



TASMANIAN
**HOUSING
STRATEGY**

What we heard
from the
Exposure Draft
consultation

November 2023

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement to Aboriginal People.....	3
Disclaimer.....	3
Introduction.....	4
Summary of feedback by stakeholder group	5
Feedback on proposed focus areas	8
Focus area 1: More homes, built faster	8
Focus area 2: Affordability in the private market.....	9
Focus area 3: People at the centre.....	10
Focus area 4: Local prosperity	11
Implementation	13
Appendix I Submissions received.....	14

Acknowledgement to Aboriginal People

The Tasmanian Government acknowledges and pays respect to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the traditional owners and continuing custodians of the land and acknowledges Elders past, present and emerging.

Tasmanian Government

Published November 2023 © State of Tasmania 2023

Disclaimer

The views or opinions expressed in submissions reflect the views only of the persons or entities making those submissions. Inclusion of submissions should not be taken as an endorsement by the Tasmanian Government of any views or opinions so expressed. Copyright in submissions rests with the author of each submission. The Tasmanian Government does not accept liability for any breaches of the author's copyright.

Information such as contact numbers and addresses have been redacted. Confidential, inappropriate or offensive submissions have not been published in accordance with the Tasmanian Government's Public Submissions Policy.

Introduction

As part of the Tasmanian Government's commitment to consultation, an Exposure Draft of the Tasmanian Housing Strategy was released on 6 June 2023. The Exposure Draft sought feedback from all Tasmanians in response to proposed themes and priorities for inclusion in the final Tasmanian Housing Strategy (the Strategy).

All Tasmanians were encouraged to have their say, by either:

- free-text submissions: uploaded as a document that used the Exposure Draft's proposed focus areas as a guide or
- structured submissions: answering seven questions aligned to the proposed focus areas and generic questions in an online template.

This report, 'What we heard from the Exposure Draft consultation', provides a summary of key findings from the submissions received during the public consultation period between 6 June and 7 July 2023.

This report provides a summary of key findings by stakeholder group and an overview of feedback on each of the proposed focus areas and the approach to implementation.

Where consent was provided, full submissions can be found on the Tasmanian Housing Strategy website, tasmanianhousingstrategy.tas.gov.au

Who did we hear from?

Organisations that submitted a response represented the following sectors:

- housing community providers, industry, support service providers and research areas
- advocacy organisations representing homeless people, those on low income, migrants and refugees, older Tasmanians, animal welfare, disability, education, youth and child protection, tenants, health and wellbeing, gender equality, and family violence
- local government sector
- short-stay accommodation industry
- natural resources
- property development
- property industry
- architecture and the built environment
- construction industry
- employment, skills and education
- advertising, business and strategy
- members of the public.

The full list of organisations that submitted a response is included in Appendix I.

Summary of feedback by stakeholder group

An overview of the feedback received by broad sectors or groups of stakeholders is outlined below in Table I. Readers are encouraged to read the full submissions for further detail.

Table I – Summary of feedback by stakeholder group

Stakeholder group	Primary feedback	Organisation
Community housing providers, housing industry representatives, support service providers and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeking clarification around the roles and relationships between the Tasmanian Government, Community Housing Providers (CHPs) and private sources of housing supply during the 20-year term of the Strategy. Advocating for immediate housing responses - short-medium term housing options while supply is increased. Financial constraint on CHPs to provide new supply and support services. Funding, financing and Federal Government income support policy are missing levers within Exposure Draft. Ensure quality is not affected by quantity (number of 10,000 homes). Name up how NIMBYism will be addressed (suggestions for community education campaigns). 	Including from Community Housing Ltd, Salvation Army Housing, Housing Choices, Housing All Australians, Mission Australia, Anglicare, Cohousing Australia, Wintringham Tasmania
Advocacy and other organisations representing homeless people, those on low income, older people, animal welfare, disability, children and youth, health and wellbeing, gender equality and family violence, or renting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate lived experience in housing design and policy decision processes. Ensure trauma-informed workforce and housing design. Commit to increased support for vulnerable cohorts through wraparound services. Multiple submissions called for immediate and short-term homelessness and housing solutions while long-term supply is addressed. Commit to a review of the Residential Tenancy Act 1997 that includes security of tenure, rent control, pets, enabling minor property alterations and strengthening energy efficiency minimum standards. 	Including Shelter Tasmania, Tenants' Union of Tasmania, TasCOSS, Create Foundation, Working It Out, Youth Network of Tasmania, Women's Health Tasmania, Council on the Ageing Tasmania, Mental Health Council of Tasmania, Flourish Tasmania, RSPCA Tas, HALT - Housing Alliance lutruwita/Tasmania
Local government sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of certainty and efficiency in planning timeframes. Constraints on local councils in the context of the planning system. Suggestions relating to developer and infrastructure contributions. Supportive of incentivising private development in social and affordable housing. Legislative reform to planning system to stop land banking and enforce social and affordable housing provisions in developments. Incentivise or mandate medium density development. Sustainability and energy efficiency principles should be addressed at a statewide (or national) level. Utilise the Temporary Housing requirements under the General Provisions of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme for urgent and emergency housing. 	Including various councils, Cradle Coast Authority and the Local Government Association of Tasmania

Short-stay accommodation industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discusses short stay sector from an economic prosperity lens highlighting benefits to expenditure in the local economy, additional income streams and employment opportunities. • Included suggestions relating to potential role for short stay accommodation in the crisis accommodation space and a sustainable tourism levy to fund community infrastructure eg key worker housing projects. • Supportive of review of <i>Residential Tenancy Act 1997</i> to identify any potential shortcomings in the regulatory frameworks that protect tenants. 	Including Air BnB and Expedia Group (Stayz)
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systemic – Strategy should focus on causation, not symptoms of housing crisis. • Legislative eg taxation reforms ie remove capital gains and abolish negative gearing. • Policy eg mMigration, property ownership ie abolish >90%LVR, limit foreign ownership. 	North East Bioregional Network
Architecture and the built environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design-led approach a critical success factor in the delivery of more homes. • Consideration of how design links to liveability, accessibility and health. • Subsidise architectural fees for housing of greater density than single dwellings to increase quality outcomes. • Support for incentivising private development and inclusion of social and affordable housing. 	Including from Australian Institute of Architects – Tas, Cumulus Studio et al. and Planning Institute Australia
Property development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasising impact of short stay accommodation and other supply and demand factors on housing market. • Increase initiatives such as ModHomes. • Policy eg migration, increase land tax, short stay accommodation caps and licencing fees. 	Including from Nekon Pty Ltd
Property industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive of increasing the availability of vacant land and infill development. • Attributes reductions of investors in the private rental market in Tasmania to the continuing contraction of rights of the property owner nation-wide. Cautions a review of the <i>Residential Tenancy Act 1997</i>. • Supportive of Tasmanian Government private rental market incentive programs to reduce current waiting times whilst new stock is brought to market over the coming years. 	Including from Property Council of Tasmania, Australian Property Institute, Real Estate Institute of Tasmania
Construction industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to partner with private construction industry. Suggest providing additional information on preferred delivery model and projected volume per delivery stream so companies can business plan, review products and determine mutually beneficial outcomes. • Commends consideration of new delivery methods such as build-to-rent. • Further consider ways to boost and support homeownership. • More work required to streamline building regulations and planning approvals landscape in order for projects to be delivered faster. • Consider the use of local Tasmanian timber products to support industry and sustainability. 	Including from Master Builders Tasmania, Housing Industry Association, Cunic Homes and Tasmanian Forest Products Association

Employment, skills and education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in training and employment programs and partnership for construction. 	Including from MAS National and IntoWork
Advertising, business and strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive of alternative housing models such as co-ops, cohousing, build-to-rent and accommodation for key workers. Suggests implementing a Tasmanian Government-owned construction company to deliver supply. Consider models to limit profit for housing eg UK/European models. 	Including from Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals
Members of the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submissions represented accounts of lived experiences in the current housing market across the housing continuum. Submissions included suggestions relating to how the housing system should better respond to individual needs. 	Multiple individuals

Feedback on proposed focus areas

Focus area 1: More homes, built faster

- 1. Scaling up*
- 2. Property upgrades*
- 3. Location, size and design*
- 4. Residential land*
- 5. Building regulations and planning approvals*
- 6. Partnerships*

Support for medium density and infill development

Submissions acknowledged the Tasmanians Government's ongoing action to help boost the overall supply of housing, as one of the most important long-term and strategic solutions to the pressures in the housing market.

According to submissions, strategic development of medium density in-fill in urban areas, inclusionary zoning, minimising greenfield development where possible, and underscoring the importance of new builds to be environmentally and socially sustainable were priorities under this focus area. Multiple submissions suggested introducing infrastructure charges and developer contributions to gain sufficient benefits from increased density.

Concerns about speed over quality

Concerns were raised that 'More Homes, Built Faster' promoted speed of delivery without enough emphasis on good quality building and design outcomes. Submission authors emphasised that when deciding targets and timelines, consideration of the quality of homes must not be affected by quantity.

Stakeholders agreed that new stock must be adaptable over its life course and suggestions were made relating to recognising and promoting the role of architects in design. Further suggestions included the Tasmanian Government providing (or subsidising) case study housing designs which are compliant with the National Construction Code and generally ready for use.

Property upgrades

Submissions agreed that including a maintenance and (energy-efficiency) upgrade schedule for existing properties is an important inclusion. Submissions also sought clarification on where social housing titles are transferred to affordable home ownership, whether that housing will be replaced. They raised that if not, Tasmania will continue to see a reduction in its total social housing stock.

Utilise vacant property

Various submissions called for a commitment from the State Government to work with local councils to introduce taxes, rates and levies for vacant properties, disused buildings and vacant residential land. Submissions also advocated for 'meanwhile use' and temporary options to offer immediate housing solutions while medium-long term goals are in progress.

Incentivise private development

Submissions suggested several incentives for private developers that could be considered as part of the housing strategy such as reduced headwork charges (or longer payback over the lifetime of the project), relaxation or reduction in car parking requirements, relaxed height restrictions for housing developments with mixed use and/or mixed demographic, greater density allowance if the development can demonstrate good design outcomes and smaller apartment size requirements.

Planning approval processes

Submissions raised the need to fast-track rezoning applications particularly for social and affordable housing. Further incentives might be provided to encourage private developers to include social housing within the development: fast tracked or priority planning approval, relaxed planning restrictions ie boundary setbacks, height limits, private outdoor spaces, relaxed requirement to meet local neighbourhood characteristics and higher density allowances.

However, local government submissions put forward that development timeframes are efficient and enable appropriate community consultation and raised concern that in minimising these time frames, other areas of development consideration would be compromised.

Focus area 2: Affordability in the private market

1. An equitable housing market

2. Home ownership

3. Rentals

Rental reform

Feedback across this focus area discussed the worsening crisis for Tasmanians living in the private rental market and advocated for rental housing reform. Submissions highlighted the mindset shift needed toward renting not being a temporary step: but as a way of life for many people as more people are renting for longer, and for many, renting is no longer a transitional tenure. Multiple submissions call for immediate and short-term or temporary housing solutions while long-term supply is addressed.

To improve conditions for renters, support was widely confirmed for a review of the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997* that includes security of tenure through longer lease terms, rent control, pets, minor property alterations and strengthening energy efficiency minimum standards.

Submissions urged the Tasmanian Government to consult with advocates with direct experience and knowledge of tenancy law, along with other key stakeholders and renters in the community to harness key knowledge that can help shape effective solutions.

Impacts of short-stay accommodation on rental market

A common topic discussed within this theme was the affect of short-stay accommodation on the rental market. Policy and legislative regulation suggestions were made in support of councils holding more power in increasing charges for whole of house short-stay accommodation. Submissions recommended that any actions in relation to short-stay accommodation do not adversely affect the supply of residential rental accommodation.

Responding to private market challenges

Several submissions agreed with the Strategy's problem definition relating to market conditions increasing demand for social housing and homelessness services, with many young people potentially facing a lifetime of renting given their diminishing prospects of home ownership. Submissions emphasised the Strategy must anticipate and respond to the challenges of the private market through rental assistance and homelessness programs.

Some submissions also raised concern with the potential of housing policies to drive wealth inequality and advocated for government intervention to focus on social and affordable housing and associated programs.

Focus area 3: People at the centre

1. *Safety*
2. *Housing first*
3. *Housing and homelessness workforce*
4. *Social infrastructure*
5. *Lived experience*
6. *Supporting those in need*

Collective support across submissions

Solid support for this focus area was noted across submissions. Submissions agreed that rising rates of homelessness and widening inequality will put further strain on the already overburdened health system, as well as on services for the homeless, mental health, and justice systems. These advocates wanted to see this focus area increased in prominence as focus area one instead of 'more homes, built faster'.

More detail about Housing First approach

Submissions commended the inclusion of a Housing First approach in the Exposure Draft. However, it was also flagged that it was unclear how the Housing First approach would affect or involve community housing providers. Submissions suggested implementing a Housing First approach in consultation with community housing providers that:

- articulated roles and responsibilities
- was informed by lived experience on an ongoing basis
- allowed for coordination and support services
- was adequately funded to ensure that people are referred to and receive the appropriate support services that they need

- ensured that community housing providers can deliver the Housing First approach without compromising existing services.

Specify homelessness objectives

Submissions called for specific actions to be outlined to meet homelessness objectives. When considering homelessness, the Strategy should focus on rough sleeping and the support homelessness services can provide to those at risk of homelessness and those who are living in inadequate housing ie overcrowding.

Strategies to better support homelessness objectives also included ensuring the homelessness workforce is adequately staffed and equipped to support people to address barriers to housing. Local government submissions suggested better collaboration between local government and crisis housing organisations. As well as being trauma-informed, the approach must incorporate wraparound supports to provide a holistic level of care for the multifaceted forms of disadvantage community members face.

Importance of education to develop skilled workforce

It was suggested that this theme has an education connection that is missing which could be strengthened by further considering TAFE and education to develop an appropriately skilled workforce. This sentiment was echoed by suggestions to invest in training and employment programs and partnership for construction.

Continue including lived experience

Stakeholders commended the inclusion of lived experience voices during the consultation process across the course of the Strategy development. They expressed there was an important opportunity to strengthen consumer representation and roles across the suite of housing and support services, and the entire housing system in Tasmania.

To encourage participants and create avenues for the voices of service users to be included in the creation of services, policies, and practises that will impact their lives, more funding and a shift in culture were required.

Focus area 4: Local prosperity

- 1. Key workers*
- 2. Regional Tasmania*
- 3. Short stay accommodation*

Support for key worker housing initiatives

Submissions across each stakeholder group supported initiatives to assist key workers around Tasmania, particularly in regional areas to assist employee retention in essential industries and support overall prosperity of local communities.

Varied opinions about short-stay accommodation

Differing opinions about the effect of short stay accommodation on the rental market were noted amongst submissions. A large portion of submissions called for legislative and policy amendments to better regulate the increasing number of whole of house listings.

Submissions from the short-stay industry attributed housing affordability and availability issues as being caused by factors that have been growing steadily since before their platforms were founded and highlighted the economic benefits of short stay accommodation in Tasmania. They noted that whole of house holiday accommodation is a small percentage of the market and identified a mismatch between dwellings that qualify for social and affordable housing and short stay accommodation, making a case for taking a balanced approach toward any action in this space.

Implementation

Measuring success

Putting this strategy into action

Roles and responsibilities across the housing system

Putting the Strategy in to action

Many submissions expressed enthusiasm in receiving further information about the proposed implementation of the Strategy and felt that without this information, they were unable to consider the Strategy in its entirety as the Exposure Draft did not include how objectives would be met.

Submissions highlighted the importance of goals, targets, timelines, reporting and monitoring measures in Strategy and called for continued consultation in the development of the Action Plan.

Many submissions urged that the Action Plan spelt out specific goals for certain population groups ie people who are homeless, children and young people, mental health consumers, LGBTIQ+, those exiting residential institutions and key workers.

Include wellbeing in evaluation measures

Specific inclusions were mentioned such as incorporating wellbeing measures instead of only economic measures into the Strategy and the associated reporting and evaluation processes.

Further recommendations were noted such as identifying and classifying proposed actions as either addressing a broader 'system-wide' issue or aiming for a more targeted intervention related to a specific matter as opposed to a systemic solution.

Transparent data and reporting processes

Many submissions were keen to see proposed inclusions over the life course of the Strategy such as a housing demand analysis, data visualisation tools and interactive dashboards that would enable transparent reporting.

This would be further complemented by publicly accessible progress reports, public meetings, open data initiatives, regular updates through various communication channels, public feedback mechanisms and performance audits.

Appendix I Submissions received

Air BnB

Australian Institute of Architects - Tas Chapter

Australian Property Institute

Anglicare Tasmania

Central Highlands Council

City of Hobart

Cohousing Australia

Cradle Coast Authority

Cumulus Studio

Derwent Valley Council

Housing Alliance Lutruwita Tasmania (HALT)

Housing Industry Association (HIA)

Kingborough Council

Latrobe and Kentish Councils

Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT)

M. Miro Quesada Le Roux

Mission Australia

Nekon Pty Ltd

North East Bioregional Network

Northern Midlands Council

Planning Institute Australia - Tas

Property Council of Australia - Tas

R. Norman

Real Estate Institute of Tasmania (REIT)

RSPCA

Shelter Tasmania

Sorell Council

Southern Midlands Council

Tasmanian Council of Social Service (TasCOSS)

Tasman Council

Tenants' Union of Tasmania

V. Wilkinson

Waratah-Wynyard Council

Online Form Submissions

A. Stocks

B. Tolputt

Break O'Day Council

Brighton Council

Central Coast Council

COTA Tasmania - Tasmanian Policy Council

Create Foundation

Cradle Coast, Regional Economic Development Committee and the Natural Resource Management Committee

D. Van Loenen

E. Hadkins

George Town Council

G. Cordover

G. Reynolds

Glenorchy City Council

Housing All Australians

J. Cambers-Smith

J. Handler

MAS National / IntoWork Australia

Master Builders Tas

Mental Health Council of Tasmania

M. Corney

P. Stigant

Professor Jason Byrne

S. Ahmed

Tasmanian Forest Products Association

T. Hindle

The Salvation Army

Women's Health Tasmania

Working it out

Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT)

Email: tasmanianhousingstrategy@homes.tas.gov.au

tashousingstrategy.homest Tasmania.com.au