

Housing Assessment Report

Summary

Objectives

The objectives of this report are to address the Director General's Requirements for the Concept Plan with regard to affordable housing; to set out how Landcom will meet requirements of the sale of the site to provide specified numbers of dwellings for older people, adaptable dwellings and affordable dwellings; and to describe how the proposed housing mix will contribute to the social sustainability of the development.

Methods

The report has been based upon desk-top research and discussions with Landcom development managers.

Findings and conclusions

Housing diversity

Based upon previous studies, there appears to be a need within Penrith to expand the range of housing types and sizes available to meet the needs of a changing and ageing population, given the current overwhelming predominance of detached family housing in the LGA. There is a need for a greater supply of smaller housing types, and for housing which is affordable for smaller households, including single person households, young people in group households, single parents and couples without children.

The housing mix proposed in the Concept Plan for the North Penrith site will include a range of dwelling forms and sizes that will meet the needs of a variety of household types. In this way it will add to housing diversity within Penrith, in terms of both dwelling type and tenure. Most of the dwellings will be in semi-detached or attached formats suitable for one or two person households, single parent families or other families with only one child. There will also be a small proportion of detached dwellings, suitable for families with children. This mix is important in order to provide housing diversity that will help create a balanced and socially sustainable community, rather than one that segregates families with children from other household types.

Affordable housing

Despite having lower headline property prices and rental costs than on average across metropolitan Sydney, low and moderate income residents in Penrith face continuing problems with housing affordability. There appears to be a need for a greater supply of housing suitable for smaller households, including single person households who are in greatest housing stress.

Landcom will address housing affordability issues and the housing needs of low and moderate income households in Penrith by:

- Providing a high proportion of small dwellings within the North Penrith development, as indicated in the Concept Plan, which will be affordable for purchase by moderate income households, in line with Landcom's Moderate Income Housing policy, and
- Delivering 44 dwellings as affordable rental properties, to be managed by a community housing provider, in line with commitments to the Commonwealth Government as part of the sale of the North Penrith site.

Housing for older people

A condition of the sale of the North Penrith site to Landcom by the Commonwealth Government is that Landcom make available 100 dwellings designed to meet the needs of older people, for which there is a considerable need within Penrith, in view of the ageing of the population. Landcom has had considerable experience in providing housing for older people in some of its other developments, where the delivery process has involved tendering to a specialist aged housing provider. The Concept Plan does not identify a specific site for the aged housing, nor has an aged housing provider been selected at this stage. Instead it is proposed that Landcom select a provider in the next stage of the planning process, either directly or through a joint venture delivery partner. The size and specific location of the site for aged housing will depend on the housing and care delivery model of the selected provider.

Adaptable housing

A further condition of the sale of the North Penrith site to Landcom by the Commonwealth Government is that Landcom make available at least 44 adaptable dwellings. It will be a condition of future delivery arrangements with a joint venture partner that a minimum of 44 dwellings are constructed as adaptable dwellings in accordance with Landcom's Universal Housing Design Guidelines.

ESD principles demonstrated in the project

The proposed mix of dwelling types will contribute to housing diversity in Penrith and encourage a balanced population that includes a diversity of age, life cycle, household and socio-economic groupings. In this way, housing diversity will contribute to the social sustainability of the development.

Recommendations

The report recommends that:

Housing diversity

1. Landcom will promote housing diversity in Penrith by including within the development a wide mix of dwelling types and sizes for a range of household types.

Affordable housing

2. Landcom will provide affordable housing for purchase in North Penrith in line with its Moderate Income Housing policy.

3. Landcom will help make available 44 affordable rental dwellings to be managed by a community housing organisation.

Housing for older people

4. Landcom will co-ordinate the delivery of 100 dwellings for older people by an appropriate organisation.

Adaptable housing

5. Landcom will co-ordinate the delivery of 44 dwellings as adaptable dwellings in accordance with Landcom's Universal Housing Design Guidelines.

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1. Objectives of assessment

At a glance

The objectives of this report are to address the Director General's Requirements for the Concept Plan with regard to affordable housing; to set out how Landcom will meet requirements of the sale of the site to provide specified numbers of dwellings for older people, accessible dwellings and affordable dwellings; and to describe how the proposed housing mix will contribute to the social sustainability of the development.

The purpose of this report is threefold:

1. To address the Director General's Requirements for the Concept Plan with regard to affordable housing. These are to provide details of how affordable housing for low and moderate income earners is to be delivered on the site, to include:

- An assessment of the proportion of the local community subject to housing stress and defined as very low, low and moderate income households
- Details of the proportion of affordable housing proposed to be provided in the development
- Details of the housing product to be provided to accommodate affordable housing, and
- Details of any proposed arrangements with social housing providers, if relevant

The Director General's Requirements for the Stage 1 Project Application for the North Penrith project contain no requirements relevant to this Housing Report.

2. To set out how Landcom proposes to address the requirements of the sale of the site by the Commonwealth Government to make available:

- 100 dwellings specifically for older people
- 44 adaptable dwellings
- 44 affordable dwellings, to be made available to a housing provider.

3. To describe how the proposed housing mix will contribute to the overall social sustainability of the development.

2. Housing Diversity

At a glance

This chapter describes the housing mix proposed for the development and the ways in which housing diversity will contribute to the social sustainability of the development.

The local housing context

Housing development within Penrith has traditionally been targeted at families with children. Penrith LGA is characterised by a predominance of low density detached housing, which comprises over 85% of all dwellings. Medium and higher density forms of housing form a small proportion of overall dwelling stock in Penrith, with only 8.1% of dwellings being semi-detached / town houses and 6% being apartments / flats.

In terms of the tenure profile in Penrith LGA, over 70% of dwellings are fully owned or being purchased. Dwellings for private rental comprise only 15.7% of dwelling stock, while public housing makes up 4% and other / not stated rental arrangements account for 6.2% of dwelling stock.

In this context, households seeking and able to afford detached housing for purchase have a wide choice of locations within the LGA. Households seeking, or only able to afford, smaller dwellings and /or dwellings to rent have a much more limited choice.

As noted the Social Planning Report which accompanies the Environmental Assessment Report for the North Penrith Urban Area (Elton Consulting) the neighbourhoods adjacent to the North Penrith site are playing an important role in providing a limited supply of smaller dwellings and rental dwellings for households who do not want, or cannot afford, larger detached homes.

In view of this profile, studies undertaken by Penrith City Council have identified a need for greater housing diversity within Penrith, to meet the needs of a changing population. While households comprising couples and children will remain the dominant household type in Penrith for the foreseeable future, there are increasing numbers of non-family and smaller family households in Penrith, consistent with demographic trends at the metropolitan level. In particular, a need has been identified for more housing suited to the needs of the growing population of older people, including semi-detached and attached dwellings with small gardens, and flats / units / apartments which are located in close proximity to shops, services and public transport. There is also an identified need for housing options for young people who have grown up and want to remain in the Penrith area, but who cannot afford detached housing when they first leave home. If Penrith is to retain its population of young people to help balance its ageing population profile, then a greater supply of rental housing and smaller, more affordable dwellings are required in the LGA.

Proposed dwelling mix

Demand for different types of housing expressed through the market is commonly considered to represent an expression of need for different types of dwellings in different locations, tempered by a household's ability to pay to fulfil their needs.

A detailed demand and supply assessment of the local housing market has been undertaken by Landcom, as the starting point for an analysis of housing need in North Penrith (Landcom, May 2010). This assessment has examined the current patterns of housing demand within the Penrith LGA by household type to establish estimates of the mix of housing products that would be likely to appeal to the local market.

The Landcom Report examines data on dwelling purchases for the year ending November 2009 in the Penrith LGA. Key findings include:

- Detached houses made up almost 90% of sales, with a median lot size of 633m²
- Of 3,435 houses sold, the greatest demand was for:
 - \$250,000-\$299,000 (21% of sales)
 - \$300,000-\$349,000 (28% of sales)
 - \$350,000-\$399,000 (19% of sales)

Sales were substantially lower in other price brackets.

- Of 803 units sold, the greatest demand was for:
 - <\$200,000 (35% of sales)
 - \$250,000-\$299,000 (25% of sales)
 - \$300,000-\$349,000 (16.4% of sales)
 - \$200,000-\$249,000 (15.8% of sales)

Sales were substantially lower in other price brackets.

The Landcom Report notes that in December 2009, the median house price in Penrith was \$345,000 and the median unit price was \$208,000. (As outlined in the following chapter, the median house price in Penrith had fallen to \$335,000 for the March 2010 quarter).

The analysis concludes that Penrith is a price sensitive market. "Demand begins to thin out at prices over \$350,000 for houses and over \$300,000 for units" (p. 5).

An analysis of other developments within the LGA and nearby areas concluded that:

- Demand for new housing in Penrith has been relatively slow in recent years. Sales rates for new developments such as house and land packages at the Waterside development, Cranebrook and lower density dwellings at Claremont Parkland, have sold at about 2-4 lots per month. Prices and block sizes have recently been reduced, partly in response to first home buyer incentives.
- Recent new private building approvals tend to have been for detached housing.
- Of the more than 700 new medium density dwellings in the planning stages for Penrith, apartments make up 65%, although there are more townhouse/villa type dwelling projects at the planning stage.
- There is likely to be demand for around 740 new dwellings in Penrith this year. Given slow take up of the new detached housing on offer, there is an undersupply of new housing in the LGA.

The Landcom report has also analysed the profile of households who purchased and moved into a house in Penrith City Centre in the previous five years, based on 2006 Census data. Information was also included from the Census in relation to the types of dwelling purchased by each type of family or household. A summary of findings is shown in Table 1 below and was used to estimate an appropriate housing mix for North Penrith Urban Area.

Table 1. Proportions of dwelling types chosen by movers to or within Penrith City

Household / Family type	Separate house	Semi-detached, row, terrace or townhouse	Flat, unit or apartment	Total
Couple family with children	65.5	21.1	13.3	100.0
Couple family without children	32.3	26.2	41.4	100.0
One parent family	42.7	37.1	20.2	100.0
Lone person households	12.4	38.7	48.9	100.0
Other families and household types ¹	46.9	18.8	34.4	100.0
Weighted average	38.7	29.4	31.9	100

Note: 1 includes other families, multiple family households and group households.

Source: Landcom, May 2010, citing ABS

This shows that families with children have chosen to live mainly in detached housing, followed by semi-detached styles. By contrast, those families without children mostly have purchased higher density flats, units or apartments, although around one third of families without children purchased detached houses. Single parent families have a preference for detached houses or semi-detached style dwellings. Almost half of people living alone are living in apartment style accommodation, with another large group living in semi-detached dwellings.

Given the strategic location of the North Penrith site and its proximity to public transport and the retail, commercial and social facilities and services of the city centre, the proposed North Penrith development will comprise predominantly medium and higher density housing.

As indicated in the Concept Plan, a wide range of dwelling types is proposed for the North Penrith Urban Area. Within each dwelling type, a number of sub-types are proposed comprising dwellings of different sizes, styles and configurations. These will range from multi-storey apartment buildings through to detached dwellings on lots with a 12-15 metre frontage.

The Concept Plan for the North Penrith development proposes a yield of between 900 and 1,000 dwellings. For the purpose of estimating population numbers, a mid-range estimate of 950 dwellings has been adopted in this study. The likely dwelling mix based on this yield is shown in the table below.

Table 2. Proposed dwelling mix and yield

Dwelling type	Number of dwellings
Apartments, lofts and other small attached dwellings	574
Attached / semi-detached dwellings (eg townhouses, courtyard houses with 2-3 bedrooms)	262
Detached dwellings (3+ bedrooms)	114
Total	950

The Landcom analysis has concluded that this mix of dwelling types is likely to attract the following breakdown of demand by market segment across the project lifetime.

Table 3. Expected proportion of households and family types

Household / Family type	Expected percentage of purchasers(%)
Couple family with children	15
Couple family without children	25
One parent family	10
Lone person households	25
Investors	25
Total	100

Tenant households in investment properties are most likely to comprise young adults (in group households and as singles and couples), single parent families and other low income households.

Encouraging diversity among residents

Providing opportunities for mixed developments that provide diversity in housing and land use is one of the key objectives of Landcom's social sustainability policy. The diversity of the population, in terms of its socio-economic, household and cultural mix, will be a function of the type, size, price and mix of dwellings provided within the development. Generally the greater the variety of dwellings provided, the greater the diversity of households attracted to the development will be.

Housing diversity is important to satisfy the needs of a changing and increasingly diverse population, to provide lifestyle choice and to create social mix and a balanced community. A diversity of housing forms will provide opportunities suited to the needs of a range of household types, at differing stages of the life cycle and with differing lifestyle priorities. Such diversity helps to avoid the age cohort peaks and troughs experienced in homogenous developments that place uneven demand and strain on social infrastructure and services.

Housing diversity also provides housing forms able to meet the needs of a changing and ageing population, allowing people to age in place as their life cycle, lifestyle and work requirements change over time, rather than having to uproot and move to a new community. Providing a range of housing forms can also provide housing choice to a wider spectrum of households, with varying socio-economic circumstances, and so contribute to social, as well as life cycle, diversity.

The mix proposed for the North Penrith Urban Area will include row houses, townhouses, zero-lot and courtyard houses in a variety of layouts and sizes, loft style apartments, single storey apartments and some traditional detached houses. This mix will include 100 dwellings suitable for older people, 44 dwellings built in accordance with Landcom's Universal Housing Design Guidelines and another 44 affordable housing dwellings. The relatively small land size of dwellings will ensure that housing will be moderately priced and hence affordable to a large section of the population within the catchment. It is likely to appeal to growing numbers of smaller households, including couples without children (both young couples yet to start a family and empty nesters), single people and single parent families. Two-parent families with children will be accommodated in the detached and larger semi-detached dwellings, but are unlikely to be the predominant household form.

The housing needs of older people within the development will be addressed through the provision of 100 or more dwellings which will be made available specifically for older people (refer Chapter 5) and another 44 or more units purpose designed as universal housing within the development (refer Chapter 6). This is important in Penrith in view of the projected ageing of the population and the growing need to provide greater housing choice for older people who wish to downsize or move to a more compact and manageable home. Providing housing suitable for older people also allows grandparents to live near adult children and their families, an important source of family support and childcare. The open space and public recreation opportunities presented by the North Penrith site may also appeal to people who are retired or semi-retired and who have time for leisure, recreation and social activities.

In addition, some of the mainstream attached and semi-detached dwellings (particularly if single storey or two storey with capacity for a bedroom and bathroom downstairs) would also cater to the needs of older people, even though not specifically designated as housing for older people. These dwellings would suit people who want to "age in place" rather than move again as their needs change.

In addition to the housing for older people and adaptable dwellings, there is a commitment for 44 dwellings to be provided as affordable housing (refer following chapter). This will provide specific opportunities for households on low and moderate incomes and help ensure that the development has a socio-economically, as well as demographically, diverse population.

The proposed dwelling mix will also appeal to younger people, given that a significant proportion is likely to be purchased by investors and made available as rental housing. The inclusion of a large proportion of apartments and attached dwellings, which are more affordable than detached homes, will also appeal to young first home buyers looking to "get a foot in the market".

It will be important that the development also provides some housing choices for families with children, as well as for smaller households, to ensure that households with and without children do not become segregated in Penrith. The inclusion of some detached dwellings and

a good proportion of semi-detached dwellings will assist this. Including opportunities for families with children will require inclusion of a range of dwelling sizes as well as forms – for instance a proportion of apartments and townhouses with 3+ bedrooms, not just all 1-2 bedrooms.

To promote further diversity and meet the needs of a changing community, it will be important to provide a wide choice in format and design within the dwelling types to accommodate households with varied needs, including working from home, accommodating adult children or frail aged parents in inter-generational housing, blended families, and larger families from other cultural backgrounds. This might include housing with separate studio accommodation or multiple entrances.

Conclusion

Based upon previous studies, there appears to be a need within Penrith to expand the range of housing types and sizes available to meet the needs of a changing and ageing population, given the current overwhelming predominance of detached family housing in the LGA. There is a need for a greater supply of smaller housing types, and for housing which is affordable for smaller households, including single person households, young people in group households, single parents and couples without children.

The housing mix proposed in the Concept Plan for the North Penrith site will include a range of dwelling forms and sizes that will meet the needs of a variety of household types. In this way it will add to housing diversity within Penrith, in terms of both dwelling type and tenure. Most of the dwellings will be in semi-detached or attached formats suitable for single person or couple only households, single parent families or other families with only one child. There will also be a small proportion of detached dwellings, suitable for families with children. This mix is important in order to provide housing diversity that will help create a balanced and socially sustainable community, rather than one that segregates families with children from other household types.

Recommendations

1. Landcom will promote housing diversity in Penrith by including within the development a wide mix of dwelling types and sizes for a range of household types.

3. Affordable Housing

At a glance

Despite having lower headline property prices and rental costs than metropolitan Sydney, low and moderate income households in Penrith, especially single person households, face problems with housing affordability. The North Penrith project will help address these issues by increasing the supply of smaller, more affordable properties for purchase by moderate income households, in line with Landcom's Moderate Income Housing policy, and by delivering 44 homes for long term affordable rental through a community housing provider.

This chapter sets out issues relevant to the delivery of affordable housing for sale and rental on the site. The research is based on analysing:

- Demographic and housing data
- Relevant national and state legislation
- Landcom's prior experience in providing affordable accommodation
- Community housing providers operating in NSW.

The local housing affordability context

Declining housing affordability is an important issue facing metropolitan Sydney. Low and even moderate income households, both renters and purchasers, are paying what many housing researchers consider to be an unsustainably high proportion of their income on housing costs. Many first time buyers are unable to enter the market as a result of unprecedented increases in the purchase price of houses and units. Private and public sector affordable rental accommodation is in short supply, and recent initiatives such as the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) have been slow to deliver new rental properties.

Defining housing affordability

There is no consistently agreed definition of 'housing affordability'. Many national and international researchers take housing to be affordable where less than 30% of a household's gross income is expended on household costs (Gabriel et al., 2005). The strength of this definition is that it covers both housing purchase and rental. However, it does not take into account a household's individual circumstances where demands on the same gross income may differ significantly between households, and over time.

A variation on this housing affordability ratio, favoured by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI), is the '30/40' rule. This ratio, also known as the 'Ontario test', considers housing stress to occur when housing costs exceed 30% of the income of households in the lowest 40% of the income distribution.

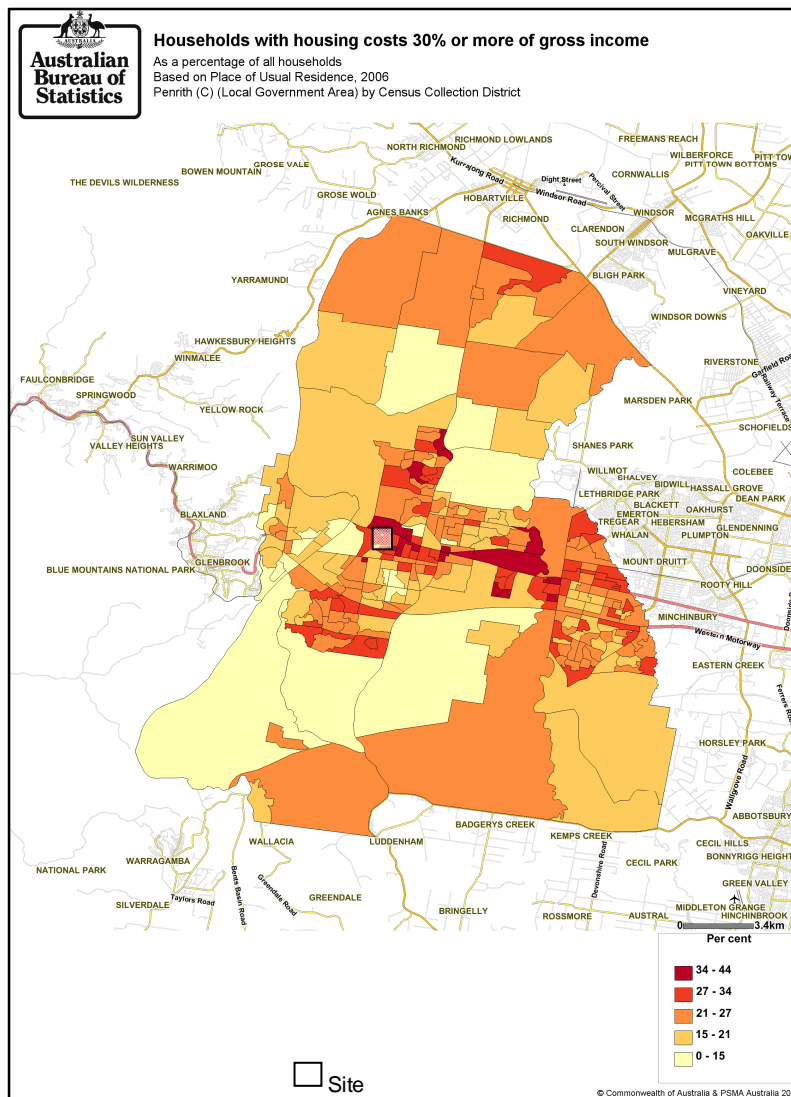
Households who do not live in affordable accommodation are considered to be in 'housing stress'. AHURI research confirmed that while across all Australian households in 2003/04 15% were in housing stress, the figure for the lowest 40% of income earners was nearly double – at 28%. More problems are faced by lower income renters in the private sector, than lower

income purchasers. Groups particularly at risk are young, single people and households with children (Yates & Milligan, 2007).

Housing stress in Penrith

Housing NSW (2010) data indicates that in the Sydney metropolitan context, Penrith's housing is relatively affordable. For the June 2010 quarter, the median weekly rent for a two bedroom dwelling in Penrith was \$260 (compared to metropolitan Sydney average of \$410) and for a three bedroom dwelling \$330 (compared to Sydney average of \$420). In terms of sales prices, the median dwelling price in Penrith in March 2010 was \$335,000, compared with \$490,000 for Sydney as a whole. The differences in incomes are less marked, with Penrith median household income \$59,644 in 2006 compared to \$60,008 across Sydney.

However, despite the headline housing affordability for Penrith looking favourable, there remain significant problems for specific sub-markets. The map below charts housing stress for households at all income levels in Penrith in 2006. It shows that many neighbourhoods are experiencing housing stress, particularly in the central area between the railway line and the M4. The North Penrith site is located in an area surrounded by households with affordability problems.



Source: ABS (2006).

Housing stress by income cohort

Census data allows investigation into housing stress for renters in Penrith using the '30/40' rule. In 2006, a total of 28% of family households in Penrith were in housing stress, that is paying more than 30% of household income in rent (ABS, 2007: gross household income by rent band tables). Of the family household renters facing stress, the vast majority - 97% - were those in the lowest 40% income bracket. In the bottom 40% income cohort, 46% of family household renters were in housing stress. Using a similar calculation, 56% of lower income lone person households were in housing stress. Both these rates are considerably higher than the 28% figure for Australia across all household composition types from the AHURI research (Yates & Milligan, 2007).

Housing NSW used 2006 Centrelink data to calculate what proportion of people on low incomes in the private rental market and in receipt of Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) are paying over 30% of their income on housing (Housing NSW, undated). Penrith has a significant number of CRA recipients in housing stress, featuring in the top 12 NSW local government areas. Single person households form the largest number and proportion of households in housing stress in Penrith, comprising 57% of all those in stress. This data indicates Penrith has insufficient affordable private rental accommodation, particularly catering for the needs of smaller, lower income households.

Many home purchasers also face housing stress, though it is not possible to use census data in the same way as above for renters. However, considering the lowest 40% of household incomes, the most that could be paid on mortgage loan repayments to avoid housing stress is \$1,250 per month in Penrith. In 2006, 77% of Penrith households purchasing their property paid more than this figure. Assuming an estimated 30% equity in properties, and taking a three times salary multiplier, the maximum priced property that could be purchased by a household in the lowest 40% of income earners is \$200,000. As there are fewer properties available for sale in this price range in Penrith, lower earners are either excluded from home purchase or need to take larger mortgages which place them in housing stress.

Section 4.1 of the NSW State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) 70 on affordable housing defines income cohorts based on multipliers of area median income. These are given in the table below, and estimates included for current household income ranges.

Table 4: Housing affordability by income cohort

Income cohort	Relationship to median income	Penrith household income	Affordable house purchase	Affordable weekly rent
Very low	< 50%	< \$34,000	< \$132,000	< \$196
Low	50% - 80%	\$34,000 - \$54,000	< \$211,000	< \$312
Moderate	80% - 120%	\$54,000 - \$82,000	< \$320,000	< \$473

Note 1: Cohort definitions based on SEPP 70. Penrith income figures are for the LGA based on an estimated median household income of \$68,000 in 2010. House purchase based on 3x household income and 30% equity in the property. 'Affordable rent is based on 30% gross income spent on rent. Figures rounded.

Note 2: Landcom's Moderate Income Housing income range is currently \$57,000-\$85,000 based on median NSW incomes. This range is slightly higher than data in the above table for Penrith LGA.

Based on 2010 sales and rental information, the median dwelling price of \$335,000 in Penrith would be unaffordable for very low and low income households and just below the affordable

level for moderate income households (Housing NSW, 2010). The median rent of a two bedroom dwelling (\$260 per week) is unaffordable for very low income households, and a three bedroom dwelling (\$330 per week) unaffordable for very low and low income households.

Data in the above table is based on household income. For sole person households in Penrith, income is an estimated \$31,000 pa. For single people even on moderate incomes, both the median house in Penrith is unaffordable to buy and two and three bedroom properties are unaffordable to rent. Even one bedroom properties are barely affordable. This reinforces the particular affordability problems faced in Penrith by single person households.

Local affordable housing provision

The above section discussed housing affordability using metrics based on the price point of house purchase or rents paid. Affordable housing for moderate income households in Penrith is mostly delivered through the market, whether the private rental market or the housing purchase market. Most local property is larger detached family housing, comprising over 85% of all dwellings. As discussed in the previous chapter, medium and higher density forms of housing and rental housing form a small proportion of overall dwelling stock in Penrith. Households able to afford detached housing for purchase or private rental have a wide choice of properties and locations. In contrast those only able to afford smaller dwellings, especially dwellings to rent, have a much more limited choice.

Affordable rental housing for lower income households in Penrith is largely supplied and managed by social housing landlords, either Housing NSW or community housing providers. There are currently 3,221 social housing properties in Penrith. These can be broken down between 2,999 managed by Housing NSW, 72 by the Aboriginal Housing Office and 372 managed by community housing providers. Social housing in Penrith represents 5.1% of total housing stock, slightly higher than the 4.98% average for NSW. Penrith's community housing, at 11.8% of social housing, is higher than the 10.4% in NSW (ABS, 2007; Gilmour & Bourke, 2009).

Most community housing in the area is provided by Penrith-based Wentworth Community Housing Association. Wentworth is one of the major not-for-profit housing providers in NSW and anticipates by the end of 2010 to be providing over 2,000 affordable rental properties in western Sydney and the lower Blue Mountains. Typical of contemporary community housing providers, Wentworth specialises in the type of accommodation that is in short supply in Penrith. Its properties comprise 40% one and two bedroom homes, and of their tenants, 39% are single and 38% sole parents with one or more children (Wentworth, 2009).

Gap analysis

Based on the above analysis, there is a need within Penrith to expand the supply of affordable rental housing, and to a lesser extent lower-cost housing for purchase. There appears to be a need for a greater supply of housing suitable for smaller households, including single person households, who are in greatest housing stress.

Affordable housing for purchase

Landcom's prior experience

Landcom has been involved since 2002 in facilitating the provision of affordable housing through strategic frameworks and policy directions established by the NSW Government.

Landcom's main focus has been to increase the supply of unsubsidised homes for purchase by moderate income households. Purchasers are typically 'key workers' such as police, nurses and teachers, who are essential to the functioning of communities but are becoming priced out of markets close to where they work.

Landcom's 'Moderate Income Housing' (MIH) product is aimed at households with incomes between 80% and 120% of median income in metropolitan Sydney. For the 2010-2011 financial year, the moderate income range is \$57,000 to \$85,000. This is calculated annually based on households spending less than 30% of gross household income on borrowing costs to purchase a property in the Sydney Statistical Division. The financial assumptions use current interest rates from May each year, a 30 year mortgage term and a 10% deposit. For the 2010-11 financial year, the price range for MIH purchases is \$228,939 to \$343,328.

Landcom has a voluntary target to make available 7.5% of its overall housing product across all development sites as housing that is affordable to moderate income households. Efforts to achieve affordable housing for purchase have focused on encouraging a diversity of housing types, particularly housing on smaller lots, recognising that rising land values have emerged as the greatest single impediment to affordable housing.

Provision of affordable housing for purchase at North Penrith

In respect of affordable housing for sale, the Concept Plan for North Penrith proposes that the site will comprise smaller allotment sizes and there will be a higher proportion of smaller dwelling sizes than currently available in the Penrith LGA. As outlined in the previous chapter, about 60% of dwellings will take the form of apartments, lofts and other small attached dwellings, and a further 27% will be semi-detached, townhouse or courtyard houses on small blocks. This will both increase housing diversity, and also deliver a solid proportion of dwellings that are affordable for moderate income households.

From the table below of recent sales prices in Penrith LGA, strata properties up to the third quartile of sale prices and non-strata up to the first quartile area are currently deemed affordable to moderate income households.

Table 5: Recent sales prices in Penrith LGA

Property	Sales prices, Penrith LGA, March Quarter 2010			
	First quartile	Median	Third quartile	Mean
All dwellings	+ \$293,000	+ \$335,000	\$395,000	\$351,000
Non-strata	+ \$323,000	\$362,000	\$423,000	\$381,000
Strata	+ \$228,000	+ \$279,000	+ \$305,000	** \$271,000

Source: Housing NSW (2010). + indicates prices within Landcom's MIH range (\$228,939-\$343,328).

Of the housing stock proposed on the North Penrith site shown in the table below, all apartments, though none of the houses, will be affordable to moderate income households using Landcom's definition. The loft apartments and one bed mid rise units are particularly affordable for first time buyers, and for households with only one income. This is a good indication of the mix in price points of the properties proposed on the site, and evidence of the delivery of affordable homes for sale.

Table 6: Proposed indicative pricepoints for North Penrith dwellings

Proposed houses		Proposed apartments	
Type	Price	Type	Price
Detached	\$495,000	Loft apartment	+ \$175,000
Zero lot	\$450,000	Apartment	+ \$312,000
Town house	\$410,000	1 bed mid rise	+ \$200,000
Row house	\$345,000	2 bed loft	+ \$250,000
		2 bed mews	+ \$270,000

Source: proposed selling prices supplied by Landcom. + indicates proposed price is below the upper threshold of Landcom's MIH range (\$343,328).

Affordable housing for rental

The Commonwealth Government's affordable housing requirements for the site are to make available to a community housing provider 44 homes for affordable rental. Landcom will make available 44 dwellings as affordable rental homes, through a community housing organisation.

Landcom has considerable experience in mixed income, mixed tenure schemes, for instance in projects at Minto and Potts Hill. Over the last 18 months, Landcom has provided project management services to Housing NSW such as project managing, site acquisition and construction of social housing under the Nation Building Plan. These have been very successful collaborations, which have allowed Landcom to develop business skills in this area. The work has also exposed the corporation to the rapid and significant changes taking place in the community housing sector.

The 44 affordable rental properties to be provided within the North Penrith site will represent an estimated 4.6% of total dwelling stock. This is ahead of similar contemporary schemes in NSW. For example, the inclusionary zoning scheme coordinated by the City of Sydney at Green Square is set to deliver 3% of residential floor area as affordable housing. The proportion of affordable rental housing at the major \$6 billion Barangaroo development scheme is 2.3%, which will yield a smaller number of affordable properties for rent in total than the North Penrith project.

Property types and location

As discussed in the previous chapter, the housing mix proposed for the site will include a range of dwelling forms and sizes that will meet the needs of diverse household types. This variety will also be reflected in the types of affordable rental properties produced, which will include a mix of houses and apartments, and have a range of sizes and bedroom configurations. This will allow the scheme to provide affordable rental properties for 1-2 person households, single parent families or other families with only one child.

An important design approach is that the affordable rental properties will be dispersed across the site and will not be differentiated from the market properties by design or quality. This will avoid the type of problems associated with earlier designs for single-tenure public housing estates. The North Penrith scheme will allow residents in the affordable housing to have equal access to employment, leisure and transport facilities. The site will have consistent form, scale, variety, detail, appearance, setbacks and general relationship to the public realm for both the market and the affordable dwellings. This follows best national and international practice for mixed income, mixed tenure, transit-orientated neighbourhood design.

Delivering and managing affordable rental housing

Landcom is not a builder of homes, and plans to deliver the North Penrith project through a joint venture arrangement with one or more delivery partners. Landcom will commit to a detailed strategy for the delivery of the affordable rental properties to support the first building applications. Consideration will be given to proposed approaches which aim to maximise affordable rental housing outcomes. These approaches may include:

- Engaging a community housing provider through a tender process with the capacity to manage tenancies at North Penrith, and undertake development either directly or through a joint venture. This follows a recent shift in government policy whereby not-for-profit housing providers are expected to compete for resources. Organising a tender process will encourage innovation by community housing providers in terms of establishing local partnerships, raising external finance and potentially producing more affordable housing than the minimum 44 units. Community housing organisations in NSW have a good track record in tenancy management and, through the NSW Registrar of Community Housing, operate in a controlled environment. They also have access to National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) incentives to develop affordable rental homes. However, their capacity to develop affordable properties varies. Some are capable of development themselves, others are part of a development consortium, while some would need to act in partnership with a private developer. The tender process will allow bidders to propose different development solutions, though it will be a condition that the longer term tenancy management must be by a NSW registered community housing provider.
- One approach at North Penrith could be for the delivery partner to build properties, then transfer them to a community housing organisation for long term management. However, this would not maximise the number of affordable properties that could be generated for the same level of public investment. Private developers are not able to benefit from the tax concessions available to community housing organisations, and would be unlikely to harvest additional Commonwealth funding under NRAS. Affordable properties part-funded through NRAS incentives must be rented to eligible applicant low and moderate income residents for ten years at below 80% of local market rental levels (Australian Government, 2008).
- Another approach could be to require the private developer(s) of the site to make a land and cash contribution for affordable housing. This will then be made available through the tender process. Community housing bidders would be expected to demonstrate their ability to leverage this funding using their own resources and NRAS incentives. Landcom could set a minimum yield of 44 affordable rental homes on the site.

Recommendations

2. Landcom will provide affordable housing for purchase in line with its Moderate Income Housing policy.
3. Landcom will help produce 44 affordable rental dwellings to be managed by a community housing organisation.

4. Housing for Older People

At a glance

The agreement to purchase the North Penrith site from the Commonwealth Government includes a requirement that 100 dwellings be made available as housing for older people. This chapter outlines how Landcom might meet this requirement. It considers population forecasts, the current provision of housing for older people in Penrith and areas of need, Landcom's experience in providing housing for older people and issues and options for the provision of aged housing within North Penrith.

Population projections and housing need

While the proportion of older people within the City of Penrith is currently well below the state and national averages, the population of Penrith is rapidly ageing, as "baby boomers" who settled in the new suburbs of the 1970's and 80's approach retirement age. The proportion of older people within Penrith is set to increase at a faster rate than the NSW average for the foreseeable future. In 2006, 14,103 Penrith residents, or 8.2% of Penrith's population, were aged over 65 years. By 2021, the number of Penrith residents aged over 65 years will nearly double to 24,128 people, or 11.5% of Penrith's population. Department of Health and Ageing forecasts suggest that by 2026, there will be an estimated 32,960 people over 65 living in Penrith, representing 16.6% of the total Penrith population.

Of particular significance will be the increase in the numbers of those in the oldest age cohorts, those aged 85+, who are expected to increase from 1,414 people in 2006 to 2,343 in 2021. Although the proportion in this cohort will be small, any increase here has significant implications for aged care services. Many of these people will have cognitive impairment including dementia, an estimated 85% will require some form of assistance in managing their lives and between a third and a half are likely to need residential aged care.

Further examination of the profile of older people within Penrith LGA from the 2006 Census shows:

- Nearly 40% of households where the reference person (ie the person filling out the census form) is aged 65 years or more are lone person households. This rises to 50% in households where the reference person is aged 75 years or more
- About 20% of households where the reference person is aged 65 years or more still have children living at home (including both couple and single parent households)
- Nearly 37% of households where the reference person is aged 65 years or more are couple only households
- Over two thirds of households where the reference person is aged 65 years or more fully own their home, and only 6.7% are still in the process of paying a mortgage
- Only 8.6% of households where the reference person is aged 65 years or more are in private rental accommodation, while a further 7.7% are in public housing
- In 2006, more than 60% of Penrith residents aged 55+ had average weekly individual incomes of less than \$400 per week, at a time when the average weekly individual income in the Sydney Statistical Division was \$518.

As discussed previously in this report, housing development within Penrith has traditionally been targeted at families with children, with a predominance of low-density, single-family homes. Data regarding the type of housing occupied by households where the reference person is aged 65 or more is not available; however, given the dominance of separate housing in the Penrith market, it is likely that the vast majority of older person households occupy detached dwellings.

Projected increases in overall population size in Penrith LGA will mean there will be demand for increases across all housing types in coming years. However, as the age structure changes it is expected that household structure will change, and this will give rise to demand for changing housing types. The greatest changes in household type over the next 15 years will be a dramatic increase in the proportion of lone person households and a corresponding decrease in the proportion of couple families with children. By 2021 it is estimated that the proportion of couple families with children will drop by nearly 5% from 42% in 2006. Lone person households on the other hand will increase by 5% from 18.7% in 2006 to 23.7% in 2021¹.

An ageing population requires a greater diversity of housing types, in order to provide greater choice to older people and ensure that their housing needs can be met within the communities where they live, with familiar shops and services and established social networks. The paucity of smaller forms of housing in Penrith located with ready access to shops, services and public transport will become a key issue as the number of older people living in Penrith increases.

Penrith City Council has prepared a draft Ageing Strategy to guide its planning, actions and service delivery to respond to the challenges of an ageing community². The Ageing Strategy has identified several challenges to ensure suitable housing for the future ageing population is available within Penrith:

- **Ensuring housing choice for older people** - Older people will require access to a range of housing forms and sizes to cater for their diversity of lifestyle choices and support requirements. Such diversity is currently limited in Penrith, and will need to be enhanced if Penrith is to retain its population of older residents.
- **Providing suitable housing in appropriate locations** - Ways to encourage housing choice for older people close to public transport, retail and service centres will need to be considered. Consideration will also need to be given to ways of meeting the housing needs of older people living in the rural areas of Penrith, where the proportion of older residents is already quite high, but services and transport are limited.

The Ageing Strategy has identified a number of actions for Council to help increase the supply of housing suited to the needs of older people in appropriate locations, through its strategic planning policies, through information and encouragement to developers and builders, and through strategies to increase the availability of land in Penrith for aged housing projects, with a particular focus on sites where Council or the State Government are significant land owners.

¹ Penrith City Council 2008b

² Penrith City Council 2009

Options for aged housing

The form of aged housing to be provided within the North Penrith site has not been specified by the Commonwealth Government. Options to address the housing needs of older people include:

- Providing *accessible* housing – self-care housing designed to be accessible for people with mobility limitations, with a focus on proximity to services and transport, manageable pathway gradients, entrances and access to essential rooms (ie no steps).
- Providing *adaptable* housing – self-care housing which can be adapted to meet the needs of older people and people with a disability as their needs change, but which is not age restricted. This usually means providing extra space, wider doorways and designing bathrooms and kitchens to accommodate people in a wheelchair. The sale of the site includes a requirement that Landcom provide 44 adaptable dwellings in addition to the 100 dwellings for older people. This requirement is discussed in the following chapter.
- Housing built under *State Environment Planning Policy (SEPP) Seniors Living*. This is self-care housing designed specifically to meet the needs of older people able to live independently in the community (ie accessible and adaptable). Occupation is restricted through covenants on the title to people aged 55 and over or people with a disability. Such housing is integrated into the community, not segregated in separate villages. The housing is sold to individual purchasers under strata title arrangements, and is not usually linked to the provision of care services or managed by an aged care provider. The SEPP allows for higher densities and different built form controls than apply in low density residential areas. In the case of the North Penrith site, there will be little need to use the SEPP to achieve higher density built form, as the general zoning and development controls are expected to permit these. However, any housing built as SEPP Seniors Living housing could be included within the Commonwealth aged housing requirement for the site by virtue of the age-related restriction on its occupation.
- *Independent living units* - self-care housing designed specifically to meet the needs of older people able to live independently and usually built and managed by a not for profit organisation which may also arrange the provision of support services. Occupation is commonly through a loan and licence arrangement, although some have strata title dwellings. Independent living units may or may not provide some communal facilities.
- *Retirement villages* typically provide independent living units along with some form of assisted living, serviced apartments or residential aged care as part of a tiered care complex. Retirement villages usually provide some communal facilities to support the social and care needs or leisure lifestyle of residents. Occupation is commonly through a loan and licence arrangement, although some villages have strata title dwellings.
- *Residential aged care facilities* provide either high care (nursing homes) or low care (hostels). They provide Commonwealth funded places for older people who can no longer live independently in the community and require on-going care. Accommodation bonds are required for entry to low care facilities. Some residential aged care facilities may provide dementia-specific places, in a secure environment. Entry to residential care requires assessment for eligibility by a NSW Health Aged Care Assessment Team, which has powers to approve eligibility under Commonwealth legislation.

It is not essential that the housing for older people provided within the North Penrith site also provide care and support services in order to meet the Commonwealth Government's

requirements for 100 dwellings. However, if care and support services are not associated with the housing, there is more limited incentive for older people to buy housing that is age restricted. This is particularly so in North Penrith, given that the site will include a variety of dwelling types and styles generally suited to the needs of older people which are not age restricted, and which will therefore be of higher value in the market.

Current provision of housing for older people within Penrith

In terms of self-care retirement village accommodation or independent living units, a total of 382 dwelling units are currently provided within Penrith, as outlined in the following table. This does not include housing provided under State Environmental Planning Policy – Seniors Living. Of the six retirement villages within Penrith LGA, four are located within about two kilometres of the North Penrith site. The retirement villages are generally situated in a landscaped garden setting and include a variety of communal recreational facilities and activities.

Table 7: Self-care accommodation for older people in Penrith

Service	Provider	Address	Description and availability
St Stephen's Village	Anglican Retirement Villages	31 Coreen Ave PENRITH	60 x 1 bed and 2 bed units
Emmaus Village	Catholic Healthcare	85 Bakers lane KEMPS CREEK	24 units x 1, 2 and 3 bed One x 3 bedroom unit available
Edinglassie Village	UnitingCare Ageing	Cnr Great Western Highway and Emerald St EMU PLAINS	45 units
Lemongrove Gardens Retirement Village	Penrith Council	King St Penrith	30 units
Mountain View Retreat Retirement Village	Private operator	37 Mulgoa Rd Penrith	171 x strata title dwellings
Regal Oaks Over 55 Village	Private operator	Park Rd Wallacia	52 x strata title dwellings

While most of the independent living units in Penrith are understood to be currently occupied, affordability is a barrier for many older people in Penrith, according to the Aged Care Assessment Team, especially in the more “up-market” retirement villages.

In terms of Commonwealth funded residential aged care facilities, there are currently 812 funded places within Penrith LGA. In the 2009/10 funding round, 280 new places were funded within the Nepean region, which includes Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury as well as Penrith. The Penrith East Statistical Local Area (SLA) was identified as a high priority for these new places. This reflects the fact that the bulk of the existing facilities in Penrith are located in the Penrith West SLA, in close proximity to the North Penrith site. The current provision of residential aged care in Penrith LGA is outlined in the following table.

Table8: Residential aged care facilities within Penrith

Service	Provider	Suburb	Care type and no. of places
Emmaus Village	Catholic Healthcare	Kemps Creek	Residential Low – 64
Kingswood Court	East West Health Care	Kingswood	Residential High – 67 Residential Low – 10
St Marys Gardens Aged Care Centre	St Marys Gardens Aged Care Centre	St Marys	Residential High – 92 Residential Low – 28
Henry Fulton Nursing Home	Anglican Retirement Villages	Penrith	Residential High – 40
Lemongrove Gardens Hostel	Anglican Retirement Villages	Penrith	Residential Low – 46 Residential High – 55
Jamison Gardens	Summit Health	Penrith	Residential Low – 40
Mountain View Retreat Nursing Home	Mountain View Nursing Home	Penrith	Residential High – 99
Edinglassie Village	UnitingCare Ageing	Penrith	Residential High – 49
Edinglassie Lodge	UnitingCare Ageing	Penrith	Residential Low – 77
Governor Phillip Nursing Home	NSW State Government (NSW Dept of Health)	Penrith	Residential High – 80

In addition to the above, Anglican Retirement Villages has plans for a retirement village within the Caddens release area at Kingswood that will contain a low rise residential aged care facility with 102 high and low care beds, together with 130 independent living two and three bedroom apartments. The village will occupy a landscaped site of eight hectares, and will include a range of recreational, social and community facilities for residents. The facility is expected to open in early 2012.

A further private sector residential care facility is also being built at Kingswood.

According to the Aged Care Assessment Team, a need remains for additional high care and low care facilities within Penrith, given high demand for existing places. While this need may be alleviated in part once the new places allocated in the latest funding round are supplied, in the longer term need will continue to grow as the population of older people increases. The greatest need currently within the residential care sector is for secure dementia-specific places.

Landcom's experience in housing for older people

Landcom has considerable experience in delivering housing for older people within its residential projects. Recent projects that have successfully included a component of aged housing include:

- Prince Henry Little Bay, where both independent living units and residential care have been provided by St Luke's
- Park Central in Campbelltown, where Macarthur Village, operated by Illawarra Retirement Trust, provides 262 independent living units and a low care residential care facility
- Macarthur Gardens, also in Campbelltown, where Stockland Retirement Living will provide a large retirement village with independent living units
- Oran Park, where Anglicare Sydney plans to develop a Chesalon Living seniors community and residential aged care facility within the new Oran Park town area.

In addition, Landcom has undertaken a pre-qualification process to select aged care providers with the skills and financial capabilities to work with Landcom on future projects. This process has identified a variety of aged care providers with interest and expertise in this area and provided a wealth of data on models of provision, different thresholds to create viable facilities and preferences for built form and service delivery. This data will provide a guide, in the first instance, as to organisations that may be appropriate to provide aged housing within the North Penrith site.

Landcom's experience has shown:

- There are a variety of ways in which Landcom has provided aged housing within its projects. In some cases, Landcom has identified a site for aged housing within its project and directly secured a provider through a tender process, based on non-discounted commercial rates. In other cases, Landcom's development partner has identified the need / market for aged housing and secured an aged housing provider.
- Most of the aged housing projects include some communal social and recreation facilities. These vary according to the target market and proximity to other community and recreation facilities provided within the Landcom residential project.
- The cost of providing the communal facilities will influence the number of units required to make the development viable.
- Some of the projects have provided retirement units in the form of 3-4 storey apartment buildings on reasonably small sites, a built form that may be applicable in the North Penrith context.

In summary, based on its previous experience, Landcom has a number of options available that can be applied to the delivery of aged housing within the North Penrith site.

Site requirements

Although it is not essential that the required 100 aged housing dwellings be provided on a single site within North Penrith, it is assumed that this will be the most feasible option, given likely thresholds for commercial viability of built form and economies of scale in the delivery of care services.

The size of the site required for aged housing will depend upon:

- Building densities and preferred built form. If the 100 dwellings were all to be provided as single storey villas or townhouses, it has been estimated that a site of approximately 4 ha

would be required, based on an average allowance of 400 sqm per dwelling. Once land for roads, landscaping and some communal facilities were deducted, this would roughly equate to an average lot size of about 200 - 250 sqm. However, given the strategic location and value of this site, it is felt that such a low density approach would not represent its best use. On the other hand, if all the 100 dwellings were provided in the form of 3-4 storey apartments, a much smaller site would be required. The built form, and hence required size of the site, will reflect the preferred model of the selected provider, within the context of anticipated demand for different dwelling types within the Penrith market.

- The number of dwelling units to be provided to create a commercially viable project, noting that the commitment is to provide a minimum of 100 dwellings, but that more could be provided if commercially appropriate.
- The nature of communal facilities and lifestyle amenities to be provided as part of the development. The communal facilities will reflect the preferred approach of the selected provider, in the context of the affordability constraints of the Penrith market. It should also be noted that a particular need has been identified for affordable housing options for older people in Penrith, and that other retirement villages are currently available or proposed to meet the more “up market” leisure lifestyle end of the spectrum.

In terms of the location of the site for aged housing, assuming it is to contain self-care housing for people able to live independently, it should satisfy the minimum requirements of SEPP Seniors Living in terms of being within 400 metres easy walking distance of the village centre shops and services and the railway station.

Delivery process

Landcom is not a builder of homes, and plans to deliver the North Penrith project through a joint venture arrangement with one or more delivery partners.

The Concept Plan does not identify a specific site for the aged housing, nor has an aged housing provider been selected at this stage. Instead it is proposed that Landcom will select an aged housing provider in the next stage of the planning process. The size and specific location of the site for aged housing will depend on the housing and care delivery model of the selected tenderer.

Options for selection of an aged housing provider include:

- Landcom to directly secure an aged housing provider through a select tender process, based upon its pre-qualification selection process in the first instance
- Landcom to include as a condition of a joint venture tender process to secure a general residential delivery partner that a minimum of 100 dwellings for older people will be constructed within the development, and for the delivery partner to manage the selection of an aged housing provider.

In selecting an aged housing provider, considerations should include the range of matters included in Landcom’s pre-qualification panel, and in particular:

- The nature of housing and care proposed, in the context of needs within Penrith LGA
- The quality of the built form

- The size of site required
- The model of care and support services proposed
- The nature of communal facilities to be provided
- The target market, with a preference that the aged housing include opportunities for older people requiring affordable housing and care
- The extent to which the provider may provide access to services activities for other older people living in mainstream housing within North Penrith
- The financial feasibility of the proposal.

Recommendations

4. Landcom will co-ordinate the delivery of 100 dwellings for older people by an appropriate organisation

5. Adaptable Housing

At a glance

A condition of the sale of the North Penrith site to Landcom by the Commonwealth Government is that Landcom make available at least 44 adaptable dwellings. It will be a condition of future delivery arrangements with a joint venture partner that a minimum of 44 dwellings are constructed as adaptable dwellings in accordance with Landcom's Universal Housing Design Guidelines.

Provision of Adaptable Housing

A condition of the sale of the North Penrith site to Landcom by the Commonwealth Government is that Landcom make available at least 44 adaptable dwellings.

Landcom has developed a set of Universal Housing Design Guidelines and plans to use them to influence the design of mainstream housing so that a greater proportion of new homes will be suitable for older people to live in for a longer period of time. In particular, Landcom aims to include a proportion of universal housing in each of its residential projects, wherever appropriate and financially viable. Locations with direct and convenient access to services that would particularly benefit older people and people with a disability, such as medical services and transport, may have a greater proportion of universal housing.

The Landcom Universal Housing Design Guidelines define universal housing as “homes that are practical and flexible, that meet the needs of people of different ages and abilities over time, and that avoid barriers that may discriminate against people living in or visiting the home. Universal housing is designed to be useable by most people over their lifetime without the need for major adaptation of specialised design”. Universal design includes many of the features specified in the Australian Standard for Adaptable Housing (AS 4299).

Adaptable housing, in turn, is defined as housing with “design features that are adaptable to flex with the changing needs of the occupants, as specified by an Australian Standard. It is designed and constructed to meet the performance requirements of AS 4299”.

The key design features and best practice principles in Landcom's Universal Housing Design Guidelines have been derived from the Australian Standard for Adaptable Housing (AS 4299).

Landcom is not a builder of homes, and plans to deliver the North Penrith project through a joint venture arrangement with a delivery partner. It will be a condition of the joint venture tender process that a minimum of 44 dwellings will be constructed within the development in accordance with Landcom's Universal Housing Design Guidelines.

Key design features

Key design features specified in Landcom's Universal Housing Design Guidelines are minimum structural and spatial requirements that cannot be changed without major expense. These include:

- Direct and level access from the street and car parking space to the house, with level thresholds and paths and sufficient manoeuvring space

- Car parking spaces that are at least 6.0 metres long and 3.8 metres wide
- A front entrance door with a minimum internal clearance of 850mm
- Internal doors with minimum internal clearance of 820mm
- Internal corridors at least on the entry level with a minimum width of 1,000 mm
- Ground level facilities to include a living or family room, a room or other space capable of being used as a bedroom and a bathroom
- Circulation space in the living or family room with at least 2.25 metres diameter circulation space, clear of furniture
- Space in the entry level bedroom large enough for a queen size bed and a wardrobe, with space to move around them
- Entry level bathroom is designed for easy and independent access
- Kitchen to be designed with a minimum of 2.7 metres between facing walls
- Laundry designed with a minimum clear circulation space of 1.55 metres diameter
- Low window sills at least on the entry level no higher than 730mm above floor level.

Recommendations

5. Landcom will co-ordinate the delivery of 44 dwellings as adaptable dwellings in accordance with Landcom's Universal Housing Design Guidelines.

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Appendix 1: Glossary

Term	Meaning
Accessible housing	Housing that is generally purpose built for a person or persons with a disability.
Adaptable housing	Dwellings with design features that are adaptable to flex with the changing needs of the occupants as specified in Australian standard AS 4299.
Affordable housing	Housing where residents pay less than 30% of their gross household income on housing costs such as a mortgage and rent payments.
AHURI	Australasian Housing and Urban Research Institute.
Ecologically Sustainable Development	Ecologically sustainable development requires the effective integration of economic and environmental considerations in decision-making. It can be achieved by implementing the following principles and programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ the precautionary principle▪ inter-generational equity▪ conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity▪ improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms.
Housing stress	Households where more than 30% of gross household income is spent on housing costs.
MIH	Landcom's 'Moderate Income Housing' product, aimed at key worker households earning between 80% and 120% of median income in the Sydney Statistical Division.
NRAS	National Rental Affordability Scheme: a Commonwealth initiative to promote new construction of affordable rental housing.
Universal housing	Refers to homes that are practical and flexible, and which meet the needs of people of different ages and abilities over time. Universal design includes many features specified in the Australian Standard for Adaptable Housing AS4299.