



## TASMANIAN HOUSING STRATEGY

# Provide your feedback on the Tasmanian Housing Strategy Exposure Draft

JUNE 2023

We encourage you to read the Tasmanian Housing Strategy Exposure Draft (draft Strategy) prior to responding to the following questions. You may choose to respond to some or all questions. Completed documents can be uploaded using the submissions drop-box on the website: <https://tashousingstrategy.homestasmania.com.au/consultation>.

**Question 1: ‘Our way forward’ identifies several levers for achieving a more equitable housing system for all Tasmanians. Are there additional or alternative more important levers that you believe should be addressed?**

Provide your response here.

As well as the long-term strategy outlined to improve home availability for all, and a “housing first” programs for those with complex needs, a **short-term plan is also needed to address the current crisis and provide improved opportunities for safe temporary accommodation for all.** [The current Housing Support paper is restricted to those in categories with special needs or specifically vulnerable, but many more – often resilient and those referred to as the houseless rather than the homeless – also experience housing stress, and their temporary housing solutions are often denied.]

The first step is to acknowledge, and then act upon the knowledge, that there **is** a current housing **crisis** which will not be alleviated **in the short to medium term** by these strategies.

The discussion paper and strategy as outlined recognise the need for a diversity of options to provide flexibility to respond to changing population needs, but have **not included a flexible approach the current change in population need**, resulting in a crisis that is talked about but not acted on with urgency. There is a need to consider allowing and facilitating currently available diverse options (as chosen by those affected) to address this crisis. In particular, there has been little or no flexibility regarding current regulations to accommodate temporary housing solutions opted for by individuals



with few or no other options, and little effort to ensure that the inevitable multigenerational living does not result in overcrowding and lack of private space for families.

Unless we accept that the minimum housing standard we, as a society, currently accept is a tent or the back of a car, current regulations will continue to be prioritised above providing adequate shelter. **We can do better than this.** In fact we don't even allow for these, as most in this situation have no legal right to use this shelter. They are therefore in the position of finding locations (often illegal), to erect or park each night, and have no certainty or support to do so.

Emergency measures could / should be included / considered:

- provision (in all municipal areas) of adequate legal parking areas (with or near basic facilities) for caravans, motor homes and tiny (transportable) homes, with defined use parameters. [Think laterally – community spaces, lease of private land; Stage 3 of a multi-stage development while Stages 1 & 2 are being developed etc.];
- temporary permits to allow similar parking on private properties where this is outside current regulations;
- if / when it is clear that housing needs will continue to outstrip delivery for an extended period, review relevant regulations to determine which of these can be permitted permanently, or for an extended period;
- programs to facilitate group housing and programs aimed at improving access to single rooms / house sharing;
- steps (such as regulatory review of the size and location ancillary dwellings) to facilitate adaption of existing homes to the inevitable multi-generational living where there an option to do so.

Some of these have been highlighted by submissions to the Discussion Paper, but are not specifically mentioned in the Draft Strategy.

## Question 2: Theme one identifies the need for 'more homes, built faster'. Are there additional or alternative objectives you recommend for consideration?

Provide your response here.

Also a need to accept that this will **not be fast enough to prevent homelessness in the short to mediate term**, unless alternative (and often temporary) housing is allowed and facilitated. These can be delivered at a much faster rate, and when housing availability ultimately improves for most households, remain an asset that can be utilised for holiday / student / single persons accommodation, and will continue to provide the flexibility to respond to future crises.

## Question 3: Theme two centres on 'affordability in the private market'. Are there additional or alternative objectives you recommend for consideration?

Provide your response here.

Accept that for some, home ownership would only ever take the form of non-traditional housing such as Tiny Homes, and consider the options to incorporate these into the housing mix.

**Question 4: Theme three places ‘people at the centre’ of the draft Strategy. Are there additional or alternative objectives you recommend for consideration?**

Provide your response here.

As well as those with more complex needs to gain and maintain a home (those termed homeless) who are recognised as needing a “housing first” approach, include other current homeless (those sometimes termed houseless) in the people-centred sphere. This would include those with tents (pitched daily) and cars / motor-homes with no legal safe parking areas; couch surfers; young people facing rental discrimination and students including international students representatives.

These are in general a more resilient group than those with complex needs, with income and age the major barriers to housing access. As such, a more diverse and readily achievable range of options would provide suitable short to medium term housing. [See Question 1] Ask them what they want (in the short term), and then ensure that they have the opportunity to access their housing solution.

**Question 5: Theme four highlights ‘local prosperity’ as a priority. Are there additional or alternative objectives you recommend for consideration?**

Provide your response here.

The University of Tasmania (like all universities with a similar funding model), is under considerable financial strain, limiting the ability to maintain education and research services into the future. A major funding pillar of this model is international full-fee services, with UTAS being particularly reliant on this. However housing shortages for students (both international and local), has become a major limitation to the recovery **and maintenance** of international student levels. The effect on local prosperity is significant, both in the short-term, and in the longer term for the State as a whole if UTAS standards cannot be maintained.

**Question 6: Are there other ways the government could make its actions and progress to meet the proposed objectives more transparent and accessible?**

Provide your response here.

Incorporate the data collection and sharing and review mechanisms requested by a variety of Municipal Councils and service providers in previous submissions.

**Question 7: Do you have any comment on what this draft Strategy does well?**

Provide your response here.

Question 8: Is there anything you think the draft Strategy does not cover but should, or that it mentions but could be highlighted more?

Provide your response here.

A short-term strategy to address immediate homeless. See above.

Thank you for your feedback.