

**Submission
No 16**

OPTIONS FOR ESSENTIAL WORKER HOUSING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Griffith City Council

Date Received: 9 September 2024



9 September 2024

Mr. Alex Greenwich MP
Chair
Legislative Assembly
Select Committee on Essential Worker Housing

Dear Chair,

TERMS OF REFERENCE: SUBMISSION

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Select Committee on Essential Worker Housing. I offer the following comments and proposals on behalf of Griffith City Council.

Terms of Reference:

That the Committee inquire into and report on options for essential worker housing in New South Wales, specifically:

- (a) Establishing an appropriate definition for essential worker housing for the NSW Government to adopt including criteria for prioritising worker cohorts and geographical areas.*
- (b) Identify options to increase housing supply for essential workers, including but not limited to:
 - (i) planning tools and reforms**

Seasonal and Temporary Worker Accommodation (Draft) Guideline.

During August 2023 the NSW Department of Planning released the Seasonal and Temporary Worker Accommodation (Draft) Guideline.

Proposal: The Seasonal and Temporary Worker Accommodation (Draft) Guideline should be finalised and released urgently.

Land Banking

Proposal: That the NSW Government establish a "Postponed Residential" Land Zone.

Councils should be authorised (but not obligated) to designate land that is zoned "Residential" but not developed within a maximum number of years to be zoned "Postponed Residential". This postponement would be discounted from the total projected yield of "Residential" zoned land for that Local Government Area and therefore facilitate support for additional land to be zoned for residential purposes. The Council could reinstate the original Residential Zone for the subject land when certain triggers are satisfied.

(ii) incentives for developments on privately owned land

Accelerated Infrastructure Fund

The NSW Government Accelerated Infrastructure Fund was established in 2021/22 to provide resources to Local Government Areas (LGAs) for housing enabling infrastructure such as roads, drainage etc. Since that time across 3 rounds, a total of \$657,550,000 has been allocated to “selected” Councils.

In addition to the above funds, \$200,000,000 has been ear marked by the NSW Government to assist the selected LGAs to achieve their respective individual housing targets.

The NSW Government has determined individual housing targets for 43 LGAs in the Greater Sydney, Central Coast, Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle and Illawarra-Shoalhaven regions. A total combined target of 322,000 homes.

There is only one (1) “Regional” Target: 55,000 homes.

Griffith is a growing regional centre but has not been offered the opportunity to apply for funding.

Proposal: That another round (Round 4) of the Accelerated Infrastructure Fund be established and growing centres such as Griffith be offered the opportunity to apply for funds.

(iii) opportunities within developments on government owned land

Unused Crown Land

There are two (2) blocks of vacant Crown Land in Griffith that are suitable for the construction of Essential Worker Housing.

Proposal: Unused Crown Land should be made available to Local Government and vested in the Council (at no cost) for projects that achieve an uplift in supply of essential (key worker) housing.

Social Housing Estates Renewal

During June 2024 Griffith City Council, in partnership with Argyle Housing finalised the construction of “Griffin Green”, an affordable housing project. A social housing estate, owned predominantly by the NSW Government surrounds the “Griffin Green” site.

Council and Argyle have developed a concept plan for renewal of the social housing estate into social and affordable housing. We are keen to work with Homes NSW to significantly increase the number of dwellings in the estate using modern methods of construction. This project will achieve positive outcomes for social housing tenants and essential workers.

Proposal: Homes NSW be encouraged to work in partnership with Local Government to maximise the potential of existing social housing estates without the current imperative of realising financial gain for the NSW Government.

(iv) investigate reforms that promote fiscal sustainability, innovation and essential worker housing in-perpetuity

(v) other related matters.

Thank you again for the opportunity to make this submission.

Yours sincerely,



BRETT STONESTREET PSM
GENERAL MANAGER