



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES
Ms Jo Clay MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy), Mr Mark Parton MLA

Mr Malcolm Snow
Chief Executive Officer
City Renewal Authority
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Dear Mr Snow

RE: Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2022-2023

Thank you for your letter of 21 November 2023 providing clarification to the evidence you provided to the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services during its Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2022–2023.

In response to a question about the allocation of affordable, public and community housing for Section 63 City (now Section 121), you advised:

‘In accordance with Government policy, our goal is to include the target that is for affordable housing. With the recent release of Section 63... the expression of interest that went out for that particular release did include the requirement for a 30 per cent target.’

In subsequent questions you confirmed that the 30 per cent target was for community housing and that there was no public or community housing included in the expression of interest.

The Chief Minister commented:

‘I would not discount community housing under a particular subsidised model in the build-to-rent space, operated by a community housing provider. I do not believe it is on the agenda of Housing ACT to be buying units within that development, but that would ultimately be a decision for them.

In your letter you clarify that in the Section 121 release, proponents were advised that:

- This land release requires a minimum of 70 dwellings or 15 per cent of the development yield - whichever is the greater to be achieved
- This can be a mix of affordable, community housing or equivalent (eg. Build-to-Rent or Build-to-Rent with affordable)
- The Authority is seeking innovative proposals from industry to address housing affordability.

Since 2018 the Government has issued affordable, community and public housing targets that are to be delivered by the City Renewal Authority and the Suburban Land Agency. I am attaching a copy of

NI2019-571 and NI2022-462 for your information. I understand that relevant agencies, including Housing ACT would have been consulted in establishing the targets.

The 2019-2020 Indicative Land Release Program identified that part Block 20 Section 63 was to be released that year, with 350 dwellings anticipated to be built on the site. The NI2019-571 determined targets for affordable, public and community housing within the 350 dwellings, being 60, 5 and 5 respectively. The proportion of social and affordable housing of the overall development was identified as 20 per cent.

NI2022-462 noted that part Block 20 Section 63 was being re-released in 2022-2023 and identified the same targets of 60 dwellings for affordable housing and 5 each for public and community housing, with the percentage of social and affordable remaining at 20 per cent.

I am pleased that the City Renewal Authority is seeking innovative proposals to address housing affordability as part of the tender process. In the tender documents is a criterion included which will assess how well each proponent intends to deliver on housing affordability.

However, I am concerned that on two occasions the Government had set clear targets for affordable, public and community housing on part Section 63 but the sale of the land did not accurately reflect those targets. Further, that in your letter you failed to mention:

- the basis on which it had been determined that the overall percentage of 20 per cent had been reduced to 15 per cent
- why the percentage was not 30 per cent
- that no public housing was to be provided, and why no public housing was to be provided.

Given that the targets have been signed off by the relevant Ministers I would assume that some support at Ministerial level to changing the targets would be required. I would be grateful if you could provide me with that advice and some explanation as to why it was decided to alter the type and percentage of affordable, community and public housing on that site, and why no public housing is included.

Canberra has a long and proud history of being an inclusive city. The policy of 'salt and peppering' housing, especially public housing, throughout the city is an important means of delivering affordable housing choices, achieving housing diversity and including a mix of tenures throughout the city. The development of Section 121 City should make a contribution to the ongoing liveability of the city.

I look forward to your early reply.

Yours sincerely,

Jo Clay MLA
Chair

11 January 2024