

Inquiry into Social, Public and Affordable Housing

Dubbo City Council Supplementary Questions with Notice

1. Gordon Estate and Apollo

a) How many people were displaced by the demolition and redevelopment of the Gordon and Apollo Estates?

Dubbo City Council has worked and continues to work collaboratively with Housing NSW and a range of other government agencies to oversee revitalisation of Rosewood Grove (former Gordon Estate) and the Apollo Estate.

In respect to Rosewood Grove (former Gordon Estate), in response to increasing levels of crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour which included a riot in 2005, in 2006, the then Minister for Housing, the Hon Cherie Burton, announced a plan to move all public housing tenants from the former Gordon Estate and embark on a program of re-settlement across a number of areas of the City and other towns. This program has been successful and has resulted in the delivery of affordable housing outcomes in this area of the City.

In respect to the Apollo Estate, Council is now a key partner in the Ministerial Action Group (now known as the Dubbo Management Group), which was formed by the former Minister for Family and Community Services Pru Goward. The Group was formed to drive a program of reform and change for the community, respond to issues in the Apollo Estate (and in other social housing areas across Dubbo).

Dubbo City Council does not hold a precise figure in respect to the number of people that were required to move from Rosewood Grove and the Apollo Estate. However, it is understood from Housing NSW that tenants in both Estates were given opportunities to move to other parts of Dubbo or to other towns and cities to be closer to relatives and support networks.

b) Where have the people who were displaced moved to and has there been an increase in homelessness?

It is understood from Housing NSW that tenants in both Rosewood Grove and the Apollo Estate were provided with opportunities to move to other properties in the City or to be re-settled in other towns and cities to be closer to relatives.

Council does not hold specific data in respect to the level of homelessness in the Dubbo Local Government Area, however, the City has a crisis centre and a refuge, which are either State Government funded or provided by non-government organisations.

c) *Has Council monitored the impact of the removal of the housing at the Gordon Estate and the impact on the Aboriginal community?*

Dubbo City Council works collaboratively with the Aboriginal community and Housing NSW in the Dubbo Local Government Area. Council has a full time Aboriginal Liaison Officer that works across the Aboriginal community and is well accepted by a range of interests groups in the Aboriginal community.

Council also has an Aboriginal Community Working Party, which has a wide membership from the local Land Council through to elders and other interested persons. This Working Party meets on a monthly basis and considers a wide variety issues in respect to the Aboriginal Community.

Council does not specifically hold data in relation to the impact of the removal of housing at Rosewood Grove and the Apollo Estate on the Aboriginal community. However, Council through the Aboriginal Liaison Officer and the Aboriginal Community Working Party aims to ensure any issues in respect to housing and the Aboriginal community can be addressed through our partnerships with Housing NSW and other providers.

2. In relation to councils working with community housing providers

a) *Are there any legal constraints in relation to local government providing land for the development of housing on land owned by council either community or operational land?*

Land is classified under the Local Government Act, 1993 as either Community Land or Operational Land. Under the Act, Community Land must be set aside for the exclusive use of the entire community through the provision of public access. It is considered that Community Land could not be utilised for a housing related purpose, where these conditions could not be achieved.

In respect to Operational Land it is considered that there are no legal constraints and that any sale or use of the land would be subject to the consideration of Council and association planning processes under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979.

b) *If there were incentives for council to provide land for the development of social or affordable housing what would be attractive to local government to do so or what would be the disincentive?*

Council has worked with a number of community housing providers in the Dubbo Local Government Area to facilitate a range of developments including Group Homes and other accommodation opportunities. Council assists the development process in ensuring that any approvals are provided in an expeditious manner.

It is considered that any incentives provided by the State Government could assist in the delivery of further affordable and social housing opportunities in NSW.

3. Would the council support a contribution from all S94 contributions addressing social and affordable housing and homelessness?

It is considered that the NSW State Government could pursue a model for Section 94 Developer Contributions to be used to deliver affordable and social housing.

A Section 94 Contributions Model for the delivery of The NSW Government is undertaking the significant review and provision of new planning legislation including developer contribution systems.

Developers of affordable housing and social housing could be provided the opportunity to have reduced developer contributions payable if the development meets the following requirements:

- Sale of the development to a third party must be undertaken at no greater than the average price for housing in the Dubbo Local Government Area for the 12 calendar months prior to the granting of development approval.
- This would mean a dwelling house could not be sold for a figure higher than the average house price applying to the area in question.
- A Caveat could be included on the title of the development with Council as the Caveat holder, for re-sale of the property to not be undertaken within a two (2) year period and for the property to be owner/ occupied for the same period.
- The Caveat could be amended if certain circumstances if required.

To consider the issue of the collection of contributions towards the provision of social and public housing, a component of Section 94 Contributions as a flat percentage rate could be utilised towards the provision of social and public housing based on the greatest percentage of need per head of population.

However, any model must not be to the detriment of infrastructure funding and infrastructure provision or place any further burden on Local Government.