic**  
Economist

Total dwelling approvals partially unwound the sharp gains recorded last month, falling 10.5%*mth* in March. The result was below our expectation but broadly in line with the market expectation. The annual pace eased to 9.0%*yr*, although the large rise in last month's result continues to leave approvals at an elevated level. Indeed, the key takeaway looks to be of a clearer upswing emerging in the detached houses segment.

Note that most figures in the charts and table are presented on a rolling-three month basis to smooth out monthly volatility.

As in recent results, private unit approvals continued to drive volatility, declining 26%*mth*, following a 101%*mth* rise in February. The March outcome does not fully unwind last month's gains, with private unit approvals remaining above their average level over the past 12 months. Units accounted for just over 39% of private approvals in the month, down from the 47% high in February. High rise unit approvals again drove the headline move, with Westpac's seasonally-adjusted estimates across both private and public sectors falling 21%*mth*, while low mid rise approvals declined 7.5%*mth*. As a result, the annual growth rate for high rise units eased to 15%*yr*, while low mid rise approvals moved into contraction (-2.7%*yr*).

Private detached dwelling approvals rose 0.9%*mth*, with February approvals revised sharply higher to 2.0%*mth* (+1.8ppts). On a rolling three month basis, total house approvals increased 5.1%*qtr*, the strongest result since October 2023, and signalling a continued upswing in detached dwelling approvals.

Dwelling approvals remain strongest in states experiencing the most robust dwelling price growth (see [here](#)). On a rolling three month basis, gains are concentrated in Qld (27%*yr*) and WA (23%*yr*), led primarily by unit approvals, although detached dwellings are providing more balanced support in WA. In contrast, approvals declined in Vic (-1.5%*yr*), SA (-5.1%*yr*) and NSW (-11%*yr*). In NSW and Vic, declines were driven primarily by units, with house approvals continuing to post gains.

In value terms, residential building approvals fell 16%*mth*, an 18% decline in new residential approvals partially offset by a 0.8% rise in renovation activity. The value of non residential approvals fell sharply (-25%*mth*), led by a significant fall in the data centre dominated 'other commercial' segment (-93%*mth*). The total value of buildings approved declined 19%*mth*.

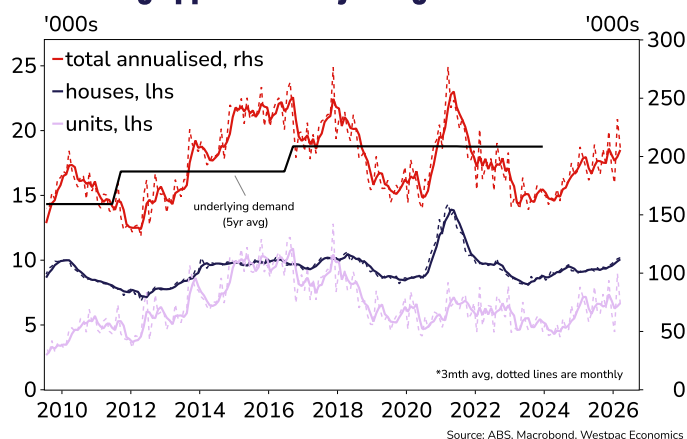
Looking ahead, further expected RBA cash rate increases across May, June and August, alongside softer dwelling price growth, are likely to temper the near term recovery in dwelling approvals. While detached housing momentum has improved, volatility in unit approvals and broader affordability constraints suggest the recovery is likely to remain uneven.

## Building approvals – March 2026

3mth avg	3mth %chg*			%yr	
	latest	Feb	Mar	Feb	Mar
Private houses	10,070	4.6	5.3	8.7	10.0
Private units	6,686	-12.5	-2.8	-9.8	-6.8
Public dwellings	379	-23.3	9.9	7.4	26.2
Total dwellings	17,135	-3.4	2.1	0.7	3.1
Total dwellings, mthly*	17,300	31.0	-10.5	16.1	9.0
– units in 'high rise'^	3,686	-17.9	0.8	-21.2	-12.0
– units in 'low rise'^	3,040	-1.3	-5.9	10.0	3.0
Renovations, \$bn	1.324	6.4	5.8	10.7	13.4
Non-res., \$bn	7.402	8.4	1.6	29.4	34.2

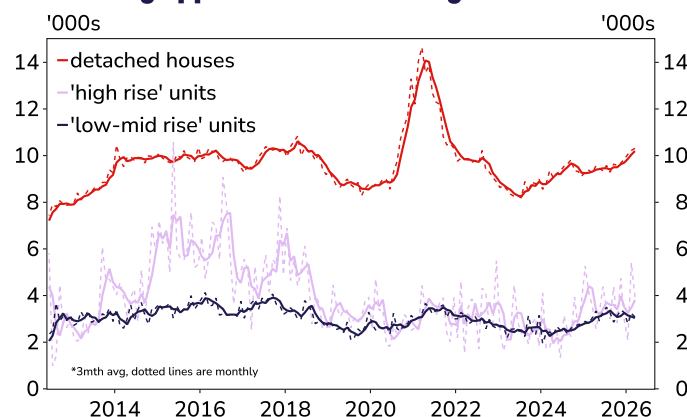
\*figures for 'total dwellings mthly' are monthly and mthly%ch, all others are rolling 3mth avg and 3mth%ch; ^all sectors, Westpac estimates  
Sources: ABS, Westpac Economics

## Dwelling approvals: major segment



Source: ABS, Macrobond, Westpac Economics

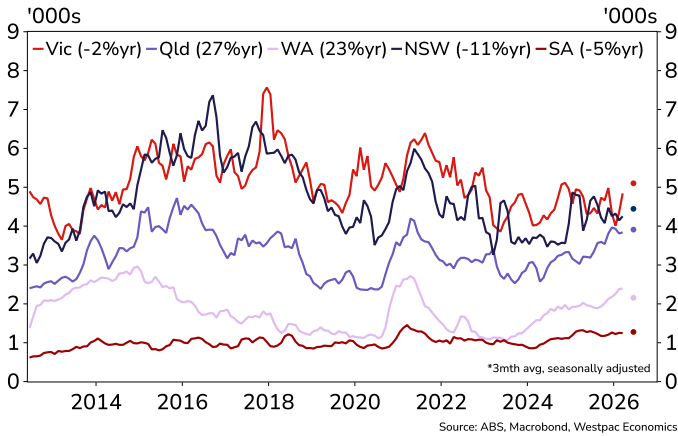
## Dwelling approvals: detailed segment



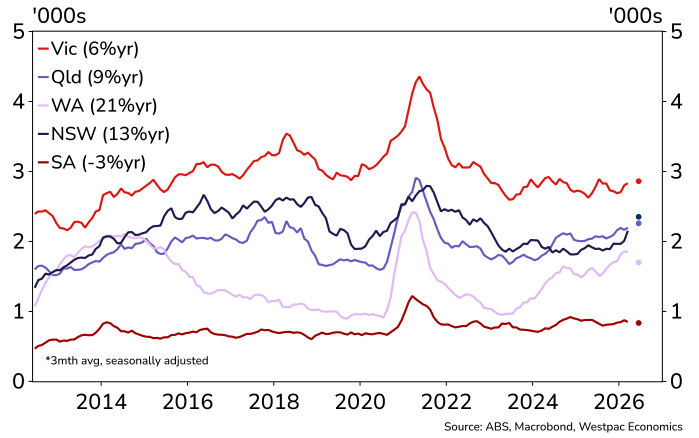
Source: ABS, Macrobond, Westpac Economics

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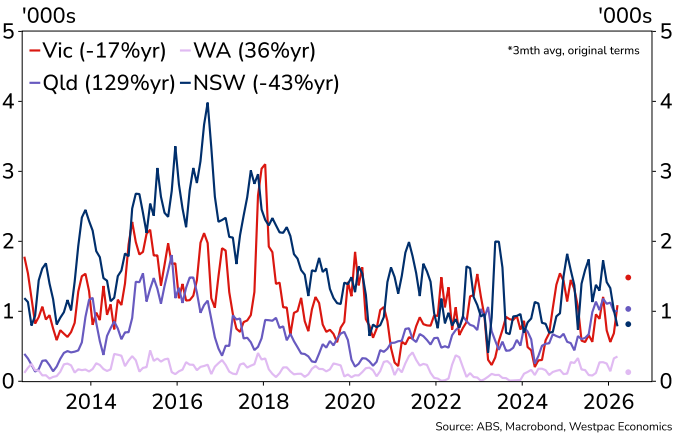
**Total dwelling approvals: by state**



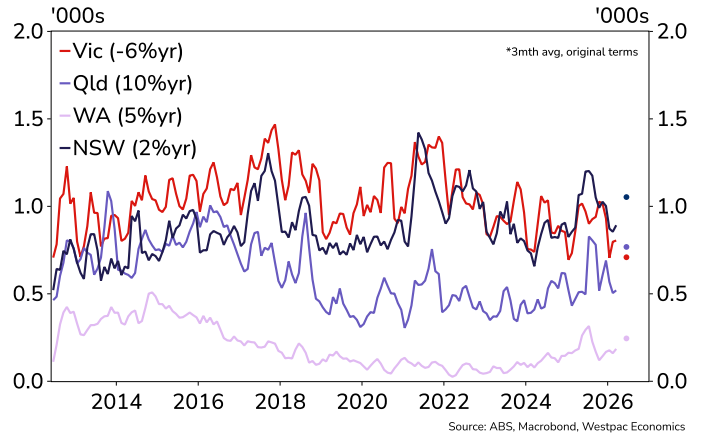
**Detached house approvals: by state**



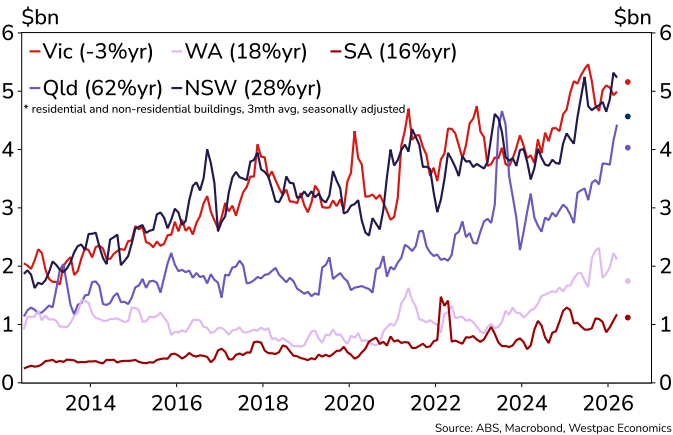
**'High rise' approvals: by state**



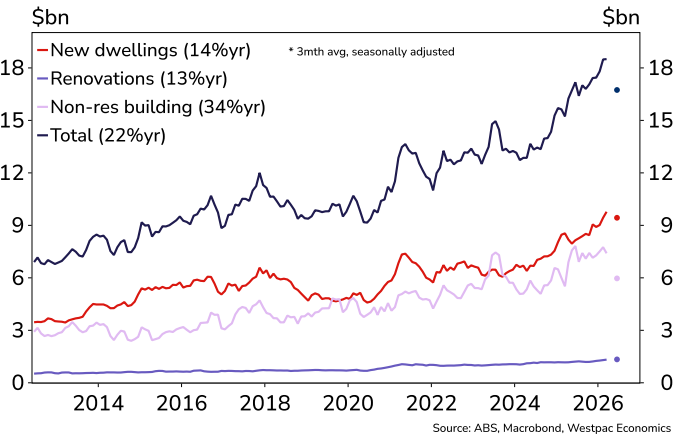
**'Low-mid rise' approvals: by state**



**Total building approvals: by state**



**Total building approvals: by segment**



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