



Proposed development at Lourdes Retirement Village, Killara

Overview of social effects

Client: Stockland Retirement Living

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1 Introduction

Elton Consulting has been engaged by Stockland Retirement Living to assist in understanding the social effects of development of a contemporary retirement community, including a retirement village, residential aged care facility (RACF), and private residential townhouses at the site of the existing Lourdes Retirement Village at 95 Stanhope Road, Killara in the Ku-ring-gai local government area (LGA).

1.1 Purpose of this summary

This report has been prepared at the request of Stockland Retirement Living to accompany an application to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) for amendments to floor space ratio, height controls and changing the proposed use for the Lourdes site. The application is intended as a first step towards finalising a development proposal based on the master plan which has been prepared as part of the application.

This report presents a short summary of the potential community impacts expected to result from the proposal once operational. It describes the evolving demand for retirement villages including both the scale (quantum of demand) and nature (characteristics demanded). This report is not based on community or stakeholder consultation and does not include an assessment of construction-related community impacts.

1.2 Key aspects of the proposal

Lourdes Retirement Village currently consists of 108 independent seniors' living units and 49 serviced apartments operated and managed by Stockland Retirement Living, and an 83-bed RACF, operated by Opal Aged Care.

Stockland have reviewed the village, and have concluded that partial redevelopment is required, as the existing dwellings and infrastructure are already experiencing a decline in their useful life. The current village cannot meet the expectations of the emerging Baby Boomer market, which differ significantly from the more modest demands of previous generations.

An indicative master plan has been prepared for the redevelopment. This is based on a revised structure plan that organises land uses, facilities, site features and circulation in a manner that reflects the findings of a site analysis and an analysis of opportunities and constraints. The project architects describe the design's drivers as:

- » Scale of the development steps down at the edges
- » Orientate the development to maximise solar access and views
- » Structure the development to frame the public domain.

Key elements of the master plan include:

- » 141 new independent senior's living apartments across three precincts offering a variety of styles and sizes
- » A modern RACF providing 110 suites
- » 63 private residential townhouses offering four townhouse types
- » New village 'Main Street', village green and community events space
- » Existing hall and chapel
- » New landscaping and gardens including terraced gardens with relocated grotto.

The master plan and accompanying design documentation are included with the application to Council, seeking to amend planning controls for the site.

2 Seniors Living: Needs and Demand

This section looks firstly at the changing demand for retirement village living both in terms of scale (the quantum of demand) and nature (the characteristics demanded). It then considers existing housing options at Lourdes and in Ku-ring-gai LGA and the needs that are emerging there.

2.1 Drivers of changing demand

The attitudes and expectations of older people have changed dramatically over recent decades, while numbers continue to increase. Organisations providing services and accommodation have had to respond to three main changes:

- » **The continuing expansion of the older population:** The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2017) projections indicate that the number of people aged 65 and over will increase from nearly 3.8 million in 2017 to over 5.5 million by 2031. A major driver of this growth is increased longevity: between 1965 and 2018, life expectancy increased from 67.6 years for men and 74.2 years for women, to 80.7 and 84.9 years respectively (ABS, 2019). Australian male retirees (65 years) can expect to live a further 19.9 years¹, while females may live a further 22.6 years (ABS 2019).
- » **Cultural change:** Baby boomers expect choice. They are unwilling to accept the one-size fits all approach that was offered to previous generations, and they are unwilling to have choices made for them by other people (Kendig & Neutze 1999).
- » **Growing affluence:** A large proportion of older people are affluent enough to maintain their previous lifestyle into retirement. This is in part due to the increased value of their homes, but also increased assets in superannuation and other investments.

Seniors' living providers are responding to these factors, particularly seeking to address the demand for:

- » Wider choice and higher quality of seniors' housing products
- » More space within dwellings, particularly inclusion of at least two bedrooms
- » Access to a wider range of services and facilities, including "lifestyle" facilities as well as those related to health and support.

2.2 Changing demand

Retirement villages represent the largest contributor to the supply of "purpose built" accommodation for seniors. In 2014, New South Wales (NSW) had approximately 50,963 retirement village dwellings, housing around 57,800 people (ABS 2016). This represents 4.7% of persons aged 65 and over, which is well below the national average. The retirement village sector has been growing strongly over the last 20 years and if the current rate of growth continues, nearly 7.5% of older² Australians will reside in retirement villages by 2025 (Grant Thornton 2014).

Like other home buyers, older people insist on products that meet their preferences and their budgets. For the reasons outlined in the previous section, preferences and budgets have changed dramatically in recent years. In many areas (including Ku-ring-gai LGA) a large proportion of the existing retirement village stock was built between 25 and 45 years ago to modest standards of design and amenity and is priced accordingly. However, many of today's retirees are seeking a more contemporary housing product offering better design, accessibility and layout, providing a setting in which they can maintain their quality of life. As a result, much of the old-style retirement housing is now experiencing falling demand, while demand for contemporary options cannot be met.

¹ Past 65 years of age

² 65 years and over

In order to address these changes, new retirement villages are being built to meet seniors' expectations about choice, standards, space, facilities and services, while older villages are looking at options for redevelopment to meet these demands. These options must address two priorities:

- » **Adequate space in the dwelling:** A desire to move to a more manageable home does not necessarily mean that an older person wants to move to a small one-bedroom unit. Older people typically seek accessible, well laid-out accommodation, and recent research by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) has found that most prefer a home with at least one spare bedroom (James, Rowley & Stone 2020). The research found that, among older homeowners, half wanted three bedrooms and only 2% wanted a one-bedroom dwelling (James, Rowley & Stone 2020). The extra rooms were needed for a variety of reasons including visits by family and friends, space for home-based activities (e.g. hobbies, office work, exercise, reading), and for storage or to accommodate furniture they did not wish to dispose of (James, Rowley & Stone 2020).

Purpose built seniors' housing has only recently started to reflect these preferences, and older retirement villages are dominated by small units, often with only one bedroom.

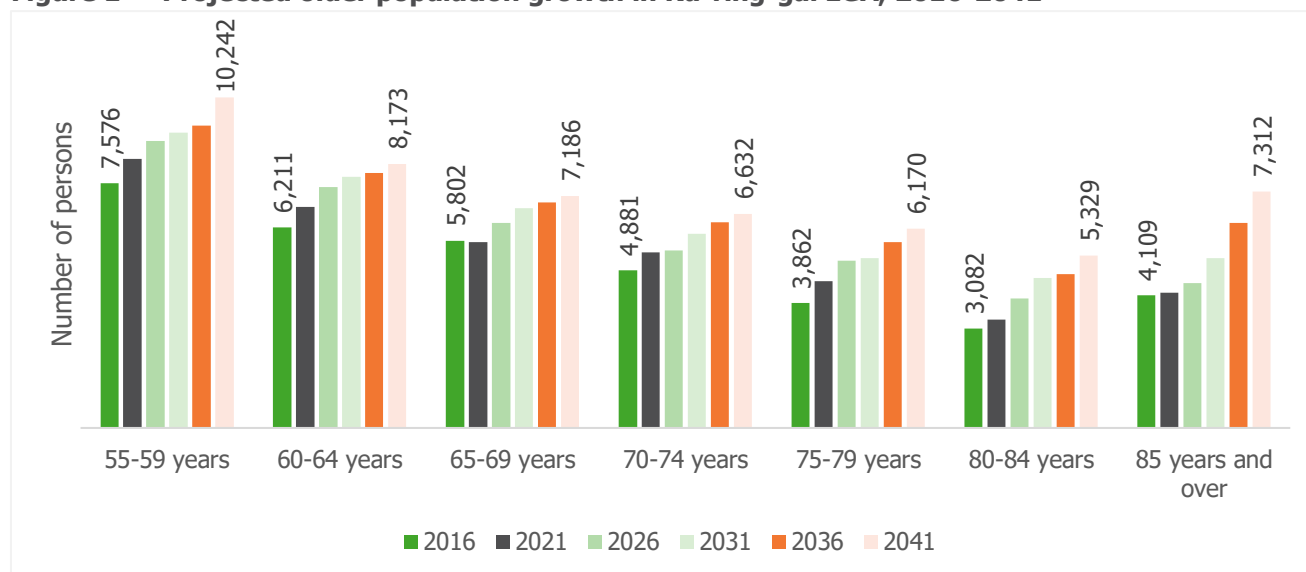
- » **Easy access to lifestyle facilities and health and services:** A key issue for many seniors in the broader community is their limited access to health and recreational facilities/opportunities and to social activities. Retirement villages specifically respond to this need by providing onsite facilities for recreation and socialising, and by providing (or organising access to) services. Contemporary villages face demand from Baby Boomers for whom sport and recreation facilities, hobbies, social dining, etc. have always been a priority, and expect that a range of services, ranging from allied healthcare to home delivered meals and domiciliary services, will be available.

Smaller, older-style villages are heavily constrained in their ability to respond to such demand because they lack economies of scale. Lifestyle facilities like onsite clubhouses and swimming pools, and services like domiciliary care provided by an onsite contractor are only viable if the client base is of sufficient scale. Larger villages also offer greater social opportunities and choice. The demand from retirees therefore strongly favours larger scale villages over smaller ones.

2.3 Seniors living needs in Ku-ring-gai LGA

Two characteristics are particularly important when considering the needs of older people in Ku-ring-gai:

- » The LGA has a larger than average older population, and that older population is increasing. According to the ABS Census (2016) there were 21,463 people aged 65 years and over in the LGA in 2016, representing 18.2% of the total resident population. By 2031 this is projected to increase to 27,979 (19.1% of residents) and to 32,629 (21.5%) by 2041 (DPIE 2019). The growth in population in older age groups is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Projected older population growth in Ku-ring-gai LGA, 2016-2041

Source: DPIE 2019: Population, Household and Implied Dwelling Projections by LGA (ASGS 2019)

- » The mainstream housing stock in the LGA is overwhelmingly comprised of large separate homes – in 2016, there were over 28,271 separate houses out of 41,266 total private dwellings (ABS 2016). Older people are especially likely to live in large homes: three quarters of persons aged 65 or over lived in a dwelling with three or more bedrooms (ABS 2016). While these homes clearly suit many older people, there is also a need for smaller and more manageable homes (particularly homes that do not have a large garden to maintain), and for adaptable homes, particularly for those with declining mobility.

One further factor relevant to any assessment of the needs of older people in the LGA is the exceptionally high price value of local homes. The median sale price of a dwelling in the LGA was around \$920,000 in March 2008 (Housing NSW 2008). Latest data from March 2021 indicates the median sale price has increased to \$2.5 million, meaning that older generations that purchased houses in the area in the 2000s or 2010s would make extensive profits should they choose to sell their home and decide to move into a more manageable dwelling (NSW Communities and Justice 2021). Consequently, many older people in the area can afford (and will in most cases choose) a high-quality home, offering a good lifestyle.

In 2016 1,296 people lived in self-contained dwellings in retirement villages in the LGA (ABS 2016). This number represented approximately 4.7% of people aged 60 years or over. The likelihood of living in a retirement village increases with age, peaking at 85-89 years before decreasing due to declining population size, as shown in Table 1 and Figure 2.

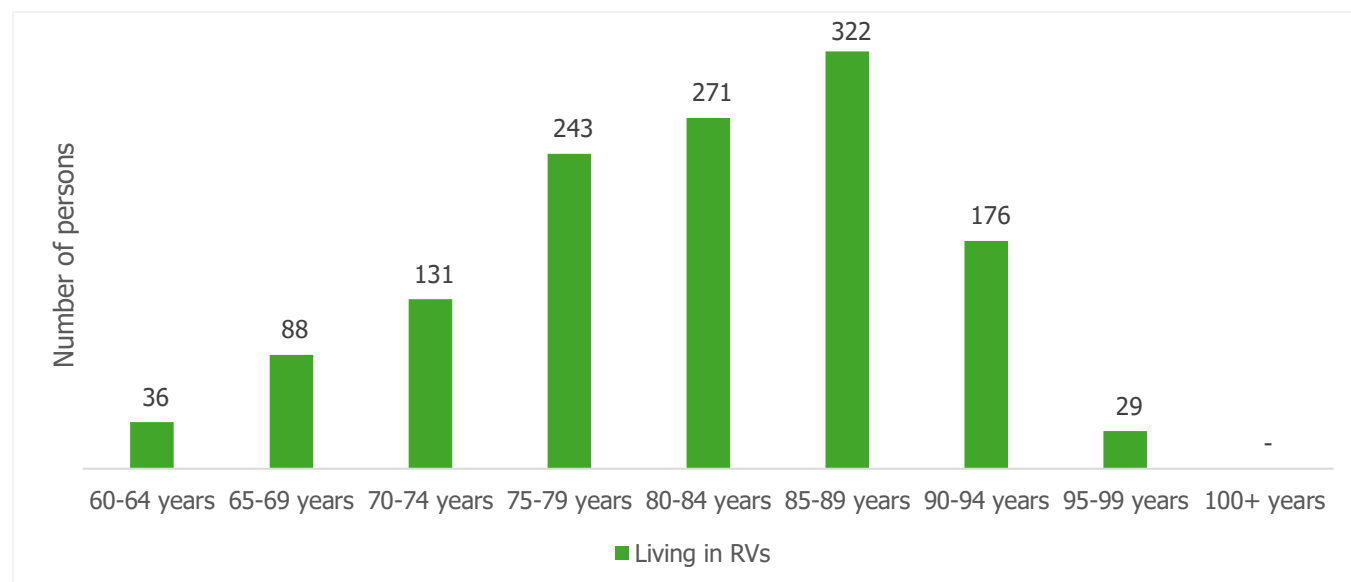
Table 1 Number of people living in retirement villages in Ku-ring-gai LGA, 2016

Age group	Total in age group	Number living in RVs	Per cent of 60+ population
60-64 years	6,093	36	0.6%
65-69 years	5,688	88	1.5%
70-74 years	4,836	131	2.7%
75-79 years	3,832	243	6.3%
80-84 years	3,076	271	8.8%
85-89 years	2,397	322	13.4%
90-94 years	1,279	176	13.8%

95-99 years	336	29	8.6%
100 years and over	19	-	0.0%
Total	27,556	1,296	4.7%

Source: ABS 2016: Census of Population and Housing: Age by DLOD Dwelling Location by LGA

Figure 2 Number of people living in retirement village in Ku-ring-gai LGA, 2016



Source: ABS 2016: Census of Population and Housing: Age by DLOD Dwelling Location by LGA

An online audit of retirement villages in the LGA indicates that there are approximately 26 villages in the LGA. However, most of these are quite small. Approximately six of these villages (including Lourdes) provide over 100 dwellings. These villages are located in Turramurra (Rohini), North Turramurra (The Landings and Cotswold Village, which is a hybrid leasehold-tenure village), St Ives (Fernbank), and East Lindfield (Lindfield Gardens). With the exception of The Landings, these villages largely offer traditionally designed dwellings with limited provision of larger units or quality internal fittings, and hence they are often very affordable compared to the local housing market and include somewhat limited provision of contemporary recreation facilities.

The audit identified one village undergoing major renovation with plans to reopen in 2021/2022 – Gordon Quarter, formerly Lady Gowrie Retirement Village. The village is planned as luxury retirement living offering one, two, and three-bedroom apartments and including facilities such as a cinema, library, sunroom, pool, gardens, BBQ area, and community lounge, and it will also be pet friendly (Anglicare 2021). This is the type of retirement living option that baby boomers are expected to be seeking in coming years.

As part of investigations into the future of Lourdes Village, Elton Consulting investigated the housing options available to seniors in Ku-ring-gai and concluded that the following gaps and shortages exist:

- » Age-friendly housing options – in limited supply. The local mainstream market is dominated by large detached homes, often with substantial gardens. While popular with many older people, this housing does not meet the needs of those seeking or requiring more manageable or accessible accommodation
- » Unmet demand – demand for seniors' housing is growing faster than supply. Based on projected demand and national ratios, demand generated within the LGA for additional retirement village dwellings will run at more than 40 dwellings per annum, but this is predicated on the products being offered meeting the requirements of the local market
- » Contemporary, high quality design – not offered in dated developments. Most retirement villages are based on a dated design template from the 1980s, while recent mainstream apartment developments have in many cases been designed around the needs of younger working people.

- » Larger retirement units, with storage and garages – demand greatly exceeds supply. There is, if anything, a surplus of small one-bedroom and studio units in the retirement village sector, while demand exceeds supply of larger units
- » Attractive, master-planned urban design – expected by contemporary buyers. Most retirement villages are landscaped but offer little in terms of high-quality urban design or responsiveness to their setting. Mainstream developments of smaller or more manageable housing rarely offer adaptability or good access for people with limited mobility and are often not located in age-friendly locations
- » Senior's housing that matches the local market – limited opportunities. Most purpose-built seniors' dwellings are modest apartments located in older retirement villages. In many cases they are highly affordable. However, a large proportion of locals can afford, and can be expected to seek out, a better-appointed product.

Based on these findings, the report found that there is strong demand for new retirement village dwellings, some of which could be met by new development at Lourdes.

2.4 Demand for Residential Aged Care

As part of the master plan for Lourdes, it is proposed to replace the existing RACF, originally constructed as separate low and high care elements, with a 110-suite integrated facility to contemporary standards. The RACF will continue to be operated by Opal Aged Care, with whom Stockland has partnered to provide the professional expertise required for a high-quality aged care service.

The Government target for RAC places for 2021-2022 is 78.4 places per 1,000 persons aged 70 years and over (ACFA, 2020). Between 2021-2036, DPIE (2019) projects an additional 5,753 persons aged 70 and over in Kuring-gai LGA, suggesting the need for around 449 additional RACF places (approximately 90 places per year) within that period (ACFA 2020).

The continued presence of an RACF on the site is a core part of the future vision for Lourdes. It will deliver the potential for village residents to age in place, even if their health deteriorates to the point where residential care is necessary, along with continuing to provide access to the facilities for local people from the Upper North Shore community.

The aged care sector is undergoing a thorough transformation, driven by major systemic reforms detailed in the Federal Government's 2021 Budget (Department of Health 2021). The Government plans to invest \$17.7 billion to create an aged care sector that is more accessible and comprehensible, strongly regulated, transparent, ensures provider accountability, and values and grows the workforce while providing the highest levels of care for the older population (Department of Health 2021). These reforms aim to ensure that the sector can respond to a future in which most of the RAC demand will come from people with complex or high-level needs – while lower level needs are met through home delivered care programs. Consequently, many older facilities are becoming unsustainable, because they cannot deliver the wide range and high quality of services and improved quality of accommodation that are now required. Redevelopment of the Lourdes RACF can therefore be expected to ensure that high quality care can be offered to the local community for many years to come.

3 Private residential townhouses

The masterplan indicates that the new development will include 63 private residential townhouses, available to persons of all ages in the private market. These townhouses will be co-located on the site of the Lourdes Retirement Village.

The stock of 63 townhouses will include four types:

- » Type A: Small Lot, 204 square metres with four bedrooms and two car spaces
- » Type B: Pine, 139 square metres with three bedrooms and two car spaces
- » Type B: Savannah, 161 square metres with four bedrooms and two car spaces
- » Type E, 216 square metres with three bedrooms and two car spaces.

3.1 Demand for private housing in Ku-ring-gai LGA

The population in Ku-ring-gai LGA is projected to increase from 122,472 persons in 2016 to 151,818 persons in 2041, representing an increase of 29,346 persons (23.9%) (DPIE 2019). Such a large increase in population will require large numbers of new dwellings. According to Ku-ring-gai Council (2020) some of the key housing points from the community that the development at Lourdes is likely to meet include:

- » Strong desire for townhouse/villa/terrace style housing and recognition of the existing lack of supply
- » Provision of a diverse range of housing options, particularly for young families and the ageing population
- » Protection of the tree canopy, biodiversity and heritage character
- » Provision of interconnecting transport, active transport networks and social infrastructure
- » Delivery of open space for any redevelopment
- » Provision of additional housing in locations with access to public transport, shops, facilities and open space
- » Necessity for additional housing to be of high-quality design that considers interface and integration with the surrounding environment
- » Concerns surrounding the availability of sites large enough to develop the preferred co-located aged care and retirement living model.

3.2 Benefits of co-location

Co-location of the private residential housing with the retirement village is likely to benefit both older and younger generations by improving community interaction and wellbeing. The integration of the old and the young in common spaces provides the potential for "...increased mutual understanding" (Uhlenberg 2000). Integration of different age groups also provides the potential socialisation for older persons living in the retirement village that they may not receive elsewhere, which can have major mental and physical benefits for all age groups (Popp 2020). Social connection can increase brain health and lower the risk of dementia, strengthen immune systems, and improve mental and physical health by boosting wellbeing and decreasing feelings of depression (Troyer 2016). The interaction likely to occur between the private residents and residents of the retirement village is likely to provide these benefits for both groups; "by creating inclusive infrastructure, such as closely connected living and learning 'micro-neighbourhoods', people of all ages remain the 'heart of economic, social and cultural life of communities'" (Kennedy 2020).

4 Community Impact

An increase in resident numbers has the potential to impact on services and facilities in the local area, potentially impacting future residents and people in the surrounding community. It is therefore relevant to consider what will be provided on site, and what is available in the surrounding area. Note that, at this early stage of planning, detailed plans for future facilities and services on site have yet to be prepared.

There are currently 103 residents occupying independent seniors' living units and serviced apartments at Lourdes. This number is likely to increase to approximately 336 residents (an increase of 233 persons) living between the independent seniors' living units and residential townhouses³. These residents are likely to interact with the surrounding areas and may increase pressure on local facilities and services.

Residents in the RACF have not been included in the calculations above as residential care is accessed almost exclusively by people with high-level needs, most of whom will not be capable of leaving the facility itself. The facility will meet their needs and they will not place additional demands on outside facilities.

4.1 Transport

Resident transport needs, for the retirement village and townhouses, will be met in three ways:

- » 287 parking spaces including 204 spaces for senior living residents and 35 for their visitors, 32 spaces for the RACF, and 16 spaces for private townhouse visitors, as most incoming residents are expected to be car owners and drivers. Each individual townhouse will also have two car spaces (private garage spaces)
- » The 556 public bus service passes through the village twice daily (morning and noon) from Monday to Friday
- » The village will continue to provide private buses, used for excursions including shopping trips.

4.2 Shopping and related services

There are excellent facilities in the area, notably at Lindfield (2 kilometres away) and Gordon, with local facilities closer by, including an IGA at East Lindfield. A major redevelopment underway at Lindfield will offer improved shopping and community services.

4.3 Entertainment, socialising and dining

Residents will have access to good onsite facilities including a café, a range of indoor and outdoor communal facilities (BBQ area and kitchen, a library, and facilities suitable for theatrical and cinema use). Expanded community facilities including a Community Events Space, are proposed as part of the development. The urban design of the proposal places emphasis on usable communal outdoor spaces that will promote social interaction, including a central "Main Street" and a village green. Lourdes currently offers an extensive activities program for residents, ranging across hobbies, activity classes and outings. The increase in resident numbers will allow this range to be expanded. A wide range of dining facilities, cafés and entertainment options (including clubs and cinemas) are also available in the surrounding areas. Many local restaurants also offer home-delivered meals, ranging from pizzas to gourmet cuisine.

³ Calculations based on ABS 2016 Census average household sizes in Ku-ring-gai LGA of 2.9 persons per household for the total population, and 1.3 persons for self-contained retirement village dwellings

4.4 Services for seniors and people with a disability

The village will continue to provide a 24-hour emergency call system in each apartment should any resident require assistance within their home.

At this stage it is not possible to specify the range of onsite services that will be offered in the future, but the intention is to offer an increased variety, facilitated by the increased client base. It is anticipated that the increase in resident numbers will place limited additional demand upon external services. Most of the additional demand will be for user-pays services which can expand operations at Lourdes if demand justifies this. This conclusion is based on the expectation that most incoming residents will have incomes that are too high to access free means-tested services, particularly as current service models increasingly restrict access to these subsidised services, whilst offering increased access to paid services.

There is good access to health services for residents in the local area and residents of the village. Lourdes is located approximately 9 kilometres from the Royal North Shore Hospital, and there are large numbers of primary and allied health care practitioners nearby. Lourdes also currently offers consulting rooms for onsite medical and allied health providers and will continue to do so. The Australian Government My Aged Care (2021) website provides comprehensive information on care and support services available within suburbs. The site identifies the following extensive range of services available to residents in Killara:

- » Aged care homes:
 - > two providers: Killara Glades Care Community and Killara Gardens Aged Care
 - > Day/overnight respite in aged care home: 15 providers, 14 with current availability
- » Domestic assistance:
 - > Cleaning, laundry, and other chores: 23 providers, only 2 with current availability
 - > Home or garden maintenance: 6 providers, three with current availability
 - > Changes to the home e.g. ramps: 6 providers with current availability
- » At home health assistance:
 - > Podiatry, physio and other therapies: 21 providers, 14 with current availability
 - > Meals and food preparation: two providers with current availability
 - > Nursing e.g. basic wound care, help with medicines: two providers with current availability
 - > Bathing, hygiene and grooming: 17 providers, three with current availability
 - > Help with impairments or continence: five providers with current availability
 - > Day/overnight respite: 21 providers, two with current availability
- » Getting out and staying social:
 - > Social outings, groups and visitors: 60 providers, 40 with current availability
 - > Transport and taxi vouchers: 11 providers, four with current availability
- » Homelessness support:
 - > one provider: current availability, reduce homelessness risk for hoarders/persons in squalid conditions
- » Home Care Packages (HCPs):
 - > HCPs range from Levels 1-4; Level 1 providing basic care needs and Level 4 providing high care needs
 - > Access is subject to needs assessment by the Aged Care Assessment Team
 - > The great majority of services are government-subsidised and are free to low income seniors, while fees are generally charged to those who can afford them.
 - > 428 HCP services catering to Killara, and 424 of them with current availability
- » Short-term care:
 - > Short-term stay in an aged care home: four providers with current availability
 - > Transition care for leaving hospital: one provider with current availability
 - > Help restoring independence: eight providers with current availability.

4.5 Recreation

The village will have a strong emphasis on lifestyle and recreation, with facilities including a swimming pool and spa, café, and community hub. There will be facilities for billiards, crafts and bowls and the existing chapel will be retained. Landscaping and open space will be improved to facilitate walking, including walking for exercise, within the site.

Recreation facilities nearby in the suburb of Killara include a neighbourhood garden, golf club, tennis club, lawn bowling club, and several local parks. Very close outside of the suburb there is another park with a cricket club and walking tracks.

4.6 Co-location of private townhouses and retirement village

The co-location of private market housing and retirement village lifestyles may require careful management so that either the private market or retirement living does not impede on the others' ability to enjoy their neighbourhoods. Potential social impacts relating to noise, traffic, parking (parking is provided by the retirement villages), and the ability of both areas to socialise together during events and activities would contribute to the community wellbeing afforded to successful retirement villages. Considered urban design will benefit community wellbeing whereby areas designated to the retirement residents and the market residents are not visibly or restrictively separated, as has been seen where social housing and market housing have coexisted in the past.

4.7 Conclusions

A good range of services and facilities are currently offered onsite. Resident numbers will increase as a result of the development, with the total number of apartments increasing from around 160 to around 251 (110 RACF units and 141 independent seniors' living units, plus a further 63 private residential townhouses). This will support expansion of these onsite services and facilities while having very limited impact on any external services and facilities. Lourdes is currently well integrated with its local community thanks in part to the good transport links but also to residents' use of services and facilities in the surrounding area.

Potentially the most notable impact will be some increase in demand for Level 3 and 4 HCPs from the increased number of younger seniors in the independent seniors' living units. However, this may not occur for a number of years as incoming residents are unlikely to need this level of care until they reach older ages and are more likely to develop reduced mobility and increased disability. Service providers will therefore have time to respond to changing demand, especially as the number of older people in the wider area is expected to increase substantially over the next decade.

5 Other social effects

5.1 Impacts on existing village residents

A management plan to minimise impacts on existing residents will be prepared as the project design moves forward. At this stage, it is relevant to note that two important factors will offer significant protection to these residents:

- » The Retirement Villages Act 1999 provides substantial legal protection to existing residents affected by redevelopment, including a formal requirement that they should not be worse off financially.
- » The staging of the project, which will include retention of some of the existing accommodation, will allow existing residents to be progressively relocated into this retained accommodation.

5.2 Construction impacts

Construction impacts will be addressed when detailed design and staging proposals for the project are in place.

An assessment of the potential social impacts on the immediate residential area would be undertaken through a program of local community consultation as part of a comprehensive social impact assessment. Appropriate mitigation measures would then be designed and implemented by Stockland Retirement Living and the construction contractor.

6 Acronyms

Acronym	Description
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AHURI	Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute
DPIE	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
HCP	Home Care Packages
ILU	Independent living unit
LGA	Local government area
NSW	New South Wales
RAC	Residential aged care
RACF	Residential Aged Care Facility

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