
————BB Professional Services————



Social Impacts Assessment

concerning

**Landcom Affordable Rental Housing Development Proposal
at 44 Bristol Circuit and 2-4 Blue Hills Avenue, Goonellabah
(Lot 533/DP1162393, part Lot 300/DP1000619)**

prepared by
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Table of Contents

1. Overview.....	4
2. Introduction	6
Services available	11
3. The population of Goonellabah and Lismore LGA.....	14
SEIFA indexes	17
Crime	19
Health	21
4. Availability of affordable rental accommodation.....	22
Census evidence.....	22
Rental accommodation available in Goonellabah now.....	24
Rental accommodation available in Lismore now	26
Homelessness in Lismore LGA	34
Renting resident case studies	36
5. Landcom community consultation	47
Community survey responses	48
Respondent sample	48
Views concerning the proposed development	53
Expected impacts on businesses	54
Comments.....	55
6. Discussion of community concerns	62
Prospective tenants.....	62
Visual impact.....	62
Impacts on neighbouring property values	64
Other issues.....	65
7. Conclusions	66
8. Social and print media coverage	67
9. NSW Labor media release on relocation of “buyback” homes	75
10. Instruments used in community consultation	77
11. Definition of affordable housing.....	83
12. Dr Rigmor Berg	86

Tables

Table 1: Gender, age, ancestry and household composition	15
Table 2: Education, employment and income	16
Table 3: Lismore LGA SEIFA scores and ranking	18
Table 4: Goonellabah suburb SEIFA scores and ranking	18
Table 5: Rates of long-term health conditions in Goonellabah and Lismore LGA	21
Table 6: Housing at 2021 Census	23
Table 7: Accommodation rented in Goonellabah in past 12 months	24
Table 8: Accommodation rented in Lismore in past 12 months	26
Table 9: Homeless people street count 2024	34
Table 10: Distance of home from site	48
Table 11: Home ownership status	48
Table 12: Nature of household	49
Table 13: Employment status	49
Table 14: Distance of workplace from site	50
Table 15: Gender of respondent	50
Table 16: Age of respondent	51
Table 17: Sources of awareness	51
Table 18: Attendance at community information session	52
Table 19: Design seen	52
Table 20: Overall attitude to the proposed development	53
Table 21: Expected impact on own household	53
Table 22: Expected impact on workers in Goonellabah and Lismore	54
Table 23: Expected impact on businesses in Goonellabah and Lismore	54
Table 24: Hope to find a home there	55

Figures

Figure 1: MOU between Lismore City Council and NSW Government	6
Figure 2: Bird's eye view of the site (red marker) and surrounds	7
Figure 3: The site and surrounding residences viewed from Bristol Cct	8
Figure 4: Shops and services	11
Figure 5: shops in Goonellabah (site marked in yellow)	12
Figure 6: Bus routes closest to Bristol Circuit Goonellabah.	13
Figure 7: Goonellabah and Lismore LGA overview	14
Figure 8: Assault	19
Figure 9: Theft	19
Figure 10: Sexual offences	20
Figure 11: Drug offences	20
Figure 12: Rental properties available in Goonellabah January 2025	25
Figure 13: Rental accommodation available in Lismore	27
Figure 14: Rental accommodation available in Lismore continued	28
Figure 15: Homes sought and offered on social media	29
Figure 16: Lismore flood and rescue efforts	43
Figure 17: Dee Mould posts on Facebook	44
Figure 18: Some of the 50 residents who attended the community drop-in session	47
Figure 19: Distance of home from site	48
Figure 20: Home ownership status	48
Figure 21: Nature of household	49
Figure 22: Employment status	49
Figure 23: Distance of workplace from site	50
Figure 24: Gender of respondent	50
Figure 25: Age of respondent	51
Figure 26: Sources of awareness	51
Figure 27: Attendance at community information session	52
Figure 28: Design seen	52
Figure 29: Overall attitude to the proposed development	53
Figure 30: Expected impact on own household	53
Figure 31: Expected impact on workers in Goonellabah and Lismore	54
Figure 32: Expected impact on businesses in Goonellabah and Lismore	54
Figure 33: Hope to find a home there	55
Figure 34: Plan of the site, showing homes, driveways, car parking and nearby houses ...	63
Figure 35: Views of the site and housing either side from the north and from the south	63

1. Overview

Across the Lismore LGA, there is clear and urgent need for more safe and affordable rental housing for key workers on low to moderate incomes.

This need was already evident at the 2021 Census, but it became far more urgent following the record-breaking floods of 2022, which damaged or destroyed 5,000 homes in Northern NSW, 1400 of them within the Lismore LGA. Goonellabah is one location within the Lismore LGA that is above the flood prone area.

At the 2021 Census, the population of Lismore LGA overall was neither particularly advantaged nor particularly disadvantaged, but those in the suburb of Goonellabah were more disadvantaged than average for the LGA. A substantial minority of Lismore LGA residents were renting and more than 40% of them were in housing stress, spending more than 30% of household income on rent. Overall, the population was less healthy than average for NSW, but not extremely so. Crime rates in Goonellabah were low and only slightly higher in the adjacent Lismore township.

While some people have left the area, safe and affordable homes are still needed by workers essential to the functioning of local services and businesses. Currently only flood damaged houses provide affordable rentals for workers on low to moderate incomes. Some Lismore residents, unable to find safe and affordable rental accommodation, are now living in caravans or tiny houses on insecure and poorly serviced sites or “squatting” in homes vacated for the government “buy back” initiative, some ear-marked for relocation, but otherwise for demolition.

The Landcom community engagement strategy was effective in collecting comment from home-owning neighbours of the site, but failed to include many renting workers. Close neighbours were all opposed to the development, for reasons including:

- concern that those renting in the proposed development will make undesirable neighbours, unwilling to work and inclined to anti-social and criminal behaviour;
- fear of negative impact on their own property values;
- expected unpleasant visual impact of “high density”, “housing commission” homes;
- traffic and parking impacts of 16 additional households;
- impact on drainage, sewerage and garbage collection systems;
- health impacts on neighbours through disturbing a contaminated site.

Concerns that the project will bring “undesirable” people to the neighbourhood, with attendant crime and danger to existing residents are not likely to eventuate. The related expectation that surrounding property values will be damaged is not consistent with research evidence.

Concerns about visual impacts are unwarranted. The proposed development is not high density. The height and bulk of the proposed buildings will be in keeping with surrounding homes and the site will be extensively landscaped.

On-site car parking provision should be sufficient to prevent any need for on-road car parking and the small number of cars entering and leaving via Bristol Circuit and Blue Hills Avenue are unlikely to cause any significant traffic problems, according to the Traffic Impact Report provided by Varga Traffic Planning.

The addition of 16 households, most with only one or two bedrooms, is unlikely to overwhelm local waste service systems. In consultation with Council and with reference to Environmental Planning instruments, Landcom has prepared a Waste Management Plan, which is outlined in the Statement of Environmental Effects. Newton Denny Chappel Engineering Services have addressed drainage and sewerage issues.

A construction management plan will be prepared with strategies to minimise noise, dust and traffic inconvenience to neighbours during construction. The selected builder will be required to comply with this plan.

A separate development application will be made for remediation of the site, which was in the past used as a cow-dip. The proposed development will be conditional on that issue being satisfactorily addressed.

Overall, the social impacts of the proposed development will be strongly positive, contributing to much needed safe and affordable rental housing for key workers on low to moderate incomes.

As well as the benefits for eligible renting workers, this housing will allow local services and businesses to attract and retain essential staff, who will also have more disposable income to contribute as customers of local businesses.

While this affordable rental housing project is for key workers only, there is also strong need for more social housing for people in the area on very low incomes.

2. Introduction

The need for affordable rental housing in the Lismore LGA was already evident at the 2021 Census, with 41.3% of renters living in housing stress where rent took more than 30% of income. However, the floods of 2022, which destroyed or damaged about 5,000 homes in Northern NSW, 1400 of them within the Lismore LGA, made this need far more pressing.

The NSW Government is committed to increasing the supply of affordable housing. Under the Housing Accord, Landcom has pledged to deliver 1,800 affordable rental homes by 2029. A Memorandum of Understanding between Lismore City Council and Landcom led to two projects being proposed in Goonellabah: the proposal under discussion at 44 Bristol Circuit and 2-4 Blue Hills Avenue, on the south-eastern edge of Goonellabah, which will deliver 16 affordable rental townhouses and another in Cynthia Wilson Drive.

Figure 1: MOU between Lismore City Council and NSW Government

MOU to build affordable housing in Lismore

Published on 04 November 2022

Lismore City Council will enter a Memorandum of Understanding with Landcom and the NSW Department of Communities and Justice to build more affordable housing on Council-owned land in Lismore.

Under the proposal, up to 24 units could be built at 44 Bristol Circuit in Goonellabah, and 40 units at 69 Cynthia Wilson Drive.

Lismore City Deputy Mayor Jeri Hall said the two projects would go some way to easing the housing crisis in Lismore, particularly after the February natural disaster.

"This is a great outcome for our community. Housing was unaffordable in Lismore before the natural disaster and has only become worse since," she said.

"These partnerships with Landcom and the Department of Community and Justice ensures once these units are built, they will remain as low-cost housing in perpetuity."

Lismore State MP Janelle Saffin thanked Lismore City Council for making the development possible.

"This affordable housing project is something I have championed since last year when I brought then Landcom Chief John Brogden to our region. It's fantastic to see my advocacy pay off," she said.

"I thank Lismore Council and the team for stumping up the land to make this possible."

Minister for Families and Communities Natasha Maclarens-Jones said the project will help ease housing pressures for people at risk of homelessness in Lismore.

"Delivering affordable housing is one way to unlock a range of services which allow people greater access to secure housing and at the same time helps them live more independently," she said.

"Greater access to housing and support pave the way for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to secure a brighter future."

On the Bristol Circuit site, it is proposed Council will provide a 50-year lease and contribute up to \$2.5 million it has already received from a Federal Government Building Better Cities grant.

On the Cynthia Wilson Drive, it is proposed that Council contributes the land and the Department of Community and Justice contributes \$5 million to allow the development to go ahead.

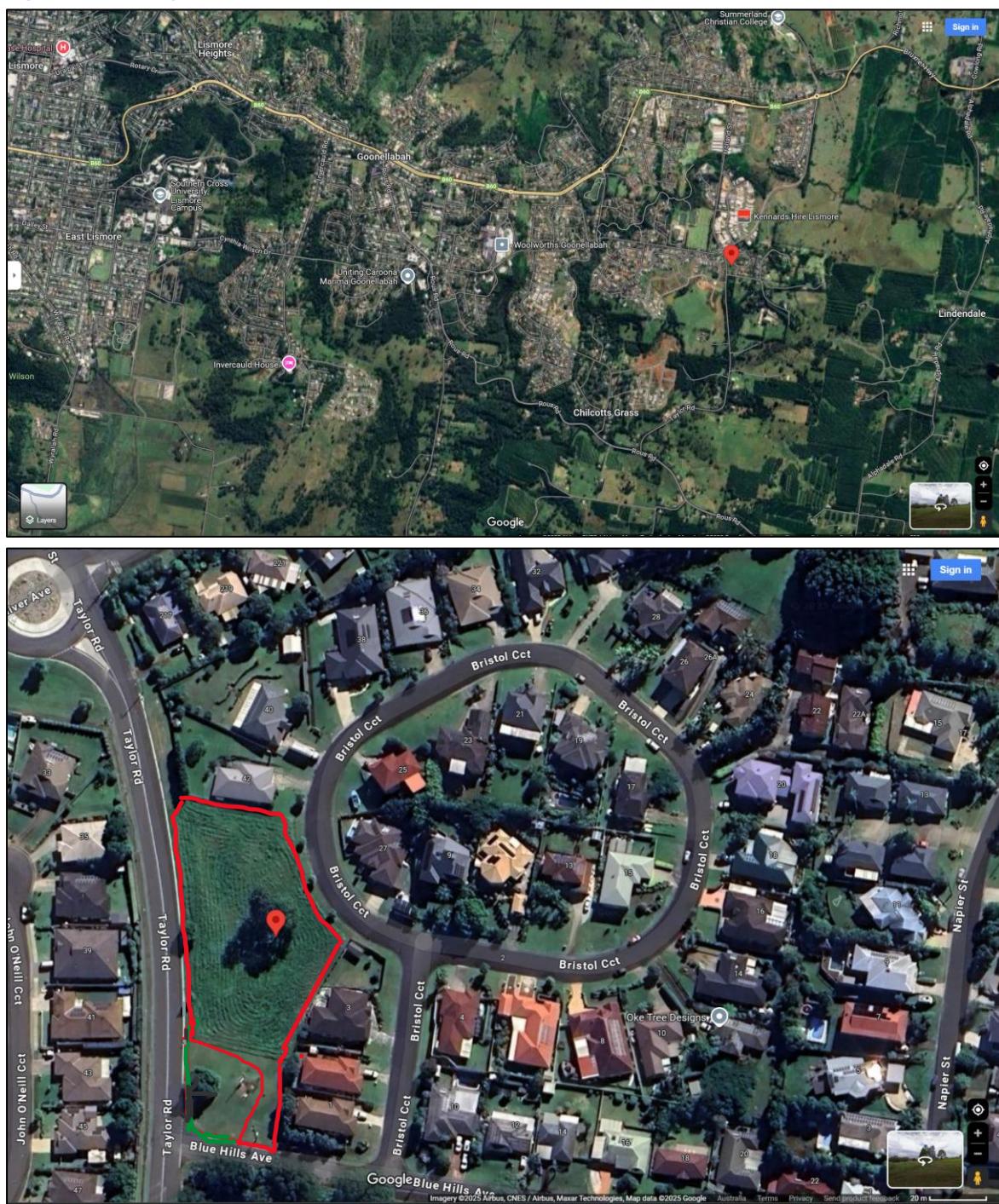
Under the MOU, Landcom would act as project managers, with the housing owned and managed by a yet-to-be appointed Community Housing Provider. This ensures Council has no ongoing maintenance, property management or asset replacement costs.

This will also allow the Community Housing Provider to use the new developments as collateral to new funding for more affordable housing projects.

Janelle Saffin, the NSW State Member for Lismore, Minister for Recovery, Minister for Small Business and Minister for the North Coast, was invited to comment on the proposed development, but was unfortunately not available.

A NSW Labor government media release concerning NSW government "buyback" and relocation scheme is at page 75.

Figure 2: Bird's eye view of the site (red marker) and surrounds



The subject site is the last vacant land along Bristol Circuit. The site stretches across to Taylor Road and down to Blue Hills Avenue.

The surrounding residences are all substantial and quite recently constructed brick and tile houses, some single storey, others two storey. See images following.

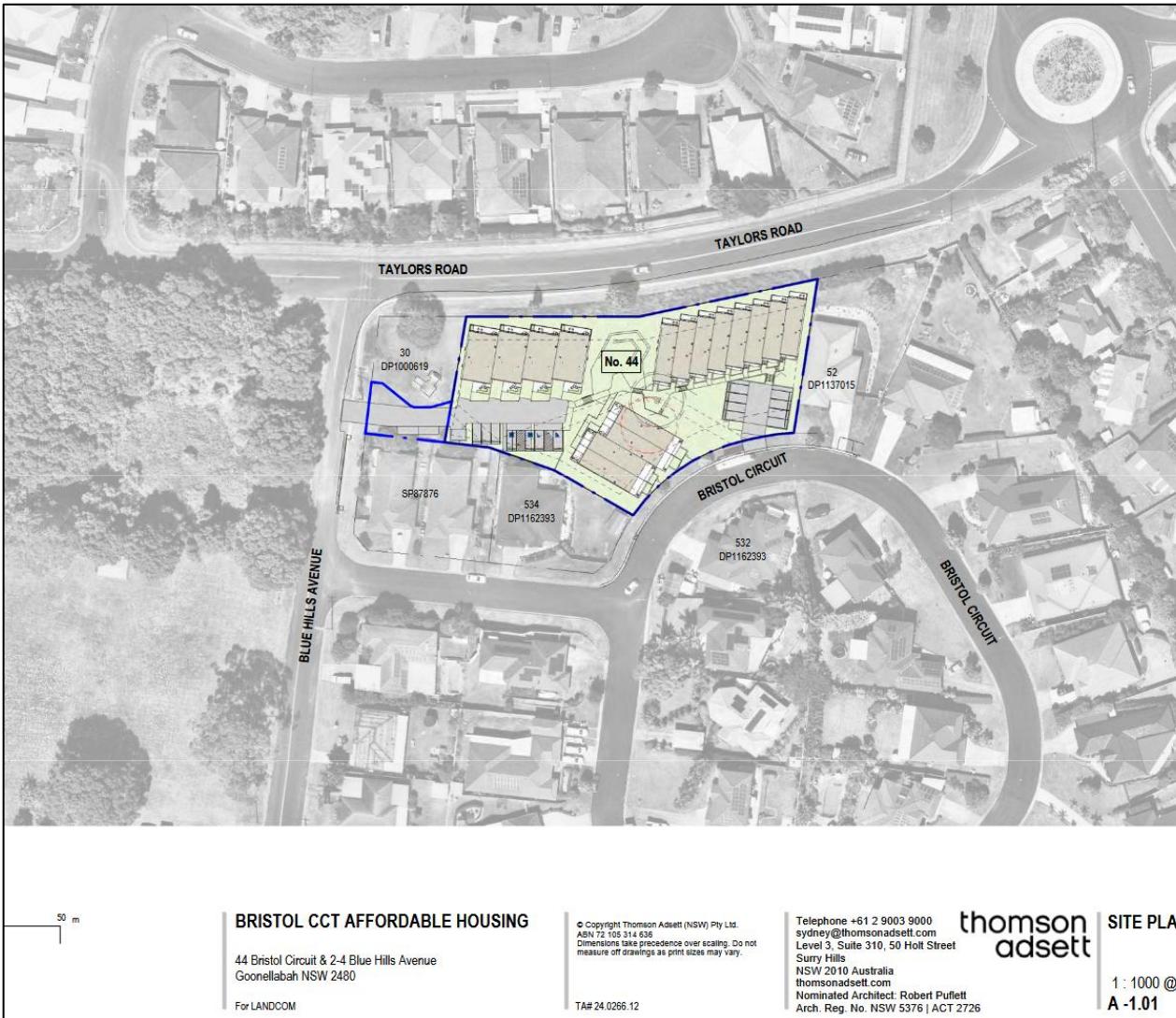
Figure 3: The site and surrounding residences viewed from Bristol Cct

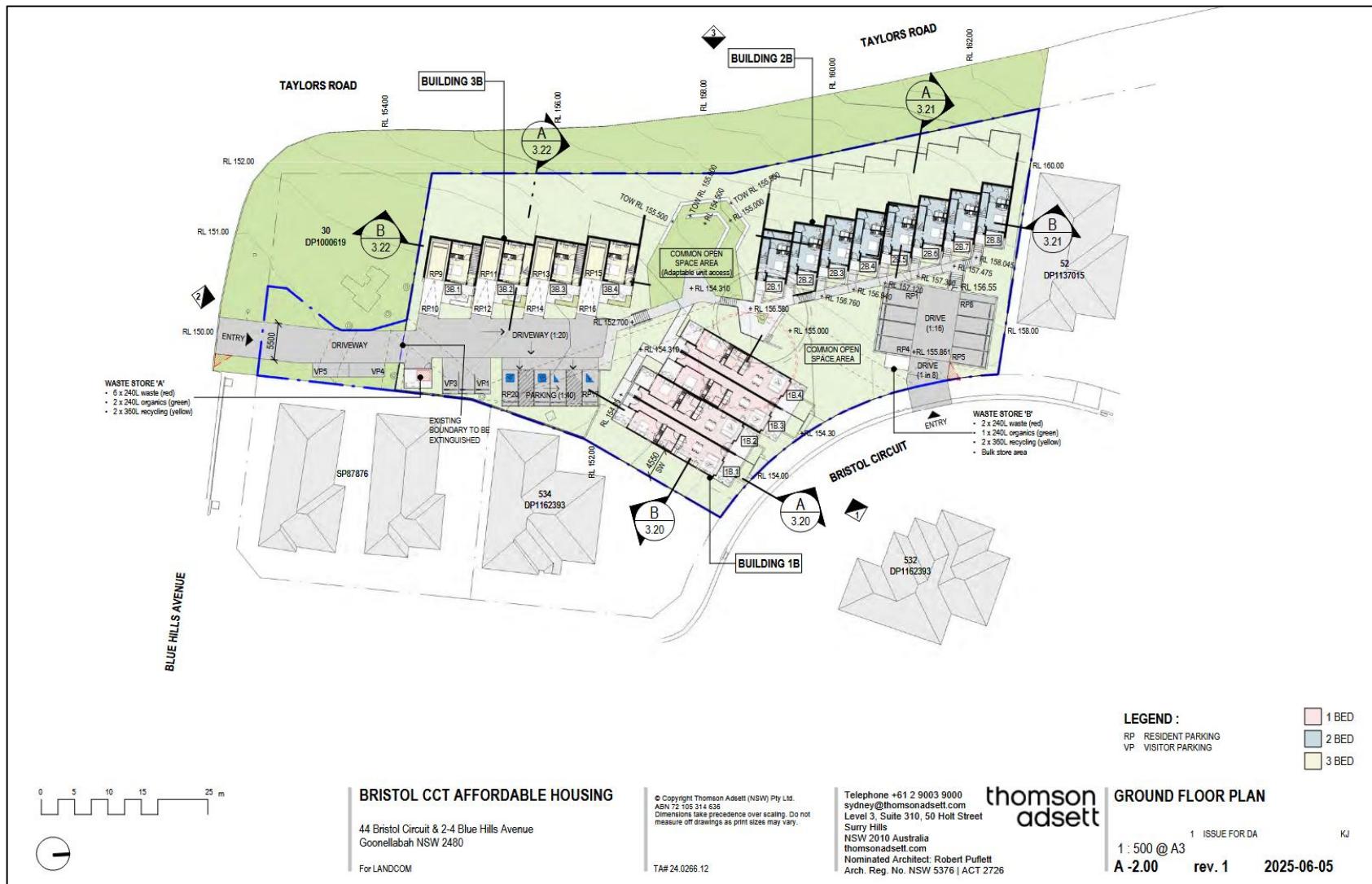


The 16 homes will be provided in three buildings:

- one single storey with four X 1-bedroom homes compliant with requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act
- one two storey with four X 3-bedroom homes
- one two storey with eight X 2-bedroom homes, as shown in the plans following.

There will be 25 on-site car parking spaces: 20 for residents and 5 for visitors.





Services available

Goonellabah has a petrol station, fire station and two shopping centres with a range of shops, cafes and services including post office and fitness centre. The nearby Lismore township has a police station, two hospitals and a wide range of shops and services.

Figure 4: Shops and services

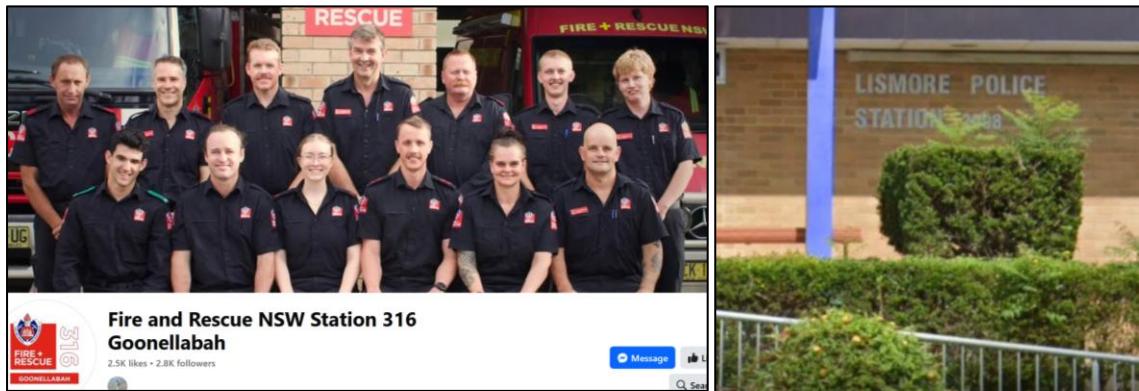
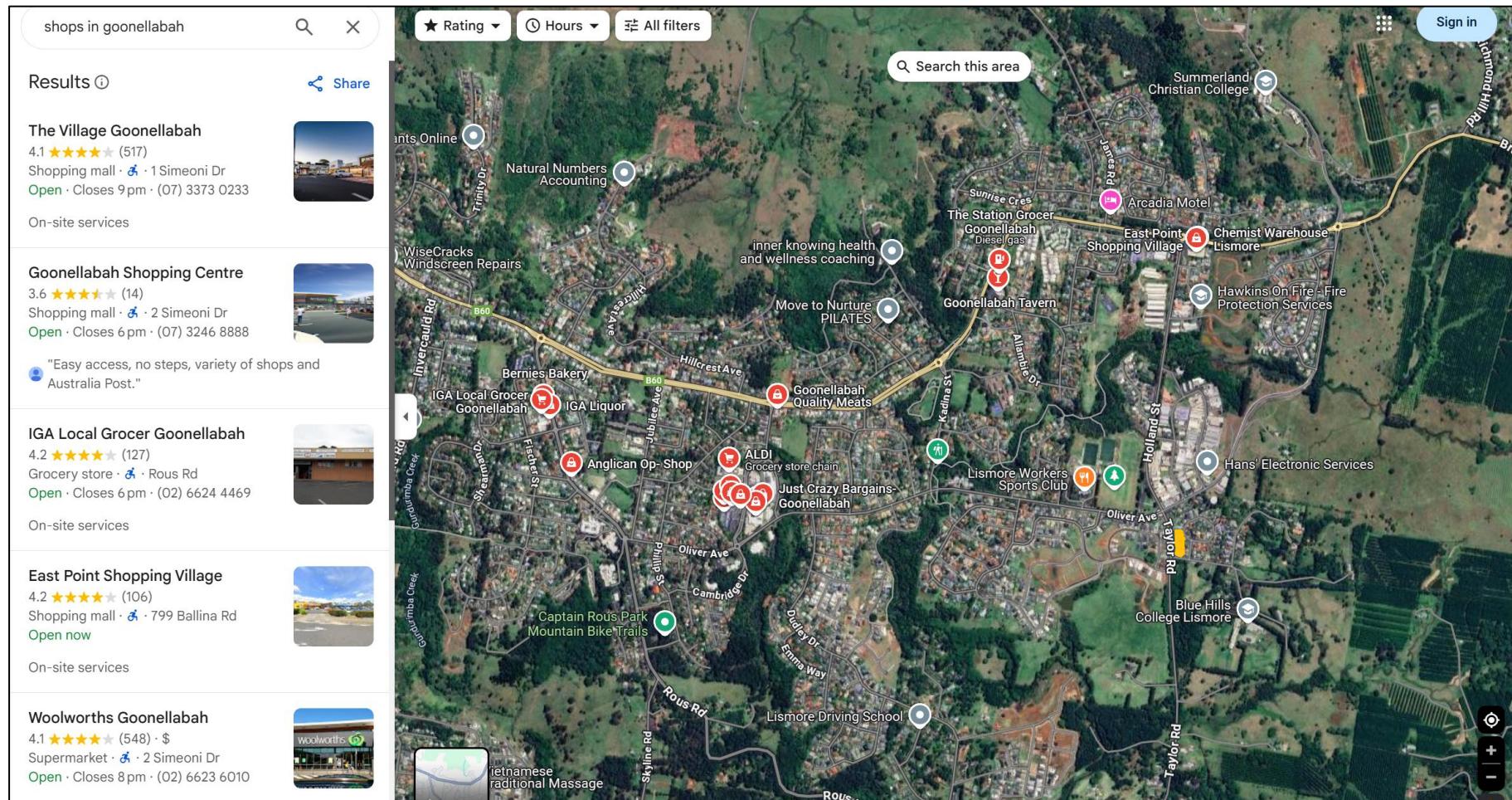


Figure 5: shops in Goonellabah (site marked in yellow)



It is likely that every household in the proposed development will have a car and, as noted above, there will be 25 on-site car parking spaces, including 5 for visitors. However, there are several bus routes through Goonellabah, including a school bus route (S346), one between Goonellabah and Lismore only (699) and those between Lismore and Ballina (661) and between Lismore and Byron Bay (640X). There is also an on-demand service to connect with other bus routes.

Figure 6: Bus routes closest to Bristol Circuit Goonellabah.

The bus routes closest to Bristol Circuit in Goonellabah, NSW are the 661, 640X, 699, and S346. The 661 connects Lismore and Ballina, the 640X connects Lismore and Byron Bay, the 699 travels between Goonellabah and Lismore, and the S346 is a school bus. Additionally, there's the B-ConX On Demand service operating from Goonellabah and other areas, which can connect you with route buses to Ballina or Lismore. 

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

- **661:** This route runs between Lismore and Ballina, passing through Alstonville and Wollongbar. 
- **640X:** This route connects Lismore and Byron Bay, also passing through Alstonville, Ballina, and Lennox Head. 
- **699:** This route is a direct connection between Goonellabah and Lismore. 
- **S346:** This is a school bus route connecting Lismore schools to Goonellabah. 
- **B-ConX On Demand:** This service allows you to book rides to places of interest or transport hubs where you can connect with other bus services. 

B-ConX - Buslines on demand transport in Northern Rivers and Ballina

About our service B-ConX, On Demand public transport, provides a convenient, safe and reliable transport service in t...

 B-ConX

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Northern Rivers On Demand service | transportnsw.info

on-demand Northern Rivers On Demand service The B-ConX On Demand services for the Northern Rivers region operated...

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Goonellabah Coach Stop | transportnsw.info

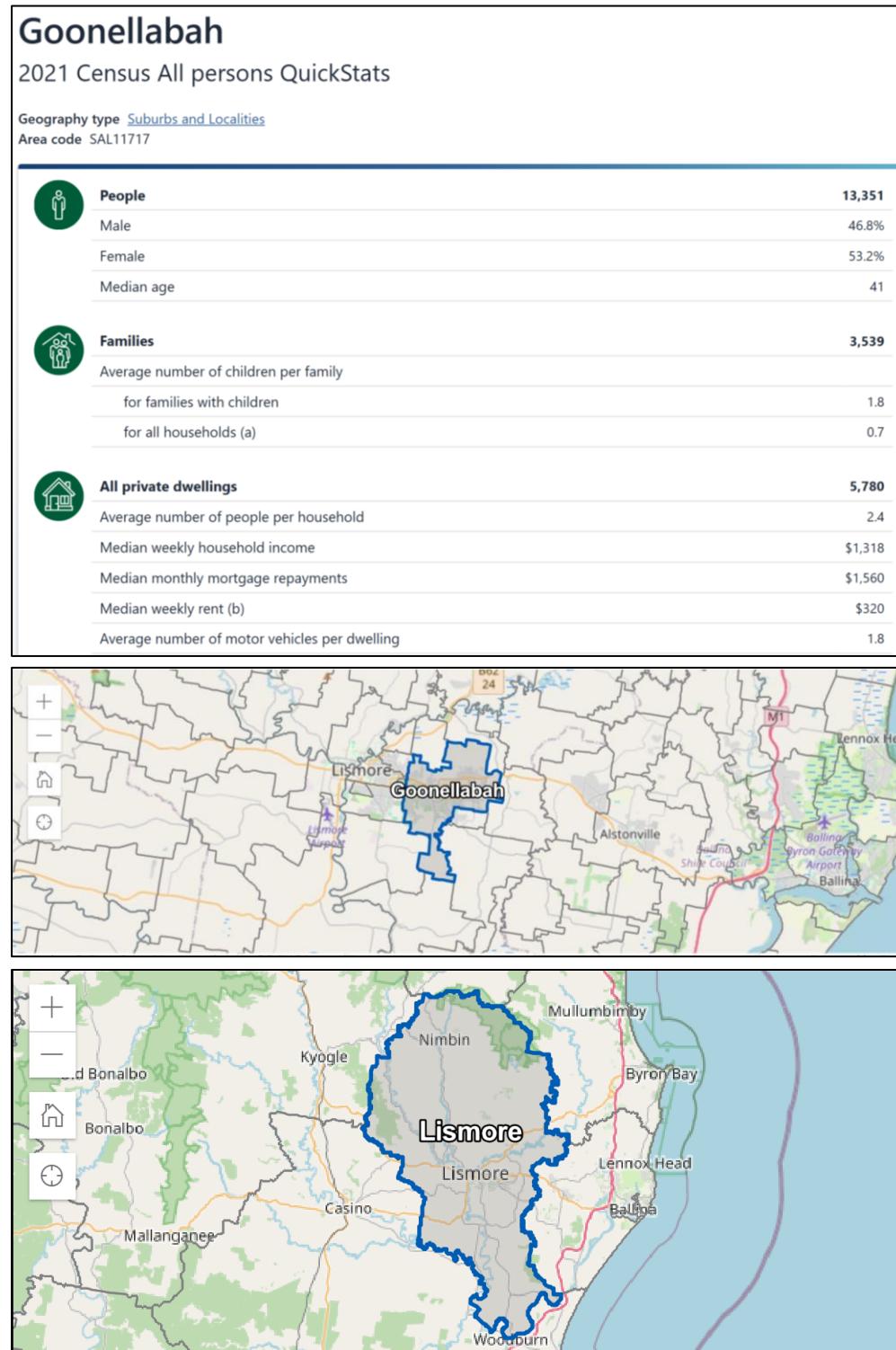
Routes from this stop * 661 Lismore to Ballina via Alstonville & Wollongbar. * 661 Ballina to Lismore via Wollongbar &...

 Transport NSW

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3. The population of Goonellabah and Lismore LGA

Figure 7: Goonellabah and Lismore LGA overview



In 2021, the population of Goonellabah and the the Lismore LGA in general was predominantly made up by Anglo-Celtic Australian families. Income levels in the Lismore LGA were close to average at personal, family and household levels, but lower than those for NSW overall. Educational attainment was somewhat lower than that for NSW overall and the main industries of employment were in hospitals, residential aged care and other assistance services, supermarket and grocery stores and secondary education.

Table 1: Gender, age, ancestry and household composition

People <i>All people</i>	Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%
Male	6,252	46.8	21,758	49.1	3,984,166	49.4	12,545,154	49.3
Female	7,099	53.2	22,573	50.9	4,087,995	50.6	12,877,635	50.7
Age <i>All people</i>	Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%
Median age	41	N/A	44	N/A	39	N/A	38	N/A
0-4 years	790	5.9	2,106	4.8	468,056	5.8	1,463,817	5.8
5-9 years	832	6.2	2,570	5.8	500,810	6.2	1,586,138	6.2
10-14 years	831	6.2	2,904	6.6	501,135	6.2	1,588,051	6.2
15-19 years	778	5.8	2,657	6.0	457,896	5.7	1,457,812	5.7
20-24 years	711	5.3	2,285	5.2	496,185	6.1	1,579,539	6.2
25-29 years	849	6.4	2,376	5.4	555,967	6.9	1,771,676	7.0
30-34 years	777	5.8	2,375	5.4	586,057	7.3	1,853,085	7.3
35-39 years	805	6.0	2,529	5.7	580,185	7.2	1,838,822	7.2
40-44 years	771	5.8	2,667	6.0	522,984	6.5	1,648,843	6.5
45-49 years	758	5.7	2,929	6.6	516,915	6.4	1,635,963	6.4
50-54 years	810	6.1	3,055	6.9	500,027	6.2	1,610,944	6.3
55-59 years	758	5.7	3,227	7.3	490,155	6.1	1,541,911	6.1
60-64 years	888	6.7	3,411	7.7	471,628	5.8	1,468,097	5.8
65-69 years	800	6.0	3,090	7.0	416,493	5.2	1,298,460	5.1
70-74 years	737	5.5	2,447	5.5	372,234	4.6	1,160,768	4.6
75-79 years	558	4.2	1,545	3.5	268,110	3.3	821,920	3.2
80-84 years	432	3.2	1,075	2.4	183,409	2.3	554,598	2.2
85 years and over	466	3.5	1,081	2.4	183,895	2.3	542,342	2.1
Ancestry, top responses <i>All people</i>	Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%
Australian	5,514	41.3	18,274	41.2	2,404,990	29.8	8,385,928	33.0
English	5,501	41.2	17,543	39.6	2,307,549	28.6	7,596,753	29.9
Irish	1,706	12.8	6,360	14.3	735,340	9.1	2,410,833	9.5
Scottish	1,459	10.9	5,383	12.1	620,363	7.7	2,176,777	8.6
Australian Aboriginal	963	7.2	2,487	5.6	259,592	3.2	741,307	2.9
Household composition	Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%
<i>Occupied private dwellings (excl. visitor only and other non-classifiable households)</i>								
Family households	3,439	65.3	11,150	65.0	2,065,107	71.2	6,542,648	70.5
Single (or lone) person households	1,647	31.3	5,212	30.4	723,716	25.0	2,370,742	25.6
Group households	184	3.5	798	4.7	111,646	3.8	361,822	3.9
Family composition <i>All families</i>	Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%
Couple family without children	1,408	39.8	4,668	40.8	809,586	37.9	2,608,834	38.8
Couple family with children	1,287	36.4	4,109	35.9	954,588	44.7	2,944,140	43.7
One parent family	783	22.1	2,472	21.6	337,729	15.8	1,068,268	15.9
Other family	49	1.4	184	1.6	34,061	1.6	108,941	1.6

Source: ABS 2021 Census

Table 2: Education, employment and income

Level of highest educational attainment <i>People aged 15 years and over</i>	Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%
Bachelor Degree level and above	2,003	18.4	7,672	20.9	1,838,502	27.8	5,464,631	26.3
Advanced Diploma and Diploma level	936	8.6	3,263	8.9	616,322	9.3	1,946,738	9.4
Certificate level IV	496	4.5	1,563	4.3	216,768	3.3	719,425	3.5
Certificate level III	1,700	15.6	5,592	15.2	771,009	11.7	2,617,766	12.6
Year 12	1,379	12.6	4,512	12.3	954,987	14.5	3,104,116	14.9
Year 11	423	3.9	1,333	3.6	212,538	3.2	958,803	4.6
Year 10	1,662	15.2	4,994	13.6	698,390	10.6	2,086,306	10.0
Certificate level II	11	0.1	45	0.1	4,703	0.1	13,687	0.1
Certificate level I	0	0.0	0	0.0	764	0.0	2,614	0.0
Year 9 or below	1,066	9.8	2,997	8.2	487,855	7.4	1,490,444	7.2
Inadequately described	325	3.0	1,029	2.8	184,252	2.8	506,259	2.4
No educational attainment	32	0.3	81	0.2	64,827	1.0	175,844	0.8
Not stated	863	7.9	3,670	10.0	549,965	8.3	1,694,773	8.2
Participation in the labour force <i>People aged 15 years and over</i>	Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%
In the labour force	6,234	57.2	21,135	57.5	3,874,012	58.7	12,695,853	61.1
Not in the labour force	4,123	37.8	12,878	35.0	2,341,417	35.5	6,888,081	33.1
Not stated	545	5.0	2,735	7.4	386,728	5.9	1,200,851	5.8
Employment status <i>People who reported being in the labour force, aged 15 years and over</i>	Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%
Worked full-time	3,383	54.3	10,636	50.3	2,136,610	55.2	7,095,103	55.9
Worked part-time	2,229	35.8	8,115	38.4	1,151,660	29.7	3,962,550	31.2
Away from work (a)	331	5.3	1,291	6.1	395,888	10.2	991,758	7.8
Unemployed	292	4.7	1,087	5.1	189,852	4.9	646,442	5.1
Occupation, top responses <i>Employed people aged 15 years and over</i>	Goonellabah	%	Occupation, top responses <i>Employed people aged 15 years and over</i>					
Professionals	1,170	19.7	Professionals					
Community and Personal Service Workers	832	14.0	Community and Personal Service Workers					
Clerical and Administrative Workers	817	13.7	Technicians and Trades Workers					
Technicians and Trades Workers	787	13.2	Labourers					
Labourers	727	12.2	Managers					
Sales Workers	626	10.5	Clerical and Administrative Workers					
Managers	578	9.7	Sales Workers					
Machinery Operators and Drivers	316	5.3	Machinery Operators and Drivers					
Industry of employment, top responses <i>Employed people aged 15 years and over</i>	Goonellabah	%	Industry of employment, top responses <i>Employed people aged 15 years and over</i>					
Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)	448	7.5	Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)					
Aged Care Residential Services	236	4.0	Other Social Assistance Services					
Other Social Assistance Services	218	3.7	Aged Care Residential Services					
Supermarket and Grocery Stores	212	3.6	Supermarket and Grocery Stores					
Secondary Education	149	2.5	Secondary Education					
Median weekly incomes (a) <i>People aged 15 years and over</i>	Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%
Personal (b)	\$705	N/A	\$685	N/A	\$813	N/A	\$805	N/A
Family (c)	\$1,721	N/A	\$1,719	N/A	\$2,185	N/A	\$2,120	N/A
Household (d)	\$1,318	N/A	\$1,319	N/A	\$1,829	N/A	\$1,746	N/A

Source: ABS 2021 Census

SEIFA indexes

Each of the four ABS SEIFA (Socio-Economic Indexes For Areas) summarises a different aspect of the socio-economic conditions in an area by using different combinations of Census data variables:

- the Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) focuses on relative socio-economic disadvantage
- the Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD) focuses on both advantage and disadvantage
- the Index of Economic Resources (IER) focuses on Economic advantage and disadvantage
- the Index of Education and Occupation (IEO) focuses on relative Education and Occupation advantage and disadvantage.

Compared with Australia overall, the Lismore LGA is neither particularly advantaged nor particularly disadvantaged:

- in the 5th decile on Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD), so not particularly advantaged nor disadvantaged;
- in the 5th decile on the Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD), so not particularly advantaged nor disadvantaged;
- in the 4th decile on the Index of Economic Resources (IER), so slightly disadvantaged;
- in the 7th decile on the Index of Education and Occupation (IEO), so somewhat advantaged.

However, the suburb of Goonellabah is consistently more disadvantaged than Lismore LGA overall, being:

- in the 3rd decile on Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD), so somewhat disadvantaged;
- in the 3rd decile on the Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD), somewhat disadvantaged;
- in the 3rd decile on the Index of Economic Resources (IER), somewhat disadvantaged;
- in the 3rd decile on the Index of Education and Occupation (IEO), somewhat disadvantaged.

Table 3: Lismore LGA SEIFA scores and ranking



Australian Bureau of Statistics

Socio-Economic Indexes for Australia (SEIFA), 2021
Released at 10.30am (Canberra time) 27 April 2023

Table 1 Local Government Area (LGA) SEIFA Summary, 2021

2021 Local Government Area (LGA) Code	2021 Local Government Area (LGA) Name	Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage		Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage		Index of Economic Resources		Index of Education and Occupation		Usual Resident Decile Population
		Score	Decile	Score	Decile	Score	Decile	Score	Decile	
14850	Lismore	966	5	945	5	970	4	959	7	44334

Table 4: Goonellabah suburb SEIFA scores and ranking



Australian Bureau of Statistics

Socio-Economic Indexes for Australia (SEIFA), 2021
Released at 10.30am (Canberra time) 27 April 2023

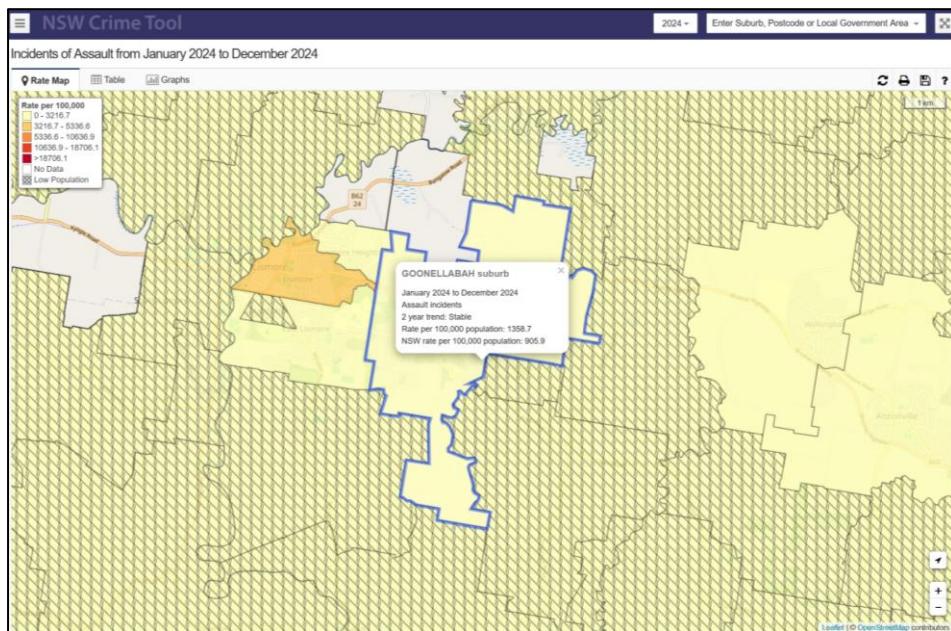
Table 1 Suburbs and Localities (SAL) SEIFA Summary, 2021

2021 Suburbs and Localities (SAL) Code	2021 Suburbs and Localities (SAL) Name	Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage		Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage		Index of Economic Resources		Index of Education and Occupation		Usual Resident Population
		Score	Decile	Score	Decile	Score	Decile	Score	Decile	
11717	Goonellabah	968	3	939	3	966	3	938	3	13351

Crime

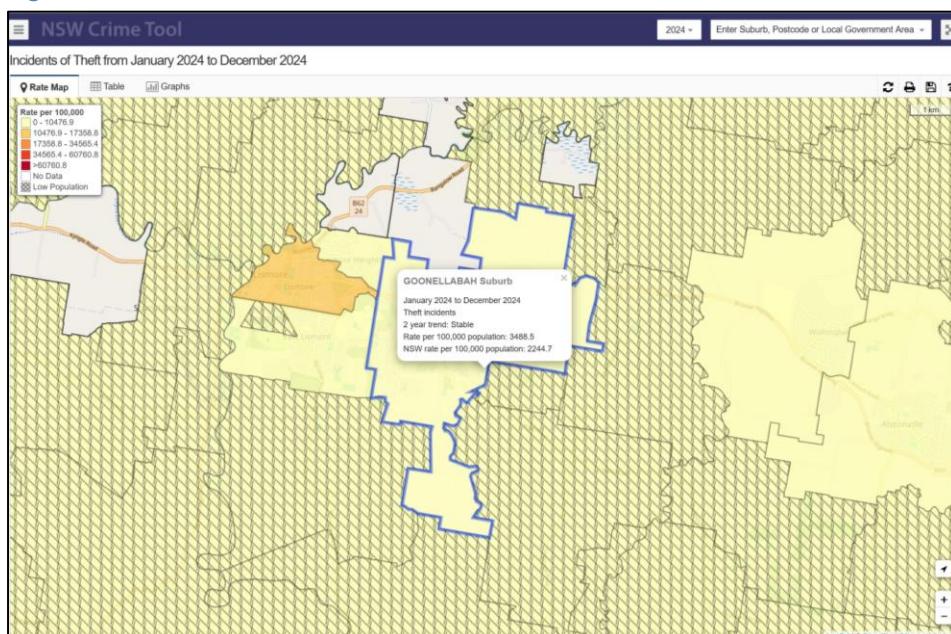
Goonellabah is a very low crime area. Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) crime maps show that it is in the lowest pentile for assault, theft, malicious damage to property, drug offences, sexual offences and homicide. The township of Lismore is also in the lowest pentile for drug offences, but has slightly higher rates of assault, theft, malicious damage and sexual offences, being in the second pentile.

Figure 8: Assault



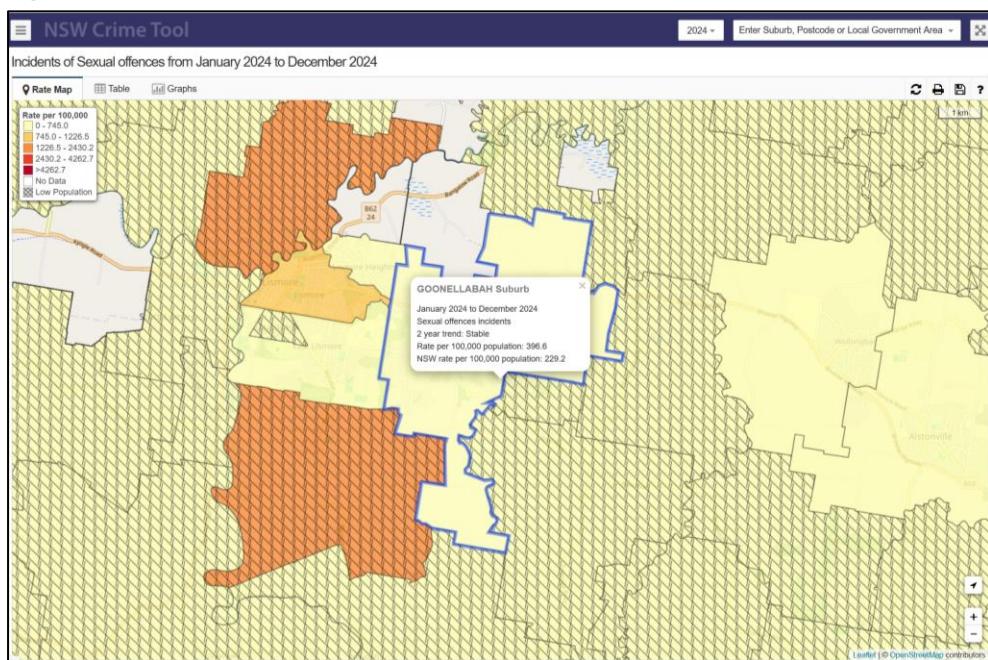
Source: BOCSAR

Figure 9: Theft



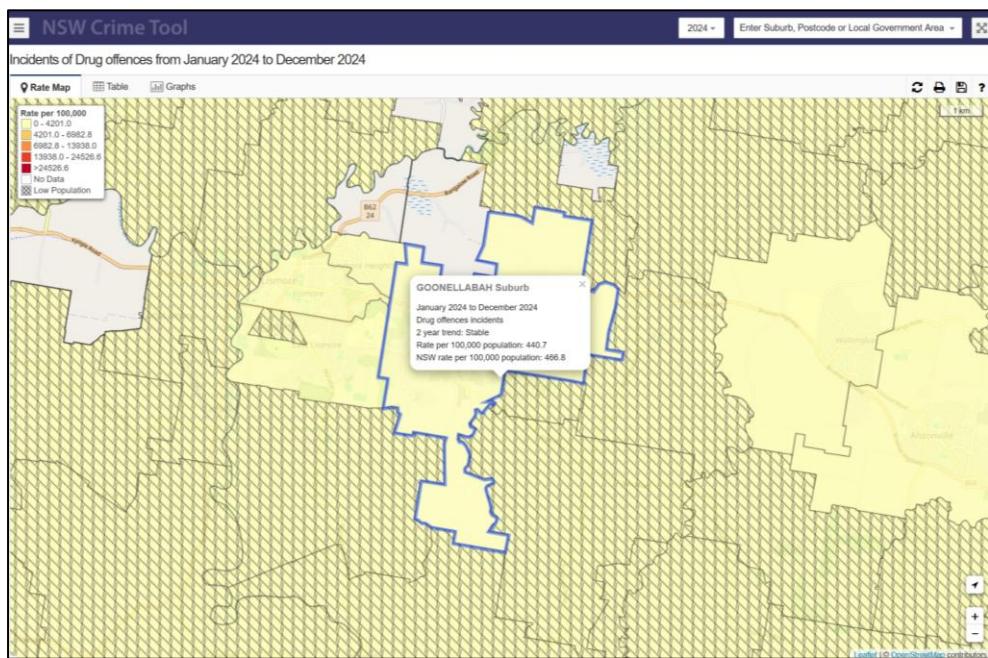
Source: BOCSAR

Figure 10: Sexual offences



Source: BOCSAR

Figure 11: Drug offences



Source: BOCSAR

Health

At the 2021 Census, the population of Goonellabah and the Lismore LGA generally had higher rates of all long-term health conditions addressed in Census questions.

Table 5: Rates of long-term health conditions in Goonellabah and Lismore LGA

Type of long-term health condition <i>All people</i>	Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%
Arthritis	1,562	11.7	4,464	10.1	679,359	8.4	2,150,396	8.5
Asthma	1,599	12.0	4,398	9.9	625,835	7.8	2,068,020	8.1
Cancer (including remission)	494	3.7	1,571	3.5	227,981	2.8	732,152	2.9
Dementia (including Alzheimer's)	155	1.2	317	0.7	62,706	0.8	189,162	0.7
Diabetes (excluding gestational diabetes)	742	5.6	1,983	4.5	388,747	4.8	1,198,721	4.7
Heart disease (including heart attack or angina)	778	5.8	2,114	4.8	316,840	3.9	999,096	3.9
Kidney disease	205	1.5	516	1.2	77,272	1.0	231,777	0.9
Lung condition (including COPD or emphysema)	409	3.1	1,172	2.6	135,909	1.7	441,109	1.7
Mental health condition (including depression or anxiety)	1,802	13.5	5,499	12.4	646,412	8.0	2,231,543	8.8
Stroke	192	1.4	552	1.2	73,269	0.9	234,609	0.9
Any other long-term health condition(s)	1,398	10.5	4,168	9.4	626,827	7.8	2,041,929	8.0
No long-term health condition(s)	6,719	50.3	23,135	52.2	4,925,422	61.0	15,292,718	60.2
Not stated	1,109	8.3	4,553	10.3	654,833	8.1	2,066,251	8.1
Count of selected long-term health conditions <i>All people</i>	Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%
None of the selected conditions	7,297	54.7	24,961	56.3	5,240,109	64.9	16,302,537	64.1
One condition	3,056	22.9	9,697	21.9	1,480,498	18.3	4,791,516	18.8
Two conditions	1,175	8.8	3,369	7.6	456,604	5.7	1,490,344	5.9
Three or more conditions	712	5.3	1,745	3.9	240,117	3.0	772,142	3.0
Not stated	1,109	8.3	4,553	10.3	654,833	8.1	2,066,251	8.1

Source: ABS 2021 Census

The impact of the 2022 floods and subsequent housing issues on the physical and mental health of Lismore LGA residents should become apparent in the next Census figures.

4. Availability of affordable rental accommodation

Census evidence

2021 Census statistics show that Goonellabah and the surrounding LGA of Lismore had substantial need for more affordable rental housing then.

- Most homes in Goonellabah (77.7%) and most in Lismore LGA (83.5%) were separate houses, compared with only 65.6% for NSW overall.
- A substantial minority of households were renting (28.8% in Goonellabah and 27.1% in Lismore LGA).
- Median weekly rent was less than that for NSW overall (\$320 in Goonellabah and \$310 in Lismore LGA compared with \$420 for NSW). However, median weekly income was also below that for NSW overall at
 - personal level (\$705 in Goonellabah and \$685 in Lismore vs \$805 for NSW);
 - family level (\$1,721 in Goonellabah and \$1,719 in Lismore vs \$2,185 for NSW);
 - and household level (\$1,318 in Goonellabah and \$1,319 in Lismore vs \$1,829 for NSW).
- In keeping with this, more than a third of renters were living in housing stress, where rental payments exceeded 30% of household income (36.7% of renters in Goonellabah and 41.3% of renters in Lismore LGA).
- As noted in the previous chapter, residents of Goonellabah and Lismore LGA were less likely than average for NSW to have tertiary qualifications and less likely to be professionals or managers than average for NSW. They were more likely to be employed as community and personal services workers, clerical and administrative workers, technicians and trades workers, labourers and sales workers.
- The main industries of employment for residents of Goonellabah and Lismore were hospitals, residential aged care services, other assistance services, secondary education, grocery stores and supermarkets.

These figures show that there was already substantial need for more affordable rental housing in Goonellabah and Lismore LGA generally at the 2021 Census, but these figures predate the floods of 2022 that damaged 5,000 homes and displaced 12,000 -14,000 people in Lismore and surrounding localities, making the situation for renters very much worse.

The highest Lismore flood on record arrived on 28 February 2022, with flood waters reaching 14.4 metres. A second flood followed on March 30th, reaching 11.4 metres.

The next Census will presumably show a very much higher rate of housing stress in the Lismore LGA.

Table 6: Housing at 2021 Census

Dwelling count		Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%
<i>Private dwellings (excl. visitor only and other non-classifiable households)</i>									
Occupied private dwellings	5,270	94.7		17,154	92.8	2,900,468	90.6	9,275,217	89.9
Unoccupied private dwellings	291	5.2		1,321	7.1	299,524	9.4	1,043,776	10.1
Dwelling structure									
<i>Occupied private dwellings (excl. visitor only and other non-classifiable households)</i>		Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	
Separate house	4,095	77.7		14,325	83.5	1,902,734	65.6	6,710,582	
Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse etc	949	18.0		1,703	9.9	340,582	11.7	1,168,860	
Flat or apartment	219	4.2		816	4.8	630,030	21.7	1,319,095	
Other dwelling	0	0.0		268	1.6	19,374	0.7	54,711	
Number of bedrooms									
<i>Occupied private dwellings (excl. visitor only and other non-classifiable households)</i>		Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	
None (includes studio apartments or bedsitters)	12	0.2		183	1.1	21,051	0.7	44,864	
1 bedroom	123	2.3		931	5.4	190,792	6.6	488,681	
2 bedrooms	816	15.5		3,077	17.9	657,578	22.7	1,768,530	
3 bedrooms	2,364	44.9		7,264	42.3	1,006,121	34.7	3,617,803	
4 or more bedrooms	1,881	35.7		5,426	31.6	983,314	33.9	3,224,351	
Number of bedrooms not stated	67	1.3		272	1.6	41,623	1.4	130,989	
Tenure type									
<i>Occupied private dwellings (excl. visitor only and other non-classifiable households)</i>		Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	
Owned outright	1,885	35.8		6,454	37.6	914,537	31.5	2,872,331	
Owned with a mortgage (a)	1,681	31.9		5,441	31.7	942,804	32.5	3,242,449	
Rented (b)	1,517	28.8		4,652	27.1	944,585	32.6	2,842,378	
Other tenure type (c)	108	2.0		346	2.0	55,931	1.9	181,518	
Tenure type not stated	77	1.5		273	1.6	42,613	1.5	136,538	
Median weekly incomes (a)									
<i>People aged 15 years and over</i>		Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	
Personal (b)	\$705	N/A		\$685	N/A	\$813	N/A	\$805	
Family (c)	\$1,721	N/A		\$1,719	N/A	\$2,185	N/A	\$2,120	
Household (d)	\$1,318	N/A		\$1,319	N/A	\$1,829	N/A	\$1,746	
Rent weekly payments									
<i>Occupied private dwellings (excl. visitor only and other non-classifiable households) being rented</i>		Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	
Median rent (a)	320	N/A		310	N/A	420	N/A	375	
Renter households where rent payments are less than or equal to 30% of household income (b)	827	54.5		2,333	50.2	529,731	56.1	1,667,080	
Renter households with rent payments greater than 30% of household income (b)	557	36.7		1,922	41.3	335,404	35.5	915,317	
Unable to determine (c)	131	8.6		393	8.4	79,448	8.4	259,992	
Mortgage monthly repayments									
<i>Occupied private dwellings (excl. visitor only and other non-classifiable households) owned with a mortgage or purchased under a shared equity scheme</i>		Goonellabah	%	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	
Median mortgage repayments	1,560	N/A		1,517	N/A	2,167	N/A	1,863	
Owner with mortgage households where mortgage repayments are less than or equal to 30% of household income (a)	1,340	79.7		4,109	75.5	677,486	71.9	2,398,902	
Owner with mortgage households with mortgage repayments greater than 30% of household income (a)	197	11.7		755	13.9	163,060	17.3	468,817	
Unable to determine (b)	138	8.2		572	10.5	102,255	10.8	374,734	

Source: ABS 2021 Census

Rental accommodation available in Goonellabah now

In the past 12 months, 248 houses in Goonellabah were let. The median rental price was \$500 per week. None of these houses were 1- or 2-bedroom; all were 3- or 4-bedroom. In the same period, 148 units were let. The median rental price was \$415 per week. None of these were 1-bedroom units, but there were 80 X 2-bedroom and 168 X 3-bedroom.

Table 7: Accommodation rented in Goonellabah in past 12 months

Market insights for Goonellabah renters

The median rent in Goonellabah is **\$500 per week**. Find out more on the latest rental property trends for the area to help you understand the local market before you rent.

Goonellabah house data snapshot

The median house rent in Goonellabah is **\$573 per week** based on 286 rental listings in the past 12 months—that's a decrease of 5%. Rental demand has increased by 16% in the same period.

Bedrooms	Median price	Leased
<u>2 bedrooms</u>	-	-
<u>3 bedrooms</u>	\$520 pw	149
<u>4 bedrooms</u>	\$660 pw	99

Goonellabah unit data snapshot

The median unit rent in Goonellabah is **\$415 per week** based on 158 rental listings in the past 12 months—that's an increase of 4%. Rental demand has decreased by 5% in the same period.

Goonellabah unit data snapshot

The median unit rent in Goonellabah is **\$415 per week** based on 158 rental listings in the past 12 months—that's an increase of 4%. Rental demand has decreased by 5% in the same period.

Bedrooms	Median price	Leased
<u>1 bedroom</u>	-	-
<u>2 bedrooms</u>	\$380 pw	80
<u>3 bedrooms</u>	\$450 pw	68

<https://www.realestate.com.au/rent/>

A January 2025 search for rental properties in Goonellabah found:

- two X 1-bedroom homes: one “granny flat” with no car parking space for \$160 per week and one separate 1-bedroom home for \$450 per week;
- three X 2-bedroom homes: a house for \$530 and two units for \$725 and \$745;
- nine X 3-bedroom homes ranging in price from \$400 to \$700 and larger homes.

Figure 12: Rental properties available in Goonellabah January 2025



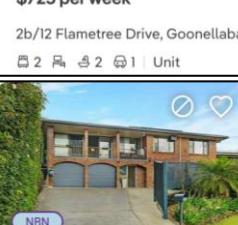
\$160 House
14 Windsor Court, Goonellabah NSW 2480
1 bed, 1 bath, 0 spaces
NBN



\$530 Flat
65 James Road, Goonellabah NSW 2480
2 beds, 2 baths, 2 spaces
NBN



\$725 per week
2b/12 Flametree Drive, Goonellabah
2 beds, 2 baths, 1 space



\$650 Per Week Incl Lawns & Gardens! House
49 Mountain View Drive, Goonellabah NSW 2480
3 beds, 1 bath, 2 spaces
NBN



\$650 Duplex Semi
Goonellabah NSW 2480
3 beds, 2 baths, 1 space
NBN



\$400 Unit
16/2 Taylor Avenue, Goonellabah NSW 2480
3 beds, 1 bath, 1 space
NBN



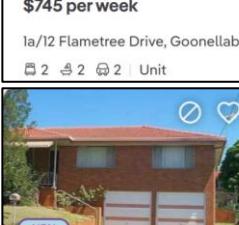
\$430 House
41 Campbell Crescent, Goonellabah NSW 2480
3 beds, 1 bath, 1 space
NBN



\$450pw Incl Furniture, Electricity, Internet, Water
Unit
8 Sanctuary Court, Goonellabah NSW 2480
1 bed, 1 bath, 1 space
NBN



\$745 per week
1a/12 Flametree Drive, Goonellabah
2 beds, 2 baths, 2 spaces



\$560 House
5 Richardson Street, Goonellabah NSW 2480
3 beds, 1 bath, 2 spaces
NBN



\$680 House
41 Northcott Drive, Goonellabah NSW 2480
3 beds, 2 baths, 4 spaces
NBN



\$700 House
2 Compton Avenue, Goonellabah NSW 2480
3 beds, 1 bath, 1 space
NBN



\$500 House
111 Oliver Avenue, Goonellabah NSW 2480
3 beds, 1 bath, 1 space
NBN



\$520 House
645 Ballina Road, Goonellabah NSW 2480
3 beds, 1 bath, 1 space
NBN

<https://www.rent.com.au/properties/goonellabah-nsw-2480>

BPBS: SIA re Landcom Affordable Rental Housing on Bristol Circuit Goonellabah

25

Rental accommodation available in Lismore now

In the past 12 months, 92 houses in Lismore were let. The median rental price was \$500 per week. None of these houses were 1-bedroom, but 24 were 2-bedroom, while 52 were 3-bedroom and 16 were 4-bedroom.

In the same period, 68 units were let. The median rental price was \$365 per week. Of these, 12 were 1-bedroom units and 56 were 2-bedroom units. None were larger.

Table 8: Accommodation rented in Lismore in past 12 months

Market insights for Lismore renters

The median rent in Lismore is **\$420 per week**. Find out more on the latest rental property trends for the area to help you understand the local market before you rent.

Lismore house data snapshot

The median house rent in Lismore is **\$500 per week** based on 96 rental listings in the past 12 months—that's a decrease of 5%. Rental demand has increased by 14% in the same period.

Bedrooms	Median price	Leased
<u>2 bedrooms</u>	\$415 pw	24
<u>3 bedrooms</u>	\$530 pw	52
<u>4 bedrooms</u>	\$575 pw	16

Lismore unit data snapshot

The median unit rent in Lismore is **\$365 per week** based on 74 rental listings in the past 12 months—that's an increase of 1%. Rental demand has decreased by 20% in the same period.

Lismore unit data snapshot

The median unit rent in Lismore is **\$365 per week** based on 74 rental listings in the past 12 months—that's an increase of 1%. Rental demand has decreased by 20% in the same period.

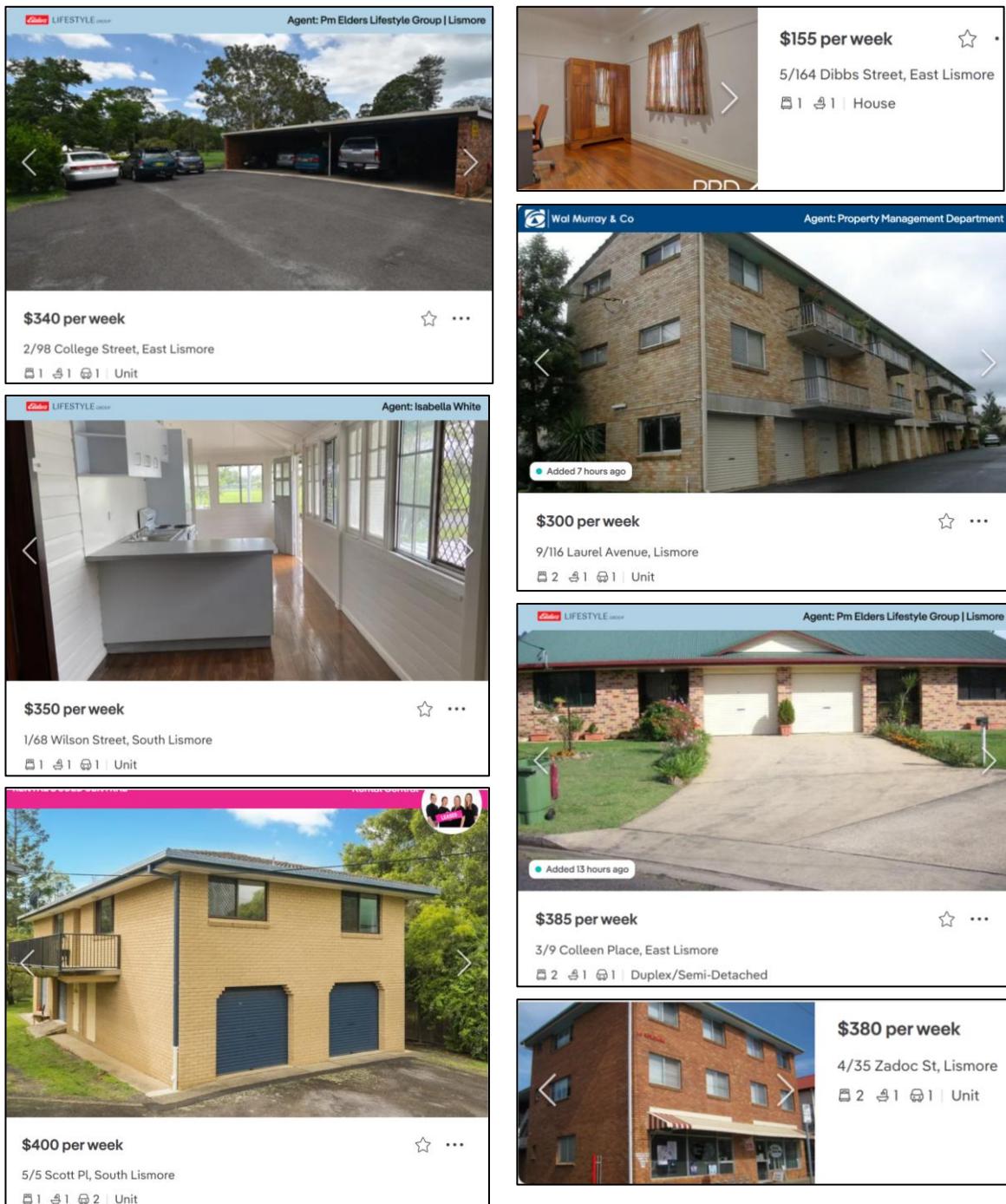
Bedrooms	Median price	Leased
<u>1 bedroom</u>	\$300 pw	12
<u>2 bedrooms</u>	\$370 pw	56
<u>3 bedrooms</u>	-	-

<https://www.realestate.com.au/rent/>

A January 2025 search for rental accommodation in Lismore found:

- a 1-bedroom home for \$155 per week (probably only a room) and three 1-bedroom homes ranging in price from \$340 per week to \$400 per week;
- 10 X 2-bedroom homes ranging in price from \$300 to \$510 per week.

Figure 13: Rental accommodation available in Lismore



<https://www.realestate.com.au/rent/>

Figure 14: Rental accommodation available in Lismore continued

 Agent: Property Management Department

\$320 per week

2/139 Dawson Street, Lismore

2 1 1 Unit

 Agent: Property Management Department

\$360 per week

4/20 Marlyn Avenue, East Lismore

2 1 1 Unit

 Agent: Property Management Department

\$360 per week

3/85-87 Wyrrallah Road, East Lismore

2 1 1 Unit

 Agent: Elke Coronakes

\$440 per week

1-6/55 Caldwell Avenue, East Lismore

2 1 1 Unit

 **\$490 per week**

3 Diadem Lane, Lismore

2 1 1 3 House

 **\$510 per week**

9 Stocks Street, East Lismore

2 1 1 House

 **\$450 per week**

2/63 O'Flynn Street, Lismore Heights

2 1 1 House

<https://www.realestate.com.au/rent/>

The shortage of affordable rental housing in the Lismore area is evident on social media, where people are looking for accommodation or housemates to share with; and caravans, cabins and single rooms are offered for rent.

Figure 15: Homes sought and offered on social media

Soul-full Abodes for the Tribe Northern Rivers
Adriana Perrin · 7 January · 

To Rent.. Huge caravan with tropical roof & open annexe Self contained- (share bathroom & compost toilet with 1 other) Leafy , private outlook. Fruit & native gardens all around. Semi rural. 1.5km easy walk to Lismore CBD. Off street parking. No cats . Flood free \$180pw includes electricity (unless you want to run air conditioner or electric heater) Bond & references required. Available now





Soul-full Abodes for the Tribe Northern Rivers

Melanie Gersbach · 30 May 2023 ·

...

Renting out my cabin between Lismore and Nimbin - in Georgica.

Self contained 2 bedroom cottage with beautiful pergola kitchen area.

Simple outdoor set up with shower , great compost toilet and kitchen with stove, fridge, sitting area, BBQ, sink.

suited to someone used to living on land who enjoys beautiful garden setting.

Pond with fishes and water garden (producing some greens) would love minimal care..

Available from mid June to Mid September.

300\$ pw negotiable

We can't have Pets



 **Lismore And Surroundings Information Exchange**
Gurmeet Singh · 20 March at 01:59 · 

Hello Everyone I'm looking a furnished room for rent in lismore, I'm working full time in restaurant in lismore, I got references, my budget is \$200 per week

 **Lismore And Surroundings Information Exchange**
Anita North · 5 January · 

 **HOUSE FOR SHORT TERM RENT IN LISMORE HEIGHTS**

Available till 1 March.

2 bedroom. Yard space. Pets allowed.

Some furniture still present (double bed, lounge, some kitchen stuff, dining table).

\$500 pw including bills.

DM me for details

 **Lismore What's Happening · Join**
Marina Curi · 14 March at 15:42 · 

LAND FOR RENT WANTED - Lismore region

Hey all, I'm looking for a bit of land to park my tiny house, completely off grid, can pay rent as I'm not good with physical jobs, only intellectual ones.

Can design you anything in exchange (from websites to actual interior design projects)

Dm me if you have a bit of land near lismore.

Cheers

 **Lismore And Surroundings Information Exchange**
Sas Detailing Ceramic Coating · 5 March · 

Hi all. . I'm 51 yrs of age stuck down in coraki. Need to find a place to live around lismore if anyone has a cheap room to rent . Very poor ATM ie being stuck in coraki has not helped. Need to be closer to my customers for detailing. And possibly chef work. My number is 0481183499. If any one has a heart and wants to help someone get back on their feet please call. I lived in chinderah and was forced to leave my cat with last landlord due to the place where I cane has four dogs would love to find somewhere I could get him back.

 **Lismore Business Connections · Join**
WR von Sturler · 15 March at 12:56 · 

Looking for an easy going person who may be interested in going halves in renting this house. It's expensive but allows for 2 separate living areas and own bathroom with plenty of spare space. PM me. <https://www.homely.com.au/.../18-renwick.../11928492...>



 **HOMELY.COM.AU**

18 Renwick Street, Lismore Heights NSW 2480 - House For Rent

3 bedroom house for rent at 18 Renwick Street, Lismore Heights NSW 2480 for \$680pw. View ...

Lismore And Surroundings Information Exchange
Simon Thomas · 24 March 2023 ·

Fully furnished, close to town, rent includes bills!



Simon Thomas
5 February 2023 ·

Short term rental opportunity:
Spacious, rustic granny flat in South Lismore easy walking distance to the CBD.
Fully furnished including kitchen equipment and bedding. Would suit a visiting tradesperson or professional.
Freshly renovated after sustaining damage in the February flood.
255PW plus bond including water and electricity.
Best suited to a single person but couples considered.
Sorry, no dogs or cats.
Available now until May 20.



Lismore community information exchange

Leila Bosonia · 16 March at 05:00 ·

...

Hi. I hope everyone is safe from the cyclone

We have rooms for rent available in Carrara

Rates:

Side studio (red circle) - \$330

Master's Bedroom (blue circle) - \$350

Tiny bedroom -(green circle) - \$160

Studio room and masters bedroom have air-conditioning and can fit couples (+30 for the second person)

. The tiny bedroom is for single occupant only.

Pets are allowed except for spiders and venomous pets. We also don't want loud housemates, some people will be working from home. For long term lease only

Tell us a bit about your hobbies and what you do for a living, and what matters to you in a shared house.



Homelessness in Lismore LGA

The Lismore Soup Kitchen is primarily based in the Winsome Hotel building at 11 Bridge St in North Lismore, but they also provide the Goonellabah Good Pantry service at the corner of Rous Road and Pleasant Street in Goonellabah from 10 am to 2 pm on Wednesdays.

According to Co-ordinator, Steve Smith, they assist about 250 homeless and otherwise disadvantaged individuals each year, providing 30,000 meals and other support services, including emergency accommodation. Currently they see about 85 people per day.

Steve noted that the Northern NSW - Mid-North Coast - New England Region has now overtaken Sydney in terms of street-based homelessness counts.

Since 2020, the NSW Government has conducted a street count of homeless people. In 2024, the count was particularly high in the Mid North Coast-New England-Northern NSW region, reaching a total of 1,046 people. Of these, 64 were observed within the Lismore LGA.

Table 9: Homeless people street count 2024

Appendix A: 2024 NSW Street Count results								
District Group	LGA	Dates	Scheduled locations	2020 street count results	2021 street count results	2022 street count results	2023 street count results	2024 street count results
Mid North Coast, New England, Northern NSW	Inverell	13 February	2	Not counted	Not counted	0	0	5
	Gunnedah	14 February	1	Not counted	Not counted	6	2	8
	Tamworth	15 February	7	6	5	4	3	11
	Narrabri	16 February	2	3	4	2	5	1
	Armidale	19 February	1	0	0	1	1	5
	Moree	19 February	1	Not counted	Not counted	11	5	0
	Clarence Valley	20 February	6	7	17	11	69	58
	Bellingen	21 February	2	Not counted	Not counted	10	23	22
	Coffs Harbour	21 February	2	51	43	57	82	147
	Mid Coast	21 February	5	2	11	30	15	49
	Kempsey	22 February	9	3	7	1	11	15
	Nambucca	22 February	6	0	0	0	17	20
	Port Macquarie-Hastings	22 February	10	5	10	23	43	53
	Richmond Valley	22 February	5	3	3	5	19	3
	Kyogle	23 February	2	0	1	1	0	0
	Lismore	23 February	5	55	48	48	40	64
	Tweed Valley	27 February	15	77	58	127	145	174
	Ballina	28 February	5	21	20	27	30	63
	Byron Shire	29 February	9	174	198	138*	300	348
	Glen Innes	-	-	Not counted	Not counted	1	5	Not counted
	Total		95	407	425	503	815	1046



2024 NSW Statewide Street Count

Technical Paper

Executive summary

The 2024 NSW street count, the NSW Government's fifth annual rough sleeping street count, was completed between 1 February and 1 March 2024.

2,037 people were counted sleeping rough during these street counts – a 26 per cent (414 person) increase compared to 2023.

Over 300 local organisations were either consulted and/or partnered with the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) to complete street counts in 400 towns and suburbs in 76 local government areas (LGA) across NSW.

These organisations included Specialist Homelessness Services, local councils and Community Housing Providers, as well Aboriginal organisations, local community groups, and Police.

Annual street counts provide the NSW Government and partners with point-in-time data to track street homelessness and target programs aimed at reducing it.

Purpose

Gathering accurate data about the number of people sleeping rough is essential to informing the best way to target resources to those who need the most support. Street counts also help foster local collaboration.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census is the primary homelessness metric. As Census data is only available every five years, NSW undertakes annual street counts of people sleeping rough to deliver more regular data on numbers of people without safe shelter.

In the most recent 2021 Census, the ABS estimates there were 963 people in NSW who were living in improvised dwellings, tents, or sleeping out¹. The 2021 estimates reflect the unique circumstances at the time of the Census. The ABS publication notes the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic public health measures on the 2021 homelessness estimates. As well as international and state border closures, the Census was conducted when parts of NSW were under stay at home orders. Funded initiatives and policy changes for Temporary Accommodation were also in place to support people sleeping rough into accommodation.

DCJ and partners have commenced follow up assertive outreach patrols to locations where people were counted sleeping rough during the street count.

Local housing issues, particularly evictions from and demolition of flood affected houses, are hot topics in local and other print media, in social media and elsewhere. Please see pages 66-73.

Renting resident case studies

Eleven Lismore residents shared their experiences by phone, email or SMS text message. Several women with children have separately been through a series of insecure rental homes since the 2022 floods. Several people are now living in caravans or a tiny house, but without the security of a permitted site with services. One man was given a house by the owner after government buy-back of the land, but he can't afford to relocate it. Two SCU students arrived after the floods: one quickly spent all his savings on rent; the other couch-surfed for 6 months. A couple who now own a house in Goonellabah but previously were renting, described rapidly escalating purchase and rental prices over the past 6 years.

"The house I was renting flooded to the roof. The house was fully inundated with water. The back wall was a single brick wall and it washed away while we were sitting in a loft before we cut our way out of the corrugated tin roof with an axe. All our possessions were in the house and we could no longer live there. The water in South Lismore was particularly putrid maybe also because our house was next to a sewage station. Either way moving back in was not an option. Also the landlord believed we had done wanton damage by cutting our way out of the roof to avoid drowning. He did not return our bond and considered our departure to be irresponsible or something..."

I moved into an affordable rental in North Lismore. My friends, the owners at the time, were impacted by the flood in an adverse way which made it difficult for them to stay in their own home because the memories were traumatic for them. I moved in with my 2 sons. The owners then got the buy back (a high set house which while close to the river has only ever flooded once in white history). I faced eviction at that point. I stood up for renters arguing that we were not acknowledged in an appropriate way and were disregarded in the making of the policies, which considered property before people and specifically flood impacted people. I was to be evicted as a consequence of the buy back system and no one (in the system) even bothered to enquire as to my name, whether or not I had dependants, whether we were flood impacted. As such and with support I argued carefully until I was lucky to be issued with the first license to occupy. It expired and I have been living there without permission since. I haven't been contacted since, I was not asked to leave yet. It is difficult to relocate because of dependency on community for well being. I would move but to where? I feel both a sense of belonging and instability. The threat of eviction is a considerable pressure and the financial relief of not paying rent means it is what it is. I love my house and it is a huge practical financial break to not be paying rent. I still pay bills fees water etc..."

There is high need (for affordable rental homes in the Lismore area). Many people I know don't consider it to be worth their effort to even look for rentals, it is too negatively impacting on wellbeing, it is soul crushing for people who are already precariously positioned. Instead they seek other more user friendly alternatives, like squatting or camping or caravan alternatives. It is just too hard to compete or even pay the rent if you were 'lucky' enough to get a place. And there is no security when you do. You could be asked to leave anytime with 6 weeks minimum notice..."

Affordable rent, the meaning of the term affordable rent has become lost completely. Affordable rent means rent you can afford, not a portion of your income. What can a person afford... sometimes, its just not that much. Honestly renters don't have any rights worth mentioning, I know because I have explored these avenues. I guess we need to just come up with our own creative solutions? I think we should work to normalise the idea that some people don't pay rent. Its not a luxury, its a necessity. Like free food is okay culturally. Let's normalise free rent or free accommodation. Its not an attack on other people. Rental stress is crippling. You can only push people so far."

(Female Lismore resident with children)

"The flood came up to shoulder height in my rental home which I had lived in since 2008. It was 3-bedroom for \$245 a week. Volunteers chucked all my possessions over the front stairs, a lot of these were salvageable. I was going through this pile putting saveable things to one side and rubbish out on the street. Before I arrived one morning all the things I had put to the side to clean and save were taken by a machine cleaning the street.

I heard about the housing crisis and decided to renovate the house, I did a lot of unpaid and underpaid work on the house, which got the buy back so I was evicted. The experience took a toll on my mental and physical health. I had to dig deep to renovate the house and have somewhere to live. The Reconstruction Authority were shocking, and demolitions are heart-breaking.

Currently I am in a share house arrangement in South Lismore. This is not so bad now but was stressful as there was another woman sharing in the house who was abusive to me. She has moved out. I was asked to leave several months ago and have only now found a cabin in Bentley. However the track to it has failed in the wet weather and will not be repaired until things dry out which may be months at this time of year.

Yes I have (had difficulty) and was thinking I might be in the house sharing income bracket. I had a 3 bedroom house for years so hard to realize I can only afford a room or caravan now. Friends have given up and live in their car etc. I nearly moved into a crappy flat in South Lismore for \$300 pw which was flood prone (all the other houses in street a metre higher) when I put an appeal out on Face Book. I was offered a cabin in Bentley for \$200 pw. Worth noting, I although not on benefits have a Health Care card because of my low income. I do bush regen work. I kill weeds in council reserves mostly. There is great need for affordable houses. People living in the dystopian pods is a good example."

(Male Lismore resident)

"I'm squatting on NSW reconstruction authority land with my own tiny home. I am in a suitable home now – no electricity mind you – but the thing is it is very precarious and the state government wants control of the land and is fighting in the supreme court for it. When that happens I might not have access to running water... There is very high need for affordable rental homes in the Lismore area... The irony is that the most affordable housing available is to squat empty 'buyback' houses as part of the governments resilient homes program post 2022 floods. They've created public housing by buying-out the previous owners. They just need to move them to flood-free land now and make them public housing."

(Male Lismore resident living in tiny home)

"I live in caravans. (At 2022 flood), I had moved them above normal 12.5m flood level, but it was not high enough, both vans and my car were flooded. I managed to salvage them however... (Now) living in my vans on vacant land, squatting... I gave up on renting over 10 years ago, hard to find places to rent and too expensive for me even back then... I would say a lot (of need for affordable rental homes in the Lismore area), again going back 25 years, rental applications were usually attended by around 30 applicants..."

What is considered affordable housing is not what I consider affordable. Most people I know paying rent are struggling. And not the only issue, safety net is also very important, and government services can only care so much. Real safety net is people. I would like to see some de regulation around sharing land, I meet a lot of people who lack community, while being surrounded by houses... A lot of people would be happy to live in small dwellings near to other like minded folk but land sharing is made risky for land owners by government regulations, but it can provide safety net, Some where nice to live, more hands to look after land and grow food. This is how affordable living/housing looks to me."

(Male Lismore resident living in caravans with no site permit)

"My home was inundated by 1.5 m of muddy water and about 80% of what I owned including my car was ruined by the Flood. I was renting a shed / studio apartment. I landed in a friend's property in Lismore town, to rent and care for the house, protect it, but that ended up being eligible for a buyback, which he took and then he gifted the house to me and I can't afford to move it up or buy land so I am in a weird position having a lease with no money involved, to stay in the house that I have been given that I can't afford to move. The buy back is just for the land. The house is mine, but I can't afford to move it. These old houses are beautiful and should be preserved, moved to higher ground. I have had a long history of finding a suitable home for my wants and needs. What I have now is the closest I have ever felt to being in my own space. I am a disability support worker and an artist. I work full time, but a lot of it is unpaid. There is a massive, massive need for affordable housing in this region. Real estate is truly a blood sport and this is on display when you look at the housing crisis in this region. The lack of secure housing impacts people's physical and mental health which sends ripples through their broader social networks and community."

(Male Lismore resident, living in a house he now owns but can't afford to move)

"I moved up here last year to study at SCU. I was not affected by the floods personally, but the house I am currently living in in North Lismore has a floor height of 13.4m and received over 1 metre of water through the house. It is currently in the process of being relocated... When I first arrived I had difficulty finding a place to stay, I spent several thousand dollars, essentially all my savings, on temporary accommodation. I eventually moved into the student accommodations at Magellan College. I found the lack of freedom and relative high cost very uncomfortable, and so I accepted the offer of some friends to move into a squat house that was pre-buy-back. That property eventually was bought back and the owner asked us for vacant possession which we complied with, I am currently staying with a retiree, contributing to utilities, and helping with tasks. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity, however the house we are in is getting moved in a couple of months. At that time I will be housing insecure again, I do not receive government support, and work odd jobs in between studying full time at SCU... When I first arrived I visited all the local real estate agents, there were a handful of rentals available, and a single one was within my budget, in Lismore, ~\$200 p/w. during this time, all my savings were going toward temporary accommodation, had I known what I know now, I would have spent the money on camping equipment and pitched a tent in a park or bushland. Either that or visited some squats and asked for assistance in homing myself. That would have been a much better decision in terms of stability, financially and socially.

I think the current mayor and council, believe that Lismore should be a thriving metropolis, where investors spend and build, and base their policy on this, rather than the reality of the situation that Lismore is located in a floodplain, with a huge homeless and housing insecure population. I don't know if Lismore should just dry up and move elsewhere, but a lot of people have a great deal of memory and love for this place and are not ready to move on. To answer the question, yes, there is a huge need, the stats tell us that Northern Rivers has the largest percentage of homeless and housing insecure people in Australia....

I would love to see an affordable tiny home initiative, something like a bike kitchen but for tiny homes, where people can leave materials, and volunteers can help people build their own homes on trailers. these trailers can then be towed out of the floodplain in the event of extreme weather, rather than build homes that have to weather the storm.

(Male Lismore resident and student at Southern Cross University)

"I am a uni student in the Lismore area. I arrived in June after the floods to a room for rent due to a friend having one spare in her share house of 3-4, up on hill toward Goonellabah. At that point it was still a busy time for couch surfing and folks storing their belongings. I

felt very lucky to be able to have a space to live. I lived in this share house for 1.5 hrs before I chose to end the lease so I can find a share house away from the main road (sick of noise and theft). (Now) I am renting in a share house in Clunes (17 km from Lismore).

The rent is \$640 for a small 3 bedroom house, which is above our preferred budget but we've brought in a 4th person to make it easier. Pros: living with friends, big pantry space, bathroom with a separate toilet, outdoor carport/breezeway area good for projects and hangout on hot days, big space for growing food gardens. Our own rainwater tank which we filter for good drinking water. Grid solar for daytime energy efficiency. Cons: expensive given size and how much driving we have to do to get to places with affordable food, uni etc (Lismore), no privacy, next to main road so lots of horrible truck noise, no bathroom extractor fan (bad for mould), no indoor fireplace which would have helped with keeping things dry during wet season and warm in winter. We have 2 good sized bedrooms (one for a couple though) and 1 small 3x3 bedroom, but the shared loungeroom and small sunroom space provide just enough alternative spaces... Despite being told we had a great

application, it took my household 4 months of actively applying and attending rental inspections (over 30 applications). I personally ended up being out of a home for 6 months, couch surfing and camping at friend's already crowded share houses during this time. Very un-ideal as I was studying and working 2 jobs at the same time. We originally hoped for a Lismore house or within 10 minute radius, but eventually got accepted for the place in Clunes that was over our original budget, lacked features we'd hoped to find and now we have to drive a lot to and from Lismore (added fuel expense and time).

A lot (of need for affordable rental homes). I have quite a few friends who had to leave the Northern Rivers (who were from Lismore) because they couldn't find any affordable rentals in the area. Rental prices coming on the market now have increased in price so much it is ridiculous, unaffordable for low income, single parent or student share houses ..a 3 bedroom house is often marketed at \$1000-\$2000 per week at the moment! I have many friends who have been squatting empty buyback homes during the past year due to there being not enough affordable houses in the area. My boyfriend is in a squat despite having a student payment and casual work because there were no affordable rooms...but also he needed to be able to live with people he felt safe with. He unfortunately can't live with me as the real estate agent has capped the tenants at 4 people.

New housing needs to be more energy efficient, like bigger eaves and light paint that doesn't absorb all the heat, with some private and public outdoor garden friendly spaces.

Buyback homes should be moved from the flood zones to be reused in new housing developments. This is good for the community's well-being as well as providing cheaper and better quality resources."

(Female student and casual worker in rented share house)

"Most of the houses here in Lismore got heavily affected by the flood. I was living in a van then and I am living in my van now, located in the Pine St community in Lismore (which consists of several Squat houses. It's really difficult to find affordable homes in this times. The rent is high. And the council doesn't want the squatters to be in Lismore... Yes (I have had difficulty finding a home). There are no affordable houses available. Everything is getting more expensive (cost of living). The demand (for affordable rental housing in the Lismore area) is huge. There are many homeless people, travellers, workers not able to find suitable homes... It is necessary that renting houses is affordable to everyone. We all need a home. And the government and towns should support each individual to have a certain standard of living."

(Female Lismore resident, living in a van)

"I was not living in Lismore at the time of the floods. I did however come to the Lismore area during that time as part of the rescue crew. My partner and I travelled up from south to help the residents clean up... Currently I am homeless, squatting in an abandoned home near Pine Street.. I came here because I could not find affordable accommodation anywhere in NSW. I came from Central Coast... Now I have a roof over mine and my son's head . The house is great. However we don't have any power so keeping food fresh and devices charged is a massive challenge. The freedom of not having major bills is probably the only good part. However what comes with not having bills is the cost of living. No power means food goes off quickly. Means no hot shower. And to make it at least feel like you're a normal person it costs more. For example I've had to source solar panels batteries and all sorts of things to try and make do. All this comes with major challenges especially being a woman on my own with a youth...

There are no affordable houses. I need a 2 bedroom place at least with my son and there is nothing priced under \$500 per week I'm desperately trying to get my life back on track. How is this possible with jobseeker payment being \$300/400 per week? How can one possibly afford housing at \$500 a week? Rentals are not meant to exceed 40% of your wages. These days it's 100% of your wages. And then add to the issue some places don't take pets. Well when you are at the end of your rope a pet is sometimes all you have left, so expecting people who are doing it tough to also lose there pets is extremely traumatising. Most people in my situation have also been abandoned by their friends and family. To lose all that and then be told we can't even have a pet is just inhumane.

There is in my opinion an epidemic of displaced people in Lismore and what's worse there is no support. Contrary to what you get told, the free food given in Lismore is dismal. There is no shelter or food for displaced people in Lismore. Lismore people don't just need housing, they need food and proper mental health support. I can see the contrast coming from the Central Coast to Lismore and here in the most traumatised town of NSW they get nothing... Before I could walk into 3 separate places and get bags of food fresh and cans on any given day. Here I'm allowed to take 2 fresh items and that's it. 2 items like 2 bananas that's it for me and my son and there is not even enough food to feed the people in need. Lismore is in desperate need not just of housing but they are literally being given no food to live on. All the free or cheap places I've been to have major restrictions on how much you can take and not just that but what's available. For example the good pantry this is meant to be a place people in need can get cheap food and free items. The food is all processed and range from \$1-\$4 in prices. Nothing fresh here. Then they have a fresh food section. You are only allowed to take 2 loaves of bread... then you have the fresh food anytime I've been there, there is a maximum of 2-3 of anything. Maybe 2 apples, a banana, and 6 potatoes. Now out of this I am only allowed 2 items so I have to choose either 2 potatoes or a potato and an apple. It's madness. I have a teenage son. If I go to the shops he cost me \$150 per day to feed and they think giving away 1 apple is sufficient and this is for a town not just for me. This place feeds the town. Lismore is being deliberately traumatised. The major shopping giants are raking in record profits meanwhile the people of Lismore are living on rotting food.

Sorry to vent all that to you. Just I've never been in this position in my life. I've always been successful and the only reason I am here is due to my divorce. I've lived in the multi-million dollar homes and ran a multi-million dollar business. My ex is still running our business so he lives a very high life, but he left me and the kids in the street. So I've had to recover from this and I am seeing a major contrast between the availability of resources in Lismore compared to other towns I've visited."

(Female with adolescent son, previously renting, now squatting)

"My rental home flooded to the ceiling in 2022. I volunteered in the flood recovery for 8 months afterwards. I wasn't able to get any government grants, but I was helped by charities and community led recovery... I was evicted by an invasive landlord, was there since 2022 floods, but being dealt with abusively by the landlord for the last year or so. Then so many of the low cost rentals through real estates are in the flood zone. Which I find hard to contemplate. Found a private rental through a friend, on a trial basis. Even rentals in the ghettos of Goonellabah seem too expensive... I think there is a massive need (for affordable rental homes in the Lismore area). and housing that isn't boxed in and soulless (it's too much to ask I know). People move here to commune with nature, listen to the birds and grow a little food... I'm on a disability pension with very little additional income. 'Cheap' rent is usually about 50% of my income. I contribute to society by volunteering a fair bit and participate in mutual aid."

(Female with child, renting)

"We are both working and we own our house now, but we were both renting not long ago. I know how hard it is. I was renting a cabin on my parents' property very cheaply - \$500 a month. (My partner) was in a flexible rental situation, renting a room from a friend below market value. (The friend) rented a 2-bedroom house and sub-let the second bedroom and also a retro-fitted garage. She was there for about 6 years. It began paying \$190 a week, not including her share of bills, but that went up to \$240 a week, just for the one room. Rents definitely went up a lot over that period, along with house prices.

We finally got into (home ownership), but it is only getting harder for others. Covid was a factor. A lot of people moved out of cities, wanting somewhere safer with green space and a sense of community, so there was huge demand and property prices skyrocketed. Houses that would have gone for \$250,000 went up to \$450,000 by last year. A 3-bedroom house in Dunoon is now \$700,000. Prices just exploded and, after the flood, there was a real shortage. People with jobs are really struggling to find anywhere. The rented house next door just had a viewing and 20 cars rolled up. Some people go into shared houses for \$250 - \$350 per room, but that doesn't always work out and prices are much higher again closer to the coast. My partner's work involves housing and recently a 1-bedroom studio in Monaltrie (more than 5km from Lismore township) with no services was going for \$420 a week. It had 87 applications after 102 viewings. The cabins at the Roadrunner Caravan Park (7 km from Lismore township) were \$150 before the flood; now they're \$285 a week; \$500 for a 2-bedroom duplex. In February this year, between Lismore and Grafton, there were 550 family units in temporary accommodation."

(Couple who bought a home in Goonellabah in 2024 after renting)

Dee Mould was a youth and disability support worker living in a rented two storey timber house in Lismore when the first and record-breaking flood event of 2022 arrived. She and her then partner escaped their home to safety before the peak of the flood and then helped to rescue by boat others trapped in flooded houses. Dee has a disability (paralysed arm), but also a range of practical skills and used these to do work on her rented home, referred to as "the wobbly house". It was later demolished. She also assisted many others with home repairs when free gypsum sheeting became available and later she set up a GoFundMe home repair assistance group.

After the wobbly house, Dee rented another flood-affected house and after that a home in Goonellabah, above the flood-affected area, but at a much higher rental. She had to leave that home because rent was taking 50% of her income. Over time, she rehabilitated and refitted an old caravan with scavenged materials and she lived in that for some time with

her daughter. She is now working as a mental health support worker for people affected by the flood and living in another rental home.

According to Dee, there are now less people sleeping in cars, tents and caravans than there were in the period immediately after the floods, but mainly because many have left the area, not because more safe and affordable rental housing has become available. While agreeing that more affordable rental housing for key workers is needed, Dee noted that people with disabilities and retirees who do not own their homes are also in need of safe and affordable housing in the area.

As well as material provided directly by email, Dee gave permission for use of material she has posted on Facebook concerning her experiences during and following the flood.

"I've been in 3 rentals since the flood: two of them in the flood area. After the flood, it was impossible to find anything affordable outside the area that was flooded. Then I rented one out of the flood area, but it was not affordable. It was taking 50% of my income. When I took a hit in income of about \$200 a week, that made it impossible and I had to move again. I bought a caravan. Caravans are a viable option, but people want a comfortable life, not paying \$300-\$400 for someone's paddock to park it in. It's bizarre.

Now I work in Lismore on a project supporting the mental health of people affected by the flood. There's a fear of impending doom. We've had two evacuation notices since.

There are a lot of homeless (in the area), people on low income, not necessarily workers. I think yes the flood made renting hard and yes it was always hard, but now it's worse. Prices out of flood area are high. You can get rentals in the flood area, but without new affordable housing out of the flood area, it will become a situation where people take less safe living situations based on income. That's what I've done. I guess it's passed down, with workers taking options they maybe wouldn't consider in a better situation, but where does that leave vulnerable communities like people with disabilities, mental health issues or just plain old people without work? It's challenging."

"We were settling down for the night and the plan was to get up at 4am when they said (the flood) was going to peak but we waded out over Browns Creek at 11pm that night through waist deep water. We stayed with friends just out of the flood area. In the morning a guy was going to investigate so I went with him.

There was people getting out of boats who had been rescued through the night. I jumped in a boat with a guy called John and grabbed a life jacket. I can't swim. We rescued people from Saffron's house which felt very life threatening. We ended up rescuing about 15 people dragging them out of houses. It was so gnarly. I ended up completely under water twice, once when I fell out of the boat and was sinking.

I can't remember a lot because I was in trauma. I know we were mooring on the second story awnings of the shops. What was scary was the speed of the water. We cruised my street and I saw our house which is also a 2 storey house and it was to the roof...

A couple of days later the water was at the top step and a guy called Tom kayaked us to the house. We kicked the door in and it was rough... I ended up stripping the walls to a shell. I had help with friends for the clean up but all the walls have been built by a crazy woman with one arm (meaning herself).

There was a company offering 10 free sheets of gyprock to flood affected people so I got those sheets and we put those in someone else's house and that's when we started 'Insulate Lismore'. We did a press release and put up a Gofund Me. We used that money as it came in to buy building materials to line 2 rooms in as many people's houses as we could. We did about 15 houses, a couple of sheds and 2 complete houses. We started

going down to Coraki, Wardell and Woodburn. A woman gave birth in emergency housing and she brought the baby to the site where we were building 2 rooms so we saw the 6 day old baby and decided to line the whole house.

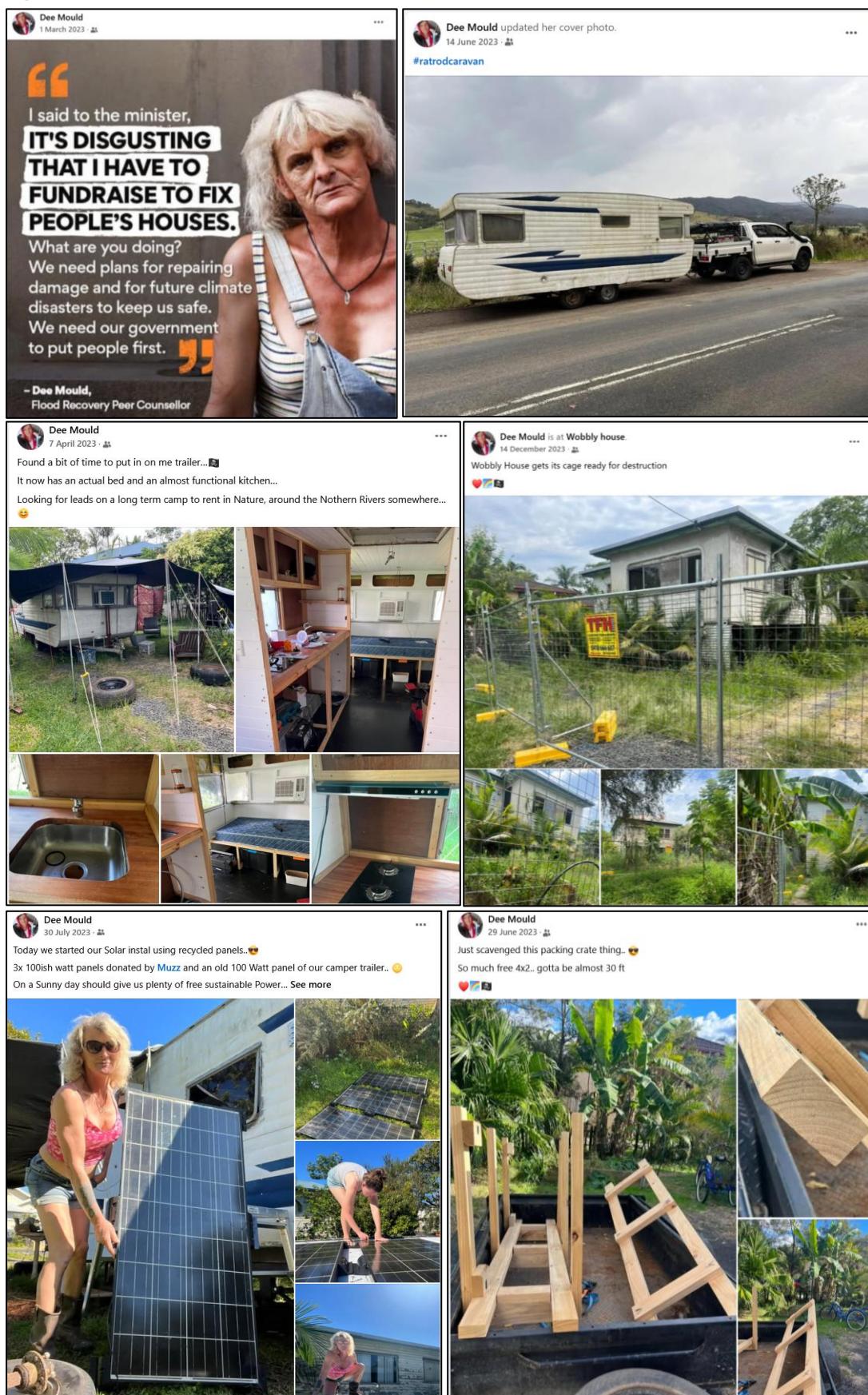
Everything we did was covered by our crowd funding and our business model was 'No drama'. My phone was ringing constantly by people needing help. I was walking into people living in tents in the houses with little children because they had no option and there's snakes. People had brown snakes in their houses. After the flood people were overrun with rats. We raised funds for an old fellow who had lost his mobility scooter in the flood and he was living in the debris of the flood. Koori Mail helped him out with food and help. Sometimes all people needed for a moment was putting a group of smiling people in their home and listening to their flood story with no drama."

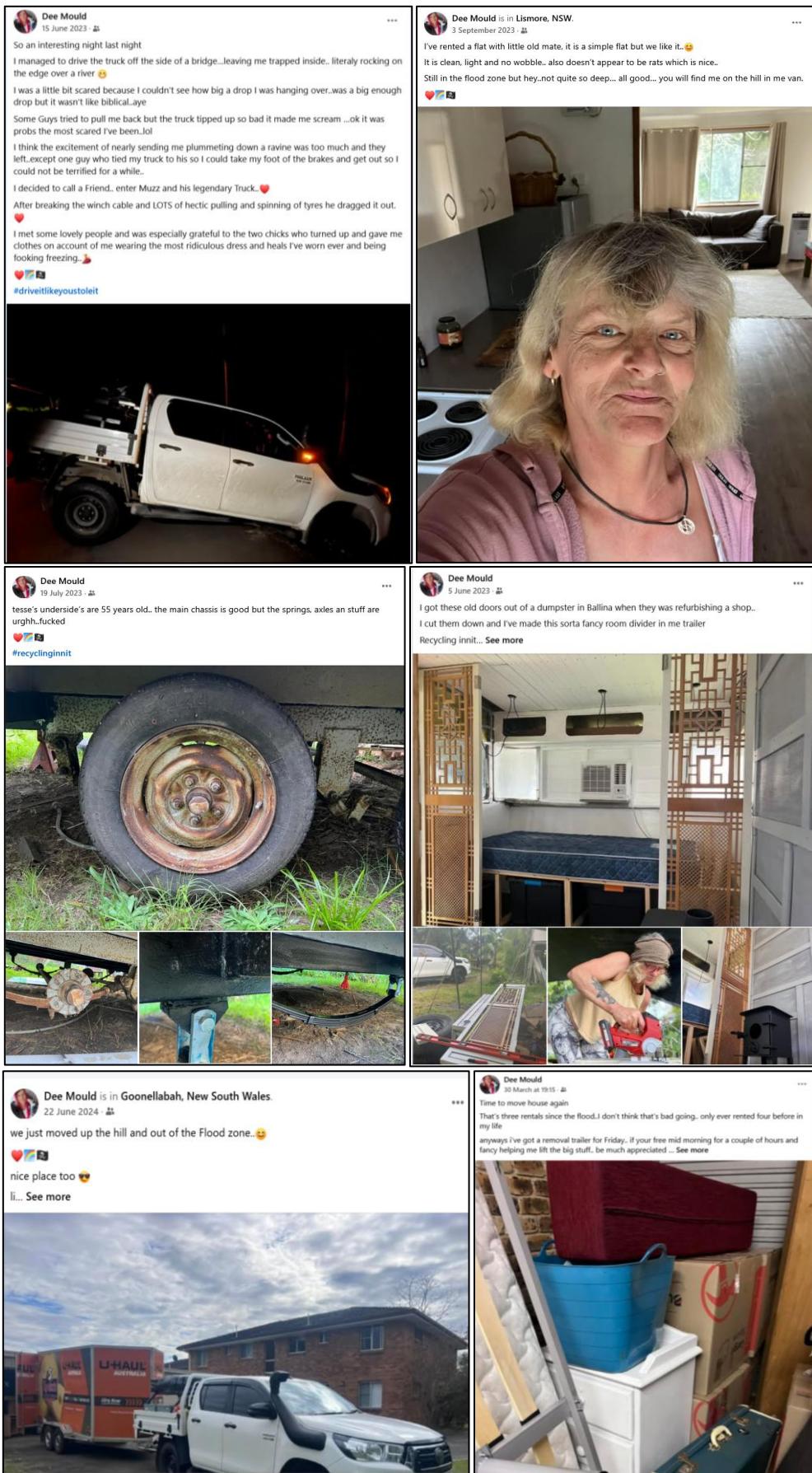
(from Humans of Lismore Facebook page)

Figure 16: Lismore flood and rescue efforts



Figure 17: Dee Mould posts on Facebook







5. Landcom community consultation

Landcom Community Engagement Team efforts included:

- a letter to residents delivered to 48 letterboxes in and near Bristol Circuit in December 2024, outlining the project and inviting residents to get information from the Landcom website and to attend a community consultation drop-in session
- a follow-up postcard sent to 80 addresses
- a splash banner in the Lismore app and on Landcom social media
- an advertisement in Northern Rivers Times on 23 January 2025
- direct emails to community members previously in contact with Landcom
- 4 community and stakeholder meetings, not including renting workers
- a community information session attended by 35 people
- consultation of Friends of Koalas community group.

The independent Social Impacts consultant visited shops and services within Goonellabah and Lismore, hoping to encourage some renting workers there to participate in the community consultation, but very few did so.

Figure 18: Some of the 50 residents who attended the community drop-in session



Community survey responses

Respondent sample

Seventy-six (76) questionnaire responses were received. Recurrence of specific IP addresses and repetition of identical wording in responses suggest that this sample includes multiple responses from some households and possibly some individuals. However, given the general uniformity of attitudes, precise numbers are immaterial. Almost all respondents were close neighbours who owned their homes, with or without a mortgage.

Table 10: Distance of home from site

Within 200 m	Within 500 m	Within Goonellabah	Within Lismore	Further away	No response	Total
46	20	5	2	2	1	76

Figure 19: Distance of home from site

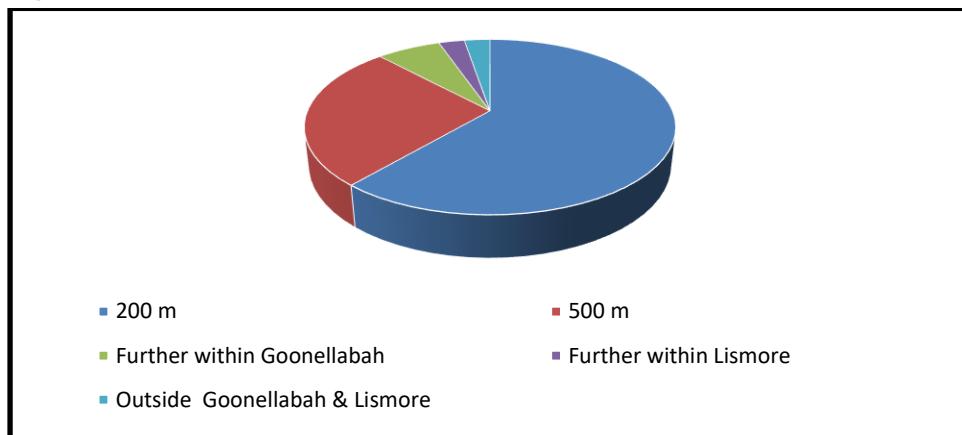
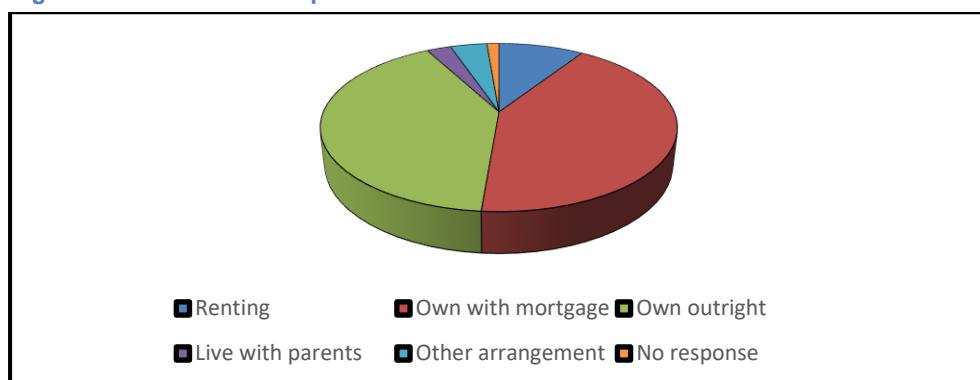


Table 11: Home ownership status

Renting	Own with mortgage	Own outright	Live with parents	Other arrangement	No response	Total
7	32	31	2	3	1	76

Figure 20: Home ownership status



Most households were couples with or without children and most were working locally.

Table 12: Nature of household

Live alone	Couple with child/ren	Couple	Sole parent with child/ren	Group share	Extended family	Other arrangement	Total
4	37	18	3	1	6	5	76

Figure 21: Nature of household

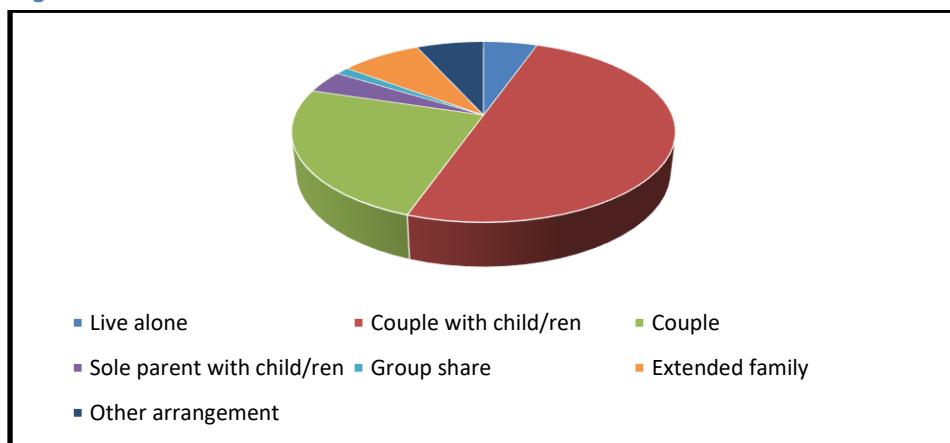


Table 13: Employment status

Own business in the area	Full-time employee in the area	Part-time or casual employee	Work elsewhere	Not in workforce	Total
7	30	14	12	13	76

Figure 22: Employment status

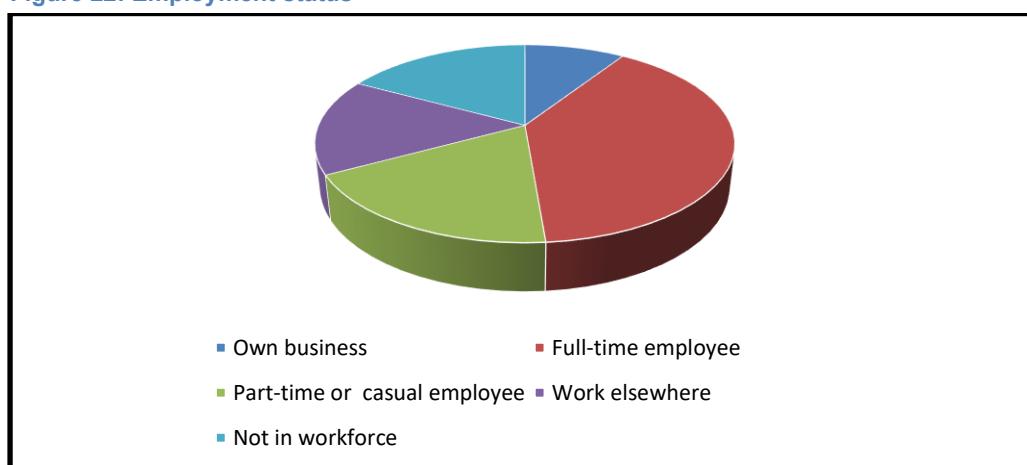
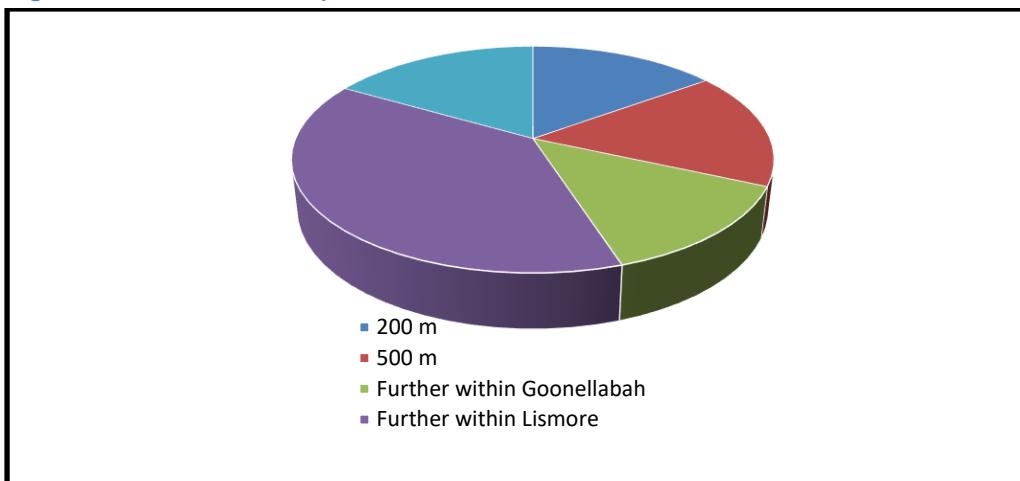


Table 14: Distance of workplace from site

200 m	500 m	Further within Goonellabah	Further within Lismore	Outside Goonellabah & Lismore	Total
9	10	8	23	10	76

Figure 23: Distance of workplace from site



Respondents were predominantly female and diverse in age.

Table 15: Gender of respondent

Male	Female	Non-binary	Self-describe	Pref not answer	Total
24	45	0	0	7	76

Figure 24: Gender of respondent

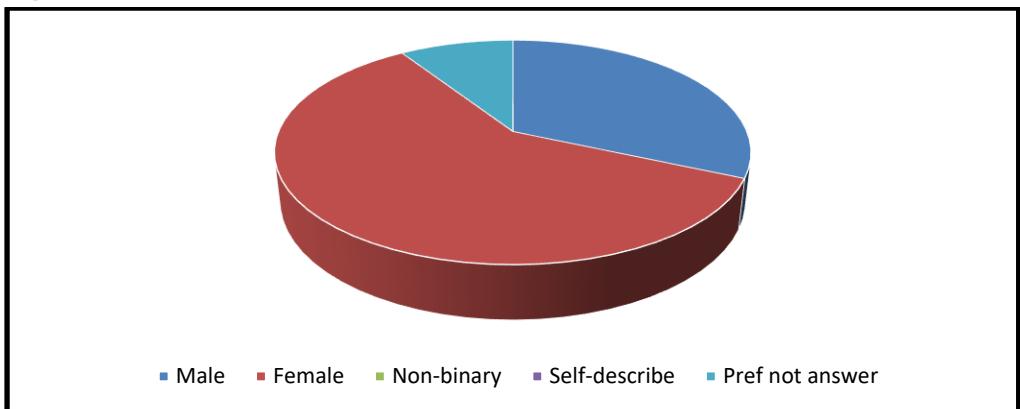
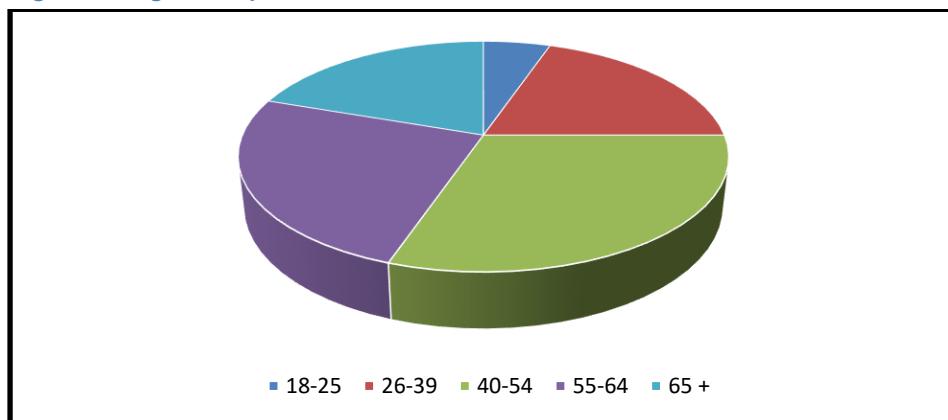


Table 16: Age of respondent

Under 18	18-25	26-39	40-54	55-64	65 +	Total
0	4	15	23	19	15	76

Figure 25: Age of respondent



About half became aware of the proposed development through the Landcom letter and about half became aware through word of mouth. About half said they had attended or would attend the community information and consultation drop-in session.

Table 17: Sources of awareness

Letter	Newspaper	Website	Social media	Word of mouth	Other
42	4	8	24	39	9

NB: Total not 76 because some aware through more than one source

Figure 26: Sources of awareness

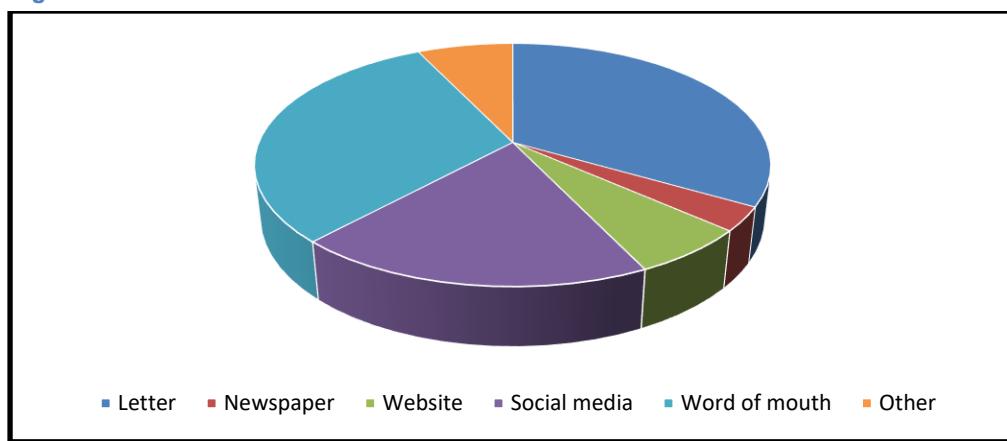
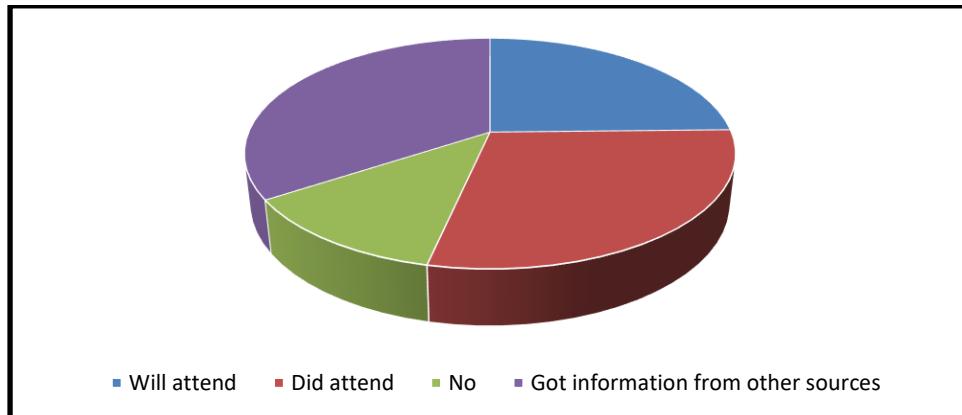


Table 18: Attendance at community information session

Will attend	Did attend	No	Other sources	No response	Total
18	21	9	25	2	76

Figure 27: Attendance at community information session

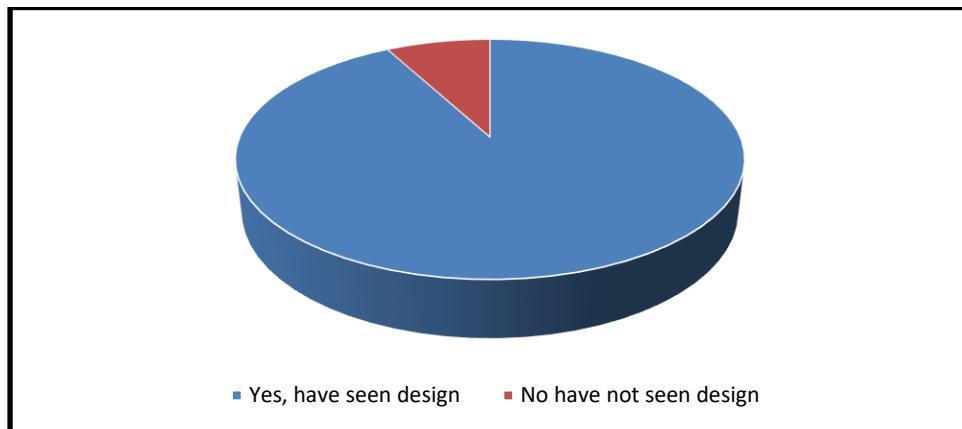


The large majority said they had seen the design.

Table 19: Design seen

Yes, have seen design	No have not seen design	Total
70	6	76

Figure 28: Design seen



Views concerning the proposed development

The large majority of respondents were opposed to the proposed development. Only a few were in support of the proposal, had mixed feelings or were unsure.

Most expected that it would have negative impacts on their own household.

Table 20: Overall attitude to the proposed development

Support	Mixed feelings	Opposed	Unsure	Don't care	Total
4	2	69	1	0	76

Figure 29: Overall attitude to the proposed development

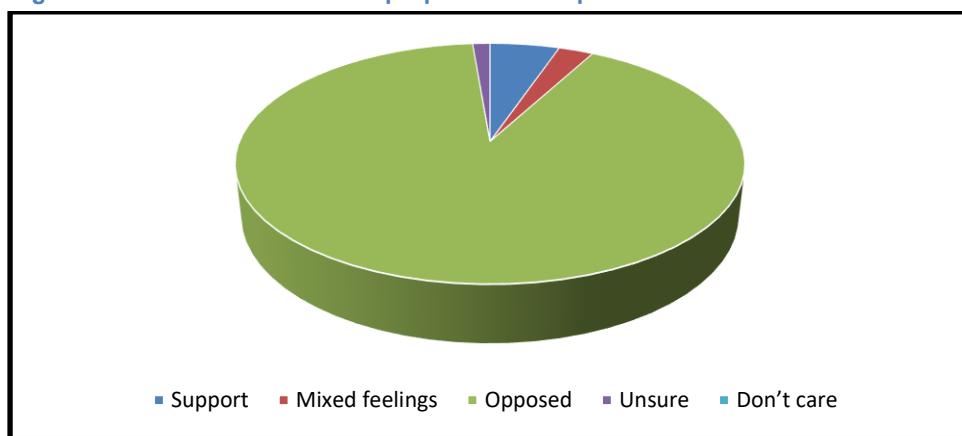
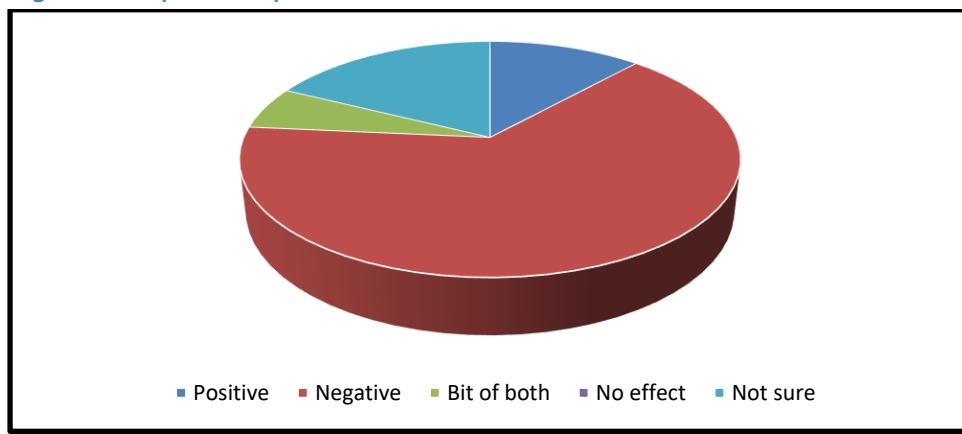


Table 21: Expected impact on own household

Positive	Negative	Bit of both	No effect	Not sure	Total
2	70	1	0	3	76

Figure 30: Expected impact on own household

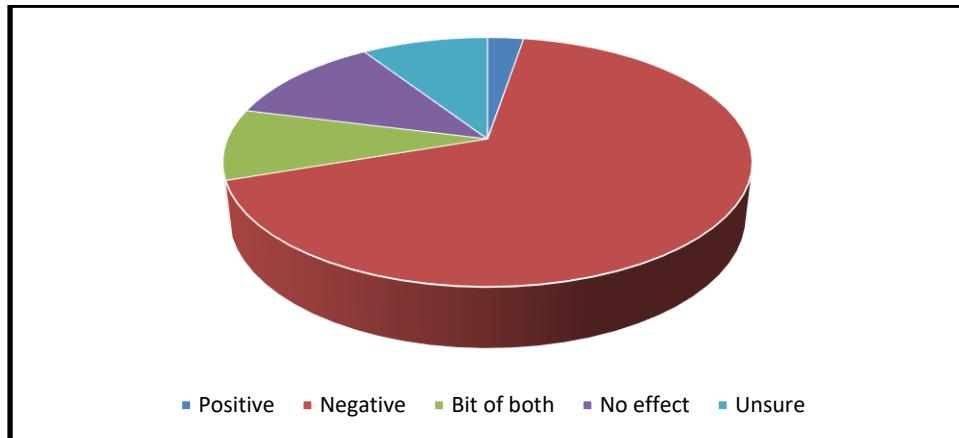


Most thought it would have a negative impacts on the workers of Goonellabah and Lismore and half thought it would have negative impacts on local businesses as well.

Table 22: Expected impact on workers in Goonellabah and Lismore

Positive	Negative	Bit of both	No effect	Unsure	Total
2	51	7	9	7	76

Figure 31: Expected impact on workers in Goonellabah and Lismore

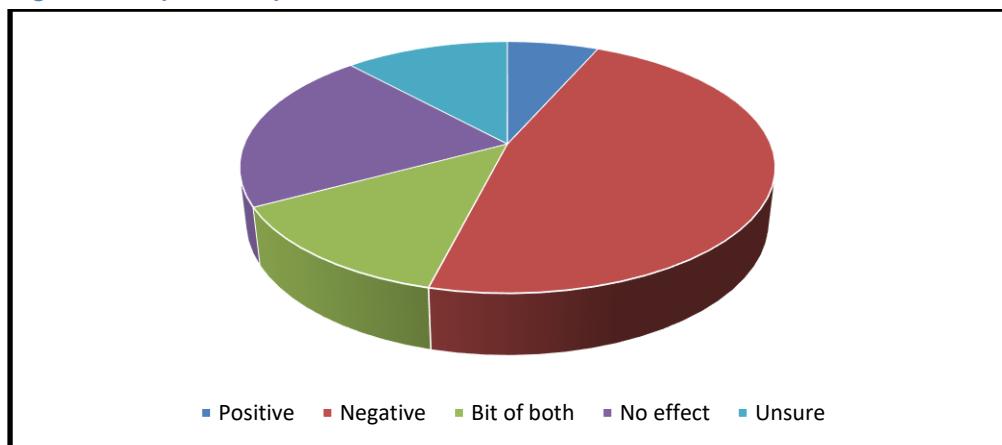


Expected impacts on businesses

Table 23: Expected impact on businesses in Goonellabah and Lismore

Positive	Negative	Bit of both	No effect	Unsure	Total
5	36	10	16	9	76

Figure 32: Expected impact on businesses in Goonellabah and Lismore

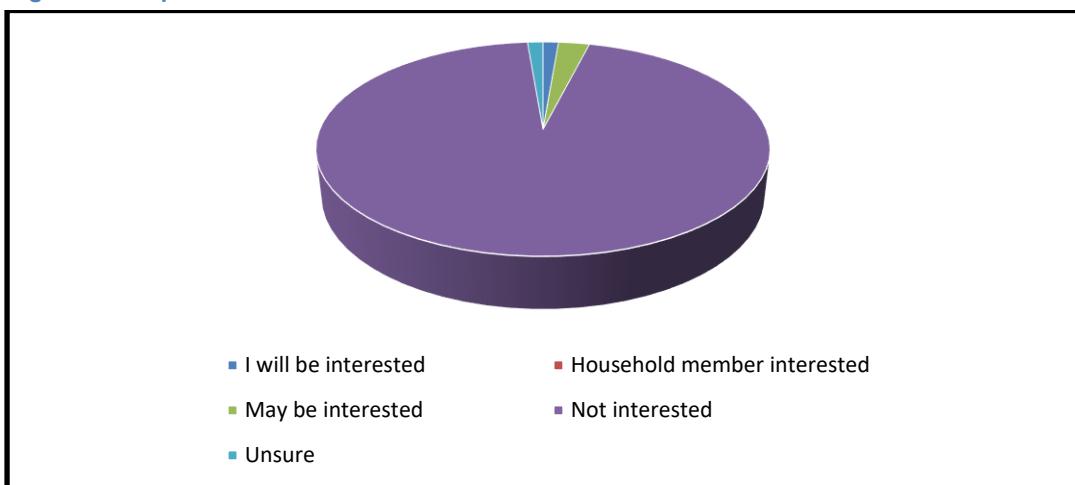


Given that only 7 respondents were renters, it is unsurprising that only one person hoped to find a home in the proposed development.

Table 24: Hope to find a home there

I will be interested	Household member interested	May be interested	Not interested	Unsure	Total
1	0	2	72	1	76

Figure 33: Hope to find a home there



Comments

The concerns expressed by home-owning residents surrounding the site included:

- that their own properties would be devalued;
- that low income people moving in would bring crime to the area, including drug abuse, anti-social behaviour and break and enter theft;
- that more cars would create on-street parking problems, traffic accidents and reduced safety for children walking to school;
- that there would be an excessive number of garbage bins;
- that the sewerage system would be overwhelmed;
- that existing residents would be disturbed by lights shining into their bedrooms;
- toxic dust risk to residents during decontamination of the site
- lack of aesthetic compatibility with existing houses in the area.

Many comments were apparently based upon misunderstanding the meaning of “affordable rental housing for key workers”.

“Bring more riff raff and undesirable people to a very quiet and family friendly area and lower our home prices.”

“My concern is that this will become a honey-trap for those who, having no work, cause trouble in their leisure time with their neighbours.”

“Dont want housing commission style set up in our community. I dont want to be fearful to be home alone. Antisocial behaviour, noise, traffic, health.”

“Crime will increase, if it is for low to very low social welfare groups. Will not feel safe in our now very safe area. No current crime in area”.

“Unfortunately those that are in the low socioeconomic category tend to create negative impacts on the surrounding community.”

“Poor unmotivated people generally unemployed will be moving to our area, drugs theft and vandalism follow.”

“To start with, as a homeowner of 2 properties directly affected by this project, WHY was I not contacted in any way about this project?????”

“Why would you choose to establish very low income families in the middle of a relatively wealthy estate?”

“People move to that area to be away from low to medium housing and what comes with it. Will make less desirable to live.”

“More traffic, huge decrease to value of our homes that we worked hard for. This is NOT a low income area. We paid a lot!. Crime, unsafe, unwanted!!!”

“With the location of the entrance and exit of the driveway there is more chance of car crashes and what sort of people will this attract to the street?”

“There will be more traffic then the road can handle, the street will be overpopulated , it will affect the value of my house.”

“Impact on traffic sewer system... Impact on safety of children walking to school”

“Health implications, anti social behaviour, increased traffic, crime, noise pollution”

“Increase crime, increased traffic, health impacts of excavating dip site, noise pollution during and after construction.”

“Risk of local break and enter crime, risk of ugly aesthetics including overuse of dark grey.”

“Health impacts of contaminates becoming airborne, increased crime from the new lower income residents, increased noise and illegal vehicle activity.”

“Completely ruins the street appeal of our neighborhood. Providing housing for low socioeconomic tenants with different values.”

“Low cost housing attracts people who have low values, not always but often and leads to increases in antisocial behaviour. That is a major concern.”

“We live in a lovely, quiet, and safe area of Goonellabah. This will change that. The value of our homes will significantly decrease.”

“A driveway across from our house if motor vehicle leave at night lights will shine directly into bedrooms, traffic congestion, excess garbage bins.”

“Home security affected: increased crime, house values will dramatically decrease, extra cars on streets, increased noise, traffic congestion, dip site.”

“The extra street traffic will be dangerous for my children, especially with Bristol Circuit only having one entry/exit point.”

“Increased crime, traffic flow, decreased housing values, increase number on cars in a small area, increase in crime, and roaming youth causing trouble.”

“Increase in traffic flow. Increase of people roaming the neighbourhood. Decrease in house value because what is being built is housing commission.”

“High density, low income developments lead to social issues and high crime rates. Fact.”

“Traffic increase will be too much and dangerous for current infrastructure, nearby school and no footpaths. Will decrease house prices.”

“I am all for creating homes for everyone in need, but jamming 16 homes on to such a small site is a recipe for disaster.”

“It will bring in a large number of low-income residents, which could lead to increased crime rates and other negative social effects.”

“Negative effect on house value for hard working families... Crime rates increasing.”

“The development will increase local crime and lower safety due to the social group the housing is providing for.”

“Negative for both the living and financial aspects. Value of homes will decrease and positive attitude for Goonellabah will decline even more.”

“1. Inc in noise - a. during const b. with addit 16 households potentially housing an excess of 60 persons. 2. traffic congestion in adjacent streets.”

“Increased noise and traffic and danger to pedestrians and school children who travel past this location daily. Too many building in a small spot... Madness.”

“Bristol Circuit would be dangerously busy. The piece of land is far too small to accommodate a development of this size. Complete nightmare. STOP IT!”

“I feel it will bring the value of my house down. We all chose this area to live in because of the way it is currently.”

“More traffic more vehicles. All living on top of one another. Bring the value of our properties down. We worked very hard to afford my home.”

“Devalue our property, cause more crime problems, destroy our way of life here, not to mention building on contaminated land.”

“This project will turn a quiet family orientated street into a busy street where the roads will not be safe for pedestrians young or old.”

“We were told the land would never be build upon. The increased traffic in our small street. It will affect our households and the safety of our kids.”

“This is not a low income area. We have worked very hard and gone without to get our homes in an area that we want to live. This is not the right area.”

“Unwanted events. Crime and feeling unsafe! More youths around and NOT SAFE for our children. We purchased our homes here for a reason. NOT THIS CRAP!”

Expected impact on local businesses

A few respondents noted advantages to businesses, including:

- that businesses will be able to retain employees if they have somewhere to live
- that the tenants will contribute to local businesses' customer base and will have more of their income left after rent for discretionary spending.

"It will help businesses to retain employees by offering somewhere affordable to live."

"Positively, increase of business."

"Increased discretionary spending in the community."

"Providing sustainable likely increases community health will likely benefit me in many ways, eg increased spending in local area."

"Positively there may be more business generated. Then again the occupants would have been living elsewhere in the area."

"It all depends where the proposed tenants are currently located. If they are already local then no effect."

However, most thought the tenants would be bad for local businesses, bringing crime.

"More crime targeted at businesses."

"Bring more undesirable people more break ins and dramas."

"As with any buildings it will depend on the tenants and the social issues they bring."

"Break and entry will most likely increase, due to the nature of the people that will live in this complex, as they are low social individuals."

"They will all be dole bludgers who only shop at uncle dans and the smoke shop."

"Increase in break and enter. Rock throwing. Extra traffic congestion. More people wondering around aimlessly. Decrease the value of the businesses."

"If this development is for low/med income, there is the possibility of increased crime for the local businesses."

"More antisocial behaviour, more crime, less care for the neighbourhoods and businesses."

"Trade people already have plenty of work and development not very close to any business"

"Surrounding businesses maybe concerned about crime. I don't like generalising, but it is fact that these developments will introduce crime eventually."

"Low socioeconomic groups will cause problems for the business owners and the community."

"Business will be impacted by theft, vandalism, break and entry, general distraction of property. Families will not have safe neighbourhood for kids."

"More crime as they don't work."

Comments on the design

Most said that they had seen the project design, but only a few made positive comments or constructive suggestions concerning the design. Most comments were disparaging, describing it as incompatible with existing housing in the area, high density or too large, with too little green space. Suggestions to improve the design were mainly to reduce the scale to a few larger homes or to build something else or somewhere else.

“Looks modern for now.”

“Nothing wrong with design, it’s the placement that needs changing.”

“I like the design, but feel that its attractiveness would be dependent on bright or pale colours. Any substantial use of dark grey would make this development far less aesthetically appealing, and would have a negative impact on residents, passing motorists and pedestrians as well as the residents.”

“The CAD drawings of the style of the properties are ok, there is just too many of them and it is out of step with everything else in the surrounding area. If there were 4-5 townhouses maximum, it would be more suitable.”

“No dark grey or black roofs, for energy efficiency and aesthetic reasons.”

“It doesn’t match housing in the area.”

“No due to it not been scaled right.”

“Unfortunately it looks like your typical housing commission. All squashed together.”

“I don’t think this design will be beneficial for the people living in the complex or the people living in the area as it will be to congested living in this houses as there will be many people living on top of each other and my past experience is that this sort of living condition only causes issue.”

“I do not like the design. It would be better to use the space for supporting regular units or housing, or childcare. Not social housing.”

“I don’t like this design, it would be better utilised for a police station or housing for the elderly. Not for those that will cause trouble in our very quiet environment.”

“Nothing (liked). Sixteen units crammed onto three building blocks without sufficient parking, greenspace as per council requirements, contamination from dip sight, nowhere for children to play except street, no surrounding parkland, extra traffic on an already busy potholed corner. Rediculous.”

“3 duplexes would be enough.”

“Change to the housing type of the area - 3BR freestanding houses.”

“3 bedrooms isn’t really good enough. There should be at least a couple of 4 bedrooms in both areas.”

“Reduce the design to a maximum of three residential lots with detached single dwellings on each that is inline with the character of the existing neighborhood.”

“Yes less houses, the proposed is far to many for such a small space. I would suggest creating town houses for a few units for regular purchase.”

“Reduce number of units (not enough land space for 16) units should be single storage.
Need to allow minimum 2 car space per unit.”

“To much building for this site 3 or 4 dwellings would be plenty.”

“Townhouses do not fit within the street aesthetics. I do not want cars parked on the road outside my house, I do not want 32 bins lined up outside by house. I do not want lights shining into the bedrooms of my home at night with cars leaving, as apparently the tenants will be shift workers.”

“The high density design creates overcrowding, so would suggest fewer dwellings”.

“Reduce number of dwellings. As there is no children's park close by, if this development is aimed at low income families there will not even be somewhere for them to play.”

“Less buildings on the sites and more car spaces to allow for future population growth.”

“Way to tight, we are not rabbits and not in a city to warrant such a tight layout.”

“Stick with the existing housing and estate designs not throw in housing commission living.”

“Toxic site bad for health. Reduce units to 1 story, and town houses to 4 homes.”

“I would like it better if the design was a police station or child care facility. I don't think this design development should go ahead in Bristol circuit. Sixteen town houses low to very low affordable housing is too many for this area. It will cause more trouble. Too many youth getting together.”

There were concerns about the location of access driveways, the adequacy of on-site parking spaces, drainage and sewerage and garbage collection issues.

“Vehicle access from Taylors Road (would be an improvement).”

“The entrance is where the school bus stops on a busy road (Blue Hills Avenue) and needs to be moved. There is not enough green space.”

“Change the BH road access, as an accident would happen as to close to the corner off the main road. Too close to existing homes, road goes over the pump station which will need to be increased as overflow is an issue for current homes. Too many townhouse for the size of the block. 4 homes only.”

“Move driveway, turning bay needed for houses. Parking issues, street too small, cars will be unable to see when pulling out. Houses are small and cramped. No thought for car spaces and ease of access.”

“Drive way over pump station on to Bluehills ave. Drive way goes past bedroom windows Reduce the amount of townhouses to 4 homes as they are two small and boxy. Not enough car space per townhouse requiring street parking which will cause congestion in the street and then safety issues for home owners.”

“They are terrible. You have a driveway that is going over a Sewer Pump station and Sewer Line. The storm water that come off the hill is enormous. I have seen 600 to 800 mm deep water in my property”.

◆

“Laughable. Even contemplating building on a dip site is ridiculous. The sewer pump cannot cope now when it rains and not to mention the foot of water that flows in and around the back fences of properties when it rains heavy.”

Some comments simply reiterated that they did not want less affluent people living in their neighbourhood. Some felt entitled to use of the site.

“Forget the concept completely. We worked to get what we have, why do they get a new house in a nice area just because they do not want to work and abuse the welfare system.”

“Not do it at all keep the riff raff away thanks.”

“Move the development to a suitable site, do not take the existing communities green space.”

“Building here is removing our green space, that we were told would never be built on. It is also detrimental to our health and mental wellbeing.”

6. Discussion of community concerns

Most community questionnaire responses received came from nearby home-owning residents of Goonellabah, all of them opposed to the proposed development. Their consistently expressed concerns included:

- fear that those renting in the proposed development will be “riff-raff”, unwilling to work and inclined to engage in anti-social and criminal activities;
- unpleasant visual impact of “housing commission” homes;
- fear of negative impact on their own property values;
- traffic and parking impacts of 16 additional households;
- impacts on neighbours of disturbing a contaminated site.

Prospective tenants

This development is intended to provide affordable rental housing for key workers, that is people on low-moderate incomes, who work in the Goonellabah-Lismore area in occupations that are essential to the wellbeing of the community, such as nurses and ambulance paramedics, fire fighters, child-care workers, aged-care workers, teachers, sales assistants, receptionists, cleaners, drivers and maintenance workers.

These people are contributing members of the community who do not own their homes and, in the current housing shortage, struggle to afford to live near their work.

Affordable rental housing for key workers is not the same thing as social housing or public housing for people dependent upon Centrelink benefits. See definitions on pages 79-81. There is no evidence-based reason to expect an influx of unemployed people, nor any rise in anti-social or criminal behaviour.

Visual impact

Most respondents had seen the housing designs, but disliked them for being incompatible with surrounding homes, some describing them disparagingly as “housing commission”. The Housing Commission has not existed since 1985 and the proposed buildings do not in any way resemble the high-rise blocks of flats the Housing Commission was known for. The proposed buildings are neither taller than surrounding homes nor more bulky.

The four-home building adjacent to Bristol Circuit will be single storey only, like some existing homes in Bristol Circuit, with a combined footprint similar to those of nearby homes.

The other two buildings, both 2-storey, containing four homes and eight homes respectively, will be adjacent to Taylor Road. Across Taylor Road, obscured by tall shrubs, are the backs of homes fronting John O’Neill Circuit on the far side. There are no homes opposite the site on Blue Hills Avenue.

Extensive landscaping will also soften the visual impact.

Figure 34: Plan of the site, showing homes, driveways, car parking and nearby houses

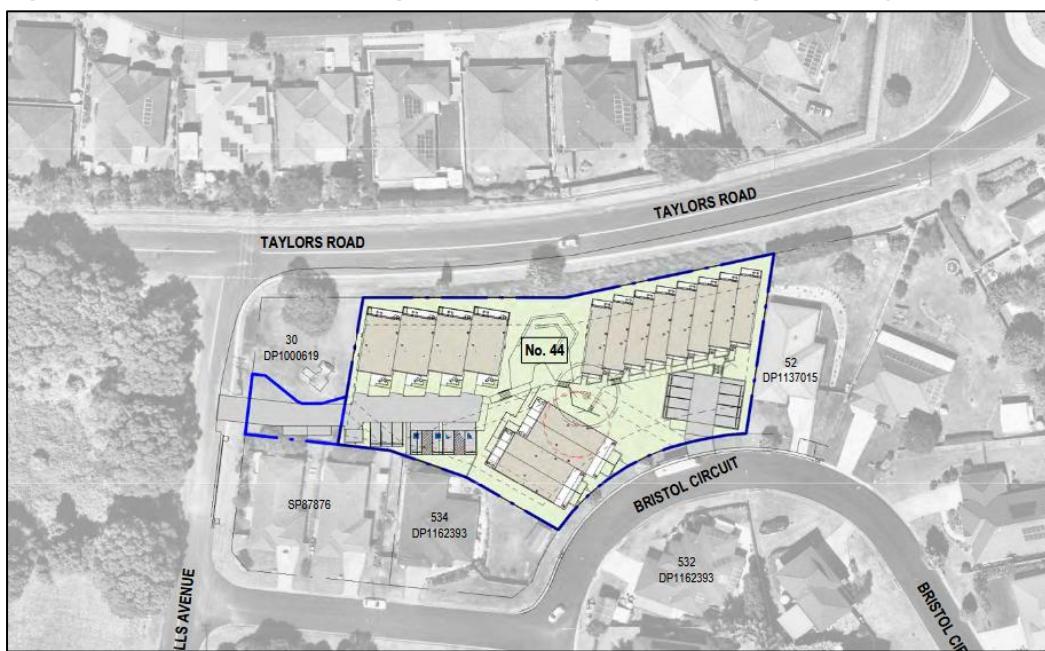


Figure 35: Views of the site and housing either side from the north and from the south



Impacts on neighbouring property values

Negative impacts on surrounding property values may sometimes arise from affordable housing developments when:

- there is overlooking or overshadowing of existing houses or obstruction of views;
- if the number of apartments is great enough to create a housing glut.

However, in this case:

- the housing is not high-rise blocks of units; the townhouse style of buildings will be no greater in height or bulk than the surrounding homes, the three buildings will not be identical, but each will contain four or eight smaller homes;
- the context of the proposed development is an acute housing shortage
- Thomson Adsett plans show there will be no overshadowing of nearby houses.

Gethin Davison, Lecturer in City Planning and Design at UNSW, and Edgar Liu, Research Fellow at the City Futures Research Centre at UNSW, conducted two relevant research projects in Brisbane and Sydney, which found that concerns regarding the impacts of affordable housing development on property values and quality of life for existing residents, including traffic, crime, the area's visual appearance and sense of community, are largely unfounded (Davison and Liu, 2016).

Davison and Liu first tested the impacts on property sale prices of 17 affordable housing developments across Brisbane LGA between 2000 and 2009, both collectively and individually, using two different pricing models. Collectively these developments had no significant negative impacts on local property prices. Impacts on property values within 100 metres of affordable housing projects were not statistically significant. Characteristics of properties (number of bedrooms and bathrooms) had far greater influence on sale prices than proximity to affordable housing developments.

Individually, the impacts of each project on local property prices varied. Some affordable housing projects had positive impacts and others negative, but only a few of the measured impacts were statistically significant and in these cases the impacts of proximity to affordable housing had more to do with other features of the neighbourhood such as proximity to public transport hubs. They concluded that the impacts of affordable housing development on local property sales prices had been minimal and the impacts experienced were not universally negative or positive.

In Sydney, Davison and Liu conducted doorstep surveys with 141 residents who lived within 60 metres of the eight most controversial affordable housing projects in the Parramatta local government area. Across the eight projects, 78% of respondents had experienced no negative impacts as a result of the affordable housing development. At most sites, negative impacts reported were dispersed and mostly related to issues such as parking and traffic. At two sites only a significant number of neighbours reported negative impacts, mostly associated with the behaviours of a small number of individual residents.

Overall, they concluded that the feared impacts of planned affordable housing developments tend to be much greater than the actual impacts experienced by neighbouring residents and suggested that perceptions of affordable housing are the problem, rather than the affordable housing developments themselves, which are generally unproblematic once completed. <https://theconversation.com/neighbours-fears-about-affordable-housing-are-worse-than-any-impacts-69291> and <https://www.unsw.edu.au/newsroom/news/2016/12/neighbours-fears-about-affordable-housing-are-worse-than-any-impacts>

Other issues

There will be 25 on-site car parking spaces: 20 for residents and 5 for visitors, so there should be no need for on-road car parking. Some will be accessed via Bristol Circuit; the others via Blue Hills Avenue. The small number of additional cars entering and leaving via Bristol Circuit and Blue Hills Avenue are unlikely to cause any significant traffic problems, according to the Traffic Impact Report provided by Varga Traffic Planning.

The addition of 16 households, most with only one or two bedrooms, is unlikely to overwhelm local waste service systems. In consultation with Council and with reference to Environmental Planning instruments, Landcom has prepared a Waste Management Plan, which is outlined in the Statement of Environmental Effects. Newton Denny Chappel Engineering Services has addressed drainage and sewerage issues.

A construction management plan will be prepared with strategies to minimise noise, dust and traffic inconvenience to neighbours during construction. The selected builder will be required to comply with this plan.

A separate development application will be made for remediation of the site. The proposed development will be conditional on that issue being satisfactorily addressed.

7. Conclusions

The overall social impact of the proposed development will be strongly positive.

There is clear need for safe and affordable rental accommodation for key workers in the Lismore LGA. This need was already evident at the 2021 Census, but has become much more pressing since the floods of 2022, which damaged or destroyed 5,000 homes in Northern NSW, 1400 of them in the Lismore area, with similar rates of damage in adjacent local government areas including Richmond Valley, Byron, Ballina, Kyogle and Tweed.

The current need for safe and affordable rental housing in the Lismore LGA is evident in on-line real estate listings, social media posts, local and other newspaper articles and the first-hand experiences described in this report.

Safe and affordable rental housing for key workers will allow them to stay living in the area, meaning in turn that local services and businesses will be able to attract and retain essential staff and also that these workers will have more disposable income left after rent to contribute to the viability of local retailers.

The proposed development will make a valuable contribution to addressing urgent housing needs of key workers, but alone will not be sufficient to meet all current housing needs. As well as workers in need of affordable housing, many people on very low incomes through retirement, disability, trauma and other circumstances are also in need of safe and affordable rental housing.

Most community responses to Landcom community engagement efforts came from home-owning neighbours of the site, who were generally opposed to the proposed development. However, the various negative impacts they anticipate are unlikely to eventuate.

Fears that the project will bring “undesirable” people to the neighbourhood, with attendant crime and danger to existing residents, are not well-founded. Fear that the development will damage the resale value of existing homes is not supported by research evidence. The height and bulk of the proposed buildings will be in keeping with surrounding homes and the site will be landscaped, so concerns about visual impacts are unwarranted. On-site car parking provision should be sufficient to prevent any need for on-road car parking and the small number of cars entering and leaving via Bristol Circuit and Blue Hills Avenue are unlikely to cause any significant traffic problems. Relevant consultants have confirmed that there will be no negative impact on drainage, sewerage or garbage services. An appropriate construction plan will minimise noise, dust and traffic impacts during construction.

Previous contamination of the site through use as a cow-dip will be addressed in keeping with a remediation plan for which there will be a separate development application.

In summary, the overall social impact of the proposed development will clearly be positive.

8. Social and print media coverage

Squatters transform buyback housing to 'public' housing

Andrew George, [The Nimbin GoodTimes](#), February 2025

Three years after the catastrophic 2022 floods and the NSW Reconstruction Authority (RA) are finally getting into the swing of their Resilient Homes Program (RHP).

No flood-impacted people had any say in designing or consenting to the RHP, in blatant disregard of the federal government's own 'best practice' in disaster recovery community engagement principles.

I mean we all want to have a say in decisions that impact our life? Turns out our governments are too afraid or incompetent to even ask us. No surprises there really.

One outcome of the RHP has been the buying back of houses deemed to be in the 'red zone' of highest risk in the floodplains of the Northern Rivers. The swampy floodplain, in the case of Gundurimba/Lismore, which should never have been drained and permanently settled if cedar-cutting settlers had respected the Wiabul people of the Widjabul country who warned them of that risk!

Hundreds of homes have now been bought back. Some owners took the offers early, because they reasoned that would be their only chance of moving out of the flood zone, or they waited in the hope they might be able to secure the promised cheaper Resilient Lands and thus relocate their homes. More and more chose, or were forced by circumstances to leave their homes behind. Now, in some streets, the only regular sign of life are the lawn-mowing contractors – disasters bring money to some, usually the owners of the contracting firms, not the workers.

The streets of Lismore and other towns across the NR are now full of buyback houses, hundreds of them empty and boarded. New ecological niches emerge in any major disturbance.

In this case, the niche is buyback properties, many renovated and lived-in post-floods and prior to buyback. You'd be hard pressed to find someone without a home not keen to shelter in many of these houses. In the midst of a housing crisis do people really expect these liveable houses to remain empty?

Pine Street in North Lismore has become a niche of human adaptation in our climate and bureaucracy deranged world. Seven of eight of the houses at the cul-de-sac end of Pine Street are buybacks. They are now full of human habitants. Every bedroom, as well as many vans that line the street serves as safe shelter for people living in a unique community.

Is the floodplain unsuitable for permanent habitation? Probably not in the way that modern consumerist society defines that. Perhaps boarding up liveable homes amidst a housing crisis is a solution that only an out of touch bureaucracy could come up with?

The Pine Street communal squat experiment has been going for over seven months, facing down a handful of eviction threats by mobilising the community to stand peacefully in support at various crunch-times. The slogan 'occupation til relocation' has been at the heart of this stand.

After all, these are big scrub timber homes that must not be demolished but protected until safely relocated, as the RA itself proclaims is its intention.

In July Lismore police superintendent met with squatters, community supporters and RA execs to come to an understanding of occupation. At this stage, a discretionary and proportional approach was taken.

Now the occupants of Pine Street have been given one week's notice to vacate by Tuesday 28th January. The RA is citing the need to have the houses available for the Expression of Interest (EOI) process (in which private bids can be made on buyback houses to relocate them from the floodplain).

The EOI trial process is currently well underway and adding nine new houses at this stage would confuse the process. The claim that these houses are needed immediately is therefore false. There is no evidence yet that the trial will successfully see buyback homes removed from the floodplain, with preference given to flood impacted residents and zero chance that the timeline for eventual removal will be short of many, many months.

Therefore, the move by the RA to once again try and evict Pine Street Squatters, can be seen as both a cynical move to appease potential Labor voters in the face of a federal election (with Nationals MP Kevin Hogan calling for their eviction), and a cover for the RA's own failure to make any material progress on turning buyback houses into social housing.

In December last year Reclaim our Recovery met with the RA and asked again about the forty houses not in the 'red-zone' that RA had earlier in the year told us were suitable for social housing. They said they were working with Homes NSW to make this a reality. In the words of the RA, "there's a shortlist of 15. We are waiting for a legal agreement. It's pretty close".

Four months later and there is no news – we have come to understand that 'soon' and 'pretty close' means a very different thing to the RA.

No surprises that the public are taking things into their own hands, moving in and taking up 'public housing'.

What is truly disturbing is how far Australian society is from demanding secure housing for all and making that demand a reality through multi-pronged and creative re-organising, based in a culture of solidarity. The system rewards investors, and thus there are people with multiple properties, renting them out at exorbitant rents or leaving them empty to bank them and make capital gains.

We all know someone who is facing rent increases or struggling to find somewhere to live. To accept this reality, in one of the wealthiest countries in the world, is to act in class treachery or ignorance. By propping up the elitist system of commodification of basic needs, we support the ceaseless neoliberal capitalist project of destabilisation, disconnection and thus exploitation of ourselves, the masses.

What is called for is solidarity and resistance.

Stand up with the people of Pine Street facing eviction and all squatters, support tenancy unions with your membership and your wallet, build alternative housing solutions, take action, and always think of those less well off.



Photos: Chibo Mertineit

Community demands Pine Street homes be moved, not demolished

Nick Fredman, Lismore, March 21, 2025

Vigilantes, whipped-up by local right-wing politicians and NSW Premier Chris Minns, rampaged through Pine Street in Lismore on March 15.

The mob was harassing people who have occupied fewer than 10 houses, which have been left vacant since massive flooding in the region in 2022.

The March 16 [Guardian reported](#) on videos of the right-wing thugs: “An individual can be seen trying to smash a car windscreen while someone is inside the vehicle; a person appears to throw a metal object out of a moving car while yelling abuse; in another, fireworks appear to be thrown from a moving car; and in a final video, a ute can be seen performing doughnuts on the street.”

The thugs were incensed that people in desperate need of housing decided to occupy houses, which were among the more than 600 properties that the NSW Reconstruction Authority bought after the last big flood. They are in the most flood-prone parts of the town.

The former owners of these houses, and many others, had an understanding that these well-made Queenslander-style timber homes in good condition would be relocated to safer ground and remain part of the town’s desperately-needed housing stock.

Right-wing councillors with substantial property interests and their allies have used community Facebook pages to vilify the occupiers as “outsiders” and “freeloaders” who are “jumping the social housing queue”. One local councillor called the occupiers “a cancer”.

Andrew George, from Reclaim Our Recovery (ROR), which has been campaigning for a democratic and just reconstruction effort since the 2022 flood, told *Green Left* that the Pine Street occupiers have indeed “come from all over”, because “the homelessness crisis is all over, literally forcing people to move to find somewhere to live”.

George said the occupiers’ stated goals are to protect and maintain the houses for later use. They use the slogan: “Occupation until relocation”.

George described how state government programs, meant to address the massive damage of the 2022 flood, have been disjointed and inadequately resourced.

Only a small minority of those requesting a buyback, house-raising or repair have received any help and there was no real support for the promised acquisition of land and relocation of houses, or for former tenants of buy back houses.

Local developers have also used their influence to severely restrict the number of buyback houses allowed on new developments.

George said that ROR was started by those concerned with bureaucratic failings and “disaster capitalism” in the wake of the 2022 flood. It proposes instead a “community-led recovery and ecological justice”.

ROR has forced the NSW Reconstruction Authority to relate to large public meetings, and is campaigning for a “People’s Assembly” to be a part of the flood recovery and disaster adaptation programs.

It has helped tenants of some buyback houses to gain a “license to occupy” their homes and argues this arrangement could be extended to the Pine Street occupiers.

But George said the local council, dominated by real estate, property investor and other business owners, has blocked democratic participation in the recovery. The same vested interests are demanding the buyback houses be immediately demolished.

In this context, NSW Labor seems to have decided that demolishing the houses it bought is the easiest option, despite the irrational waste of resources and the fact it does nothing to house homeless people.

The small minority of these houses occupied by squatters is being used as a convenient excuse to demolish all of them.

In the aftermath of minor flooding associated with Cyclone Alfred, Minns claimed it was urgent to demolish the houses. Pandering to the right-wing 2GB audience he said occupiers were “obviously trespassing and putting people’s lives in danger”.

Claims by Minns and local right-wingers that emergency services had to unnecessarily attend the Pine Street houses in the midst of a flood were contradicted by locals who posted photos to Facebook showing the street was very well cleaned up, flood protected and empty, well before residents were advised to leave the area.

Sue Higginson, NSW Greens Legislative Council member and a Lismore resident, said: “Premier Chris Minns has chosen to punch down on my community, on the frontline of the climate crisis, spreading lies and stoking division rather than addressing the real issues we are facing.”

George called for community defence of the Pine Street houses if threatened with demolition. ROR is circulating a [petition](#) to demand the threatened houses be relocated.

Rachel Evans, a housing activist and Socialist Alliance candidate for the federal seat of Sydney, told *GL* she supports the Pine Street residents and others taking action to win the basic right to genuinely affordable housing.

“The right will always scapegoat the vulnerable to deflect from their greedy profit-first, anti-social approach. There are so many solutions, including community-controlled public housing, a cap on rents and strict controls on landlords. Eliminating capital gains tax exemptions and negative gearing incentives would also go a long way to help make housing the human right it should be.”

Protesters call for housing justice outside MP Janelle Saffin's office

[Nick Fredman, Lismore](#), April 18, 2025, Issue [1428](#)

Fifty people protested outside NSW Labor MP and Minister for Recovery Janelle Saffin's office on April 15 over the planned demolition of over 160 flood-affected houses.

Campaigners say many of the homes are still liveable, particularly those constructed from "big scrub" highly water-resistant timber, and should be relocated.

A similar number rallied outside the site of the first demolitions on April 8.

"The immediate demand is for a pause in demolition," activist Miriam Torzillo told *Green Left*. "We want clear evidence for decision-making processes, particularly for any demolitions, and clarity around all aspects of the Resilient Homes program."

Resilient Homes, NSW Labor's program, is meant to either buyback or help improve the safety of houses affected by the devastating 2022 floods. It is also meant to provide safer housing options for those living on the area's floodplain.

Activists point out that the buyback funds being offered are not enough to buy another house in a town increasingly unaffordable for most people to live in, and that only a tiny number of promised house relocations have happened. Nothing has been done for renters, they added.

Torzillo is active in [Reclaim Our Recovery](#) and the Lismore People's Assembly, which helped organise the actions under the general demand for a "just recovery".

NSW Greens Legislative Council member Sue Higginson, another speaker, is a long-time resident of North Lismore, one of the worst affected areas in the 2022 floods. She has been calling out Premier Chris Minns' lack of action in providing housing and planning for a region set to face further climate disasters.

NSW Labor set a course for the rapid demolition of flood-affected homes following minor flooding associated with Cyclone Alfred in early March. [Minns has scapegoated people](#) who had occupied seven vacant North Lismore homes, claiming emergency workers were at risk.

Occupiers and housing activists pointed out that these homes had been well-maintained and that there was no evidence of unsafe behaviour during recent extreme weather.

Torzillo told *GL* that the occupiers, with the support of the houses' owners and local elders of the Widjabul Wai-bal people, had reached an understanding with local police and the NSW Reconstruction Authority for "occupation until relocation", with reasonable notice for the occupiers to vacate. Minns' politically motivated intervention then led to the immediate eviction order.

The vehemence of Minns' scapegoating was echoed in attacks on the occupiers and housing activists by local National Party federal MP Kevin Hogan and right-wing councillors. One

posted a video on social media he took of the April 15 rally showing himself standing over and mocking a young woman, and added his own sexually harassing commentary.

Torzillo argued that Hogan is pushing a “get tough campaign” in the lead-up to the May 3 federal election, and that a number of local councillors with considerable property and business interests feel threatened by the growing call for housing justice. She said some have career ambitions in the National and Labor parties.



Photos: Yani Clarke



Photo: Reclaim Our Recovery/Facebook

Lismore housing opportunities wasted

As demolition orders continue to be issued for structurally-sound Big Scrub homes in Lismore, community advocates are calling for an urgent policy shift from the NSW Reconstruction Authority (NSW RA) to prioritise relocation over demolition – preserving valuable housing stock during both a climate crisis and housing emergency.

Perfectly sound homes face the wrecking ball

Recent engineering assessments confirm that many homes slated for demolition are structurally sound and suitable for relocation.

The Johns Lyne Group report for a Union Street property explicitly states: “The property is NOT structurally compromised...” and “...does NOT require demolition.”

This finding was further confirmed by Matrix Thornton, Consulting Engineers who certified the property as “safe to be re-occupied.”

Despite these professional assessments, the NSW RA continues to push forward with demolition plans rather than implementing relocation solutions.

“I was surprised to hear the house was structurally unsound, because prior assessments from the RA stated it was stable,” said the previous homeowner of the Union Street property.

“I was reassured that the house would be made available for others to utilise, which was reassuring at the time. I

didn’t want it to go to waste.”

The demolition in August 2024 of 13 Wotherspoon Street – a historically significant building that once housed the Rainforest Information Centre – demonstrates NSW RA’s concerning approach.

The property owner had been given a 12-month timeframe to relocate the building, yet the NSW RA demolished it two months before this deadline expired, without adequate notification.

Cost-effective housing solutions ignored

Community advocate, Chels Hood Withey, founder of House You, has calculated that relocating all 800 buyback properties would cost approximately \$80 million (at \$100,000 per home) – a fraction of the funds already allocated to the recovery program – while preserving much-needed housing stock for a region still struggling with accommodation shortages three years after the devastating 2022 floods.

“The NSW RA continues to waste resources on buybacks and demolitions when the focus should be on resilient measures for the 10,500 homes damaged in the 2022 flood,” said Chels Hood Withey.

“In three years, how can the NSW RA only have granted resilient works for 16 houses when 6000 applied out of the thousands of affected homes in need of an immediate raise or retrofit?”

“In the face of both climate change impacts and a homelessness epidemic, why demolish when we could relocate existing housing stock?” she said.

Urgent calls for policy change

Community members are calling for:

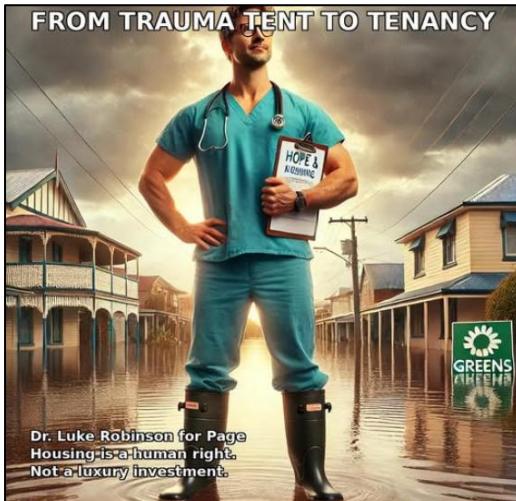
1. An immediate halt to demolitions of structurally sound homes
2. Prioritisation of relocation over demolition for all suitable buyback properties
3. Transparent consultation with homeowners and the broader community
4. Redirection of funds from demolition to relocation initiatives

“There is still a lot of work to do in Australia to address economic disparity and deliver secure housing to people who are least able to access it on their own,” the previous Union Street homeowner added.

“There could be government subsidies for relocation, more safe land release etc, but the easiest option (demolition) seems to be the default, unless community applies pressure and raises expectations.”

So far NSW RA has spent \$57 million on staff salaries, including 38 directors averaging \$250,000 pa salaries and 10 executive directors averaging \$350,000 pa.

Antoinette O’Brien, a Lismore flood-affected resident said, “It is unconscionable that high-wage staff sign eviction notices to vulnerable community members who have nowhere else to go.”



Dr. Luke Robinson for Page
Housing is a human right,
Not a luxury investment.

Lismore Fake News & Other Manufactured Outrage · Follow
31 March at 11:14 · 45

"Dr. Luke Robinson: Putting People Before Profit (We Know, It's Radical)"

Are you tired of being told there's no money for public housing while million-dollar homes sprout like mould on a floodplain?

Do you suffer from chronic development fatigue, symptoms including:

- Sudden rage when you see the words "exclusive lifestyle enclave"
- A mysterious rash every time you hear "boutique riverside community"
- Involuntary gagging when your rent goes up for the fourth time this year?

Dr. Luke Robinson has a prescription:

HOUSING FOR ACTUAL HUMANS.

That's right.

Not another estate for investors with boat names like "Liquid Equity."

Not a fourth home for a Byron crypto-bro named Sage.

Not a five-bedroom wine bunker for a Sydney couple who thought Mullum was "too edgy."

We're talking housing for:

- Flood survivors
- Single mums
- Nurses, teachers, firies, the bloke who saved your nan
- That guy who grew up in South Lismore and just wants a front yard again

Dr. Luke doesn't want to sell you a dream home. He wants to build you a future—one with dignity, roofs, and rental caps that don't cause heart palpitations.

This election, don't buy into fantasy. Vote for function.

Vote for housing as a human right.

Vote for a doctor who treats homelessness like the emergency it is.

Vote Dr. Luke Robinson.

Because people can't live in planning applications.



Since the catastrophic floods of 2022, houses purchased by the Reconstruction Authority and slated for demolition have been left empty. Facing a critical housing shortage, squatters have occupied some of these empty houses, creating a safe haven for locals and visitors alike. Now, the state government has turned to the Supreme Court of NSW to issue notices of eviction against 10 homes.

Join us in opposing these evictions, and hear from those living in occupied houses, and how the government has failed us in providing safe and affordable housing. We stand in solidarity with the residents of Pine St. Lismore, and call for them to be allowed occupation until relocated!



26m



Mayor slams coverage of Pine Street squatters

From the Mayor's desk
by Steve Krieg
Lismore City Council

I was in two minds about submitting this column, as I do not want to support a paper that is not transparent with its readers and puts its ideology ahead of what is good for the entire Lismore Local Government Area and our community. I write this after last issue's appalling coverage of the illegal squatters in Pine Street Lismore that three years after the worst natural disaster in Australia's recorded history is diverting attention and resources away from our recovery.

This paper must be called

out on this. These people are not locals and are only homeless by deliberate choice. *The Nimbin GoodTimes'* extensive and supportive coverage of these illegal squatters make no mention of the fact that they are predominately overseas travellers, nor is it mentioned that their spokesperson, Rachele Meliani, is a 28-year-old self-proclaimed "social advocate" from Italy who does not think Australian laws apply to her and her fellow illegal squatters.

This of course is a nonsense. What they are attempting to do is generate national headlines for their cause at the expense of those who did go through

the heart-wrenching natural disaster. As our community continues to recover, we want people to know that Lismore is a good place to live, work and raise a family. This is not the image of Lismore portrayed by these squatters.

Ms Meliani calls the occupation a "nice social experiment". We are not an experiment. We are a community trying to recover from a disaster. They should show our community some respect and leave immediately.

As your readers may know, I am not the only councillor concerned about the impact of these squatters. Other councillors, even those on the other side of politics, are opposed to this illegal occupation and the impact it is having on the mental health of nearby residents.



Some of the many supporters of the occupations

There are even reports of residents coming home to find a squatter in their homes. This is simply not on, yet it is not reported to your readers as it doesn't fit the narrative of tearing Lismore down.

I was also shocked to see

that your supportive page three "news" story did not disclose that the author was a founding member of the left-wing fringe grouping called Reclaim Our Recovery that has encouraged the occupation from the start. I do not mind being criticised when I or Council do something wrong.

On this issue, *The Nimbin GoodTimes* is wrong and should apologise to our community for it support of this illegal occupation to the detriment of our community.

9. NSW Labor media release on relocation of “buyback” homes

More Northern Rivers buyback homes up for resale and relocation

NSW Minister for Recovery Janelle Saffin has inspected one of the second release of flood buyback homes for resale and relocation. This home is in Norton Street, Kyogle.



- [20 May 2025](#)

THE NSW Reconstruction Authority is releasing more homes for sale across the Northern Rivers after a very strong community response to the first-ever home relocation Expression of Interest process.

There will be a rolling release of homes available for auction and relocation, starting with 20 flood-affected properties in the Northern Rivers available online from today and more in the coming week.

This next release will include another 30 homes and build on the success of the first offering, which saw 31 homes made available for purchase and relocation in December 2024.

The Reconstruction Authority appointed PRD Northern Rivers to manage the sale process and received more than 130 offers for the initial 31 homes, with some properties attracting more than 10 individual offers.

PRD Northern Rivers are engaging with successful bidders from the first release to begin the contracting process, with homes to be relocated within 12 months.

The Reconstruction Authority remains firmly committed to reusing and relocating as many flood-affected homes as possible.

Most submissions for the EOI were from local community members who have land within the Northern Rivers.

Further details on the agents representing the next tranche of homes is available on the RA's website.

◆

Minister for Recovery Janelle Saffin said:

“It’s great to see that there are so many people who are ready to buy and relocate homes that were bought back by the Reconstruction Authority.

“The demand from the public is there, and we want to resell as many homes as possible so people can relocate them to safer areas. I’m looking forward to seeing more homes available for purchase and relocation soon.”

“This isn’t just about making sure we keep using the existing housing infrastructure whenever possible, it’s also about making sure our region doesn’t lose its unique character while we help move people out of harm’s way.”

NSW Reconstruction Authority CEO Mal Lanyon said:

“The people of the Northern Rivers told us that as well as having access to homes safely located away from floodplains, they wanted to retain and preserve where appropriate the sense of community by repurposing older homes in the area, and we are excited by the response from potential homeowners.”

“We know there are more people who are seeking homes, and we are working quickly to make more homes available to the community.”

HAPPY HOMEOWNERS: Minister for Recovery Janelle Saffin inspects a buyback home in a flood-affected area of Kyogle, one of 50 properties to be offered for resale and relocation under the NSW Reconstruction Authority’s second Expression of Interest process. She is joined by Lindy Martyn, her partner Brett Fox and RA Executive Director Kristie Clarke PSM. Lindy sold her North Lismore home after losing everything in the 2017 flood and has been living in a farm shed on her rural property in the Kyogle LGA. Her dream of having a home again is coming true after she successfully bid for a buyback home in South Lismore, including a cubby house, carport and sheds, during the first EOI process. “I feel truly blessed to have this amazing opportunity to have a house that has such history and character, and is making a positive out of a negative,” Lindy said.

This webpage is authorised by Janelle Saffin MP, 55 Carrington Street, Lismore NSW 2480. Funded using Parliamentary entitlements.

[NSW Labor Media Releases](#)

10. Instruments used in community consultation

Landcom letter delivered to close neighbours



10 December 2024

Dear Resident

RE: Landcom and Lismore City Council affordable housing partnership at 44 Bristol Circuit and 69 Cynthia Wilson Drive, Goonellabah.

We previously informed you that two Council-owned sites, at 44 Bristol Circuit and 69 Cynthia Wilson Drive, had been identified as potential locations to deliver affordable housing. We are pleased to advise that site planning is progressing, together with preliminary concept designs.

An important part of this process is your insights and feedback, which will be valuable to us. Community consultation on these preliminary concept designs will commence in January 2025 to help us finalise development applications. The development applications will then be exhibited by Council for public comment.

Community input will be considered alongside technical studies and feedback from other stakeholders as we progress the design. We will provide you further details in January on how you can be part of the consultation process.

Landcom is working in partnership with Lismore City Council and the community housing sector to deliver projects which will enable key workers (such as nurses, retail assistants, paramedics and childcare workers) to find a place they can call home. Lismore residents deserve access to a range of affordable housing solutions, and we are committed to making that a reality.

I invite you to subscribe to our newsletter to receive project updates. You can subscribe by scanning the QR code below or visiting landcom.com.au/goonellabah-newsletter-form

If you have any questions, you can contact us at
goonellabah@landcom.nsw.gov.au

We look forward to working with the community to deliver much-needed affordable housing.



Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janelle Goulding".

Janelle Goulding
Director, Affordable Housing
Landcom

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Questionnaire used in Landcom community consultation

The proposed development at 44 Bristol Circuit Goonellabah will provide 16 affordable rental town houses for people on low to moderate incomes who work in Goonellabah. Please tell us how you think the development may affect members of your household, your workplace, local businesses and the wider community. This will inform the final proposal to be submitted in the Development Application and also the Independent Social Impacts Assessment being undertaken by Dr Rigmor Berg –

<https://www.bbpsi.com.au> .

1. How do you think the completed development will affect members of your household?

- In a positive way
- In a negative way
- A bit of both
- No effect
- I'm not sure

2. Please provide details:

3. What are your concerns, if any, during the construction period?

4. These affordable rental homes are for essential workers on low to medium incomes. Do you or a member of your household hope to find a new home within this development?

- Yes, I will be interested
- Yes, another member of my household will be interested
- Maybe
- No
- I don't know

5a. Do you work in Goonellabah or Lismore?

- Yes, I own a business there
- Yes, as a full-time employee
- Yes, as a part-time or casual employee
- No, I work elsewhere
- No, I am not in the workforce

5b. If so, what is your occupation/business type? _____

6. How far from the site is your workplace?

- within 200 metres
- within 500 metres
- further away, but in Goonellabah
- further away, but in Lismore
- beyond Goonellabah and Lismore

7a. How do you think the proposed development will affect people who work in the Goonellabah - Lismore area?

- In a positive way
- In a negative way
- A bit of both
- No effect
- I'm not sure

7b. Please provide details.

8a. How do you think the proposed development will affect businesses in the Goonellabah - Lismore area?

- In a positive way
- In a negative way
- A bit of both
- No effect
- I'm not sure

8b. Please provide details.

9a. Have you seen illustrations of the preliminary concept design?

- Yes
- No

9b. (If yes) What do you like about this design?

9c. (If yes) Are there any design changes you would like to suggest?

10. Overall, how do you feel about the proposed development?

- I support it
- I have mixed feelings
- I am opposed to it
- I am unsure
- I don't care

11. How did you hear about the project?

- Information in my letterbox
- Local newspaper
- Website
- Social media post
- Word of mouth
- Other: _____

12. Will you / did you come to a community information session either online or in person?

- I will
- I did
- No
- No, but I have sought out more information another way

About you

13. How far from the site is your home?

- within 200 metres
- within 500 metres
- further away, but in Goonellabah
- further away, but in Lismore
- beyond Goonellabah and Lismore

14. What is the nature of your household?

- I live alone
- We are a couple with child/children
- We are a couple with no children
- I am a sole parent with child/children
- I live in a group share arrangement
- I live with extended family
- I live in another arrangement

15. Do you currently rent or own your home?

- I am renting
- I own it with a mortgage
- I own it outright
- I am in temporary emergency housing
- I live with my parents
- Other

16. How old are you?

- Under 18 years
- 18-25 years
- 26-39 years
- 40-54 years
- 55-64 years
- 65+ years

17. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Prefer to self-describe
- Prefer not to say



18. Are there any further comments you would like to make?

Thank you for taking the time to share your feedback

If you have completed a printed questionnaire, you can:

- hand it in at the Landcom Community Information Drop-in Session or
- post it to Dr Rigmor Berg at 928 Bourke St Zetland NSW 2017 or
- send a scan or smart phone photos to rigmor@bbps.com.au

Questionnaire used by SIA consultant for non-owners

Landcom wants to build some affordable rental homes in the Goonellabah – Lismore area for people on low incomes. Affordable means no more than 30% of your income on rent. My name is Dr Rigmor Berg and I'm writing a Social Impacts report about these projects. I'm keen to hear what people who don't own a home think. I don't need your name.

- How did the 2022 floods affect you and your home?
- What is your current housing situation? (eg renting, house sharing, squatting, couch surfing, living in a car/van/shed/tent). What is good? What are the problems?
- Have you had any difficulty finding a suitable home? Please tell me about that.
- How much need is there for affordable rental homes in the Lismore area?
- What else would you like to tell me?

Thanks for giving me your views. Please send a scan or phone snap of your answers by email to rigmor@bbps.com.au or by SMS to my mobile: 0403 779 748. I am willing to give you \$30 for your answers if you give me bank or postal details to make that possible.

11. Definition of affordable housing

What is affordable housing?

Affordable housing is housing available to very low to moderate income households which is priced so that these households are also able to meet other basic living costs such as food, clothing, transport, energy, medical care and education.

As a rule of thumb, housing is usually considered affordable if it costs less than 30% of gross household income.^[1]

In this context, affordable housing refers to housing that has been developed with some assistance from the NSW, local and/or commonwealth governments, including through planning incentives. It may include a range of housing types and sizes, including single or multi-bedroom units or houses, as well as studio apartments.

Affordable housing is only available in some locations and eligibility criteria apply. It is usually available for rent at a discount to the market rent for a comparable property in the area it is in.

Affordable rental housing may be owned by local or state government, community housing providers, charitable organisations, private developers or investors. It must be managed by a registered community housing provider and in accordance with [the NSW Affordable Housing Ministerial Guidelines PDF, 14062.98 KB](#).

People on a *very low income* are those earning less than 50% of the NSW or Sydney median income, depending on where they live^[1]. They include workers in a range of lower paid occupations, particularly in areas such as retail or manufacturing, as well as people earning the minimum wage^[2] or who are on an aged or disability pension or other government benefit.

People on a *low income* are those earning more than 50% but less than 80% of the NSW or Sydney median income. They include many people working in jobs such as a child care worker, secretary or cleaner.

People described as being on a *moderate income* are those earning between 80-120% of the NSW or Sydney median income. They may include people working in occupations such as teaching, policing or nursing, particularly if they are in earlier stages of their careers.^[3]

How is affordable housing different to social housing?

Affordable housing is not the same as social housing.

Social housing is government subsidised, long-term, rental housing for people on very low incomes with a housing need. Social housing includes public, community and Aboriginal housing. Public housing is managed by Homes NSW while community housing is managed by non-government organisations.

Housing need may include homelessness, experience of family violence or other complex needs such as medical or age-related support needs. People accessing social housing are very unlikely to be able to afford private rental accommodation.

Affordable housing is rental housing for very low to moderate income households. It is open to a broader range of household incomes than social housing. Households do not have to be eligible for social housing to apply for affordable housing, though people who are eligible for social housing may also be eligible for affordable housing properties.

Affordable housing is managed more like a private rental property, but there are eligibility criteria and the managers are mostly not for profit community housing providers. When there is a vacancy for an affordable housing property, this is usually advertised and people submit an application to the manager as they would if they were applying for a property in the private rental market. Some managers may keep waiting lists if there is no vacancy, but this is not required.

Rents for affordable housing are usually calculated differently to social housing and there are different tenancy arrangements. Generally, affordable housing tenants cannot transfer between properties and household members cannot apply to take over a tenancy.

Some affordable housing properties are available to people who are also eligible for social housing and on the NSW Housing Register. If someone on the NSW Housing Register is eligible and accepts a tenancy in an affordable housing property, they will be considered suitably housed and removed from the NSW Housing Register.

Who needs affordable housing?

Many different people need affordable housing and for lots of different reasons. This may include people who work full- or part-time in lower paid jobs, where their household income is not high enough to pay market rent in the area in which they live and/or work. This is sometimes the case even for people working full-time in an essential service such as a police officer, a nurse or a childcare worker^[1], particularly if they are just starting out in their career or supporting a family on only one income.

People may also need affordable housing because a change in their lives has impacted on their financial circumstances – for example, a household member has lost their job, a family has separated, a family moves to a single income household after a baby is born or a spouse has died.

Affordable housing is sometimes only needed for a short- or medium-term period, depending on the life changes a household is experiencing. Over time, the household's circumstances or income may change again and some households may re-enter the private rental market or purchase a home. For example, the primary income earner may progress in their career or a family on one income moves to two incomes.

Homes NSW are working in partnership with the housing sector to deliver more affordable homes to very low, low and moderate income households to ensure that people have a safe, secure and affordable home in NSW.

People on low incomes living in rental housing are some of the most vulnerable people in the community and at highest risk if there is any tightening of supply or price increases in the private rental market. Households which are struggling to pay housing costs are faced with a range of issues that further erode their ability to meet costs. These include:

- living with unmanageable levels of debt, further exacerbating housing vulnerability
- working long hours to pay for housing
- travelling long distances to work or services
- living in overcrowded or substandard housing
- going without essentials such as adequate food, heating, medication or education
- missing out on other opportunities because housing costs are too high relative to income.

Source: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/providers/housing/affordable>

12. Dr Rigmor Berg

Dr Rigmor Berg, Principal of BB Professional Services, has BSc(Hons) and PhD in Psycho-Social Research qualifications and is experienced in pure and evaluative research, using both qualitative and quantitative methods. She has an Associate Professional Certificate in Expert Evidence and has provided social impacts / community impacts expert evidence to the NSW Land and Environment Court, the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority and the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Rigmor aims to provide research that is constructive and balanced, with conclusions supported by clear evidence and actionable recommendations

Rigmor was Senior Researcher at the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), Evaluation Officer at TAFE Drug Education Program, AIDS Education Co-ordinator for NSW at Centre for Education and Information on Drugs and Alcohol. She has taught Psychology and Women's Studies at Melbourne University, Bio-ethics at University of NSW and Marketing Research at the University of Technology Sydney, each over several years. She has worked as an independent research consultant to all levels of government, community-based organisations, international organisations and the private sector and has held period contracts with Centrelink Social Marketing Research Panel, the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations and the National Relay Service.

Australian Federal Government clients have included Australia Council, Centrelink, the Department of Health & Family/Human Services/Aged Care, Department of Immigration & Indigenous Affairs, Department of Social Security, Health Insurance Commission, National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, Department of Family and Community Services and the Department of Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs.

State Government clients have included the NSW Departments of Health, Corrective Services, Community Services, Juvenile Justice, Education and Training and Attorney General; North Sydney and Central Coast, South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra, Western Sydney and Central Sydney Area Health Services and Communicable Diseases Branch of Queensland Health. Local government clients have included Gosford City and Hornsby Shire Councils. Other clients include Sydney University, World Health Organisation and Wellcome Australia.

Non-government organisation clients have included Seniors Rights Service, NSW Tenants Union, Maternity Action UK, Cancer Council of NSW, Diabetes Australia, Family Planning Association, NSW Association for Mental Health, the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations, ACON, Queensland AIDS Council, Queensland Association for Healthy Communities, NSW Users and AIDS Association, Australian Arabic Welfare Council, the Gender Centre and the Inspire Foundation.

Rigmor has worked with a range of populations with special needs including seniors, tenants, people with disabilities, youth, homeless and unemployed people, people with HIV, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, First Nations, lesbians, gay men and transgender people, prisoners, injecting drug users and sex workers.

While most of her work has been undertaken as the sole or principal consultant, she has also collaborated with or been sub-contracted by other social research, social marketing or strategic planning organisations, including T Issues, Quay Connection, Urbis Keys Young, University of New England, Australian Centre for Health Promotion, C,W,F,S and Cultural Partners Australia.

Dr Rigmor Berg was the sole or principal consultant for all projects listed in the following pages, except those marked by *, for which she was a sub-contracted consultant.

Social impact research and expert evidence

- Landcom: Social Impacts Assessment concerning affordable rental housing in
 - Edmondson Park
 - Mullumbimby
- Gemlife: Social Impacts Assessment concerning Aliria Lifestyle Resort and affordable rental accommodation in Gulmarrad
- The Grove Academy: Social Impacts Assessment concerning proposed childcare centre in Dunmore
- Fountaindale Group: Social Impacts Assessment concerning seniors housing development in Mittagong
- Fountaindale Group: Social Impacts Assessment concerning integrated housing development in Albion Park
- Lindsay Bennelong Developments: Social Impacts Opinion re availability of affordable housing in Maroubra
- Williamtown Aerospace Centre 52: Social Impacts Assessment re industrial development proposal
- Peter Hambley: Comprehensive Health and Social Impacts Assessment re proposed renovation of the Appin Hotel
- DK Retail Management: Social Impacts Opinion for NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal re Packaged Liquor Licence for Weston Foodworks
- Wingecarribee Shire Council: Social Impacts Assessment for Land & Environment Court re Pepperfield Residential Park in Bowral
- Sangha Partners PL: Community Impacts Expert Evidence for NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal concerning Packaged Liquor Licence in Nabiac
- Firas Qabado: Social Impacts Assessment, Plan of Management and Community Impacts Statement concerning proposed bottle shop in Bossley Park
- PRJM Pty Ltd ATF: Social Impact Assessment concerning proposed caravan park in Glossodia
- EDH Group Trust: Social Impact Assessment concerning proposed residential park development at Lake Munmorah
- ST Traiden P/L: Social Impacts Assessment concerning proposed redevelopment of Wyoming Caravan Park
- NSW Tenants Union: Social impacts evidence concerning eviction of elderly long-term tenants in relation to the proposed Badgerys Creek airport
- Gosford City Council/PJ Donnellan & Co:
 - Social Impact Assessment re redevelopment of Tingari Residential Park for Land & Environment Court (LEC GCC vs Baker)
 - Social Impact Assessment re Erina Gardens and Karalta Court Residential Parks
 - Social impact opinion regarding proposed redevelopment of land at Mt White
- Longhill Planning/Hawkins Consortium: Social impacts assessment of a proposed vertical village and seniors living complex at Umina Beach
- Longhill Planning/QCare Australia P/L: Social impacts assessment of a proposed integrated seniors housing and aged care facility at Empire Bay
- Cameron & Myers: Social Impact Assessment of Proposed *Corea Bay Village* Residential Park at South Woy Woy

- The Stevens Group: Social Impact Statement concerning the redevelopment of Melaleuca Caravan park at Port Macquarie
- RCI Group; Social Impacts Assessment for proposed redevelopment of Melaleuca Caravan Park in Port Macquarie to a car park, petrol station and fast food restaurant
- Doug Sneddon: Social Impacts Assessment concerning proposed student accommodation at Niagara Park
- Jackson Chen: Social impacts comment concerning proposed group home for people with disabilities in Casula
- GPV Charlestown Trust: Social Impacts Assessment concerning proposed Health Services Centre in Charlestown
- Michael Mantei / DeBattista: Social Impacts Assessment concerning proposed housing development in St Georges Basin
- Gwynne Thompson: Expert evidence presented to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal concerning an ILGA judgement concerning a bottle shop at The Entrance
- Gwynne Thompson: Social Impact Assessment concerning proposed expansion of Wentworth Hotel in Homebush Bay
- Gwynne Thompson: Community Impact Statement concerning proposed IGA bottle shop in Marulan
- Wilson Planning / Health Rehabilitation Centre: Social Impacts Assessment for proposed residential drug rehabilitation centre in Tumbi Umbi
- Hornsby Council/Storey & Gough: Social impact expert evidence for Land and Environment Court Proceeding concerning proposed childcare centre
- Gwynne Thompson: Community Impacts Assessment concerning proposed bottle shop at The Entrance
- De Cue Pty Ltd /Comino Prassas: Social impact expert evidence for Land and Environment Court class 4 proceedings No 40301 of 2006
- The Cellar Group/Gwynne Thompson: Community Impacts of proposed Dan Murphy's in Byron Bay
- Luton Design: Social Impacts Assessment concerning proposed bottle shop within Asian grocer in Lidcombe
- VIP Karaoke Pty Ltd: Social Impacts Comment concerning DA amendment to extend hours of operation of karaoke bar in Liverpool
- Marlene and Matthew Fulham: Social Impacts Assessment concerning proposed small bar in Cessnock
- Entasil: Social Impacts Statement concerning proposed bottle shop in Rozelle
- SJH Planning/Glynatsis: Social impacts assessment concerning Bella Café and Small Bar in Terrigal (Central Coast Council DA: 52739/2017)
- Longhill Planning/ Cameron & Myers: Social impact survey and expert evidence for LEC case 975/2004 - Tommy Doran's Irish Pub, Wallarah Rd, Kanwal
- Phillip Brand/ Cameron & Myers: Social Impact study and expert evidence for Liquor Administration Board related to Union Hotel Gosford
- Cameron & Myers/Gwynne Thompson: Review of literature addressing potential social impacts of proposed Killarney Vale bottle shop on the Central Coast of NSW
- Poonsup/Storey & Gough: Social impacts of a proposed brothel in Gordon

Needs assessment, program review and evaluation of services

- NSW Drug and Alcohol Directorate: Strategic Assessment of all Alcohol and Other Drug Services for Young People throughout NSW
- Sydney University College of Health Sciences: Strategic Review of All International Health Activities of Faculties and Institutes within the College
- NSW Health/Department of Health, Housing and Community Services: Evaluation of Innovative Health Services for Homeless Youth Program in NSW
- UnitingChurch Burnside/Division of General Practice/NSW Department of Community Services (with T Issues Consultancy): Evaluation strategy for RAPT AOD Project (Reconnecting Adolescents and Parents Team) AOD Project; Year 1 Review of RAPT AOD Project; Final Evaluation of RAPT AOD Project
- WestWood Spice/National Relay Service Outreach:
 - National User Survey 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013
 - qualitative research concerning Indigenous Australians with hearing impairment
 - Needs assessment for promotion of the NRS to older men with hearing impairment
 - Needs Assessment for Indigenous Users
 - Research concerning awareness of NRS amongst professional intermediaries
 - Needs assessment for and testing of responsive website design for mobile devices
 - User Experience Consultation concerning NRS App
 - TTY Users Project, including survey of Speak & Read users and focus groups with Type & Read users
- Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations: Evaluation of Education Program 2012-2014, including intellectual leadership and capacity development components, plus
 - *Ending HIV* national campaign
 - *The Drama Downunder* national campaign
 - *Time to Test* national campaign
 - *Your Body Blueprint* website
 - *Condoman* website
 - *Our Team* booklet
 - *Taking a Look* booklet
 - *Us Mob and HIV* booklet
 - *Our Destiny Haz Arrived* print resources.
- Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations: Process and Outcome Evaluation of Gay Education Strategies Program, including:
 - *Withdrawal* campaign,
 - *Relationships* campaign,
 - *Oral Sex* campaign,
 - *Negotiated Safety* campaign,
 - *One Community* campaign,
 - *Getting in Focus* campaign,
 - *Living in the Epidemic* campaign,
 - *Asian Gay Proud* campaign,
 - *Gay Youth* campaign,
 - *NTAC Mensline*,
 - AACACT referral cards,
 - TasCARD *Bass Strait is Not a Barrier* campaign,
 - conferences, workshops, manuals and other resources

- Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations:
 - Assessment of Information Needs of People with HIV from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds;
 - Evaluation of Reflexive Practice Workshop;
 - Evaluation of Gay Educators' Conference;
 - Review of AFAO/NAPWA Education Steering and Education Strategies Groups
 - PLWHIV community consultation concerning health promotion needs in relation to a proposed website addressing preventable illness
- AIDS Council of NSW / ACON:
 - Evaluation of Trashy Queens Tribes Project;
 - Evaluation of NSW Deaf Communities HIV Project;
 - Fun and Esteem Gay Youth HIV Project Evaluation data analysis;
 - HIV Education Needs Assessment data analysis;
 - Evaluation of The Luncheon Club (health promotion for HIV+ people)
- Family Planning Association/Juvenile Justice Department: Evaluation instruments for *Thinking Through Adolescent Sexuality* workshop
- NSW Users and AIDS Association:
 - Review of User's News (with Julie Bates)
 - Evaluation of Goulburn Koories Tribes Project
- The Aged-care Rights Service (TARS):
 - Review of Client Intake, Flow and Support Processes
 - Quality Assurance Study for Retirement Villages Legal Service
 - Rebranding consultations with staff and potential clients
- Queensland Health Communicable Diseases Branch HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and Sexual Health Program: Sex Workers Assessment of Needs 2008 (with Julie Bates), followed by establishment support for a community-based organisation to deliver a health promotion program for sex workers, including community workshops, development of policies and procedures, strategic, operational and implementation plans and evaluation strategy using a Hierarchy of Outcomes framework
- Queensland Association for Healthy Communities:
 - Evaluation of HIV, HCV and STIs Program for Gay and other Men who have Sex with Men (including Two Spirits Indigenous Program), including development of conceptual diagram, stakeholder consultations, community focus groups and audit against national benchmarks
 - Review of Best Practice in Group Work with Gay Men
- HIV and Related Programs (HARP) Unit of South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Health Region: Gap Analysis of Services for Sex Workers At Risk (with Julie Bates and Christine Harcourt)
- NSW Department of Corrective Services Prison AIDS Project/Commonwealth Department of Health, Housing and Community Services: Evaluation of National AIDS in Prisons Information Clearing House (NAIPIC)
- AIDS and Infectious Diseases Branch, NSW Dept Health:
 - Impact evaluation of CEIDA HIV/AIDS Training Program for drug treatment and needle exchange workers;
 - Evaluation of Needle and Syringe Vending Machine Strategy;
 - Evaluation of HIV/AIDS Education Arabic Speaking Community Project
- Mental Health Branch, Department of Human Services and Health/ Inspire Foundation: Evaluation of *Reach Out!* national youth suicide prevention project

- Health Insurance Commission/ Keys Young*: Strategies for Improved Aboriginal Access to Medicare and Pharmaceutical Benefits telephone survey of Aboriginal Health Services
- Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Services/ Keys Young*: Mid-term Review of National Indigenous Australians Sexual Health Strategy
- Department of Health and Family Services/Keys Young*: Evaluation Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health Action Plan
- ATSIC/Keys Young*: Evaluation of ATSIC Service Charter and Complaints Management
- ACON Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP): Review of All Information Resources (with Julie Bates)
- Western Sydney Area Health Service: Assessment of HIV/STD education needs of young people in Western Sydney
- Qld EPA /*T Issues: evaluation tool design and data analysis for Waste Education Strategic Review
- Department of Community Services: Review of Services for Vulnerable Youth throughout NSW in relation to Youth Services Database Pilot Project
- Commonwealth Department of Health, Housing and Human Services/ Sydney Sexual Health Centre: Process and Impact Evaluation of National HIV Contact Tracing Seminar
- Gender Centre/NSW Health: Evaluation of Health Service Providers Training
- NSW Department of Health/Cultural Partners: Evaluation of Play Now Act Now Youth Alcohol Film Project
- Department of Community Services/urbis keys young* Family Access to Prisoners
- Department of Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs/ Keys Young*: Strategies for Disadvantaged Job Seekers telephone survey of key informants
- Department of Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs/ Centrelink/Keys Young*: Post Implementation Review of Jobs Network Access
- Australia Council/Quay Connection*: Community Cultural Development Fund National Models Project Evaluation

Concept testing and evaluation of campaigns and information resources

- Cellblock Youth Health Centre/NSW Department of Health: Concept testing and evaluation of *Health Information Project for Homeless Youth (HIP* comics); Concept testing and evaluation of *Youth Alcohol Project (YAP* comics)
- Social Change Media/Mental Health Branch, Department of Human Services and Health: concept testing and evaluation of *Parenting* booklets and materials for radio
- MedAct /Maternity Action (UK):
 - Concept testing of *Reaching Out Project: Maternity Access and Advocacy Pack*
 - Evaluation strategy and instruments for *Maternity Rights at Work Project*
 - Evaluation strategy for *Maternity Rights* website for service providers
- AIDS Council of NSW: Concept testing of
 - *Summer 2002* materials
 - *Relationships* magazine
 - *Post-Exposure Prophylaxis* posters

- Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations/National Association of People With HIV/AIDS: Concept testing / impact evaluation of:
 - *Indigenous Sistergirl* posters
 - Indigenous gay men and sistergirl life stories project for radio
 - *Everyday Pleasures* campaign
 - *Parties* campaign
 - *Overseas Travel* campaign
 - *Regional Travel* campaign
 - *Young Gay Men* campaign
 - *Standards of Care* booklet for people with HIV
 - *HIV+ Gay Sex* booklet
 - *Unprotected Anal Intercourse/ Clinical Markers* campaign
 - *HIV Survival Guide; HIV Treatments Breaks* Campaign
 - *Sexually Transmissible Infections* poster
 - *Sex In Queer Places* interactive website
 - booklet for people newly diagnosed with HIV
 - *Having a Life* resource for HIV positive people
 - *Side Effects* resource for positive people
- Central Sydney Area Health Service: STIGMA HIV/STI testing interactive website and campaign print materials
- AIDS Council of NSW: Evaluation of Social Marketing Program 2001-2002, including
 - *Safe Summer campaigns*;
 - *Consider This*;
 - *When You're Hot, You're Hot* (SOPV booklets);
 - *On Any Street* (Anti-Violence Project),
 - *Relationships* magazine;
 - *15%* campaign
- National Relay Service Outreach/ WestWood Spice:
 - Concept testing of information resources and advertisements targeting older men and their families
 - concept testing of general promotional brochure
 - testing of new website design
 - testing of viral promotional video
 - testing of responsive version of website for small screen mobile devices.
- Department of Social Security (with Juliet London):
 - Concept testing of *TeleService* promotional materials
 - Concept testing of information resources concerning changes to Age Pension eligibility age
 - Concept testing of change of Age Pension eligibility (extended deeming) information resources
 - Concept testing of Age Pension *All you need to know* booklet
 - Concept testing of Age Pension *Investing money: Your choices* booklet
 - Concept testing of *Moving House: Your choices* booklet
- Drug & Alcohol Directorate/Centre for Education and Information on Drugs and Alcohol:
 - Concept testing, evaluation of Amphetamines Campaign (*Speed Wise Speed Safe*)
 - Concept testing of minor tranquillisers information brochure for women
 - Drink Drunk Campaign: Concept testing of alcohol and violence comic
- NSW Association for Mental Health: Evaluation of the Mental Health Information for Regional and Remote Australia (MHIRRA) service

- Wellcome Australia/C,W,F,S: HIV Early Treatments Information Campaign: concept testing and benchmark research.
- Centrelink/FaCS:
 - Customer consultation concerning sole parent review process;
 - Evaluation of new format *Age Pension News*;
 - Focus testing of *You and Your Family* December, 1997 and March, 1998;
 - Market testing of SA316 (residential aged care fee subsidy application form and booklet)
 - Focus testing of Commonwealth Seniors Health card claim form and brochure

Other research services

- Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care/Sydney University: Facilitation of action research to define best practice in systemic conferencing with clinicians
- Matthew Myers:
 - research towards paper addressing ways to improve access to Family Dispute Resolution Services for First Nations people
 - preparation of paper addressing the evidence of children and of expert witnesses in cases before the Family and Federal Magistrates Courts involving allegations of child sexual abuse.
- World Health Organisation Global Program on AIDS: Multi-centred Sex Industry Research Project guidelines and Australian component of field work (with Julie Bates)
- UTS School of Marketing*/ Goodman Fielder: Attitudes to Gelatine in the Asia Pacific
- National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research: HIV Related Malignancy Study questionnaire design
- World Health Organisation/*Australian Centre for Health Promotion: Assessment of Needs for a Tobacco Control Workshop for the Asia Pacific Region (interviews with Health Senior Executives in Asia Pacific Nations including China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Samoa, Thailand, Vietnam, Micronesia, Taiwan, Fiji, Vanuatu
- Health Insurance Commission/Cultural Partners: project management, questionnaire design and data analysis for Overseas Drug Diversion Program Second Evaluation
- Queensland Health/University of Queensland: Data collection from Torres Strait Islander gay men/sistergirls to inform health promotion programs
- Diabetes Australia/Quay Connection*: Facilitated round table discussions to identify priorities for a Diabetes Public Awareness Strategy
- Cancer Council NSW: Preparation of scientific paper for submission to Standards Australia, *Measurement and Reporting of Broad Spectrum Capability in Sunscreens*
- School of Public Health, Sydney University: Preparation of research brief for independent marketing research tender

Strategic Planning

- ANET (Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations – National Association of People with AIDS Education Team): Membership consultation and development of 2011-2015 Five Year Strategic Plan (with Ross Duffin)
- Communicable Diseases Branch, Queensland Health / Respect Inc: Mentoring assistance with development of first 3 year strategic plan, operational plan and agency implementation plans for Year 1; Design of program logic conceptual diagram, evaluation strategies and tools
- Seniors' Rights Service: development of 2015-2020 Strategic Plan
- Northern Territory Aboriginal Health Forum: facilitation of strategic planning day
- Araluen Cultural Precinct, Alice Springs: Facilitation of strategic planning day.

Training/Manuals/Workshops

- NSW Department of Corrective Services: Drug and Alcohol Harm Reduction Education Manual (and later adaptation for Indigenous Inmates)
- NSW Department of Corrective Services/ University of New England, Northern Rivers*: Prison Officer HIV Training Program design
- Central Coast Area Health Service: Consultant trainer in HIV prevention, HIV support, HIV legal and ethical issues over three years for diverse human services professionals
- ASP Plastics *Fitpack Disposa-Safe*: Consumer Stakeholders facilitated workshop addressing safe disposal of injecting equipment
- NSW Association for Adolescent Health: Best Practice in Youth Health Services (facilitated two day workshop, followed by production of best practice manual)
- NSW Attorney General's Department: Manual of Policies and Procedures for Youth Drug Court Pilot Program
- NACAIDS: HIV Counselling Manual for Telephone Counsellors; HIV Counselling Manual for Campus Counsellors
- Network of Alcohol and Drug Agencies: HIV Education, Counselling and Support Manual
- 5th National AIDS Conference: HIV training of venue staff and community liaison
- University of Technology Sydney: Lecturer in Marketing Research, School of Marketing for 3 years
- University of NSW: Lecturer in Bioethics, School of Medical Education; Lecturer in Medical Ethics and Health Law, School of Community Medicine for 4 years.

- Addressing Landcom/Wilson Planning comments(files are saved in *Objective ConnectàDA submissionàYour discipline*)
- Updating the standard text with new site address
- Updating site address and site plans/boundaries throughout your report
- Upload your final reports in their respective folders with the naming convention
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