

Shelter NSW Submission

Draft Goulburn Mulwaree Local Strategic Planning Statement



Introduction

Shelter NSW appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Goulburn Mulwaree Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) (May 2020). We congratulate Council on the high standard of its draft plan, and we support many of the proposed Actions outlined which aim to deliver both housing choice and affordability.

From Shelter NSW's perspective, we see the LSPS process as an opportunity to promote dialogue about ways to deliver better housing outcomes for all NSW residents. Having reviewed the Draft Goulburn Mulwaree LSPS, Shelter NSW has provided comments/recommendations and practical policy suggestions that we feel might support or strengthen many of the housing-related outcomes Actions in your strategy.

Our submission also provides an overview of Shelter NSW's role as a state peak body in the housing policy and advocacy space, and a summary of the key messages we heard during our recent consultation sessions across NSW about what communities see as a desirable housing system. From this, we worked with communities to develop a new vision for a future housing platform.

About Shelter NSW

Shelter NSW is the state peak body for housing policy advocacy. Established in 1975, we represent broad interests across the housing system rather than those of a specific industry or sector. Our diverse network of partners includes organisations and individuals that share our vision of a secure home for all. We pursue this vision through critical engagement with policy and by providing thought leadership.

As an independent, non-profit organisation, we advocate for systemic housing policy reform and provide advice on policy and legislation. In doing so, we research the causes of inequity within the NSW housing system and promote solutions that ensure better housing outcomes for households on lower-incomes. We then leverage this expertise to engage and



collaborate with the sector to work towards an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable housing system.

Key messages from Shelter NSW wide visioning sessions

In 2019, Shelter NSW held seven workshops across regional NSW and Greater Sydney to develop a shared vision for a better housing system. Close to 200 community members spoke at these sessions about the problems they see as facing the housing system and the actions they want to see to address them. Here is a summary of their insights that are relevant to all levels of Government.

1. Make plans that emphasise housing as a home, not just an investment

The concept of 'home' should be at the core of the housing policy. It underpins health, social connections and participation in work and society. However, speculative investment in housing and the standard model of development are not delivering housing that people need or can afford. The Government needs to talk with communities about these problems and discuss solutions. Following engagement, they should make a plan for the specific region that addresses the issues they can control and works with other levels of Government on ones they cannot.

2. Build places and communities, not just houses and towers

New housing should be located close to jobs and services and improve the quality of existing neighbourhoods. Well-connected and well-designed homes make it easy for people to get around and transition between various stages of life. However, developers seem to be delivering either car-dependent sprawl or low-quality density. Both result in different kinds of congestion and unpleasant environments. Government authorities can help achieve this through planning, support for innovative designs and investment in infrastructure.

3. Provide diverse housing that everyone can afford, not just high-income earners

The housing system should be as diverse as the community to give people the options they need. This system would support ageing households with the opportunity to downsize, and young people with the possibilities to become independent. Women can then leave abusive relationships, and First Nations people can live on Country. Students can then focus on their education, and key workers can live in their communities. Most importantly, people experiencing or at risk of homelessness can find a secure home. To provide these options, governments need to invest in social and affordable housing as well as create more diversity in the housing market.

4. Make renting a genuine alternative to ownership, not just a transition phase

Tenants should be able to expect security and a high level of service when they rent their home. This protection is especially true now that homeownership is in decline. However, the possibility of no-grounds evictions makes it hard for tenants to put down roots or request repairs. Equally, social housing has become seen as a temporary safety net which is



increasingly rationed and run-down. Governments need to ensure rental housing is both secure and high quality. It can do so by amending laws and policies that support long-term renters and providers of suitable housing options.

5. Use housing policy to address climate change, not exacerbate it

Our built environment should help us transition to a zero-carbon economy. Housing design and construction techniques can reduce our energy consumption and extraction of new resources. So too can planning and subdivision protect our homes from natural hazards and limit our reliance on cars and lifts. Trees can cool our streets and infrastructure can make them walkable. All of this improves our health and saves us money. Governments need to use all of these tools to prevent and avoid the worst effects of climate change which we are just starting to see and feel.

Shelter NSW Comments on the Draft Goulburn Mulwaree Council Local Strategic Planning Statement

Freestanding dwellings dominate the existing housing stock in most major regional centres across NSW, with a significant percentage of dwellings occupied by ‘empty nesters’, many of whom have reached retirement age. This situation is evident in the population and housing characteristics of Goulburn Mulwaree Local Government Area (LGA) with around 25% of the Goulburn Mulwaree population aged 60 years and older, and over 25% lone person households (ABS Census 2016). These statistics reflect the growing disconnect between housing supply, which continues to deliver stand-alone 3, 4, and 5-bedroom dwelling, and population demographics. As indicated by Council in its LSPS, this mismatch between the housing needs of an ageing population and younger residents who require different forms of housing has created a challenge for councils on how to address this issue.

In its LSPS, Council also indicated that the LGA has a high percentage of low-income households and they need more affordable and public housing. Council acknowledges that the waiting times for public housing are between 2 to 10 years depending on bedroom types, with the longest waiting times being for one- and two-bedroom dwellings.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population make up 4.0% of residents in the Goulburn Mulwaree LGA, and this community often has particular housing-related issues. One is limited access to affordable rental supply, and another is overcrowding which can have specific longer-term impacts regarding social and educational outcomes.

As evident from the data and issues outlined in this section, the Goulburn Mulwaree LGA has a mismatch between housing supply and the needs of different population groups across the LGA. For the foreseeable future, addressing these problems will be a significant task for the Council. Delivering new dwellings that provide more choice and new public



housing dwellings are two critical solutions to mitigate the adverse effect associated with the current disconnect between population characteristics and housing need.

The following Table outlines the proposed strategic actions in the Draft Goulburn Mulwaree Draft LSPS related to sustainability, housing choice and affordability. It provides feedback from Shelter NSW on ways to support or strengthen some of the proposed Actions outlined in the LSPS. In situations where Shelter NSW suggestions go beyond the direct control of Council, we are happy to collaborate with the Council in any future advocacy-based actions.

<p align="center">Shelter NSW Comments on Housing Related Issues in the Goulburn Mulwaree Council Draft Local Strategic Planning Statement</p>
<p>The following recommendations are based on the capacity of the General Residential (R1) Zones and Medium Density Residential (R3) Zone to provide more housing choice in regional areas dominated by detached dwellings. It aims to support the delivery of sustainable regional communities into the future and to ensure that new residential developments are based on clustering dwelling patterns. This situation will provide better sustainability outcomes through consolidated vegetation, reduced bushfire impacts and delivery of better water management practices.</p> <p>In addition to the sustainability benefits associated with the recommendation, they will help the delivery of different housing options in town centres, better support the economic base of a small town and address the needs of both younger and older single residents to live in smaller dwellings connected to town centres.</p>
<p>Council Proposed Actions - City, Town and Village Centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review LEP and DCP provisions including height, FSR and car parking controls to facilitate urban renewal of the Goulburn CBD • Prepare a Night Time Economy Strategy for Goulburn CBD • Review Council’s Development Control Plan, to include character precincts to emphasize individual character areas
<p>Shelter NSW suggests the following as part of the proposed Actions outlined above.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Council’s review of its LEP and DCP address ways to increase housing choice and affordability through the use of planning tools. 2. That Council considers increasing housing density and diversity in its town centres by mandating a mix of dwelling types and a proportion of bedroom



types in new development. The aim would be to support the delivery of homes that meet the need of single person households and help older residents to age in place.

3. That in locations connected to town centres, education, medical facilities and transport hubs, Council replace existing Low-Density Residential (R2), Large Lot Residential (R5) and Village (RU5) zones with General Residential (R1).
4. That, as part of any CBD or 'town centres' master plan, Council considers ways to deliver housing diversity in a variety of forms such as the introduction of more medium-density (R3) zones.
5. That Council includes incentives in its DCP such as height bonuses to encourage the delivery of diverse dwelling types and mandate bedroom mix.
6. That Council undertakes a review to identify areas suitable for seniors housing and assesses opportunities to support their development.
7. That Council organise a workshop with local developers and builders on ways to deliver more diverse housing opportunities.
8. To ensure that any new or infill development enhances the existing build form in regional town centres, Council should include a local character assessment requirement in its DCP.

Council Proposed Actions – Housing

- Adopt, implement and monitor an Urban and Fringe Housing Strategy
- Review planning provisions to improve aged, social and affordable housing supply
- Prepare a Villages Strategy, to identify what if any capacity the relevant villages have for further growth
- Monitor the take up of shop top housing, and housing supply/demand in the CBD

Shelter NSW suggests that Council consider the following as part of the proposed Actions outlined above.

1. That, in implementing any proposed Urban and Fringe Housing Strategy, new residential release not be dominated by Low-Density large lot zones. Instead, consideration is given to the use of General Residential (R1) zones as this will provide additional housing choice options, better sustainability and bushfires management outcomes.
2. That Council, as part of its proposed planning provisions review, considers measures to support older residents to age in place, through amendments to



the planning controls to support the delivery of age-specific housing options in town centres.

3. That, in review its planning provisions to improve aged, social and affordable housing supply, Council works in partnership with Community Housing Providers and the Department of Communities and Justice to facilitate the delivery of new affordable and social housing options within the LGA.
4. That Council defines affordable housing as an essential infrastructure (including public and community housing) in any future infrastructure or planning policy (Note: this definition is from the Australian Infrastructure Audit 2019).

Council Proposed Actions - Heritage

- Ensure consultation in the preparation of studies and assessments with the Aboriginal community

Shelter NSW suggests that Council consider the following as part of the proposed Actions outlined above.

As indicated by Council, it is committed to consulting with local Aboriginal community members in the preparation of studies and assessment processes. Shelter NSW would like to see a commitment by Council to work with Aboriginal Land Councils on the development of a strategic plan for their landholders, aimed at supporting the delivery of additional housing opportunities for their members. This process could focus on the delivery of a strategic plan for Aboriginal landholders, with the primary aim being to support the delivery of additional housing opportunities and appropriate design outcomes on Aboriginal-owned land. This work can be based on the Aboriginal Land Framework (introduced by the NSW Planning System in 2019).

Proposed Actions:

1. to work cooperatively with LALC to rezone land so that it can be used for additional social housing,
2. to explore ways to support secondary dwelling/granny flat accommodation on existing Aboriginal/social housing lots,
3. to support ways of encouraging the construction of additional Aboriginal social housing stock, so that the underutilisation of existing housing and essential service can be addressed.



Thank you

Shelter NSW appreciates the opportunity to comment on Goulburn Mulwaree Council's Draft Local Strategic Planning Strategy. We hope that the comments and insights we have provided bring some value to Councils strategic planning work in the housing policy space.

We are also happy to engage with Council on the issues raised in our submission. If you wish to discuss our submission in more detail, please contact Stacey Miers on 0410 633 272 or by email at stacey@shelternsw.org.au.

Sincerely Yours,

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