

**Submission
No 73**

OPTIONS FOR ESSENTIAL WORKER HOUSING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Lachlan Shire Council

Date Received: 13 September 2024



Contact Person: Greg Tory

13 September 2024

Mr Alex Greenwich MP
Chair
Select Committee on Essential Worker Housing
NSW Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Greenwich,

RE: Inquiry into options for essential worker housing in New South Wales

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on options for essential worker housing.

Lachlan Shire Council (Council), located in the Central West of NSW, is experiencing a severe shortage of rental accommodation, housing and residential land. This has been highlighted most recently by the fact that the local mine has doubled its workforce and in the process booked out most temporary accommodation. They have also leased almost all rental properties within the district in addition to being a significant private owner of residential houses in Condobolin. While this is a welcome economic development opportunity, it demonstrates that a single event can put significant constraints on the local housing market and outcompete essential workers that are equally desperate to secure housing.

Exorbitant construction and freight costs in the regions have created a situation where private developers refrain from developing residential or industrial estates. This leaves Council as the developer of 'last resort' and often dependant on grant funding to provide infrastructure to any new residential or industrial development.

Continuous cost shifting has resulted in Council taking on additional responsibilities that are not its core business, nor are they envisaged under the *Local Government Act 1993*. An example in Lachlan Shire is that Council owns both the local medical centre building and the associated doctor's housing. This has been the only option to ensure this vital health service is offered to the community with the ratepayers bearing the majority of the costs involved.

Council would welcome additional grant funding opportunities from the NSW Government. This would enable further residential development to cater for the increased demand that comes from additional proposed mining projects, a highly diversified light industrial sector and a productive agricultural industry. This might ensure that essential workers do not miss out in the process.

If you have any queries regarding this letter please contact the undersigned on (02) 6895 1900.

Yours sincerely



/Greg Tory
General Manager
Lachlan Shire Council