

PUBLIC HOUSING RENEWAL: DICKSON WHAT WE HEARD REPORT



DICKSON DEVELOPMENT

From 26 February to 20 April 2018, Housing ACT sought input from the community as part of the pre-DA engagement stage for a new public housing development on Lowrie Street, Dickson.

Housing ACT is proposing to consolidate 4 blocks - 35, 37, 39 and 41 Lowrie Street - and redevelop these combined sites as a multi-unit development comprising of 20 units for public housing.

The 20 dwellings will be a mix of one, two and three bedroom units including two adaptable units. The proposed development is a 3 storey building, with basement parking for 31 vehicles plus five additional off street visitor parking spaces at ground level.

The existing dwellings to be replaced are almost 60 years in age and are no longer fit for purpose and costly to maintain. The site is a short distance from the Dickson Group Centre with its shops, commercial outlets, employment opportunities, as well as health and other community facilities. There are a variety of public schools near the site and easy access to light rail and buses on Northbourne Avenue and at Dickson.

Housing ACT has given careful consideration to the site and the amenity of the area to produce a high-quality design that aims to integrate with the surrounding area and builds on the current and future desired character of the suburb.

THE CONVERSATION

Housing ACT engaged with the community to seek feedback on the shape and scale of the proposal, and asked people to consider the orientation, look and design, height and density, materials and colour palette, and landscaping of the new development. This was done through a series of information kiosks and online.

Information about the proposed development was sent to all Dickson residents in February 2018. Pop-up information kiosks were held at the Dickson shops on 2 and 22 March, and on site at 35 Lowrie Street on

13 March, where community members were able to drop by to see the plans, ask questions and engage with representatives from Housing ACT.

Housing ACT engaged with stakeholders face-to-face and online about the proposed development from 26 February 2018 to 20 April 2018.

There was a presentation to the North Canberra Community Council meeting on 18 April, providing information about public housing in Canberra and the public housing renewal program.

WHO ENGAGED

A postcard with information on the proposed development and a link to the Your Say website, including dates for community engagement opportunities, was sent to all households in Dickson in February 2018.

Housing ACT held a stall at the Northside Community Services monthly barbecue at the Dickson shops on 2 March 2018, which enabled a broad cross section of the community to stop by and enquire about the project. Approximately 27 people stopped to engage about the project.

The pop-up information kiosk held on site at Lowrie Street on 2 March had 4 people stop by, and the kiosk at the Dickson Shops on 22 March saw approximately 18 people from the surrounding neighbourhood engage about the project.

Key insights from the community

Public housing in the inner north

- 1 There is strong support for public housing in this location being close to essential services and transport
- 2 Support also exists for smart design and energy efficient housing
- 3 There was general interest in design aspects:
 - importance of communal open space
 - insulation to address acoustics/noise transmission
 - utilisation of roofspace for solar panels and / or roof top gardens
 - size and number of dwellings
 - materials and building height



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Key insights continued

Parking

- ④ concerns that visitor parking was inadequate and would result in on-street parking
- ⑤ Inclusion of bicycle parking for visitors

Construction

- ⑥ There was general interest in the process for;
 - Development Application and construction timeframes
 - Traffic management during and post construction
- ⑦ Local residents were interested in construction timings due to potential street access and traffic impacts of other developments currently underway

WHAT'S NEXT?

Housing ACT values the community's feedback to the proposed development. The majority of the feedback was supportive of the proposal and the inclusion of public housing in the area. Issues raised through the community engagement process were taken into consideration and no changes are proposed to the design of the new complex.

The next step is to lodge a Development Application (DA). There will be further opportunity to provide comment as part of the DA process. Please visit: http://www.planning.act.gov.au/development_applications/pubnote

You can register to receive project updates at : housingactrenewal@act.gov.au

To find out more about Housing ACT's redevelopment on Lowrie Street and other initiatives, policies and projects in Canberra visit www.yoursay.act.gov.au or follow us on Facebook or Twitter

Key Timings

Step 1 - 26 February/Outcome/Focus

Step 2 - May/June 2018, compile community feedback

Step 3 - July 2018, submit Development Application

Step 4 - end 2018, construction commences

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

303

We reached 303 people via YourSay

49

We spoke to 49 individuals face-to-face

3

We held 3 pop-up information kiosks in Dickson

1,066

1,066 postcards were sent to households, businesses and community groups in Dickson

15

We received 15 items of written feedback (YourSay and email)

13

We presented to 13 attendees at the April North Canberra Community Council meeting

4

We received 4 written submissions in support of the proposal and 2 against it



Feedback collected on Lowrie Street, Dickson proposed redevelopment

Comment	Design Response	DA response
YOURSAY		
<p>Why not make the blank unused roofs an active space?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - roof top gardens - developments reducing green areas so good offset - solar panels 	<p>Rooftop gardens can create improved amenity especially in locations where space is of a premium. However use of the roof for a garden or green roof adds to the cost and complexity of construction. Soil and garden beds on the roof may also result in future water ingress issues, structural damage and additional maintenance costs. Access to the roof space by tenants would also create issues of safety and oversight into neighbouring properties.</p>	
<p>No to a multilevel development. Property prices will drop in the area. Crime rate will spike. Dickson is too small a suburb to absorb this.</p>	<p>The proposed development is consistent with the planning controls in the area. Public Housing is located within other high value suburbs and properties in these locations have received sales returns that would be expected within a market context. The population of Dickson peaked in the 1960s at just under 3,500 people. As at the 2016 Census there were 2,149 people living in Dickson.</p>	
<p>New blocks have cars on the nature strip at night and on weekends and this kills the street trees. More parking or please design this out.</p>	<p>This development will incorporate 31 parking spaces in the basement for tenants and 5 off street parking spaces for visitors. It can be difficult to control where people park their cars, but if this impacts on the verge, Housing ACT will take steps to restrict us of the area, subject to obtaining necessary approvals.</p>	
<p>I suggest the development should at least comply with the Silver Liveable standard; given the client profile, it would seem to be a minimum.</p>	<p>The units have been designed to achieve Liveable Gold standard. Two units have been designed to be Class C Adaptable.</p>	
<p>A big Yes to more of this type of development. Canberra needs to urbanise. And good to see public housing in the mix.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	

Feedback collected on Lowrie Street, Dickson proposed redevelopment

<p>The design looks a bit boring. Make it really attractive and you have to be kidding with 5 spaces for visitor parking? Outlooks?</p>	<p>Housing ACT considers that the design is a good response to the planning controls on what is a difficult site. The main building is set well back on the site and will be obscured by trees lining the street. Due to the development facing north to maximise solar orientation, the street view primarily shows access passageways. The street side of the building features different materials and textures to provided interest and articulation to the street view. All units have been designed to minimise overlooking into neighbouring properties.</p>	
<p>This is a site which calls for higher density and providing public housing in such a central location close to services is a great outcome.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	
<p>Great project - very positive for the area - would have preferred even higher energy efficiency and sustainability standards, but ok as is.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	
<p>I am glad to see some public housing being built. Much more is needed. Shocking how many homeless people there are in this wealthy city.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	
<p>Why replace old public housing enclaves with new ones? Suggest purchasing some (not all) units in a private development. Parking big issue</p>	<p>The existing dwellings were over 60 years old and had reached the end of their useful life. The new dwellings will be better designed, more energy efficient, cheaper to run and cheaper to maintain and able to be used by a broader range of tenants. Parking for this development complies with planning requirements. Due to the site being close to Dickson Shops and Northbourne Avenue there is less need for tenants to own a car or use a car to go shopping.</p>	
<p>There should be more provision for dwellings and less car parks</p>	<p>The number of dwellings on this site is limited by planning rules such as the Inner North Precinct Code.</p>	

Feedback collected on Lowrie Street, Dickson proposed redevelopment

EMAILS		
<p>Suggested an update be done to the parking and traffic assessment report which was dated June 2017, to also take into account other developments occurring in the vicinity. Design (aesthetic) comments.</p>	<p>A revised traffic report has been prepared and will be included with the Development Application. A local area traffic management plan will be needed to be agreed with Transport Canberra and City Services before development commences on the site, with the aim of minimising inconvenience for road users.</p>	
<p>Concern that 5 visitor spaces is inadequate and will result in on street parking, on what is already a narrow street. Concerns about height of development and the impact it will have on existing streetscape.</p>	<p>Parking for this development complies with planning requirements. The planning controls do not anticipate all of the visitor car parking to be provided on-site. Allowance is made for on street parking within 100 metres of the site in determining the parking requirements. Due to the proximity of the site to the Dickson Shops and Northbourne Avenue, there is less need for tenants to own a car or use a car to go shopping. The height of the proposed development is consistent with the neighbouring residences. Zoning for this location allows for an additional level.</p>	
<p>Positive about 3 storey development in this location. Explore inclusion of attics and dormer windows. Ensure adequate insulation in walls, between floors to ensure acoustic privacy and noise mitigation to avoid tenant conflict.</p>	<p>The proposed design is in keeping with current design trends. Insulation and acoustic treatment will be reviewed prior to submitting a DA. To ensure high levels of acoustic separation, solid masonry walls and concrete floors will be used to separate units.</p>	
POP-UP INFO KIOSK FEEDBACK		
<p>Resident in Lowrie Street concerned about the possibility of two developments occurring at each end of the street, and the potential for traffic access issues for local residents.</p>	<p>A Traffic Management Plan is required as part of the DA. When more than one development is underway in a restricted area or street, it is common industry practice to coordinate traffic management and disruptions so the impact on local traffic is minimised.</p>	

Feedback collected on Lowrie Street, Dickson proposed redevelopment

<p>Query if bicycle parking provisions had been made for both tenants and visitors. Asked if solar panels are being included and if not, would this be considered?</p>	<p>Tenant storage lockers have been designed to accommodate bicycles. Bicycle security measures will be provided for visitors. At this stage, solar panels have not been considered as part of this project. This may be considered in the future and provision for future installation of solar panels will be provided as necessary.</p>	
<p>All housing should be accessible.</p>	<p>The proposed design provides a high level of accessibility through the provision of flat pathways and lift access to all levels. All units have been designed to achieve Liveable Gold Standard, with two units designed to be Class C Adaptable.</p>	
<p>General discussions with people who stopped by on aspects of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Size and make-up of development - Standards Housing ACT use - Number and size of dwellings - Communal space, energy ratings, orientation of site - Building materials and building height - Traffic management during and post construction - Timing of the DA process - Construction timeframes - Tenant make-up 		
<p>Current HACT tenants with issues in their current residence.</p>	<p>Housing ACT works to manage disruptive behaviours with the aim of helping the tenants resolve issues at the neighbourhood level. This helps sustain the tenancy and more importantly, sustain the community.</p>	