

**Submission  
No 99**

## **INQUIRY INTO SOCIAL, PUBLIC AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**Organisation:** Canterbury City Council

**Date received:** 28/02/2014

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# *City of Canterbury*

*City of Cultural Diversity*

*Our Reference:* H-30-4

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The Hon Paul Green MLC,  
Committee Chair  
NSW Parliamentary enquiry into Social,  
Public and Affordable Housing  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Green

**Subject: Submission to the Inquiry into Social, Public and Affordable Housing**

I refer to the recent announcement of the Inquiry into Social, Public and Affordable Housing and your invitation for submissions.

We welcome the opportunity to provide information on the significant value of social, public and affordable housing in our community and the need for this type of housing for the residents of the City of Canterbury.

Critical issues for the City of Canterbury include the extensive waiting times of more than ten years for applicants of social and public housing and the increasing costs of private rental housing.

The City of Canterbury has a score of 922.0 on the SEIFA index of disadvantage, showing it has the third highest level of disadvantage of local government areas in metropolitan Sydney, with only Fairfield and the Liverpool Plains having higher levels of disadvantage.

45 percent of residents of the City of Canterbury were born overseas compared with only 26 percent for Greater Sydney. The City also has a very significant number of refugee entrants and is registered as receiving more than five times the number of refugees (1,365) than the City of Sydney, which accepted the next highest number of refugees (259). This type of resident profile indicates a higher level of need for subsidised housing.

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Other key features of the City which show the level of disadvantage of its residents include:

- i. A higher level of households which rent – 35 percent as against 30 percent for Greater Sydney;
- ii. Higher numbers of couples with children – 38 percent as against 35 percent for Greater Sydney
- iii. Considerably higher levels of unemployment – 8.2 percent as against 5.8 percent for Greater Sydney

Additionally, the disease burden of residents of the City of Canterbury is greater for a number of chronic diseases which results in higher levels of disability and therefore increased levels of disadvantage. For example the prevalence of Type 2 Diabetes, circulatory system conditions and lung cancer is higher in Canterbury than for NSW.

In summary, The City of Canterbury has a number of key factors which indicate a higher level of need for social, public and affordable housing. These factors, combined with the LGA being in the middle ring of Sydney housing, and thereby subject to greater housing price increases (both rent and sales costs), strongly suggest the need for increasing the supply of additional social, public and affordable housing within this area.

As stated above, 45 percent of residents of this LGA were born overseas and many have large and extended families living together. Accordingly, an available supply of larger properties is required to prevent overcrowding in smaller dwellings.

In terms of creating more affordable opportunities for new supply, partnerships between land owning entities such as some local councils, not-for-profit organisations and churches and Housing NSW can be an effective means by which to increase supply at reduced costs. Under such partnerships, entities can provide land on which new housing can be constructed.

Canterbury City Council in partnership with Housing NSW developed what is now a successful aged care facility in Roselands in the late 1980s. In this instance Council provided the land and Housing NSW built the facility which provides 65 beds for older people. 50 percent of the beds are for older people on low incomes.

Whilst the emphasis of breaking up areas of high concentrations of disadvantaged people on housing estates has a positive effect on the people in public housing estates, consideration should also be given to the benefits of building effective linkages with the local social services infrastructure.

The redevelopment of the estate at Riverwood, within the City of Canterbury, provides for a positive mix of public, affordable and private housing and is an excellent consultation model, building linkages within the estate to the Riverwood Community Centre and with Canterbury City Council.

Maximising engagement of the local social services infrastructure positively impacts on the outcomes for residents. Local Councils such as Canterbury City Council have very comprehensive Community Planning and Community Consultation networks that can assist residents to integrate successfully into their community.

Canterbury City Council operates a number of Community Advisory Committees to ensure that the needs of the Community groups such as seniors, the CALD community, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and community members with a disability are carefully planned and advocated for.

Canterbury City Council's Capacity Development Team ensures that information is made available to the residents of the City of Canterbury regarding all programs, projects and services, and that access to programs supported by us, are accessible and socially inclusive.

The services provided by local government are imperative to ensuring that a community has the connectivity in place to support individuals, groups and organisations to build skills, information and independence and our role in supporting effective social housing outcomes should be acknowledged. The partnership we have had with Housing NSW has had many constructive benefits for our community.

I look forward to seeing the final report of the Inquiry.

Yours sincerely

Jim Montague PSM  
**GENERAL MANAGER**

27 February 2014