

1. Issue Name

Housing

2. Contributors

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3. Issue Definition and Scope

Housing is intrinsic to the quality of life and characteristics of the Shire. The image that housing creates influences people's decisions about where to live. It shapes the Shire's socio demographic make up, quality of life, rate of growth, level of investment, cost of living and service needs.

The challenge confronting Redland Shire over the coming decade is to satisfy changing demands for a range of accommodation types in terms of tenure, size and type, that are affordable, ecologically sound, well designed for energy efficiency and well suited to the needs of all residents at different life cycle points.

In responding to this challenge, this paper examines the following key matters:

- Housing choice;
- Urban efficiency and consolidation;
- Residential design and sustainability;
- Residential amenity and character;
- Housing affordability; and
- Housing special needs the community.

4. Executive Summary

Council currently has no formal housing policy. Nevertheless it has the capacity to influence housing outcomes in the Shire. Through its Planning Scheme and Local Area Planning Program Council has a role in relation to standards of housing, neighbourhood design and the location of housing developments. It also has a public health role in relation to standards of rental accommodation and undertaking research and advocacy work on behalf of the community housing sector who provide long and short term affordable housing for residents in need.

Over the next decade the following trends will significantly impact on housing issues in the Shire. They are:

Redland Shire is one of the fastest growing local government areas in Australia. It is expected that the Shire will maintain the present rate of growth well into the next decade, ensuring an active residential construction industry in the Shire continues as a significant driver of the local economy; An ageing population, decreasing household size, changes in family composition are examples of the many social trends which will impact on the need for a greater diversity of housing in the future;

Smaller lots and higher density development will be required to accommodate continued high levels of growth, address urban efficiency and contribute to the building of sustainable communities. Managing potential community resistance to such changes will be one of the many challenges facing Council;

Energy efficiency and sustainability issues will become increasingly significant ensuring housing is built in a manner that minimises resource use both in its construction and use and that new neighbourhoods are developed with the maintenance of biodiversity, water sensitive urban design and reduced reliance on the private motor vehicle;

Improved residential design and streetscape outcomes and addressing heritage and character throughout the Shire will become increasingly important.

Housing affordability is currently and will continue to be an increasingly significant issue in the Shire;

Increasing shortages of both supported and unsupported crisis and transitional and special needs housing will be encountered in the Shire.

Many of the above matters are or will be addressed through Council's Redlands Planning Scheme and the roll out of Local Area Plans. The role of Council in addressing issues of housing affordability and the provision of crisis, transitional and special needs housing is less clear.

It is therefore recommended that a Housing Strategy be developed which articulates Council's position with regards its principles, aims and objectives for housing in the Shire. The need for a housing strategy can be reflected in the new Corporate Planner.

5. Regional Cooperation

Federal, State and Local Government responsibilities

Each of Australia's three spheres of government plays a role in providing and regulating housing. Traditionally Local Government has been responsible for controlling building, planning, health and other laws relating to housing, as well as delivering basic services to households with the State and Federal Government responsible for the provision of funding for crisis, transitional and long term "public housing" and "community housing" through the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA).

Increasingly in response to reduced funding and tighter targeting of public housing combined with decreasing housing affordability and rising homelessness putting pressure on local housing, many councils including Brisbane City Council are experimenting with innovative forms of housing provisions. Examples include:

The establishment of housing trusts or companies:

- Joint ventures or partnerships with private and community sector organisations;
- Refurbishment of older buildings as affordable housing.

Regional and State Initiatives

The draft South East Queensland Regional Plan, due for adoption in late June 2005 will have a significant impact on the provision of housing over the next 20 years. The Regional Plan is the pre-eminent plan for the region and takes precedence over all other planning instruments. The plan will impact on housing in a number of ways including for example:

- Prioritising a compact and sustainable urban footprint within proximity to public transport networks;
- Identifying new dwelling targets for major urban local governments (2004-2026); and
- Incorporating strategies to support affordable housing.

Other relevant State initiatives embrace the concept of Smart Housing as promoted by the Queensland Department of Housing that aim to encourage the design and construction of affordable, energy efficient, universal designed, safe and secure dwellings.

It is important to note the initiative reflected in the draft South East Queensland Regional Plan and the State Housing Project are generally reflected in the draft Redlands Planning Scheme.

6. Background/ Discussion

Trends in Housing in Redland Shire:*

High Growth Rates

- High population growth with the Shire growing by an average of 3273 residents per year, an average annual growth rate of nearly 3% per year.
- It is expected that the population will continue to grow at a rate of around 2400-3500 people per year and that by the year 2021, the population of the Shire will be 168,400 to 179,000 residents;

Changing Demographics

- The population of the Shire is expected to age over the next decade. In particular the proportion of persons aged 65 and over is projected to increase from 13,200 in 2001 to 35,200 in 2021.
- Household structure is changing rapidly with decline in household size from 3 persons per detached dwelling in 1991 to 2.7 persons per detached dwelling in 2021.
- A trend exists in the increasing level of lone person and single parent family households in the Redlands.

Housing Trends

Private housing stock has increased over the last fifteen years from 29,571 dwellings in 1991 to 35,068 in 2001 an increase of approximately 5500 new dwellings;

**To be read in conjunction with the broader demographic profiles analysis provided in the Issues Paper for Population Change and Development.*

- 79% of all housing comprises of single detached dwelling houses indicative of the low density development trends that have typified residential development in the Shire. In 2003 93.5% of all new dwellings were detached.
- The average size of dwelling houses in the Shire continues to increase;
- Loss of identity and homogenous character of new suburban estates.
- Increasing number of dwellings not responsive or sympathetic to the sub tropical coastal climate or energy efficiency; and
- Ongoing community resistance to smaller lots and increased residential densities is likely to continue unless ongoing education and promotion programs supported by examples of best practice developments throughout the Shire are established.
- There exists an opportunity to address these issues in a Housing Strategy for the Shire.

Housing Affordability and Special Needs Housing Current Trends

Previous investigations and studies, including the Community Facilities and Services Study 2004 highlight the following matters of concern relating to housing affordability and special needs housing. They are:

- Increasing property prices and rentals placing greater financial and housing stress on families and individuals and preventing agencies funding premises;
- Shrinking public funding with all levels of Government withdrawing from housing provision;
- Emphasis on keeping aged people 'in their own home' which places more people 'at risk' increasing the need for crisis, temporary and affordable accommodation;
- Ageing population resulting in elderly parents with disabled siblings, ageing partners unable to cope and more people with little financial capacity to cope;

- Community expectations of help and support from Government and charities;
- Fewer carers providing home support because partners, parents and extended families are not there and insufficient volunteers and foster carers to meet increasing service demands; and
- Increasing drug, alcohol and substance abuse leading to violent behaviour, more people at risk and the need for early intervention and rehabilitation.

The above trends are creating:

- Lack of 'Affordable Homes' especially for the young and elderly without support;
- Lack of 'Crisis Accommodation' for those at risk or needing respite care;
- Lack of 'Effective Responses' as governments increasingly withdraw from housing;
- Homelessness amongst all age groups especially women, young people and in the future, homeless old aged;
- Growing Demands for:
 - Provisions of crisis and temporary accommodation especially for women and children at risk, those being rehabilitated and those with mental disabilities;
 - Provision of crisis respite accommodation (over night and weekends) – also for places that offer longer respite care (from 1 to 4 weeks);
 - Affordable and low income housing particularly in Cleveland, Redland Bay, Wellington Point and Birkdale;
- The social divide's developing in Redlands between the well serviced affluent and the poor living in less serviced areas;
- The availability of affordable rental housing is a crucial housing issue;
- While the overall number of rental properties has been increasing in recent years, key informants report the number of rentals available for low income households is decreasing markedly;
- The Mangrove Housing Association found that 70% of people recently surveyed indicated that young people could not afford to live independently in the Redlands by renting privately;
- North Stradbroke island faces a critical shortage of affordable housing across all age groups;
- Redland Shire has only one crisis accommodation provider (the Domestic Violence Service) and the number of people they can house is severely limited;
- Affordable accommodation for Service Agencies is an existing, and growing problem, both for their own needs and premises for client needs (eg for independent living);
- The lack of long term funding certainty makes it impossible to enter into long term leasing. (Long term leases are important when premises need modifying to meet special needs);
- Agencies have to close down at short notice at existing locations and urgently seek alternative accommodation when their short leases run out.

Summary of Issues

The challenge confronting the Shire is to ensure Redland residents enjoy a variety and choice of housing which meets the needs and preferences of all households and is consistent with long term needs and social and demographic trends. Anticipated changes in household structure and size are creating a mismatch between diversifying housing demands on the one hand and the largely homogenous supply of single family dwelling houses on the other. At the same time, housing is becoming increasingly expensive and continued low density development without associated services and facilities to support the resulting neighbourhoods, has meant increasing social costs to the community and economic costs for households in the outer suburbs.

To facilitate the building of sustainable communities Redland Shire also needs to ensure that dwellings are affordable, ecologically sound, well designed for energy efficiency and well suited to the household needs with close and convenient access to services.

As noted earlier in the report the Redlands Planning Scheme and future local area plans will provide a key policy framework to address many of the key housing challenges facing the Shire. Other Council programs and strategies will also play an important role. Despite this it is apparent housing will become an increasingly important issue for council over the coming decade and there is a need for an overall housing policy/strategy for the Shire¹ which clearly outlines Council's position on principles, aims, objectives and responsibilities for housing.

¹ Framework for Housing Study should be guided by the Queensland Department of Housing/Local Government Association of Queensland Resource Kit.

Appendix A

Sourcing of Data Information

- Affordable housing in sustainable communities – Local Government Resource Kit – Queensland Department of Housing.
- Australia's guide to good Residential Design – National Office of Local Government.
- Redland Shire Council Draft Aged Persons Housing Strategy 2005.
- Draft South East Queensland Regional Plan – Office of Urban Management – October 2004
- Population Growth – Highlights and Trends – Queensland 2005 Department of Local Government and Planning
- Population and Housing Fact sheet Redland Shire 2004 – Dept Local Government and Planning (PIFU Unit)
- Dept of Housing (QLD) – “Affordable Housing Design Guidelines” – September 2004
- Dept of Housing (QLD) – “Bayside Public Housing Client Survey”
- Bayside Housing Focus Group – “ Report from Bayside Forum on Housing” – October 2001
- Bayside Housing Focus Group – “The Gap Exposed: Providing the Unmet Housing Need in the Redland/Bayside Area” – August 2001.
- Redland Shire Council – Community Facilities and Services Study (2004)ew years.