

**Submission
No 55**

**OPTIONS TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO EXISTING AND ALTERNATE
ACCOMMODATION TO ADDRESS THE SOCIAL HOUSING SHORTAGE**

Organisation: NSW Disability Council

Date Received: 13 August 2021

D21/1346433

13 August 2021

Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services
New South Wales Parliament
6 Macquarie Street
Sydney, NSW 2000
Via: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Chair

Re: Options to improve access to existing and alternate accommodation to address the social housing shortage

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to your inquiry into options to improve access to existing and alternate accommodation to address the social housing shortage.

The NSW Disability Council (the 'Council') is a statutory body that provides independent advice to the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services on matters that affect people with disability in NSW, as well as their families and carers.

The Council is particularly interested in improving access to social housing for people with disability. We would strongly encourage that a proportion five per cent of all new and existing social housing be quarantined for people with disability. This is particularly important as housing affordability, especially in the private rental market, can be an issue for people with disability. To facilitate access and ensure that social housing meets the needs of people with disability, the following principles should be followed.

Livable Housing Design Guidelines

It is essential that all social housing meets the minimum standards set out in the Livable Housing Design Guidelines. Livable homes include key easy living features that make them easier and safer to use for all occupants including people with disability.

Co-design

Where possible a co-design process should be adopted to ensure that housing meets the diverse needs of all tenants, particularly people with disability, so that it is fit for purpose.

Location

It is essential that social housing is located throughout NSW including rural and remote communities. As mobility may be a challenge for many people with disability, it is important

that social housing is located as near to key infrastructure and amenities as possible including public transport, shops, and medical facilities.

To assist with planning, it would be useful to understand current demand for social housing by people with disability, by locality, compared with the number of suitable properties available.

Safety

Priority access to safe and secure housing is essential for people with disability. This is particularly important for women with disability who may be escaping domestic violence.

NSW Housing Register

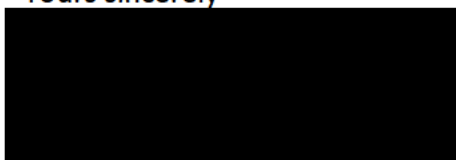
A centralised database of properties suitable for people with disability would facilitate access. It is important to note that many vulnerable people do not have access to the internet and phones, so it is important that strategies are in place to reach marginalised individuals.

While it is acknowledged that this inquiry is focused on existing and alternate accommodation, the Council would recommend consideration be given to incentivising developers to incorporate accessible, social housing within new builds.

In addition to the suggestions above, the NSW Disability Council wishes to endorse the recommendations made by the Physical Disability Council of NSW in their submission to the inquiry (see attached).

Thank you once again for the opportunity to contribute to this important inquiry.

Yours sincerely



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Attachments included with submission

Submission 35 - Physical Disability Council of NSW