

Singleton Shire Council  
Cnr Queen St & Civic Ave  
Singleton NSW 2330

29<sup>th</sup> May 2024

Re: **Development Application 8.2023.455**  
147 Gardner Circuit & 4 Francis Place Singleton Heights NSW 2330

Dear Mrs Sarah Boyton  
Duty Planner

Further to your email dated 5 February 2024, we would like to provide the following correspondence.

Firstly, thank you for undertaking a preliminary assessment of the above Development Application for the development of a Group home at 147 Gardener Circuit and 4 Francis Place, Singleton Heights.

We provide the following response to the matters raised in your letter.

### **Social Impact Assessment**

Housing Plus has engaged BD Infrastructure to prepare a Social Impact Statement (SIS) to assess the potential social consequences of the proposed group home.

BD Infrastructurer and their social impact team has a wealth of knowledge and experience in best-practice engagement and social sustainability methodologies to develop strategies that reduce risk, increase positive impacts and deliver benefit for communities.

While the project is not a state significant development, the SIS has been prepared using the Social Impact Assessment Guidelines (NSW Government, 2023) to ensure all relevant matters are addressed, including:

- > Identifying impacted groups, such as local residents, neighbours, the broader community and community service providers;
- > Identifying and scoping potential social impacts (i.e. the consequences that people experience when a new project brings change, being positive, negative, physically observable, rational or justified fears, tangible, intangible, direct or indirect);
- > Assessing how significant each potential social impact may be before any mitigation or enhancement strategies applied; and
- > Assessing the likelihood, magnitude and overall significance following the application of mitigation or enhancement strategies applied.

In summary, the SIS demonstrates that:

- > The development provides highly significant positive social impacts for residents – a vulnerable group of the community who are otherwise underserved. This positive impact indirectly extends to the broader community group, albeit at a less significant level of impact.

- > Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) service providers are also likely to experience significant positive social impacts due primarily to the Core and Cluster model that underpins the design of this development. This assessment of impact is the justification of why the NSW Government is funding and supporting the implementation of Core and Cluster DFV refuges around the state.
- > Where they exist, potential negative impacts are most likely to impact direct neighbours. On balance, these negative impacts are either unlikely to develop, or result in a low level of magnitude for nearby neighbours where they do eventuate. Where appropriate and possible, Housing Plus and the service provider have put in place several strategies to mitigate any neighbourhood impacts; for example, through design and collaboration with stakeholders such as the local Council or Police. It has not been possible to completely remove all negative impacts, due to a need to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the women and children affected by DFV.
- > Further, the SIS identifies that the low level of impact on neighbours is evidenced through the successful implementation of Housing Plus's current Core and Cluster DFV accommodation, The Orchard, which has continued to deliver positive outcomes since commencing operations in 2020.
- > The SIS concludes that a holistic assessment of social impact indicates a likely positive social impact resulting from this development. The level of positive impact for vulnerable women and children affected by DFV is significant, compared to any likely negative impacts experienced by the nearby neighbours.

### Private Open Space

The Singleton Development Control Plan 2014 (Singleton DCP 2014) does not provide specific design requirements for group homes. For this reason, we have provided an assessment of the proposed development against the design requirements of the Singleton DCP 2014 for multi dwelling housing.

It should be noted that clause 2.15 of the Singleton DCP 2014 does not apply to group homes or acknowledge that group homes, by definition, are required to operate as a single household. As noted in the Statement of Environmental Effects submitted with the Development Application, the Core and Cluster group home model improves on the former share house model by providing self-contained living quarters for each resident, including private kitchen and bathroom facilities. There is no such requirement to provide dedicate private open space for each living quarter.

Notwithstanding, the proposed development has been designed to ensure that each individual living quarter within the group home has been provided with an area of private open space. While the area of private open space provided for each independent living quarter is less than that would be required for a standalone dwelling within a multi dwelling housing development, these areas are complemented by additional communal open space and facilities. The communal open space and facilities with the proposed group home include an overall area of 120 m<sup>2</sup>.

Having regard to the guidance provided at clause 2.15 of the Singleton DCP 2014, the following is noted:

- > Open space is accessible from each living quarter and open to the sky;
- > Open space has been purposively designed to encourage use;
- > Areas of open space are generally screened from public view;
- > The gradient of the site is below 12%;
- > Open space areas typically have a minimum dimension in excess of 4m;

Taken together, the areas of secluded private open space and communal open space ensures that the proposed development has been designed to meet the objectives of clause 2.15 of the Singleton DCP 2014 and exceed the extent of open space typically provided within the former share house model of group home.

## Review of Hardstand Area

Housing Plus has undertaken a detailed review of the proposed development with a view to softening the visual impact of hardstand along the Gardener Circuit frontage.

Through the detailed review, Housing Plus has identified the following:

- > The need to ensure equitable access and two options for exits in some circumstances requires more hardstand than a typical residential development;
- > Economic analysis of replacing external ramps with external lifts has proven to be cost prohibitive to construction and ongoing operation of the proposed development; and
- > The proposed development has been designed to achieve relevant standards for parking and waste storage whilst minimising the extent of hard stand where possible.

The detailed review has identified few opportunities to reduce the extent of hardstand adjacent to Gardner Circuit. Notwithstanding, further opportunities have been identified for enhanced landscaping to mitigate the visual impact of the hardstand area.

These opportunities include additional hedge plants and a garden bed along the boundary of the site. It is anticipated that the enhanced landscaping will further soften the visual impact of the hardstand area.

## Detailed Cross Sections

An amended plan set is provided with this letter.

The amended plan set includes additional detailed cross sections of the proposed development to the relation of the proposed development to boundary fences, street frontage and adjoining properties.

Should you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards,



**Darren Wooding**  
**Project Manager**

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