

# **ATTACHMENT TO AGENDA ITEM**

**Ordinary Meeting**

**21 April 2020**

<b>Agenda Item 10.6</b>	<b>Adoption of the Greater Shepparton Affordable Housing Strategy: Houses for People 2020</b>	
<b>Attachment 1</b>	<b>Greater Shepparton Affordable Housing Strategy: Houses for People 2020 .....</b>	<b>739</b>



GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL  
**AFFORDABLE  
HOUSING  
STRATEGY**  
Houses for  
People

FINAL DRAFT  
April 2020



### **Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners**

We, Greater Shepparton City Council, acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land which now comprises Greater Shepparton. We pay respect to their tribal Elders, we celebrate their continuing culture and we acknowledge the memory of their ancestors.

Prepared by  
**Greater Shepparton City Council**  
And  
**Affordable Development Outcomes**

With assistance from  
Residents of Greater Shepparton  
Beyond Housing  
Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative Ltd  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Ethnic Council of Shepparton & District Inc.  
The Bridge Youth Service & Education First Youth Foyer  
St Vincent de Paul Marion Centre  
Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Advisory Committee

And with the financial assistance of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning,  
through the Voluntary Affordable Housing Grant Program.

## CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>SECTION 1 - CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>13</b>
What is Affordable Housing? .....	13
Why does Greater Shepparton need Affordable Housing? .....	14
Government Policy Context .....	19
What is Council's Role? .....	21
Key Challenges .....	23
Key Opportunities .....	24
How will Council address Affordable Housing need? .....	25
<b>SECTION 2 – ACTION PLAN .....</b>	<b>30</b>
Vision, Objectives and Measures of Success .....	30
Monitoring and Review.....	30
Action Plan .....	31
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>36</b>
Appendix 1 - Frequently Asked Questions.....	36
Appendix 2 - Examples of Alternative Housing Development and Ownership Models .....	37

*This version is prepared for Council endorsement and includes ATTACHMENT 1: Issues and Opportunities Paper (from page 41), to be published separately.*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Greater Shepparton City Council (Council) recognises adequate housing as a basic human right and the foundation on which the region’s liveability, health and wellbeing, productivity, and community participation is built.**

Evidence highlights that not everyone in the community has access to appropriate and affordable housing that suits their needs and housing journey. This has significant social and economic impacts on individuals, households and the community.

Homelessness is the most urgent aspect of bigger issues of housing insecurity and takes many forms, including people living in unsafe, overcrowded or short-term housing or motels, as well as those ‘sleeping rough’ in cars or on the street. Greater Shepparton has the highest rate of homelessness in regional Victoria<sup>1</sup> and a large number of very low and low income households in housing stress.

There are a range of factors that affect the demand, supply and cost of housing and reasons that people fall into housing stress or homelessness. Some households are particularly vulnerable and may also require additional social supports to maintain tenancies and participate in the community.

Provision of Affordable Housing, particularly Social Housing, responds to gaps in the market and supports very low, low and where necessary, moderate income households into housing that is more affordable and appropriate for their needs. Delivering Affordable Housing requires a land-use planning response to ensure there is an adequate supply of a diversity of housing in the right locations, as well as an economic and social response to ensure this housing is affordable and available to households in need.

Land, planning, capacity and significant investment is required to address the homelessness and the shortage of Affordable Housing in Greater Shepparton.

In response to legislative changes, and reflecting Council’s role as the Planning Authority, the **Greater Shepparton Affordable Housing Strategy 2020** establishes the evidence of Affordable Housing need and the actions that Council will take to facilitate an increase in supply and build on existing actions to support housing supply, diversity and quality in Greater Shepparton.

Underpinned by a ‘Housing First’ approach, the Strategy aims to support investment and action to increase in crisis and specialised accommodation; increase Social Housing; improve the diversity of housing choice; and increase the diversity of dwellings in Greater Shepparton.

Meeting this challenge requires partnerships between all levels of government, the not-for-profit and private sectors and targeted investment to ensure Greater Shepparton has sufficient and appropriate ‘Houses for People’, particularly those on very low and low incomes and achieves the vision that:

***All members of the Greater Shepparton community have access to safe, affordable and appropriate housing.***

### What is Affordable Housing?

**Affordable Housing is housing that is appropriate for the housing needs of very low, low or moderate income households.**

Affordable Housing encompasses a range of programs, including housing for rent or purchase that is suitable and affordable for very low, low and moderate income households. The primary type of Affordable Housing is Social Housing, which is housing owned and managed by the State Government or not-for-profit housing organisations, including Indigenous housing agencies.

Affordable Housing is typically rented or sold at a discount to rent or by way of a contribution to support home purchase. Households living in Affordable Housing may also require other supports to maintain their tenancy or engage in the community.

Affordable Housing should be located close to services and transport, integrated across the neighbourhood and be of a high-quality design and build.

### Why do we need Affordable Housing?

There is extensive evidence of the need for Affordable Housing in Greater Shepparton, with a significant proportion of Greater Shepparton's population affected by housing insecurity in some form.

More than 800 homeless or marginally housed people are estimated to live in Greater Shepparton, including people who are sleeping in tents on the riverbank or in their cars. Growing instances of homelessness include increases in women fleeing family violence, with consequences including children not going to school, families losing vital community connections, or women remaining in unsafe home environments.

Other vulnerable groups include older people, young people, single people, single parent families, recently arrived immigrants, people with a disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Lower income homeowners may also experience housing stress.

For students and prospective workers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing can make Greater Shepparton a less attractive place to live. It can also lead to people having to remain in unsuitable or unsafe housing situations or occupying larger dwellings with higher housing costs.

Access to Affordable Housing at a time of crisis is particularly critical to assist people to avoid homelessness and begin to re-build their lives. A 'Housing First' approach aims to provide people with a roof over their heads as a priority before supporting people with a range of services to enable them to rebuild their lives.

"You cannot have certainty when you have no home, you get depression, things don't connect, you feel unvalued as a person, a failure." Survey respondent

Increasing the supply of Affordable Housing has a range of social and economic benefits for households and the wider Greater Shepparton community, including:

- Reductions in homelessness supports, health, human services, emergency services and criminal justice costs;
- Improved education and training outcomes and reduced social disadvantage;
- Supporting the expansion of services such as hospital and education facilities by ensuring housing options for key workers; and
- Increased expenditure through construction of Affordable Housing and by freeing up individual household income for non-housing expenditure in the community.

Adequate Affordable Housing underpins the future productivity of Greater Shepparton, enabling staffing of expanding infrastructure like our hospital, educational institutions and sporting facilities. It supports workers to live near their employment and within their community, with ongoing benefit to families, social cohesion and the environment.

Community surveys undertaken by Council in June 2019 found that 96% of all respondents consider Affordable Housing as an issue that is 'important' or 'very important' to Greater Shepparton's social and economic growth.

**What is the Affordable Housing need in Greater Shepparton?**

There are a range of complex factors that impact on the provision and diversity of housing in Greater Shepparton and on the circumstances that lead to homelessness and housing stress. Only some of these fall within Council's area of influence.

The Strategy classifies three levels of need:

1. **Acute Housing Need** – experienced by people who are **homeless**<sup>ii</sup> and those who are **marginally housed**. People in acute housing need may require short term crisis accommodation or supported accommodation before transitioning to longer term Social Housing. A 'Housing First' approach seeks to prioritise the development of housing for people in acute housing need.

**The evidence of homelessness in Greater Shepparton is alarming, estimated at a rate of 5.56 homeless persons per 1,000 people – the highest in regional Victoria.**<sup>iii</sup>

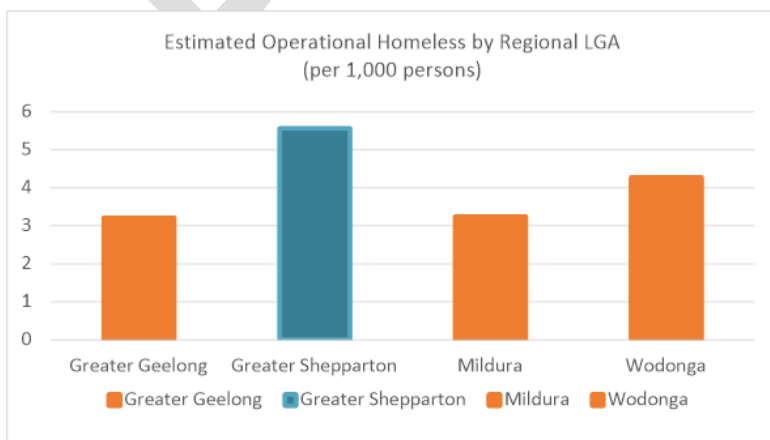


Figure 1: Estimated 'operational homeless' by Regional LGA, 2016 (ABS Census)

2. **'At risk' Housing Need** – includes people who are in mortgage or rental stress, who are renting without a lease, or otherwise experiencing hardship, and who are vulnerable to trigger events that may prompt a housing crisis or eviction. These households may have a place to live but may not be able to afford other costs of living, or their housing may not be appropriate. Households 'at-risk' may require long-term Affordable Housing or short-term financial supports to meet their direct housing costs and reduce housing stress.

**It is estimated that Greater Shepparton has an estimated shortfall of at least 1,700 dwellings required to ensure existing very low to low income residents are not homeless or in housing stress.**

3. **Potential Housing Need** – includes people that cannot afford to enter the property market or that could fall into housing stress if housing costs rise, low levels of housing diversity continue and there is no increase in Affordable Housing. These households will benefit from adequate housing supply, greater housing diversity and may require support to not fall into housing stress.

**There was a 10% decline in the affordability of the private rental market between 2008 and 2018 in Greater Shepparton with only 30% one-bedroom rental lettings affordable for a single person on Newstart in 2018.<sup>iv</sup>**

Income is not the only factor that determines the availability of suitable housing, with housing supply and diversity impacting on housing costs and choice.

Whilst there are reasonable rates of land supply, 87% of dwellings in Greater Shepparton are detached houses and 72% have three or more bedrooms. Only 3.6% of housing comprises one-bedroom, in comparison to the proportion of single person households (27% of households).

This results in higher demand for smaller housing types and challenges particularly for single person low-income households to find housing that is suitable in size and cost. The physical form of housing can also impact on other living costs such as transport and utility bills.

Delivery of a diversity of housing is a broader challenge within the Greater Shepparton context, with limited opportunities for higher density housing and the development of smaller dwellings considered less viable compared to the return on larger dwellings. The release of land to the market and its cost is also controlled by the private sector. These are complex issues that are primarily addressed through Council continuing to facilitate timely land supply through the planning system, encouraging housing diversity and supporting the delivery of infrastructure. Improving housing supply and diversity does not however guarantee an Affordable Housing outcome for people in need.



### What is the cost of addressing the problem?

Addressing the problems and supporting the development of new Affordable Housing will take time and significant resources.

It is estimated that more than \$260 million in new investment is required to house the 1,041 households in Greater Shepparton on the Victorian Housing Register in 2019, including 485 households identified as being in priority need.<sup>v</sup> Significant additional investment is required to provide support to households in housing stress to reduce the likelihood of slipping into a crisis situation or longer-term homelessness.

The scale of investment required is beyond the role and capacity of Council and is reliant on Federal and State Government funding. This funding can be leveraged by Council actions and partnerships between the private and not-for-profit sectors, maximising the investment to achieve the greatest number and diversity of housing responses. **Whilst the demand for and supply of Affordable Housing is a complicated and fluid issue, the cost of not responding is too great to ignore.**

### How will the Strategy address local Affordable Housing need?

With a multitude of both individual and systemic contributing factors impacting on the need and provision of Affordable Housing, there is not a single solution to reducing homelessness, housing stress and demand for Affordable Housing and increasing supply.

Council has undertaken preparation of the **Greater Shepparton Affordable Housing Strategy: Houses for People 2020** to broaden the understanding of Affordable Housing need across the municipality and to strengthen local responsiveness; ensuring there is a strong foundation for new investment in Affordable Housing that is in the right locations and of the appropriate dwelling type, size and quality.

The Strategy builds on existing Council's community support programs and policies including the Greater Shepparton Planning Scheme, *Greater Shepparton Housing Strategy 2011*, and *2018-2028 Public Health Strategy*, which recognise the importance of affordability, consistent dwelling supply, and wider housing diversity in the municipality as well as the importance of Affordable Housing on health and well-being and inclusive communities.

The Strategy adopts a 'Housing First' approach and provides Council and stakeholders with a common framework for focusing advocacy, action and investment on four key elements for Affordable Housing provision: **Organisational Capacity, Land, Planning Direction, and Investment.**

A 'Housing First' approach aims to ensure people experiencing housing stress and insecurity, particularly homelessness, are first provided with a stable housing foundation on which the rest of a person's life can be rebuilt. Other supports can then be provided if required.

Analysis of the evidence of need in Greater Shepparton demonstrates that a range of Affordable Housing outcomes are required to suit the diversity of household needs and deliver on a 'housing first' approach. This will require adequate housing supply, improved housing diversity and significant investment in crisis and Social Housing, delivered through partnerships across governments, the not-for-profit housing sector and the private sector.

The Strategy commits Council to undertake actions within its role and to facilitate and focus on supporting the development of 'shovel-ready' Affordable Housing projects suitable for government

investment. In the short term, smaller scale actions will also be undertaken to improve the situations of vulnerable residents.

A key Council role as Planning Authority will be extended to reflect requirements under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (PAEA) 'to facilitate to provision of Affordable Housing in Victoria' when undertaking land-use planning and assessing planning amendments and permits. Opportunities to engage with landowners will be identified and a framework for negotiation established.

### Overview of the Strategy and Action Plan

The *Affordable Housing Strategy 2020* strengthens Council's policy position to respond to this legislative framework and better support the provision of Affordable Housing through setting a strategic framework to enhance existing policies, and to maximise Council's capacity to serve the community and achieve its vision that:

**All members of the Greater Shepparton community have access to safe, affordable and appropriate housing.**

The Strategy applies eight criteria that have been established by the State Government and provides a framework to guide future residential development towards Affordable Housing provision and facilitate actions result in dwellings that are appropriate for use by very low, low or moderate income households.

Council's vision has been expanded into four key objectives with corresponding measures of success identified to guide actions and monitoring of outcomes:

Vision			
All members of the Greater Shepparton community have access to safe, affordable and appropriate Housing			
Levels of identified need			
Acute	At risk		Potential
Objectives to address identified gaps			
1 Increase crisis and specialised housing responses to support vulnerable households	2 Increase Social Housing stock	3 Increase diversity of housing choice, including 'alternative' housing and lifestyle typologies.	4 Increase diversity of dwelling size, beginning with one and two bedroom dwellings
Measures of Success			
1 The proportion of the population in acute housing need is decreased from a 2016 baseline of 5.6 persons per 1,000.	2 The supply of Affordable Housing (Inc. Social Housing) is increased from a 2016 baseline of 6.1% of all dwellings.	3 The proportion of low income households in housing stress is decreased from a 2016 baseline of 27%.	4 Dwelling supply correlates more closely with distribution of household size. <i>(The supply of one and two bedroom dwellings is increased from a 2016 baseline of 18.6% of all dwellings.)</i>

Table 1: Affordable Housing vision, levels of identified need, objectives, and measures of success

The Action Plan sets out the key activities that Council will progress that aim to provide a foundation for incremental change as well as actions that may be able to facilitate Affordable Housing in the short-medium term.

In this inaugural Affordable Housing Strategy, Council will focus on:

- Actions that support the delivery of Social Housing including crisis accommodation, including assessment of government assets and increased and coordinated advocacy for investment;
- Innovative means to provide specialised housing responses for vulnerable households; and
- Increasing the diversity of housing to correlate more closely with household size distribution.

Key actions include:

- Establishing an Affordable Housing Reference Group to guide implementation and further strengthen local partnerships and advocacy;
- Strengthening of provisions in the Greater Shepparton Planning Scheme to better respond to Affordable Housing opportunities and facilitate private sector participation;
- Assessment of Council-owned assets and locations of community infrastructure;
- Ongoing community engagement;
- Advocacy for State and Federal funding for housing and infrastructure.

Implementation of the strategy will be monitored annually by Council, in conjunction with the Affordable Housing Reference Group.

A review of the Strategy and Action Plan will be undertaken in 2027.

### Navigating the Strategy

**Section 1** provides an overview of Greater Shepparton's housing context, which provides the justification for the actions in the Strategy. It summarises the background information in the Greater Shepparton *Affordable Housing Issues and Opportunities Paper 2020*, outlining Council's basis for action, the government policy context and key challenges and opportunities.

**Section 2** sets out the Action Plan that identifies Council's activities to achieve the Strategy's Vision and Objectives over the next seven years.

## GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

AHRG	Affordable Housing Reference Group (see Action C. 1)
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
Council	Greater Shepparton City Council
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (Victorian Government)
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services (Victorian Government)
PAEA	<i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i>
Affordable Housing	<p>'Affordable Housing' is a specific type of housing response, defined under the PAEA as '<i>Housing, including Social Housing, that is appropriate for the housing needs of very low, low and moderate income households.</i>'</p> <p>Encompasses a spectrum of housing types, including Social Housing, crisis housing, transitional housing, supported accommodation, affordable rental, shared equity home ownership, affordable home purchase.</p>
Housing Affordability	'Housing affordability' refers to the cost of housing compared to the financial capacity of a household to meet their housing costs, whether rent or mortgage payments. See Housing stress.
Housing Insecurity	Housing insecurity reflects any kind of uncertainty of tenure, encompassing a number of dimensions, including lack of privacy, lack of belonging, lack of physical comfort, high mobility (frequent moves between dwellings), housing instability (lack of control over one's own circumstances), and feeling unsafe.
Housing stress	A household is considered to be in 'housing stress' if it spends more than 30% of its income on housing costs and the household's earnings place them in the bottom 40% of incomes in the area. <sup>vi</sup>
Inclusionary zoning	A land use planning measure used by governments that either mandates or incentivises the inclusion of a proportion of Affordable Housing dwellings in a residential development.
Ministerial Notice	A directive issued by the Victorian Minister for Planning under Section 3AA92) of the PAEA, specifying matters which must be regarded for the purpose of determining what is appropriate for the needs of very low, low and moderate income earners. Includes: allocation; affordability; longevity; tenure; type of housing (form and quality); integration (physical build and local community); and official estimates of housing need.

Registered Housing Agency	<p>A not-for-profit organisation that is registered by the Victorian Government under the <i>Housing Act 1983</i> as a provider or operator of Affordable Housing. Housing Agencies have a dedicated charitable purpose to deliver and manage Affordable Housing and are the primary recipients of Government grants or financial support when it is available.</p> <p>Registration means that the organisation's work in providing Affordable Housing must comply with a range of standards and reporting obligations that are monitored by an independent Housing Registrar. Agencies are also regulated as charities by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission and the Australian Taxation Office. Other organisations may also provide and/or manage specialised forms of Affordable Housing or deliver wrap-around support services to tenants but may not be registered as a Housing Agency.</p>
Social Housing	<p>An umbrella term for Public Housing that is owned and managed by the Director of Housing (through the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)), and housing that is owned or managed by a Registered Housing Agency (RHA) where the dwelling is allocated to a household that meets the Social Housing income and asset eligibility requirements. Some agencies focus on specific high-risk groups, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households, households with a disability or older people.</p> <p>Social Housing is prioritised for households with low to very low incomes who are not able to meet their housing needs in the housing market without falling into housing stress. People may have experienced homelessness, family violence or have special housing needs, or may be aged pensioners, families, and students. RHAs and DHHS allocate stock to those in most need and facilitate any required support services. Social Housing encompasses crisis and transitional accommodation.</p>
Specialised housing	Housing developed to provide for the needs of a specific cohort, such as women, youth, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
Victorian Housing Register	A State Government managed waiting list for Social Housing allocation.

## SECTION 1 - CONTEXT

### What is Affordable Housing?

In June 2018, the Victorian Government passed changes to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (PAEA), which governs Council's responsibilities as Planning Authority, implementing the objective 'to facilitate to provision of Affordable Housing in Victoria'.

The changes incorporated a legislated definition, defining Affordable Housing as **"Housing, including Social Housing, that is appropriate for the housing needs of very low, low and moderate income households."**<sup>vii</sup>

### What qualifies a very low, low and moderate income household?

The State Government specifies the following income ranges to define 'low', 'very low', and 'moderate' income levels for households in regional areas for the purpose of setting eligibility for Affordable Housing (Table 2). Income ranges will be updated annually by the State Government.

Not all households that earn within these income ranges require Affordable Housing, rather this sets a framework for assessing household eligibility for Affordable Housing. Social Housing has different income limits.

	Very low income range	Low income range	Moderate income range
Single person	\$18,920	\$18,921 to \$30,280	\$30,281 to \$45,420
Couple	\$28,390	\$28,391 to \$45,420	\$45,425 to \$68,130
Family	\$39,740	\$39,741 to \$65,590	\$63,591 to \$95,380

Table 2: Defined income ranges for areas in Victoria outside the Greater Capital City Statistical Area of Melbourne for the 2019-2020 financial year.<sup>viii</sup>

### What is affordable for very low, low or moderate income households?

An assessment of what would be affordable for these households assuming they spend 30% of their gross household income on housing costs has been estimated (Table 3).

Household type		Single	Couple	Family*
Very low Income	Income Limit	< \$18,920	< \$28,390	< \$39,740
	Affordable Rent/week	< \$109	< \$164	< \$229
	Affordable Purchase**	< \$81,848	< \$122,815	< \$171,915
Low Income	Income Limit	< \$30,280	< \$45,420	< \$63,590
	Affordable Rent/week	< \$175	< \$262	< \$367
	Affordable Purchase**	< \$130,991	< \$196,486	< \$275,089
Moderate Income	Income Limit	< \$45,420	< \$68,130	< \$95,380
	Affordable Rent/week	< \$262	< \$393	< \$550
	Affordable Purchase**	< \$196,486	< \$294,729	< \$412,612

Table 3: Defined income ranges for areas in Victoria outside the Greater Capital City Statistical Area of Melbourne for the 2019-2020 financial year. (Source: Victoria Government Gazette 6 June 2019)

\* 'Family' includes one or two parents, with dependent children. \*\* Affordable Purchase assumes 30 per cent of income on housing costs, 10 per cent deposit, average 6.69 per cent interest rate, 30 year term.

Greater Shepparton Affordable Housing Strategy: Houses for People 2020

An assessment of income capacity compared to median house prices in Greater Shepparton indicates which households are likely to face greater housing stress (Table 4).

	Household type	Single	Couple	Family
<b>Very Low Income</b>	<b>Income Limit</b>	<b>\$18,920</b>	<b>\$28,390</b>	<b>\$39,740</b>
	Rental Gap	-\$116	-\$121	-\$56
	Purchase Gap	-\$107,488	-\$157,776	-\$110,060
<b>Low Income</b>	<b>Income Limit</b>	<b>\$30,280</b>	<b>\$45,420</b>	<b>\$63,590</b>
	Rental Gap	-\$50	-\$23	\$82
	Purchase Gap	-\$59,816	-\$86,224	-\$9,871
<b>Moderate Income</b>	<b>Income Limit</b>	<b>\$45,420</b>	<b>\$68,130</b>	<b>\$95,380</b>
	Rental Gap	\$37	\$108	\$265
	Purchase Gap	\$9,486	\$17,729	\$135,612

Table 4: Indicative Affordability Gap Assessment by Household Type (estimated potential gap in red)

Where median rents or price points are greater than a household's income capacity – shown in red – a household may require housing support or direct Affordable Housing provision to ensure they are not in acute housing need or at risk of housing stress and homelessness.

Each household is different, with gaps also varying by household type and location. This analysis indicates that very low and low income households in Greater Shepparton are more likely to experience housing stress.

### Why does Greater Shepparton need Affordable Housing?

Council recognises adequate housing as a basic human right and the foundation on which our region's liveability, health, wellbeing, productivity, and community participation is built. However, not everyone in the community currently has access to appropriate and secure housing that suits their needs and their housing journey.

The full evidence base outlining the need for Affordable Housing is set out in the *Affordable Housing Issues and Opportunities Paper*.

This work established an extensive evidence base of the need for Affordable Housing in Greater Shepparton, including a spectrum of housing needs in the municipality, reflecting difficulties in both obtaining and maintaining appropriate housing, and ranging from homelessness and marginal housing, though housing stress, to shortages of particular dwelling types. Both renters and owners were evidenced to experience housing stress and may be vulnerable to 'trigger events' that precipitate a housing crisis.

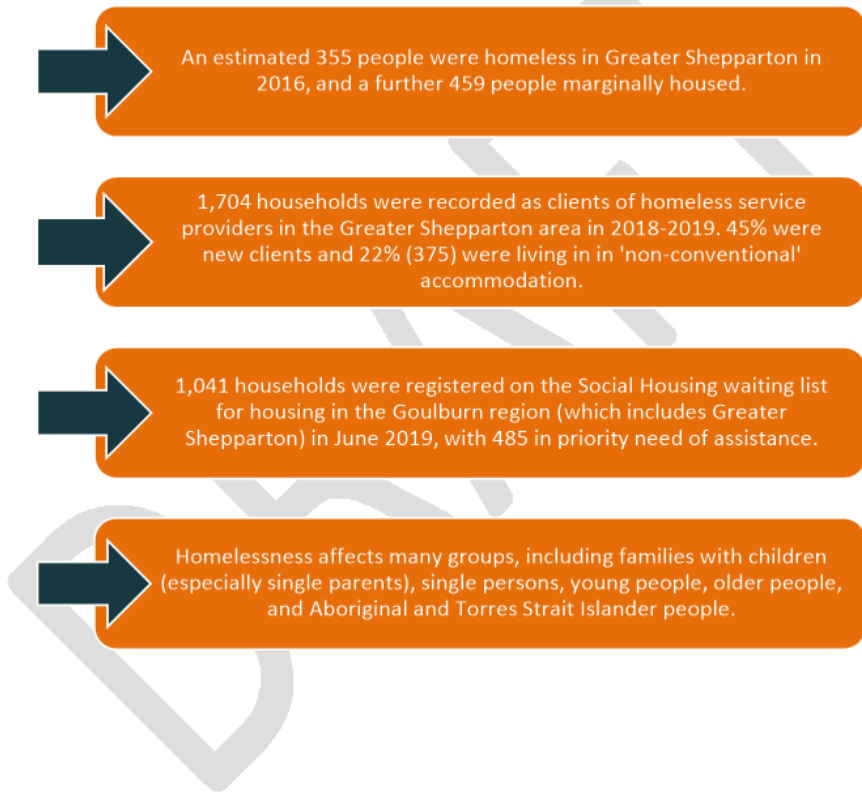


**Levels of need**

The Strategy classifies three levels of need requiring action:

- 1. **Acute Housing Need** – experienced by people who are **homeless<sup>ix</sup>** and those who are **marginally housed**. Those in acute housing need may require short term crisis accommodation before transitioning to longer term social housing, which subsidises housing costs to at an affordable level.

In Australia, it has been estimated that for every \$1 invested in ‘last resort’ crisis accommodation beds to address homelessness, \$2.70 worth of benefits are generated in the community. Moving a person from crisis accommodation into a stable and affordable long-term dwelling is estimated to reduce government costs by an average of \$11,935 in FY19 dollars per person, per year, as a result of reduced interaction with services.<sup>x</sup>





- 2. **'At risk' Housing Need** – people who are in housing stress or otherwise experiencing hardship and are vulnerable to trigger events that may prompt a housing crisis or eviction, such as illness, an accident, or redundancy. This category includes people who have secure, low-moderate incomes, but who cannot obtain suitable accommodation.

- 2,716 low income households were in housing stress in Greater Shepparton in 2016, representing 27% of all low income households.
- An estimated 3,315 low income households required Affordable Housing in 2016, with only 1,564 of these households supported into Social Housing.
- Greater Shepparton currently has an estimated shortfall of 1,751 Affordable Housing dwellings for lower income households. An estimated 42% of all forecast dwelling supply would need to be delivered as Affordable Housing to meet estimated demand to 2036.

- 3. **Potential Housing Need** – people that cannot afford to enter the property market or could fall into housing stress if declines in housing affordability and low levels of housing diversity continue and there is no increase in Affordable Housing supply.

- Mismatch of housing stock to household needs with only 3% one-bedroom dwellings and 15% two-bedroom dwellings in the market that to meet the housing needs of 25% of single person households.
- Despite relative market affordability, very low and low income households are expected to struggle to afford median priced rentals in Greater Shepparton.
- 10% decline in the affordability of the private rental market between 2008 and 2018. Only 30% one-bedroom rental lettings in 2018 were affordable for a single person on Newstart.

“Housing is very expensive in this region and there are many people who are unable to pay the rents. I understand there are many people who are living in cars or without homes. This is a big problem for our community.”  
Survey respondent

### Vulnerable Households

The research has identified a range of households that are disproportionately affected by housing insecurity.

There can be a range of cohort-specific factors that contribute to housing stress, encompassing both personal and societal elements, including the fluctuations of the housing market itself. Some of the priority groups experiencing housing stress and homelessness in Greater Shepparton for whom Affordable Housing is critical are highlighted below. This is not a comprehensive list but highlights the range of factors that impact on households that may be particularly vulnerable.

#### Women

Women, and particularly older women, are 'at-risk' of housing insecurity as there are a wide array of factors that may accumulate into disadvantage, including irregular employment history, minimal superannuation and assets, and increased risk of experiencing family violence.

Women predominate in lower paid and part-time employment categories and may spend extended periods out of the workforce in caring roles. These factors often inhibit women's eligibility for employment opportunities and housing loans. Even single older women who own property may be unable to meet other housing costs due to limited financial capacity.

Older women aged 55 years and over are the fastest growing cohort of homeless Australians, increasing by 31% nationally between 2011 and 2016.<sup>xi</sup>

**61.3% (1,045) of presentations to homeless service providers in 2018/2019 in Greater Shepparton identified as female.**<sup>xii</sup>

#### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) identifying households can have specific housing needs to ensure cultural appropriateness of housing and capacity for households to respond to changing family circumstances and responsibilities, cultural needs, and discrimination.<sup>xiii</sup> In 2020 Aboriginal Housing Victoria developed an Aboriginal Homelessness and Housing Framework, endorsed by the Victorian Government "*Mana-na worn-tyeen maar-takoort: Every Aboriginal Person Has a Home*" which sets out a blueprint to improve Aboriginal housing outcomes in a generation.

**Whilst ATSI households comprise an estimated 3.4% of the Greater Shepparton population, 27% of household clients presenting to homeless service providers in 2018-2019 identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.**<sup>xiv</sup>

#### Older people

Older persons are particularly vulnerable to housing insecurity if they haven't achieved home ownership by retirement, and those who own their home may not be able to maintain it. Older people reliant on the Age Pension may also find it difficult to meet living costs, resulting in people going without heating, food, or medication in order to meet their housing costs.<sup>xv</sup> Older people seeking to downsize to reduce costs of living are often not able to stay within their community as smaller houses are not available and the costs of selling and buying are prohibitive.

**Persons aged over 60 years were the fastest growing population group in Greater Shepparton between 2011 and 2016.**<sup>xvi</sup>

### Young people

Young people are constrained by very low incomes and limited rental history. Whilst young people may have greater propensity to sharing a house, for some young people this is not a suitable option. Young people are also particularly vulnerable to family violence and are more likely to couch surf or live in other inappropriate housing circumstances. Newstart is a notably low income support payment which makes meeting housing costs very difficult for single young people.

*The success of the Youth Foyer in Greater Shepparton highlights the importance of tailored housing responses for young people who are particularly vulnerable and can ensure that education and training can be achieved.*

### People with a disability

People with a disability face additional barriers to accessing suitable and affordable housing that are different to other cohorts of the population. They require homes that are accessible and adaptable, and enable informal support as well as independent living, and that encourage social inclusion, economic participation and health and wellbeing.<sup>xvii</sup> Older people with disabilities may own their home but will be at risk of mortgage stress or be unable to meet other housing related costs.

**Over 3,800 people in Greater Shepparton reported needing assistance to undertake day-to-day activities in 2016, representing approximately 6% of the population.<sup>xviii</sup>**

### Community Costs

In addition to the individual costs of housing insecurity, Council recognises that the whole municipality feels the effects of the loss of productivity, participation and potential as a result of homelessness and housing stress, encompassing:

- Loss of employment and civic participation, poorer training and education outcomes, and increasing social disadvantage;
- Impacts on children – moving frequently develops patterns of vulnerability in later life as well as having poor health and educational outcomes in the present;
- Increasing costs in health and other and other human services, emergency services and criminal justice;
- Impacts on economy – residents have less discretionary spending, reduced spending equates to reduced viability of businesses and empty shops in CBD, compounding perceptions of disadvantage; and
- Difficulty in filling key employment roles, such as staffing our new hospital development, as people are reluctant to move to Greater Shepparton, or cannot find appropriate housing, reducing the feasibility of essential services.

The extent and complexity of housing issues in Greater Shepparton is growing every year, bringing greater costs to both individuals and our community.

### Government Policy Context

Affordable Housing provision is affected by a range of regulatory and funding levers at both Federal and State levels of government, which can enable or constrain outcomes at the local level (

Figure 2).

Investment by Federal and State Governments is critical to bridging the gap between the market and Affordable Housing delivery, to meet the Strategy’s Objectives.

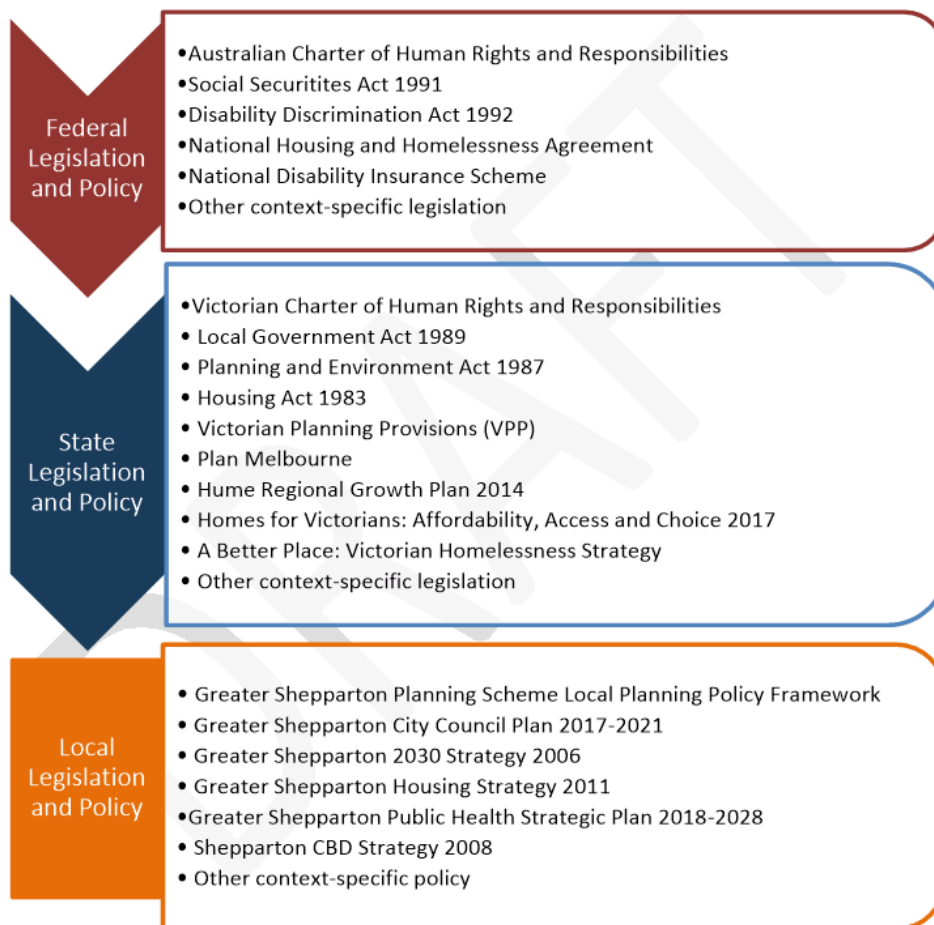


Figure 2: Framework of Federal, state and local legislation and policy that influences Affordable Housing provision.

### Federal Government

The Federal Government has jurisdiction over legislation addressing many factors that impact on housing supply and cost, housing need and the delivery of associated services that support low income earners and welfare recipients.

Key federal government investment includes funding to the State under the National Affordable Housing and Homelessness Agreement; direct funding to individuals as Commonwealth Rent Assistance; and low cost low-cost loans, equity investments and grants to local, state and territory governments and Housing Agencies via the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHFIC).

The Federal Government oversees funding for Specialised Disability Accommodation under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and provides the Commonwealth Rent Assistance supplement (CRA) to eligible people renting in the private market or Community Housing.

Recent Federal Government initiatives include the First Home Super Saver Scheme<sup>xix</sup> and the First Home Loan Deposit Scheme to support up to 10,000 first home buyer loans each year nationally by guaranteeing up to 20% of a purchase price.<sup>xx</sup> These programs are not targeted to lower income households or guarantee housing affordability.

### State Government

The Victorian State Government implements and oversees a range of taxation, legislative and regulatory policies relating that impact on housing availability, affordability and diversity.

The State is the largest Affordable Housing operator in Victoria with over 64,000 Public Housing dwellings under its control including nearly 1,000 dwellings in Greater Shepparton.<sup>xxi</sup>

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (PAEA) is the primary legislation relating to housing supply and diversity and is administered by Council. Other State legislation that regulates real estate transactions, residential tenancies and building codes can also impact on the cost and delivery of housing.

Two key strategic initiatives, *Homes for Victorians (2017)* and *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050*, set out the State Government's policy and investment commitments in relation to Affordable Housing.

The Victorian Homelessness Strategy 'A Better Place' (2010) aims to deliver a more strategic, targeted and coordinated approach to homelessness, with goals to halve overall homelessness and offer supported accommodation to all rough sleepers who need it by 2020.

*Homes for Victorians* initiatives include provision of capital and recurrent grant funding and low-cost financing for Registered Housing Agencies, redevelopment of public housing assets; sale of underutilised State Government owned land with an Affordable Housing requirement; investment in Shared Equity Home Ownership; and increased application of planning tools to facilitate Affordable Housing.

Changes to the PAEA in 2018 require Council to consider the facilitation of Affordable Housing when undertaking planning for land use and development. The State Government is supportive of councils seeking to reach agreement to an Affordable Housing inclusion with a landowner as part of the planning amendment and approval process.<sup>xxii</sup>

## What is Council's Role?

Council's core functions are stipulated by the *Local Government Act 1989* with an overarching purpose 'to serve our community through providing leadership, making decisions, and advocating for equitable services and infrastructure', towards a vision in which Greater Shepparton offers 'a thriving economy...with excellent lifestyles, innovative agriculture, a diverse community and abundant opportunities.'<sup>xxiii</sup>

Council roles focus on:

- Leadership and Advocacy;
- Land-used planner and delivery of housing and local transport associated infrastructure; and
- Facilitator of social and economic outcomes.

Council recognises the remarkable work of existing networks of Registered Housing Providers and not-for-profit organisations who provide services, support and housing to the most vulnerable in our community.

In addition to continuing advocacy to the State and Federal Governments to obtain funding for these agencies, Council delivers several services, support and funding measures that provide direct and indirect assistance to residents in housing need and/or who are on low incomes including:

- Funding allocations for community organisations that provide food, transport, financial counselling, and family violence and addiction recovery programs;
- Funding and resourcing for community facilities and services such as Neighbourhood Houses, Kindergarten and child care places, Community Grants, Sporting Chance Scholarships, Meals on Wheels and food skills education, Word and Mouth youth organisation, a range of low or no cost activities, and 24 hour toilet/shower facilities at Harry Bird Reserve;
- Support for community advocacy for the needs of 'at risk' groups through the Positive Ageing, Disability, and Women's Charter committees;
- Preparation of policies and strategies that identify strategic directions to support public wellbeing, such as the Public Health Strategic Plan 2018-2028, which recognises housing and specifically access to Affordable Housing as one of 12 Liveability Domains, and a key objective for Council.

Council's key capacity to impact housing affordability is through its role as Planning Authority, by ensuring a consistent and appropriate supply of zoned land to meet projected demand for a minimum of 10 years. Requirements for both residential and industrial land supply are assessed every five years, or sooner if required.

Council also provides strategic direction for appropriate housing development through strategies such as the *Greater Shepparton 2030 Strategy 2006*, the *Greater Shepparton Housing Strategy 2011*, and the *Shepparton CBD Strategy 2008*.

These strategic directions are reflected in the Greater Shepparton Planning Scheme, which includes:

- Clause 21.04 Settlement, which contains the objective ‘to encourage a variety of housing types, particularly in terms of tenure and price, to contribute to housing diversity and affordability’, and which guides overall development;
- Residential Zones, including the Residential Growth Zone (RGZ), the General Residential Zone (GRZ), and the Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ), which regulates use and development on a site by site basis; and
- Provisions that address design and neighbourhood integration requirements.

While Council sets the overarching aims for residential development, it remains reliant on the private market to implement its directives in the construction of housing stock. In recent years, increases in the overall pricing of housing have put even the lower end of the market out of reach for many, even moderate income earners.

In some other jurisdictions, legislation now mandates that a percentage of dwellings within a residential development to be provided as Affordable Housing to return some of the value increase of the land for community benefit, a measure known as ‘inclusionary zoning’. However, this measure has not been implemented in Victoria; the State Government is encouraging Councils to facilitate Affordable Housing in residential development through voluntary agreements with landowners.

As Greater Shepparton’s housing market largely does not experience the high levels of demand and profitability that exist in other localities, opportunities for voluntary measures are minimal but will be pursued where possible.

The *Greater Shepparton Affordable Housing Strategy 2020* establishes the strategic justification and means to strengthen the provision of Affordable Housing within the planning scheme, and to maximise Council’s capacity in its role as Planning Authority to respond to Affordable Housing requirements through land-use planning and negotiation with landowners.

## Key Challenges

Greater Shepparton faces a range of challenges that will impact the availability and delivery of Affordable Housing, some of which are universal, while others are specific to our municipality. These include:

- Historical underfunding and limited Federal and State Government investment relative to demand, with highly competitive funding processes for housing agencies when available;
- The accumulating scale of housing issues, breadth of cohorts affected, and Council's limited capacity to directly invest or to address causal factors such as underemployment, domestic violence, or rising utility costs, which increase individual need for social housing support;
- No capacity under State legislation for Council to mandate Affordable Housing delivery or dwelling diversity requirements;
- A slower and less profitable housing market than metropolitan Melbourne and other regional centres, reducing the feasibility and desirability of large scale development;
- Culturally embedded preferences for detached houses on large, gardened lots;
- Stigmatisation of those experiencing housing insecurity, which may lead to discrimination in selection of rental tenants;
- Lower profitability limiting the delivery of one and two-bedroom dwellings in the market that are suitable for singles and couples, downsizers, people with disabilities, etc;
- The lengthy duration of the planning, design and construction process for housing stock and the high cost of construction relative to returns on Affordable Housing, which necessitates subsidy or other investment to meet the gap, particularly for housing that supports very low and low income households;
- Constraints on land supply due to high-value agricultural activity, fragmented ownership, and flooding and bushfire risks;
- Predominantly private ownership of land, and subsequent lack of Council capacity to direct supply timing, dwelling diversity, or price setting for rent or purchase;
- Longevity of housing stock, particularly in relation to changes in household size; and
- Cost and timing to deliver infrastructure as residential growth occurs.



## Key Opportunities

There are a range of opportunities available to support and promote the provision of Affordable Housing in Greater Shepparton.

Some opportunities can support short term action whilst many of the challenges are unlikely to be directly mitigated without other parties' investment and action. Opportunities to build a strong foundation to attract investment and support partners to achieve outcomes are therefore also important.

Key opportunities include:

- Improvements to the exchange and coordination of knowledge and expertise between housing providers, developers and landowners, government agencies, investors, and other interested parties, as well as ongoing consultation and conversation with the community to monitor changing needs and capitalise on emerging ideas and practices;
- Collaboration between stakeholders to develop 'shovel-ready' proposals to strengthen the likelihood of State and Federal funding allocations or alternative investment, and to enable the gathering of necessary resources from complementary sources;
- Collaboration between stakeholders to develop a coordinated advocacy platform for new Federal and State Government investment in crisis, emergency, and Social Housing;
- Delivery of infrastructure to support Affordable Housing outcomes in new residential development through the National Housing Infrastructure Facility (NHIF), and other grant programs;
- Efficient use of currently underutilised assets for Affordable Housing purposes, especially Council- or government-owned land and buildings;
- Pre-emptive planning for former school sites and other sites suitable for adaptive reuse;
- Improving Council's understanding of community infrastructure to enable a 'fine-grain' understanding of appropriate locations, dwelling types and sizes, allocation and requirements for neighbourhood integration as a basis for Planning Scheme ordinance and negotiation with developers and landowners;
- Strengthening of planning provisions to improve housing diversity and facilitate Affordable Housing through the Greater Shepparton Planning Scheme. This could include measures to encourage Affordable Housing in growth plans, precinct structure plans and other Council policies and strategies;
- State Government moving to mandatory requirements for Affordable Housing in residential development projects;
- Identified growth corridors already in advanced planning stages, into which provision of Affordable Housing may be incorporated;
- Increasing Council's capacity to negotiate with developers and landowners to encourage Affordable Housing outcomes;
- Capacity to decrease risk by adapting and utilising successful models from other jurisdictions and establishing supporting systems and practices; and
- Bringing together willing community members, organisations, and companies who volunteer services, resources, and knowledge to support Affordable Housing outcomes.

The potential for collaboration and collective action is a critical opportunity and will be required to address shortfalls of Affordable Housing in Greater Shepparton.

Council will draw on its established relationships with the following key stakeholders when implementing the Strategy:

- Federal and State Governments; to advocate for critical funding and regulatory inputs;
- Registered Housing agencies; to support applications for funding, to enhance professional networks, and provide ancillary support. The main agencies operating in Greater Shepparton include Beyond Housing, which manages more than 700 Social Housing dwellings across the Goulburn and Ovens Murray region and provides the primary Opening Doors homeless services access point in Greater Shepparton, as well as Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHV), Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative, Community Housing Limited, Haven Home Safe, and Common Equity Housing Ltd.
- Landowners, developers, and landlords; to develop incentives and mutually beneficial outcomes; and
- Tradespeople, architects and designers, and real estate agents; to increase shared knowledges and promote adaptation and innovation.

### How will Council address Affordable Housing need?

The evidence demonstrates the complexity and range of housing needs in Greater Shepparton.

There is not a single solution to the circumstances that can contribute to housing insecurity and demand for Affordable Housing in Greater Shepparton.

Council's core functions are prescribed in the *Local Government Act 1989* and do not include direct housing provision.

In the absence of functional responsibility for housing, Council does not have the human resource or financial capacity funding to undertake significant construction of crisis accommodation at a scale that would impact the extent of current housing need without compromising its legislated functions. Council actions must therefore be targeted within the roles of Council.

Research highlights that taking a 'Housing First' approach provides a framework to direct Council resources such as underutilised land holdings and social capital for maximum community benefit.

#### The 'Housing First' Approach

'Housing First' provides stable accommodation for people experiencing housing shortage as a starting point, reinstating a degree of control and choice by enabling people to live successfully in a community, and encouraging improvements to health, wellbeing, and social integration, while providing mobile support services in their own homes.

A dwelling becomes the foundation on which the rest of a person's life can be rebuilt, driven by the premise it is easier to focus on solving other problems with a secure roof. Other services are then readily provided, ensuring households have the required supports as they need them.

The model has been implemented successfully in Europe and the USA and is increasingly being adopted across Australia. In Finland, a national 'Housing First' program prioritised buying and building housing through collaboration between government, not-for-profit, and private organisations, supported by an integrated social benefits system, which provides assistance to

maintain tenancy in case of emergency, and free or affordable health care, with at-home support services provided to residents.

Whilst there are several key contextual differences that impact on the direct application of the Finnish model in Greater Shepparton, there are significant learnings with the Housing First approach reducing the complexities of social and external variables to enable focus on the key elements required for provision of dwellings:

- Organisational Capacity
- Land
- Planning Direction, and
- Investment.

Reflecting this framework Council has identified the following areas of focus within the *Greater Shepparton Affordable Housing Strategy 2020*:

- Increased Social Housing stock, particularly crisis accommodation, to support households with acute needs;
- Specialised responses to be targeted to households with specific housing needs, through both Social Housing and Affordable Housing models; and
- Increased diversity in size and type of dwellings to suit the range of households.

#### Ensuring appropriateness of Affordable Housing

The evidence of need identifies that household income capacity is not the only factor that determines the availability of suitable housing.

87% of dwellings in Greater Shepparton are detached houses, with 72% comprising three or more bedrooms, resulting in high demand for other housing types.

For example, in Greater Shepparton there is a substantial shortage of one-bedroom dwellings (3.6% of stock) in comparison to the proportion of single person households (27% of households). Only 16% of housing stock has two bedrooms, while 34% of households comprise two persons.

At the other end of the spectrum 3.4% of stock has more than 5 bedrooms compared to 10% of households with more than 5 people.<sup>xxiv</sup>

While household size is not directly correlated to dwelling size, these figures suggest that competition will drive higher prices for those likely to be least able to afford higher housing costs, and that issues such as overcrowding may be a result of limited housing diversity.

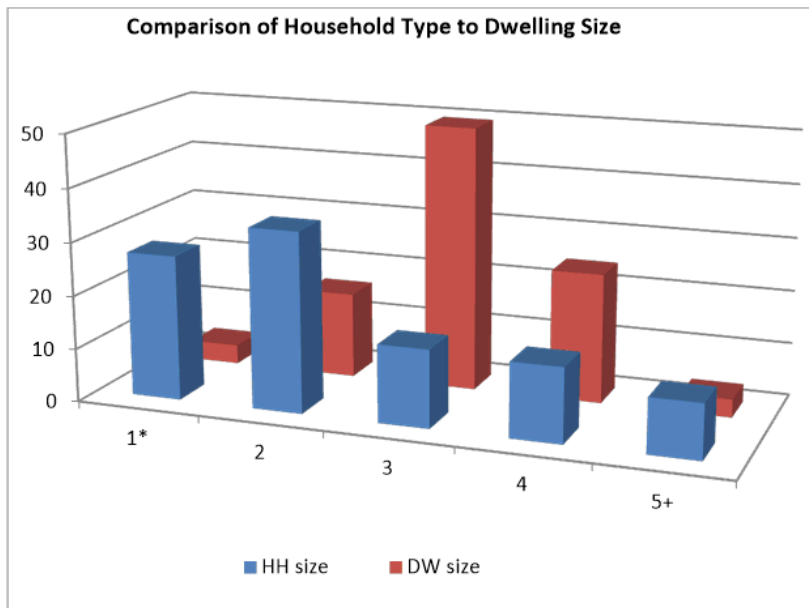


Figure 3: Comparison of household size (HH) to dwelling size (DW)

The physical form of housing may also influence associated costs that determine ongoing affordability, such as transport and utility bills. Housing that is distant from employment opportunities necessitates car ownership, adding thousands in ownership and running costs, and poorly designed or maintained structures can result in considerable costs for heating and cooling.

In response to these considerations, the State Government has established specific criteria, in addition to affordability, to guide the development of dwellings intended for provision as Affordable Housing to ensure dwellings are appropriate for very low, low or moderate income households:

- Allocation – to those in genuine need
- Affordability – in terms of the capacity of a household to pay housing costs
- Longevity – in terms of benefit to the public
- Type – in terms of form and quality
- Location – siting and proximity to amenities, employment and transport
- Integration – in terms of physical build and local community
- Housing need – demonstrated by official estimates.

The application of these criteria in Greater Shepparton is elaborated in the framework set out Table 5 which will provide guidance to direct future development and delivery of Affordable Housing.

While the physical form of Affordable Housing may include 'standard' detached houses that are priced at the lower end of the market, or that are subsidised for sale at below-market cost, alternative models of housing and lifestyle may also be required, including low-medium rise apartments, co-operative housing, cohort-specific housing, affordable private rental, and affordable home ownership, to fulfil both financial and physical aspects of Affordability.

## Framework to guide land-use planning and built form outcomes

Criteria	Response and Framework for Action
<b>Location</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shepparton and Mooroopna are priority locations for Affordable Housing due to their convenient access to services and amenities.</li> <li>• Other locations in the municipality, including smaller towns and growth areas, may also be suitable for Affordable Housing provision, particularly if there is government owned land available for development. Where possible Affordable Housing should be located close to transport and services.</li> <li>• Government owned land is a priority for Affordable Housing reflecting the opportunity for government leadership and action. This includes current school sites that may eventually become surplus to education needs and available for redevelopment.</li> <li>• Locations within the municipality that are identified as being suitable for growth and for more diverse and particularly smaller dwellings such as flats, duplexes and apartments are priority areas, reflecting the need for more one and two-bedroom dwellings.</li> </ul>
<b>Type</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One and two-bedroom dwellings are the priority built-form to meet the priority unmet and forecast Affordable Housing need in Greater Shepparton.</li> <li>• The need for increased 5+bedroom dwellings may be considered on a case-by-case basis in development of residential estates.</li> <li>• Affordable Housing should be built to reflect market standards and measures such as water-sensitive urban design, with consideration to long-term affordability features balanced against upfront capital costs.</li> <li>• Adaptable design should also be incorporated to allow for changing household needs.</li> <li>• Dwelling type may need modifications or alternative design to reflect the needs of a priority group.</li> </ul>
<b>Tenure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both affordable rental and ownership tenures are required to respond to the evidence of need, with emphasis on Social Housing and Affordable Rental Housing for lower income households.</li> <li>• Affordable rental tenures could include housing owned or managed by a Registered Housing Agency (Social Housing) or dwelling managed under an appropriately regulated privately owned Affordable Housing arrangement. It could also include co-housing, shared equity housing, rent-to-buy or other forms of affordable home ownership.</li> </ul>
<b>Allocation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear and accountable process of ensuring any dwellings delivered as Affordable Housing are allocated to households that meet either the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> published Affordable Housing income bands or Social Housing income eligibility is required.</li> <li>• Dwellings proposed for a home purchase arrangement by an individual Eligible Purchaser that are allocated through an appropriately regulated process with an established process of income checking will provide for appropriate allocation.</li> <li>• Priority households for Affordable Housing include single people, ATSI households, women, older people, people with a disability and/or younger</li> </ul>

	people.
<b>Affordability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dwellings proposed as Affordable Housing must be clearly intended to be affordable for the proposed household target group. An acceptable benchmark is that very low, low- or moderate-income households should not pay more than 30% of their household income on housing costs. Ownership and/or management by a Registered Housing Agency is expected to ensure this requirement is met.</li> </ul>
<b>Longevity of outcome</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The evidence indicates a forecast need for Affordable Housing. Affordable Housing that is delivered is expected to therefore be intended for long-term use or the value provided re-invested in new Affordable Housing over time should the dwelling be sold.</li> <li>Affordable Housing should be of sufficient quality to provide positive contribution to the public realm throughout its expected lifespan of 30+ years.</li> </ul>
<b>Integration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Housing should not look externally different from market housing and should be equal in design quality and standards.</li> <li>Integration of Community Housing built form across a site is prioritised, with an objective that Community Housing is not concentrated in any one single location unless supported by a Registered Housing Agency.</li> <li>Clustering of Affordable Housing dwellings may be appropriate in some circumstances due to proximity to transport and/or availability of land or sites or government redevelopment or investment strategy.</li> </ul>

Table 5: Framework to Guide Affordable Housing Built Form and Allocations in Greater Shepparton

**SECTION 2 – ACTION PLAN**

**Vision, Objectives and Measures of Success**

The Affordable Housing Strategy has established the strategic basis and evidence for increased action to address unmet and forecast Affordable Housing demand.

The following integrates Council’s vision with the levels of identified need and priority dwelling options:

Vision			
All members of the Greater Shepparton community have access to safe, affordable and appropriate Housing			
Levels of identified need			
Acute	At risk		Potential
Objectives			
1. Increase crisis and specialised housing responses to support vulnerable households	2. Increase Social Housing stock	3. Increase diversity of housing choice, including ‘alternative’ housing and lifestyle typologies.	4. Increase diversity of dwelling size, beginning with one and two bedroom dwellings
Measures of Success			
1. The proportion of the population in acute housing need is decreased from a 2016 baseline of 5.6 persons per 1000.	2. The supply of Affordable Housing (Inc. Social Housing) is increased from a 2016 baseline of 6.1% of all dwellings.	3. The proportion of low income households in housing stress is decreased from a 2016 baseline of 27%.	4. Dwelling supply correlates more closely with distribution of household size. <i>(The supply of one and two bedroom dwellings is increased from a 2016 baseline of 18.6% of all dwellings.)</i>

Figure 4: Affordable Housing vision, levels of identified need, objectives, and measures of success

The Action Plan focuses on addressing these objectives by way of Organisational Capacity, Land, Planning Direction, and Investment.

**Monitoring and Review**

Implementation of the strategy will be monitored annually by Council, in conjunction with the Affordable Housing Reference Group.

The Strategy will be reviewed in 2027, when updated Census becomes available.

## Action Plan

ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY		
Action:	Timeframe:	Objective:
<b>C. 1 Establish an Affordable Housing Reference Group</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To build understanding and trust and facilitate collaborative partnerships between Council and key stakeholders.</li> <li>To support knowledge sharing and collective action.</li> <li>To support Council in the refinement and delivery of agreed actions.</li> </ul>		
C.1.1 Establish Terms of Reference and confirm resourcing to support the Reference Group establishment and ongoing activities. Undertake a process to appoint organisational, community and Council representatives.	Short	All
C.1.2 Engage with specialised housing services and explore options for Council to assist in expansion of existing Affordable Housing delivery and support programs.	Ongoing	
C.1.3 Support the Reference Group to provide timely and informed advice to Council on the delivery of the actions set out in the Strategy, and particularly in regard to facilitating targeted responses to identified vulnerable cohorts.	Ongoing	
<b>C. 2 Support community understanding, engagement and support for Affordable Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support ongoing engagement with the community, to share information, provide updates, and receive suggestions and feedback on delivery of actions</li> <li>To facilitate sharing of resources and knowledge, and increase awareness of potential actions and resource requirements</li> </ul>		
C.2.1 Establish a Council website portal to promote the Affordable Housing Strategy objectives and actions, facilitate ongoing conversations with the community, and link people to State and Housing Agency Affordable Housing programs.	Short	All
C.2.2 Incorporate housing related events into Council's calendar of events for promotion.	Short	
C.2.3 Investigate 'alternative' housing and lifestyle models, and explore opportunities to showcase different housing typologies to the public, broadening the local knowledge base regarding housing options. Including models that decrease environmental impacts and reduce ongoing housing costs.	Ongoing	3



<b>C.3 Build capacity of Council staff to implement the strategy and support Affordable Housing outcomes</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure Council has the skills and procedures in place to implement the Strategy.</li> </ul>		
<b>C 3.1 Provide training and support for Council's planning offices to implement Affordable Housing objectives in new Structure Plans and to negotiate Affordable Housing outcomes in nominated planning and development circumstances.</b>	Short	All
<b>C 3.2 Reflect Affordable Housing objectives in updated or new Council policies and strategies</b>	Ongoing	

LAND		
Action:	Timeframe:	Objective:
<b>L. 1 Build on the Framework to Identify opportunity areas for Affordable Housing delivery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support Affordable Housing being located in areas close to services and facilities.</li> <li>To prioritise delivery of future infrastructure requirements.</li> </ul>		
L 1.1 Undertake Community Infrastructure Mapping to identify existing community resources and needs and areas of gaps and priorities for Affordable Housing.	Short	All
L1.2 Develop localised guidelines to support the facilitation of Affordable Housing in appropriate locations, such as the CBD, and in proximity to Goulburn Valley Health.	Short-medium	All
<b>L. 2 Identify and assess potential of government assets for development as Affordable Housing (including crisis housing, specialised housing, Social Housing and/or transportable (short-term) homes)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To determine opportunities to maximise the use of Council land assets to achieve new Affordable Housing supply for priority households.</li> <li>To identify specific site opportunities to advocate for Federal and/or State Government investment and provide a focus for partnerships.</li> </ul>		
L 2.1 Conduct an audit of Council owned assets to identify potential Council land holdings, underutilised buildings and air-right opportunities (i.e. above car parking) to determine sites that may be suitable for Affordable Housing purposes.	Short-Medium	1 & 2
L 2.2 Undertake feasibility studies of shortlisted Council assets identified at 2.1 to assess and determine potential development opportunities and housing outcomes, suitability for different household groups, and delivery and partnership options. (Utilising mapping created under Action L. 1.)	Short - Medium	
L 2.3 Work with the Affordable Housing Reference Group to progress the delivery of agreed Council sites nominated for Affordable Housing, including advocacy for Federal and/or State funding.	Short - Medium	
L 2.4 Advocate for utilisation of State and/or Federal government owned assets in Greater Shepparton for Affordable Housing purposes, including revitalisation of underutilised, poor quality, or ageing social housing assets, and appropriate development of repurposed sites, such as former school locations.	Ongoing	
L 2.5 Support the development of applications for development of existing Social Housing sites that encourage housing diversity, integration, and an increase of Social Housing stock.	Ongoing	1, 2 & 3

PLANNING DIRECTION		
Action:	Timeframe:	Objective:
<p><b>P. 1 Strengthen the Greater Shepparton Planning Scheme to incorporate clear objectives and strategies to facilitate Affordable Housing and pursue opportunities to incorporate Affordable Housing outcomes in residential projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To respond to objectives of the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> that require Council to facilitate the provision of Affordable Housing through land-use planning and development.</li> <li>To ensure the Planning Scheme reflects current evidence and policies.</li> <li>To support Council to incorporate Affordable Housing objectives and outcomes in areas identified for residential development.</li> <li>To strengthen Council's ability to engage with developers and landowners to achieve Affordable Housing outcomes through agreement.</li> </ul>		
P 1.1 Develop an Affordable Housing Negotiation framework and explore opportunities to incentivise agreement, supportive partnerships, and delivery of Affordable Housing with the private sector.	Short	2
P 1.2 Implement localised development guidelines within the Shepparton South East Precinct Structure Plan and new growth areas to support housing affordability and diversity.	Short-medium	2, 3 & 4
P 1.3 Prepare a planning scheme amendment to implement provisions that reflect the findings and recommendations of the Strategy.	Medium	
P 1.4 Continue to facilitate planning for new growth areas and encourage housing diversity and affordability through inclusion of smaller lots.	Ongoing	
P 1.5 Advocate to the State Government to improve planning system capacity to implement Affordable Housing outcomes, including the implementation of inclusionary zoning at appropriate proportions.	Ongoing	

INVESTMENT		
Action:	Timeframe:	Objective:
<b>F. 1 Advocate for Federal, State and private investment in Affordable Housing and related housing infrastructure in Greater Shepparton</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To attract new investment to support the delivery of Affordable Housing.</li> <li>To attract new investment to ensure the timely provision of infrastructure, facilities, amenity and services to support residents.</li> </ul>		
F 1.1 In conjunction with the Reference Group, develop a coordinated advocacy platform to seek State and Federal Government funding for Affordable Housing (including crisis, supported and Social Housing).	Short	All
F 1.2 Examine the potential to access the National Housing Infrastructure Fund and other grant programs to support the provision of infrastructure and Affordable Housing in new developments.	Short	
F 1.3 Advocate to State and Federal Governments for improved public transport and other services, and funding for community infrastructure.	Ongoing	
F 1.4 Engage with potential impact investors, social enterprises, and philanthropic organisations to explore opportunities for investment.	Ongoing	
<b>F. 2 Investigate opportunities to enhance and increase Council's investment and allocation of resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To enhance existing Affordable Housing resources.</li> <li>To consider opportunities for direct Council investment.</li> </ul>		
F 2.1 Investigate options for Council to provide assistance to encourage improvements in supply of Affordable Housing stock, such as grants for repairs and/or improvements to existing poor-quality stock, provision of high-efficiency utilities, and/or incentives for privately owned affordable rentals.	Short	All
F 2.2 Explore opportunities for Council investment to support improvements to public spaces in areas with concentrations of Affordable Housing. Projects could include improvements to local parks, local tree-planting days, mural painting projects, community gardens, garden maintenance programs.	Ongoing	
F 2.3 Investigate options to minimise stigmatisation of Affordable Housing through measures such as providing streetscaping and landscaping, and subsidised access to Council services.	Ongoing	

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 - Frequently Asked Questions

#### **What is the difference between Social Housing and Affordable Housing?**

Social housing is for people in our community with low to very low incomes who experience housing stress and who also experience disadvantage or challenges in participating in the private market. Many of these people have recently experienced homelessness, family violence or have special needs and some may just have a low income such as aged pensioners, families, students or very low income earners. Social Housing is owned and/or managed by the State Government or by a Registered Housing Agency with dwellings rented to households that are registered on the Victorian Housing Register.

Affordable Housing includes a broader range of housing responses that are appropriate to the needs of low, very low and moderate income households as defined by the PAEA. Affordable Housing includes, but is not limited to, Social Housing and can include dwellings that are available for rent or purchase. Affordable Housing programs include dwellings that are sold at the lower end of the market prices, alternative housing forms, and alternative ownership models such as cohousing.

#### **How do Social Housing and Affordable Housing differ from other housing?**

Social Housing and Affordable Housing looks just like other homes in your neighbourhood. The differences are in how they are managed and financed and the process of allocation.

#### **Why is Social Housing important for Greater Shepparton?**

Social Housing provides critical support for people in our community who experience circumstances that make acquiring and keeping homes difficult under the current market-based system. These circumstances can arise through an array of societal impacts that are beyond personal control, which often combine to create very complex problems. Lack of housing can bring about a host of concomitant issues that are more expensive to address than providing housing.

#### **Will my property value be affected by having Social Housing in my neighbourhood?**

For most homeowners, their home is their biggest asset. It is natural to be concerned about the potential for an effect on the value of your home as a result of changes in your neighbourhood.

There is evidence from a number of studies that shows that property values are not detrimentally affected by having Social or Affordable Housing nearby.<sup>xxv</sup>

#### **Will my safety be affected by having Social Housing in my neighbourhood?**

There is no evidence supporting a link between Social Housing and increased crime. The vast majority of people living in Social Housing were already living in our community and have simply fallen on hard times.

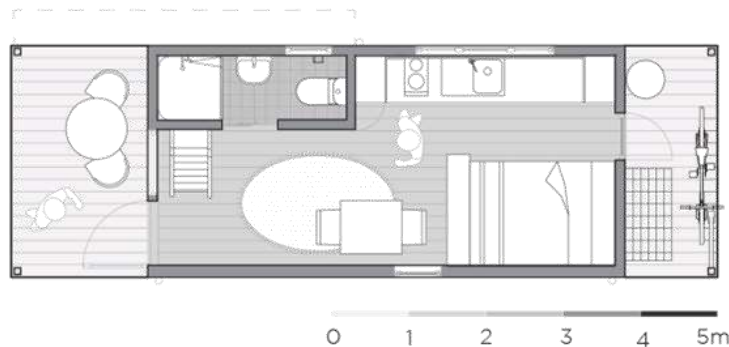
## Appendix 2 - Examples of Alternative Housing Development and Ownership Models

### *Harris Transportable Housing Project*

Melbourne, Australia

The first six of 57 proposed transportable housing units in Melbourne's inner western suburbs were occupied in August 2019.

The FREDi.e units, designed by Schored Projects, offer open plan living and sleeping, a kitchenette and bathroom, with mezzanine storage, private courtyard and balcony, and environmental features such as solar hot water and passive heating/cooling that reduce ongoing costs for tenants. They are securely positioned on high strength steel footings.



The land is owned by VicRoads and reserved for a future road-widening, but in the meantime has been leased to Launch Housing for five years at a nominal rent. VicRoads is required to give 12 months' notice if it needs the land, at which time the units can be crane-lifted to another site. They have an expected lifespan of 50 years, and have been fitted out specifically to suit the needs of people who have experienced long-term homelessness. The nine sites will allow for different configurations, to suit varying needs and enable residents with larger pets to retain their companions.

The Harris Transportable Housing project is a collaboration between Launch Housing, VicRoads, Schored Projects, DHHS, Oscar Building (construction of the units), Hansen Yuncken (transportation & installation), Victorian Property Fund (\$3 million in funding), and Harris Capital, a philanthropic foundation whose donation of \$4 million made the project feasible.

A base model unit could be set in Shepparton for approximately \$92,000 (as at 2019), subject to land availability.

<https://www.launchhousing.org.au/harris-transportable-housing-project/>

### *Murundaka Cohousing Community*

Melbourne, Australia

Cohousing is a model that varies in physical form, but which emphasises intentional design, social interaction and environmental sustainability. Cohousing communities are based around sharing everyday tasks, such as cooking and gardening, and sharing living spaces that are tailored to the needs of the residents, encompassing gardens, entertainment areas, guest facilities, hobby rooms; residents have their own self-contained, private dwellings as well as facilities they may not be able to afford on their own.

Murundaka Cohousing Community, in Heidelberg Heights, had its roots in a housing co-operative, growing as Community Housing to encompass 18 households in a purpose-built 3 storey complex ranged around a large productive garden.

<https://www.murundakacohousing.org.au/>



*Nightingale Housing*

Brunswick, Melbourne



The Nightingale Housing delivers multi-residential housing that is environmentally sustainable, financially affordable and socially inclusive, utilising a set of systems and processes that have been refined over 11 projects to enable pricing below local market standards

Each medium-rise apartment building provides communal outdoor spaces, productive gardens, shared laundry facilities that maximise individual space within dwellings and lower construction costs, car sharing and abundant bicycle parking, and active retail interfaces with the street. Designed by architects, investor profits are capped at 15%, and resident groups are balloted prior to construction commencing, to minimise risk and maximise benefit to all parties.

<https://nightingalehousing.org/>



- End Strategy -

DRAFT

## COUNCIL AGENDA PAPER ATTACHMENT 1

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES PAPER

This Appendix sets out the background research, community consultation and issues and opportunities that have informed the development of the Greater Shepparton Affordable Housing Strategy.

#### Affordable Housing Demand and Supply Summary

	Key statistics – Greater Shepparton
<b>Population Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>63,837 persons with an average household size of 2.4 persons.</li> <li>5.12% growth in population from 2011 to 2016.</li> <li>27.8% of households have children, 24.7% of families are sole parent households and 25.2% of households comprise one person.</li> <li>3.4% of households identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.</li> <li>9,966 low income households (bottom 40% of all incomes).</li> <li>31% of all households have a mortgage and 27% of households rent.</li> <li>19,944 households are in receipt of a Commonwealth income support payment (Dec 2018).</li> </ul>
<b>Housing Diversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Majority of properties (86.8%) are separate dwellings.</li> <li>71.9% of dwellings have three or more bedrooms.</li> <li>3.5% of dwellings have one bedroom and 15.1% have two bedrooms.</li> <li>6.1% long-term Social Housing (1,564 dwellings).</li> </ul>
<b>Housing Affordability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>51.7% of all low-income households are in rental stress (1,874 households).</li> <li>40.5% of all low-income households are in mortgage stress (842 households).</li> <li>66% (1,149 dwellings) of all private lettings available to rent in 2018 were affordable for households on a statutory income, a decline from 75.9% in 2008.</li> <li>Only 30% (45 dwellings) of all private lettings available to rent in 2018 were affordable for a single person on a statutory income (very low income), a decline from 53% in 2008.</li> <li>26% notional increase in median market sale price for land and 34% increase for houses between 2008 and 2018 despite an increase in the number of lots or houses for sale. Number of dwellings or median value did not increase for units.</li> <li>Estimated Affordable Housing shortfall of 1,751 dwellings across the municipality as at 2016.</li> <li>12.17% of all new forecast dwelling supply between 2019 and 2036 is estimated to be required to be provided as dedicated Affordable Housing to meet household needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Homelessness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>355 persons estimated to be homeless in Greater Shepparton in the 2016 Census - a decrease of 2.28% since 2011. A further 459 persons were living in marginal housing.</li> <li>A total of 1,704 recorded household presentations to the Homeless Services across 2018-2019.</li> </ul>

Table 1: Overview of household and housing characteristics (references within the document)

Of note:

- The majority of households are couples with children (27.8%), lone persons (25.2%) and couples without children (24.7%);
- There is significant disparity between the distribution of dwellings by size and that of household size (Figure 2, below). For example, 25.2% of households are single-person households, but only 3.5% of dwellings had zero to one-bedrooms and 15.1% had two-bedrooms.<sup>xxvi</sup>

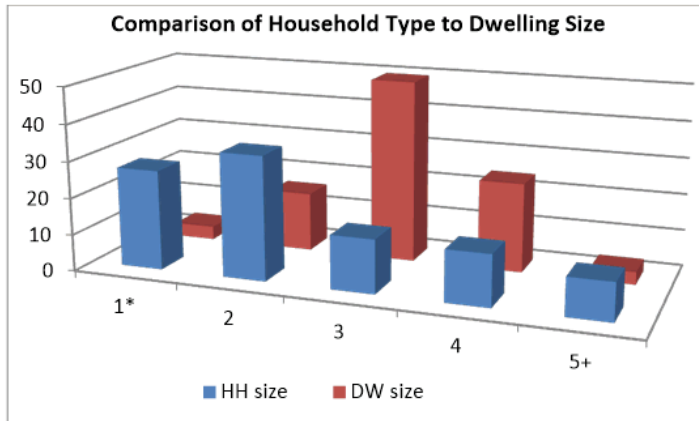


Figure 2. Comparison of household size (HH) to dwelling size (DW)

Between 2001 and 2016 there was an increase in retirees and older persons moving to the City Greater Shepparton. There was also a flow of families into the City of Greater Shepparton from overseas and from surrounding rural areas and losses of young people to larger centres.<sup>xxvii</sup>

**Key Issues and Challenges**

Category	Key Issues and Challenges
<b>Housing Market and Housing Affordability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range of difficulties associated with facilitating urban consolidation due to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reasonable land supply opportunities outside of the centre;</li> <li>- Higher costs of construction of medium – high density development;</li> <li>- High sale revenue required for medium and higher density dwellings relative to lower scale, detached housing;</li> <li>- Heritage requirements; and</li> <li>- Market understanding and perceptions of demand for smaller, centrally located dwellings.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Mismatch of housing stock (including Public Housing owned by DHHS) to household types, with predominance of three and four-bedroom stock not suited to one and two person households</li> <li>• Reliance on private sector to develop and deliver on smaller lot/dwelling typologies with perceived lack of demand for two-bedroom dwelling coupled with relatively higher cost per square meter compared to three-bedroom + dwellings.</li> <li>• Challenges associated with costs and delivery of infrastructure in growth areas impacting on delivery to market and housing affordability.</li> <li>• Limited Affordable Housing supply, with a significant gap between estimated demand and supply for Social and Affordable Rental Housing for very low and low income households to access.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited crisis and transitional housing options.</li> <li>Declining supply of affordably priced and quality private rental housing.</li> <li>Poor quality housing and limited sustainability requirements leading to high running costs.</li> </ul>
<b>Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council has minimal capacity to influence the market's decision to deliver housing supply and diversity until applications are lodged, other than to set the high level strategic framework for where growth should occur and the type of housing outcomes that are desired and built-form requirements (set-backs etc.).</li> <li>No mandatory requirement for Affordable Housing under the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i>.</li> <li>Affordable Housing can only be included on privately owned land by agreement with a landowner, with no single percentage requirement or delivery model set by the State Government. Each site is a separate negotiation.</li> <li>Limitations on Council's ability to provide planning incentives to private land owners to support Affordable Housing inclusion within planning requirements.</li> <li>Drivers for changes in planning controls to support increased density and smaller lots are not widely understood and/or supported in the community.</li> <li>Growth areas and smaller townships have limited access to service provisions, such as schools, transport and services.</li> </ul>
<b>Funding and Financing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited and insufficient Federal and State Government funding available to redevelop Public Housing assets, support Registered Housing Agencies to develop sites and/or purchase dwellings, and provide appropriate levels of private rental assistance. Any new funding is typically limited and is highly competitive.</li> <li>Limited capacity of Registered Housing Agencies to borrow funds due to the low rental returns.</li> <li>Not the primary role of private sector to fund Affordable Housing.</li> <li>Not the primary role of Council to fund Affordable Housing.</li> <li>Rate capping limiting stretched Council resources.</li> <li>Market is constrained in its ability to access to development finance and mortgage finance.</li> <li>High costs of infrastructure required to be met by Council and recovered through development contributions, often well after outlay. Issues such as drainage requirements adding further costs to development.</li> <li>No institutional investment in Affordable Housing in Australia and expected limited interest in regional areas due to need for scale and strong capital growth.</li> </ul>
<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mixed level of understanding in the community of Affordable Housing - why it may be required, how the locality benefits, and who needs it, resulting in stigmatisation particularly of Public Housing</li> <li>Community concerns around urban consolidation / density, neighbourhood character and traffic / parking can become conflated when coupled with an Affordable Housing proposal.</li> <li>Limited understanding of development economics and viability and how this informs whether Affordable Housing can be viably delivered.</li> <li>Changing population – increase in older and single-person households. Some migrant and Indigenous families also require larger housing options.</li> </ul>

Table 2: Overview of Key Issues, Greater Shepparton

## Household Income

The median weekly household income (equivalised) in 2016 was \$1,163 per week.

Out of a total 20,141 households living in Greater Shepparton 6,095 households (30.3%) earn less than \$494 per week, and a further 5,822 households (28.9%) earn between \$495 and \$864 per week (Table ).<sup>xxviii</sup>

Quartile group	Equivalised Weekly Household Income	Equivalised Yearly Household Income	Number of households	% of households in Greater Shepparton
Lowest group	\$0 - \$494	\$25,688	6,098	30.3%
Medium lowest	\$495 - \$864	\$25,689 - \$44,928	5,822	28.9%
Medium highest	\$865 - \$1,392	\$44,929 - \$72,384	5,020	24.9%
Highest group	\$1,393 or more	\$72,385 or more	3,199	15.9%
<b>Total Households</b>			<b>20,141</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3: Households by income Greater Shepparton, 2016

In relation to lower income households:

- There are approximately 18,000 recipients of Commonwealth income support payments living in the municipality;
- The most common payment received is the Aged Pension at 42.47% of recipients, followed by the Disability Support Pension (17.03%) and Newstart Allowance (15.33%),<sup>xxix</sup> and
- There were 5,208 recipients of Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) in December 2018. CRA is a top-up subsidy for households that receive a government allowance or tax benefit and who rent in the private rental market. It does not guarantee that rents will be affordable.<sup>xxx</sup>

Accompanying the objective to 'facilitate Affordable Housing' in the PAEA, an Order in Council has specified the following income ranges to define 'low', 'very low', and 'moderate' income levels for the purpose of Affordable Housing:

	Very low income range (annual)	Low income range (annual)	Moderate income range (annual)
Single adult	\$18,920	\$18,921 to \$30,280	\$30,281 to \$45,420
Couple, no dependant	\$28,390	\$28,391 to \$45,420	\$45,421 to \$68,130
Family (with one or two parents) and dependent children	\$39,740	\$39,741 to \$63,590	\$63,591 to \$95,380

Table 4: Defined income ranges for areas in Victoria outside the Greater Capital City Statistical Area of Melbourne for the 2019-2020 financial year. (Source: Victoria Government Gazette 6 June 2019)

### Estimated 'Affordability Gap'

A preliminary assessment of the 'affordability gap' has been undertaken to assess the gap between income capacity of different households and the median rents and purchase prices in Greater Shepparton. This informs the understanding of which household groups are most likely to have difficulty in participating in the market and could find themselves in housing stress and who would therefore benefit from intervention. Where there are dwellings that are affordable for lower income households they are also not necessarily owned or rented by them due to the competitive nature of the private market.

The modelling assumes one and two-bedroom units are appropriate for singles and three-plus bedroom dwellings are appropriate for couples and families (Table 5).

	Housing Type	Median Rent	Median Sale Price
Single Person Household	1 – 2 Bedroom unit	\$225 / week	\$187,000
Couple, Family	3 – 4 Bedroom house	\$285 / week	\$287,000

Table 5: Estimated median rents and price points, Greater Shepparton, September 2019

An assessment of what would be affordable for these households has then be undertaken using a 30% income on housing costs:

	Household type	Single	Couple	Family*
<b>Very low Income</b>	<b>Income Limit</b>	<b>&lt; \$18,920</b>	<b>&lt; \$28,390</b>	<b>&lt; \$39,740</b>
	Affordable Rent/week	< \$109	< \$164	< \$229
	Affordable Purchase	< \$81,848	< \$122,815	< \$171,915
<b>Low Income</b>	<b>Income Limit</b>	<b>&lt; \$30,280</b>	<b>&lt; \$45,420</b>	<b>&lt; \$63,590</b>
	Affordable Rent/week	< \$175	< \$262	< \$367
	Affordable Purchase	< \$130,991	< \$196,486	< \$275,089
<b>Moderate Income</b>	<b>Income Limit</b>	<b>&lt; \$45,420</b>	<b>&lt; \$68,130</b>	<b>&lt; \$95,380</b>
	Affordable Rent/week	< \$262	< \$393	< \$550
	Affordable Purchase	< \$196,486	< \$294,729	< \$412,612

Table 6: Estimated Affordable Rent and Purchase<sup>1</sup>

Using these estimates, to be affordable:

- A one or two-bedroom dwelling would need to be priced at less than \$196,486 for a single person on the top end moderate income to afford to purchase; and
- A three-bedroom plus dwelling would need to be less than \$294,724 for a couple on a top end moderate income to purchase or \$412,612 for a family to afford.

The analysis then deducts the amount a household could pay on rent or a mortgage (using a 30% of income measure) from the median rental or purchase price.

Table 7 indicates where there is an estimated a gap between the household income for each household type and median market prices for the Greater Shepparton municipality, with a gap shown in red.

<sup>1</sup> Affordable Purchase assumes 30 per cent of income on housing costs, 10 per cent deposit, average 6.69 per cent interest rate, 30 year term

	Household type	Single	Couple	Family
Very Low Income	Income Limit	\$18,920	\$28,390	\$39,740
	Rental Gap	-\$116	-\$121	-\$56
	Purchase Gap	-\$107,488	-\$157,776	-\$110,060
Low Income	Income Limit	\$30,280	\$45,420	\$63,590
	Rental Gap	-\$50	-\$23	\$82
	Purchase Gap	-\$59,816	-\$86,224	-\$9,871
Moderate Income	Income Limit	\$45,420	\$68,130	\$95,380
	Rental Gap	\$37	\$108	\$265
	Purchase Gap	\$9,486	\$17,729	\$135,612

Table 7: Indicative Affordability Gap Assessment by Household Type

This analysis highlights:

- Very low income households of all types are likely to struggle to find affordable rental in the Greater Shepparton area. The gap is also expected to be greater due to the limited supply of one and two-bedroom dwellings, meaning singles may also need to be trying to rent a three bedroom dwelling;
- Low income singles and couples are unlikely to find an affordably priced rental and home ownership remains out of reach for these households. Low income families are generally expected to be able to afford private rental, but home ownership may be challenging for some; and
- Moderate income households on the top end of the Social Housing income eligibility are expected to be able to afford both private rental and home purchase in Greater Shepparton.

#### Private Rental

Between 2011 and 2016 there was very little increase in the percentage of households in Greater Shepparton that rented in the private market from 21.6% to 21.9% of all households (totalling 5,346 households as at 2016).<sup>xxxii</sup>

Consumer Affairs data based on rental bond lodgements indicates a median rent of private rental dwellings was \$280 / week from January 2018 to December 2018, with median rents ranging from:

- \$170 per week for a one-bedroom unit;
- \$248 per week for a two-bedroom unit or house; and
- \$368 per week for a three or four-bedroom house.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

It is important to note that there are dwellings both higher and lower priced than these medians, with a scan of rentals as at July 2019 indicating a shift to higher pricing of rentals is occurring. This is likely to relate to the low vacancy rate with a vacancy rate for the Shepparton and Goulburn area in March 2019 of only 1.6% indicating a lack of supply of private rental housing.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

Median rents of all dwellings have increased by 41% from \$198 per week to \$280 per week between 2008 and 2018.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

**Declining Rental Affordability**

Whilst affordability of the private market may appear relatively high, 36% of all new rentals over this period were un-affordable for lower income households that receive a government payment.

Affordability of private rental housing does not guarantee that a lower income household will be prioritised to rent the dwelling, with higher income households often occupying lower priced rental housing. This is reflective of the market nature of private market with rents and allocation not regulated by the State Government.

The affordability of one-bedroom dwellings is particularly an issue, with an average of only 19.3 dwellings per quarter considered affordable for a very low income single person household on a statutory (Commonwealth Government) payment.

Over a two year period from January 2017 to December 2018, 46.78% (2,501 dwellings) of all private lettings made available to rent in Greater Shepparton were affordable to households on a statutory income. This included:

- 87 one-bedroom dwellings (27%) that were affordable for a single person on Newstart;
- 805 two-bedroom dwellings (72%) that were affordable for a single parent with one child; and
- 1,609 three and four-bedroom dwellings (66%) that were affordable for a family on Newstart.<sup>xxxv</sup>

The affordability of one-bedroom dwellings is particularly an issue, with an average of only 19.3 one-bedroom dwellings available to rent per quarter assessed as being affordable for a very low income single person household on a statutory payment.

Affordability of the private rental market for households on statutory incomes has declined significantly over time despite increases in land supply and development:

- From 75.9% of all properties made available to rent in 2008 (new lettings) to 66.6% in 2018 (Figure 4);
- From 53.3% of one-bedroom new lettings in 2008 to 30.1% in 2018 (Figure );
- From 80.2% of two-bedroom new lettings in 2008 to 70.5% in 2018 (Figure ); and
- 77.5% of three-bedroom new lettings to 65.8% in 2018 (Figure ).<sup>xxxvi</sup>

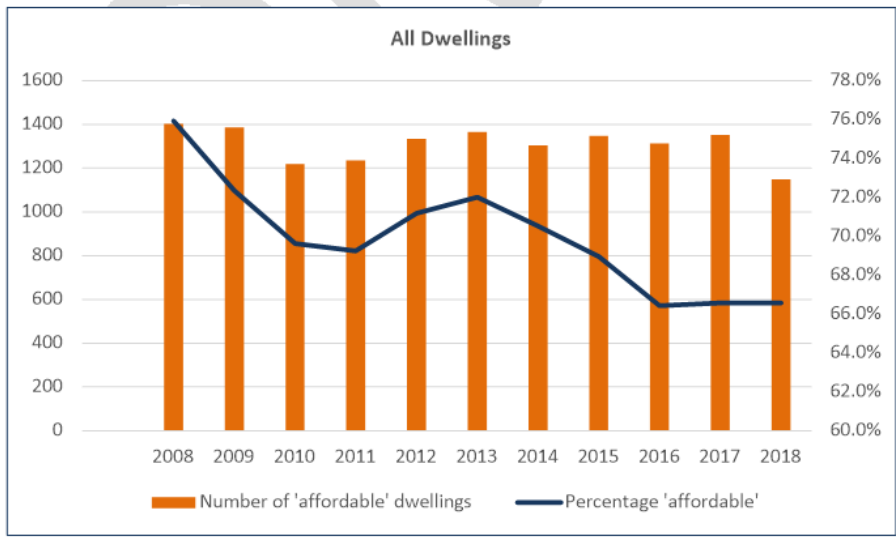


Figure 4: Private rental affordability, Greater Shepparton, 2008 – 2018, all dwellings



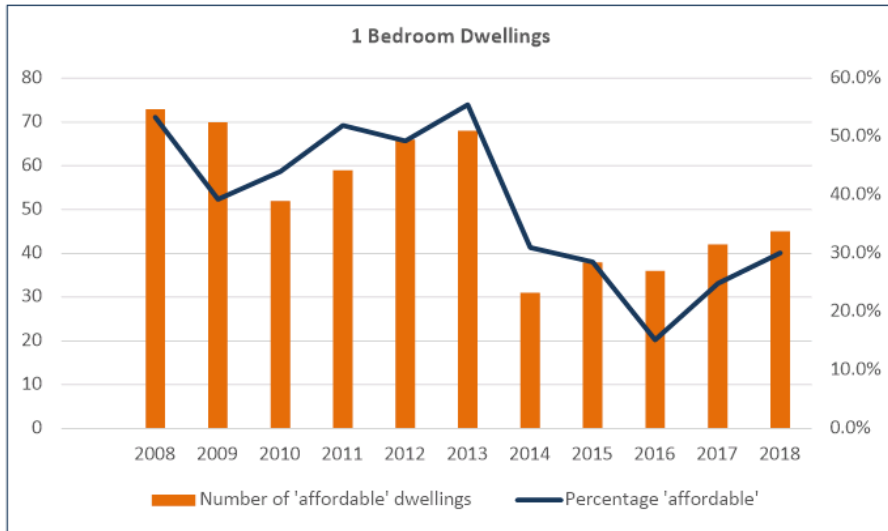


Figure 5: Private rental affordability, Greater Shepparton 2008 to 2018, 1 Bedroom dwellings

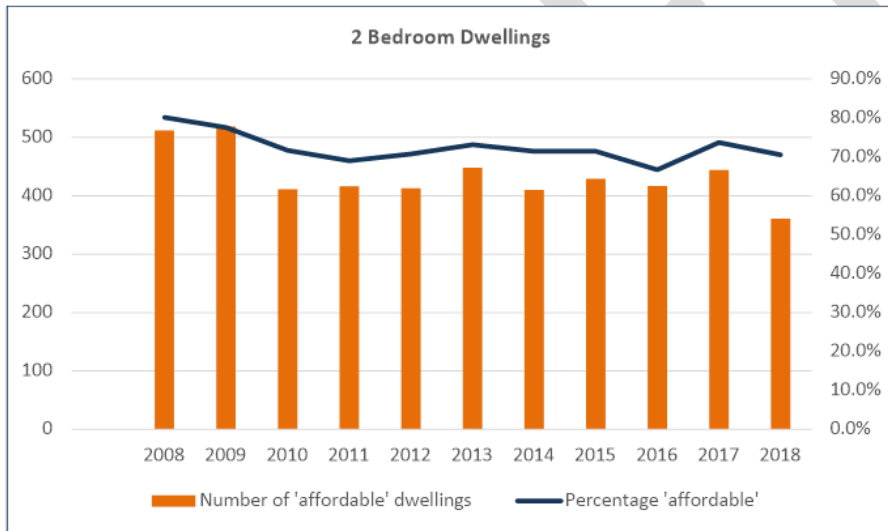


Figure 6: Private rental affordability, Greater Shepparton 2008 – 2018, 2 Bedroom dwellings

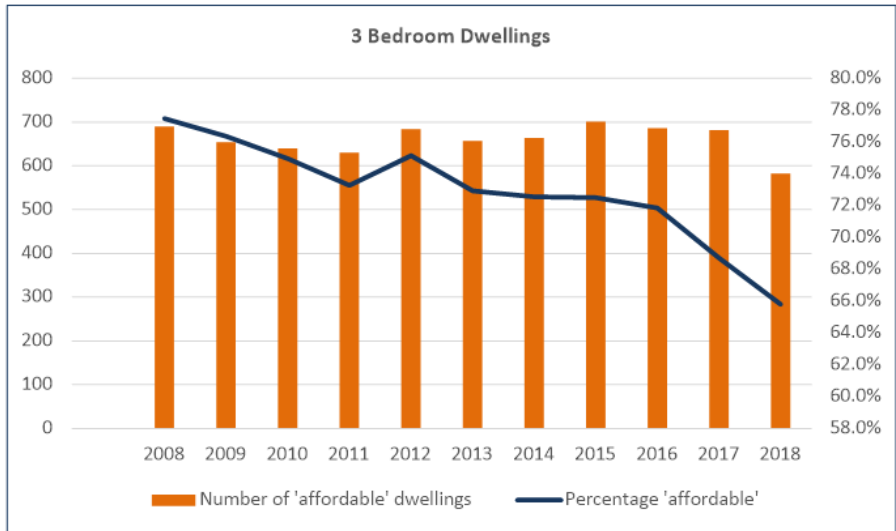


Figure 7: Private rental affordability, Greater Shepparton 2007 – 2018, 3 Bedroom dwelling

**Home Purchasing and Ownership**

In the Greater Shepparton Local Government Area:

- In 2016, 31% of all households (7,579 households) owned their home and 31% (7,569 households) had a mortgage. Indigenous identifying households had lower rates of ownership (11.6% of Indigenous households or 112 households), with 28% (271 households) purchasing;<sup>xxxvii</sup>
- Of those households that owned their own house, 49% (3,786 households) were low income households and of those households that had a mortgage, 27% (2,080 households) were low income households (earning in the bottom 40% of incomes);<sup>xxxviii</sup>
- Between 2011 and 2016 there was a very small decline in households that fully owned their dwelling from 31.6% to 31.1%, and a decrease in households with a mortgage from 33.2% to 31.0%;<sup>xxxix</sup>
- Sales between January and December 2018 indicate a median land price of \$128,750 unit price of \$187,000 and a median house price of \$277,500. Sales were concentrated in Shepparton, Mooroopna, Kialla, Kyabram and Tatura with 944 house sales, 134 unit sales and 414 sales of vacant land blocks in 2018 across the municipality;<sup>xl</sup> and
- The median value of units decreased by 0.93% between 2008 and 2018 while the median price of houses increased by 23.33% and the median price of vacant land increased by 26.32% during the same period (Figure ). The change in house prices has an impact on affordability for lower income households who can either no longer afford to purchase or are paying higher rents due to increases in the property’s capital value. The minimal change in unit prices is unusual particularly given there has been very little change in the number of units sold in 2008 (125 sales) to 2018 (134 sales).

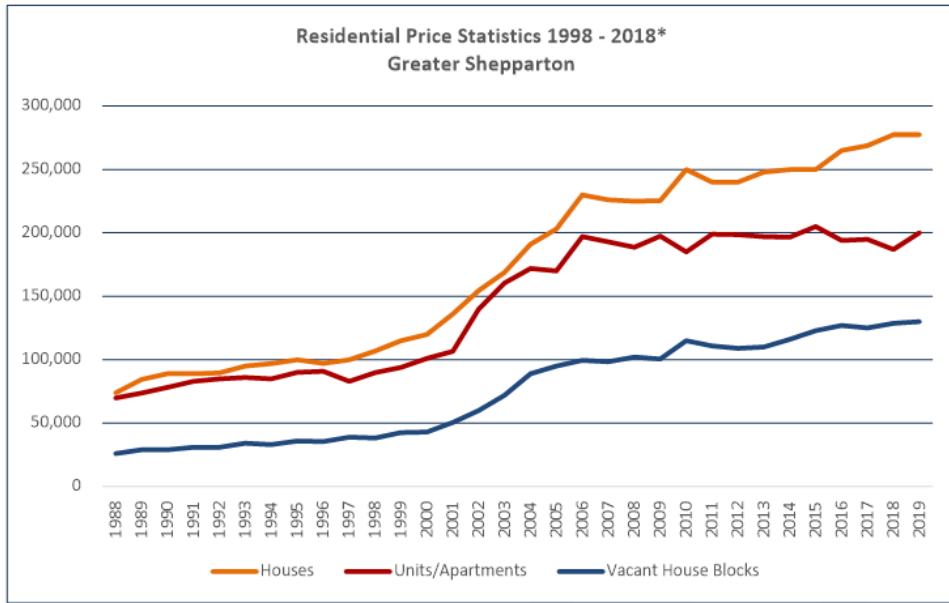


Figure 8: Residential Price Statistics, 1987 - 2019, Greater Shepparton Local Government Area (\*2019 is based on a small number of sales and is preliminary only)<sup>xii</sup>

**Housing Stress**

In 2016, it was estimated a total 2,716 lower income households (earning in the bottom 40% of household incomes) were in housing stress in Greater Shepparton in 2016, representing 27% of all lower income households.

Of these households 1,874 were in living in private rental and were assessed to be in rental stress, representing:

- 28.5% of all households in the private rental market; and
- 51.7% of all low-income renter households in Greater Shepparton.
- 842 of all lower income households in housing stress were mortgage holders, paying more than 30% of their income on mortgage repayments, representing:
- 11.1% of all households with a mortgage; and
- 40.5% of all low-income households with a mortgage.<sup>xiii</sup>

Lower income households in rental and mortgage stress were more likely to live in Shepparton South and Shepparton South East.<sup>xiii</sup>

Analysis undertaken by RMIT for Council in 2018 found “up to 66% of lower income households within Shepparton spend more than 30% of their gross incomes on housing costs”.<sup>xiv</sup>

Housing stress engenders vulnerability to homelessness through trigger events such as loss of employment or illness.

**Homelessness**

The 2016 Census reported 345 person as homeless in Greater Shepparton at the Statistical Area 3 level, (defined as living in improvised dwellings, tents, sleeping out, in supported accommodation or boarding houses, staying temporarily with other households living in severely overcrowded dwellings), and a further 459 persons living in ‘other marginal housing’ including other crowded dwellings, improvised dwellings or people marginally housed in caravan parks (Table 9).<sup>xv</sup>

<b>HOMELESS OPERATIONAL GROUP</b>	
Persons living in improvised dwellings, tents, or sleeping out	37
Persons in supported accommodation for the homeless	110
Persons staying temporarily with other households	56
Persons living in boarding houses	11
Persons in other temporary lodgings	0
Persons living in 'severely' crowded dwellings	131
<b>All homeless persons</b>	<b>355*</b>
<b>OTHER MARGINAL HOUSING</b>	
Persons living in other crowded dwellings	324
Persons in other improvised dwellings	15
Persons who are marginally housed in caravan parks	120
<b>All Persons in Other Marginal Housing</b>	<b>459</b>

Table 9: Homeless by operational group by selected Local Government Area, 2016 \*ABS report a total 355 due to rounding

When compared to other regional areas and using Local Government level data, Greater Shepparton had a higher rate of estimated homeless per 1,000 persons (Table 10).

	<b>Greater Shepparton</b>	<b>Greater Geelong</b>	<b>Mildura</b>	<b>Wodonga</b>	<b>Loddon</b>
<b>Homeless Operational Group (# persons)</b>	355	750	175	168	41
<b>Rate per 1,000 persons</b>	5.56	3.21	3.25	4.27	5.46

Table 10: Estimated Homeless Operational Group by Local Government Area, 2016<sup>xvi</sup>

Three 'Opening Doors' homeless services access points operate in the Greater Shepparton area – Beyond Housing, St Vincent de Paul Marion Centre and Rumbalara Co-operative.

Between July 2018 and June 2019, the three services registered a combined total of 1,704 household clients. Of these clients:

- 89.7% (1,528) were born in Australia (Table);
- 61.3% (1,045) were female;
- 41.8% (713) were single, while 23.1% (393) were single-parent families and a further 7.2% (122) were couples with child(ren) (Figure);
- 59.3% (1,011) were aged between 26 and 45 years old (Table);
- 27.8% (4,74) identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander;
- 8.9% (152) were in full or part-time employment;
- 37.3% (635) were in receipt of the Newstart payment, 20.7% (352) were in receipt of a parenting payment and 19.7% (336) were in receipt of the disability support pension;
- 45.7% (779) were a new client for the agency;<sup>xlvii</sup>
- 22.2% (378) were living in non-conventional accommodation;

- 51.5% (878) had been in permanent housing less than one week prior, whilst 15.66% (267) had not been in permanent accommodation for over 6 months (35 for over 5 years) (Figure 9);
- 60% (1,024) last permanent address was in Greater Shepparton, with the majority living in Shepparton or Mooroopna;
- ‘Financial difficulties’ was the main reason for presenting (Table 13).<sup>xlviii</sup>

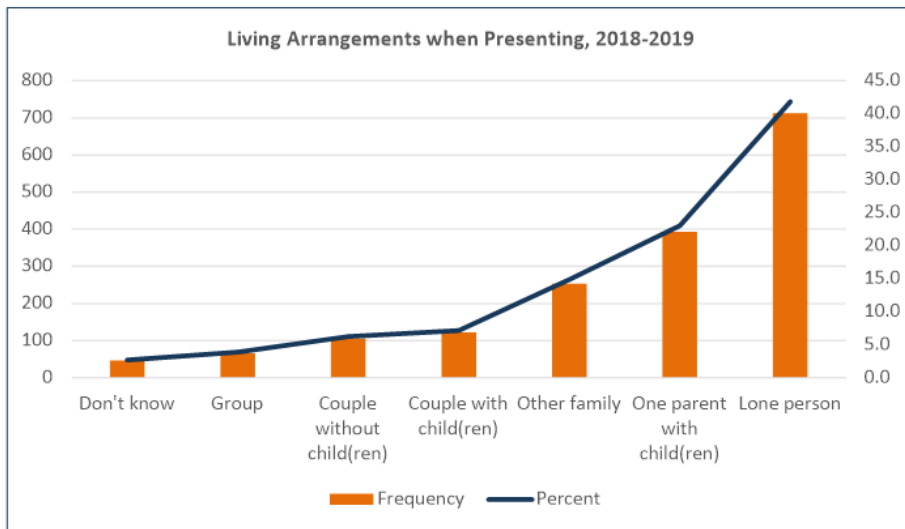


Figure 9: Living arrangements when presenting (by householder recorded as client), 2018/2019

Country of Birth	No. Households	%
Australia	1,528	89.67%
Afghanistan	24	1.41%
Iraq	16	0.94%
Philippines	15	0.88%
New Zealand	15	0.88%
Malaysia	10	0.59%
Other	96	5.63%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1704</b>	

Table 11: Country of Birth of Client

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
0 - 11 years	17	1.00%
12 - 14 years	3	0.18%
15 - 17 years	13	0.76%
18 - 20 years	76	4.46%
21 - 25 years	221	12.97%
26 - 35 years	505	29.64%

36 - 45 years	506	29.69%
46 - 55 years	239	14.03%
56 - 65 years	87	5.11%
66 - 85 years	32	1.88%

Table 12: Age of main client presenting

Main Reason for Presenting	No. Households where reason was recorded*
Non-family violence	30
Transition from custodial arrangement	49
Employment difficulties	53
Problematic drug or substance abuse	108
Medical Issues	110
Unemployment	158
Lack family and/or community support	169
Mental Health issues	241
Time out from Family	248
Housing Crisis	403
Relationship / Family Breakdown	430
Domestic and family violence	447
Inadequate or Inappropriate dwelling condition	699
Financial Difficulties	862

Table 13: Main reasons for presenting. \*Note, more than one reason may be recorded

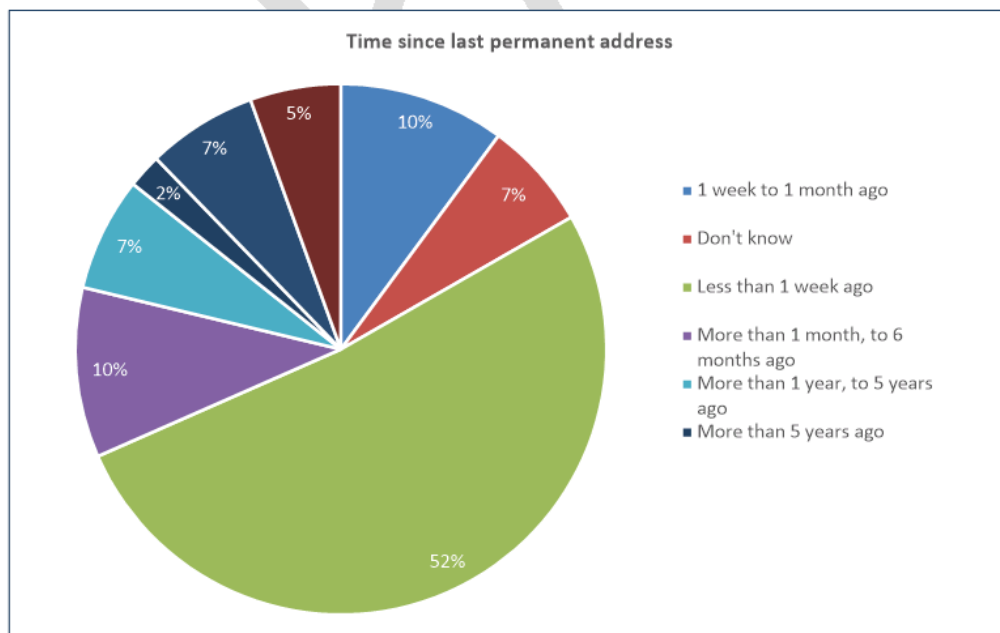


Figure 10: Time since last permanent address

**Social Housing Supply**

As of 30 June 2018, DHHS recorded a total 1,634 Social Housing dwellings in the Greater Shepparton Local Government Area, of which 1,564 were provided as long-term Social Housing, indicating approximately 6.1% of all households were living in Social Housing (5.7% of all dwellings). The majority (991 dwellings) were Public Housing dwellings.

A further 11 DHHS supported crisis accommodation dwellings and 60 transitional housing dwellings were also available in the Greater Shepparton area (Table 14).<sup>xlix</sup>

Social Housing (June 2019)	# Properties
Public Housing	991 properties
Community Housing	370 properties
Indigenous Community Housing	203 properties
Crisis Supported Accommodation	11 properties
Transitional Housing	60 properties
<b>Total Social Housing</b>	<b>1,635 dwellings</b>

Table 14: Social Housing Dwellings as at June 2019

**Rooming Houses**

A rooming house is a building where one or more rooms are available to rent, and four or more people occupy the rooms. In the past, rooming houses have provided low-cost, short- or long-term accommodation, sometimes at short notice, for those in need. From 31 March 2013, rooming house operators have been required to comply with minimum standards set out in the *Residential Tenancies (Rooming House Standards) Regulations 2012*.

These standards relate to privacy, security, safety and amenity in rooming houses. There is no requirement in relation to rent setting. As at June 2019 there were two registered ‘rooming houses’ in Greater Shepparton, one of which is focused on student housing; the other has only eight rooms available.

**Estimated Affordable Housing Supply Gap**

An analysis of the evidence of demand in Greater Shepparton estimated that 3,315 very low and low income households required Affordable Housing in Greater Shepparton in 2016 (Affordable Housing Demand) compared to an estimated Affordable Housing Supply of 1,564 Social Housing dwellings (Affordable Housing Supply).

It is subsequently estimated there is a current gap or need for 1,751 new Affordable Housing dwellings in Greater Shepparton to support very low and low income households that are in housing stress.

If this need was met, 12% of all dwellings in Greater Shepparton would be Affordable Housing, compared to the 2019 supply of 5.74% of dwellings:

- To address the estimated unmet need, and ensure Affordable Housing supply responds to forecast population requirements, it is estimated that at least 4,254 Affordable Housing dwellings will be required by 2036;

- To meet projected Affordable Housing need, and assuming current projected market dwelling supply, would require approximately 158 dwellings of projected new supply per annum to be delivered as dedicated Affordable Housing for very low to low income households; and
- This equates to approximate 42% of all projected supply that would ideally need to be delivered as Affordable Housing, primarily as Social Housing or other forms of Affordable Rental Housing, to meet current and forecast demand.

There are also an expected number of moderate income households in private rental market who are in housing stress in the market, occupying lower cost rental housing and/or creating bottlenecks in the housing system that require an Affordable Rental Housing or Affordable Home Purchase outcome.

DRAFT



## Community Consultation

### Overview of Engagement

In accordance with Council's *Community Engagement Strategy 2009*, a range of consultation activities were undertaken with the community and a number of key organisations:

- To provide the public with information to assist in understanding the problems, issues, alternatives and opportunities surrounding Affordable Housing;
- To obtain public feedback on analysis, options, and potential solutions;
- To ensure that concerns and aspirations are understood and considered; and
- To facilitate partnerships to develop alternatives and identify preferred solutions.

### Pre-draft consultation

The pre-draft phase of consultation aimed to identify Issues and Opportunities surrounding Affordable Housing in Greater Shepparton, to augment broader research. The activities included:

- One-on-one meetings with housing agencies and planning consultants;
- A stakeholder forum with representatives from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Beyond Housing, Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative Ltd, Ethnic Council of Shepparton & District Inc., The Bridge Youth Service, Catholic Care Sandhurst, Ray Dobson Real Estate, Your Sold Real Estate, Bruce Mactier Building Designers, Southern Vale Homes, and the Committee for Greater Shepparton, as well as the Mayor, Councillors, the Chief Executive Officer, and staff from across Council;
- Two surveys, via online and print methods (see p. 80 for questions).

Sixty-six responses to the surveys were received, as well as an extensive range of comments and input during the forum. The survey questions and responses are detailed in full in Appendix 1, on page 51.

### Consultation on Draft Strategy

Once completed, the Draft Affordable Housing Strategy was uploaded to a dedicated website, and the opportunity to provide comments was advertised through social media, targeted emails, and a billboard on the corner of Wyndham Street and Knight Street in Shepparton. Feedback was obtained through:

- An online submission form;
- Printed flyers distributed to key sites across Greater Shepparton;
- Four public drop-in sessions held at community centres in North Shepparton and South Shepparton; and
- Phone calls and meetings with individual stakeholders.

Ten written submissions were received during the draft phase of consultation. The submissions and Council's responses are listed below.

### Comments from the Pre-draft Consultation

The pre-draft consultation activities included meetings, an organisation forum, and 2 surveys, one of which was targeted to organisations operating in housing-related sectors, while the other was framed for the wider community. This section provides a summary of the information obtained.

**Impacts of Housing Insecurity**

Both surveys asked respondents about the importance of Affordable Housing in Greater Shepparton. 96.7% of those surveyed consider Affordable Housing to be an issue that is ‘important’ or ‘very important’ to the municipality’s future growth:

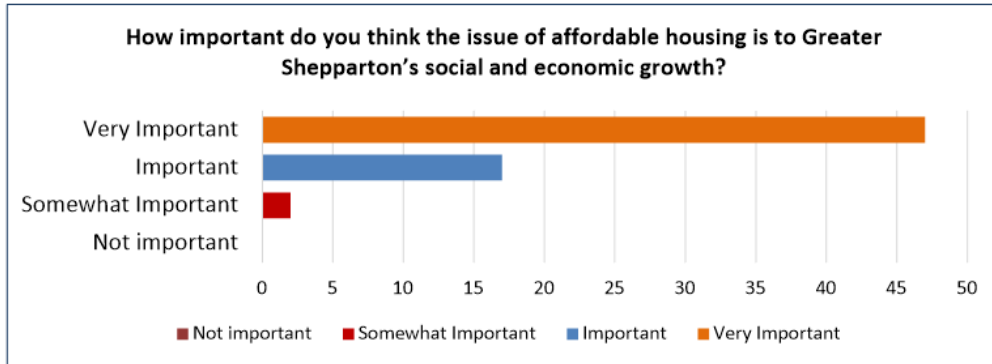


Figure 11. Collated responses to survey Question 2 of the survey: ‘How important do you think the issue of Social and Affordable Housing is to Greater Shepparton’s social and economic growth?’

As summarised in Table 12 below, the necessity of housing as a basic need and right, and as the foundation of a healthy life, wellbeing, belonging, education, employment and public participation was a key reason for perceiving Affordable Housing as an important issue in Greater Shepparton (27.3%), along with the number of local people who are currently experiencing homelessness (22.7%). Impacts on the local economy, including employment opportunities, feasibility of businesses and services, future growth potential, and the rental housing market, were also identified, as well as the effects on children, stress placed on families, domestic violence, mental health, and community safety.

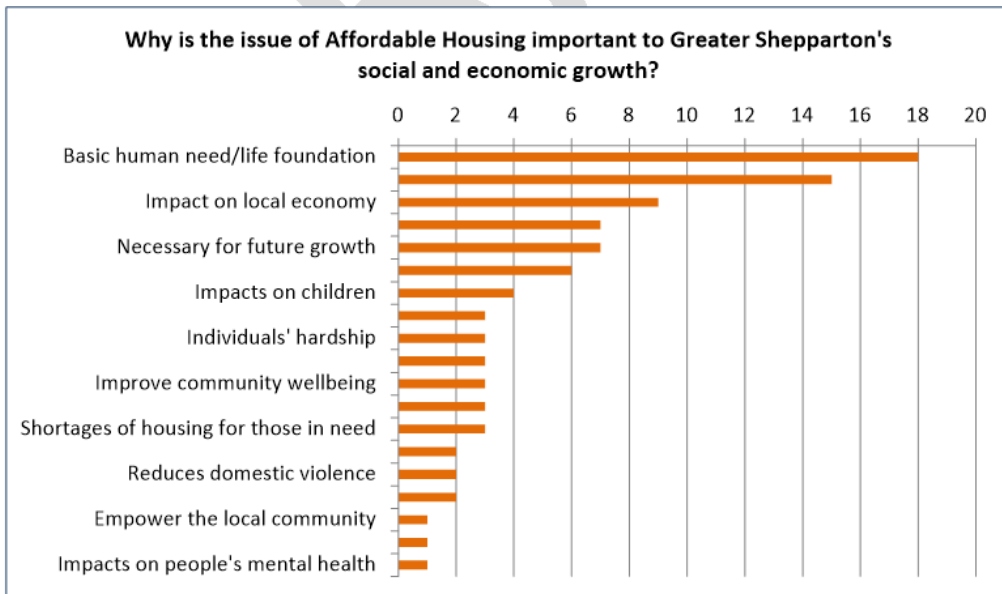


Figure 12. Collated responses to survey Question 3 of the survey: ‘Why do you rate the issue in this way (not important, somewhat important, important, very important)?’

The impacts of housing shortages were recognised across a broad range of residents and issues, and as having both present and future dimensions.

**Issues and opportunities of Affordable Housing**

The following table consolidates comments received through the surveys, meetings and stakeholder forum, and provides a response.

DRAFT

	Barriers	Opportunities	Council officers' response
Affordability	<p>Not enough rental properties are available at reasonable cost, the cost of renting is too high, and too competitive, pushing low income people/families out of housing.</p> <p>Landlords and real estate agents maximise the rental returns the market can support.</p> <p>The other costs of living, such as utilities and car ownership, that are dependent on housing, contribute to housing stress.</p> <p>Other local problems, such as employment shortages and low wages, contribute to housing issues.</p>	<p>Form partnership with DHHS and place transportable units on land ear marked for long term development, utilize schools and community to landscape, build shelter communal BBQ area raised garden veggie beds.</p> <p>Council could work with real estate agents to prioritise those experiencing housing stress or homelessness for private rental.</p> <p>Increase supply to inhibit rent increases.</p> <p>Housing should be well designed and of high quality construction, to reduce ongoing costs, e.g. solar orientation for energy efficiency. Higher density may provide economies of scale. Use new technologies.</p> <p>Increase rent assistance to keep pace with market values.</p>	<p>Action C.1 of the Strategy will establish an Affordable Housing Stakeholder Reference Group. One function of the group is expected to be the facilitation of projects that provide Affordable Housing under both rental and ownership tenures. It is expected that models that have been utilised elsewhere, such as the Harris Transportable Housing project in Melbourne, will be analysed and adapted to be applied locally, following the implementation of Action #6, an assessment of Council owned assets for suitability.</p> <p>Council hopes to build partnerships with a range of interested parties, including estate agents, to promote Affordable Housing outcomes, but has no capacity to influence market-led rental costs, or rental assistance payments through the Federal Government. Increases in welfare payments, including rental assistance and Newstart, may be part of the joint advocacy position established by the Stakeholder Reference Group.</p> <p>Council will continue to promote well-designed and high quality housing, to ensure long-term benefit to the community as well as on going efficiencies and cost reductions for residents.</p>

	Barriers	Opportunities	Council officers' response
Availability and Diversity	<p>There is a lack of housing stock in general, and of multi-unit developments, and a lack of diversity to accommodate different needs, such as those of large families, one- and two-person households, and the most vulnerable.</p> <p>There is high demand for the limited available rental properties, which increases competition; this is exemplified by a father who was unsuccessful in more than 20 rental applications, despite a good rental history in Queensland, living in a tent with his children during winter.</p> <p>More options are required to meet the needs of the community, including other pathways to ownership, so that the housing market caters for all.</p>	<p>Consider alternative and flexible housing options – such as student accommodation, shop-top housing, tiny houses, youth/backpackers hostel, housing cooperatives, cohousing, shared/common equity programs, self-build communities.</p> <p>Provide Council subsidies and rate concessions for alternative housing.</p> <p>Provide more smaller 1-2 bedroom units for 1-person households, and more larger rental properties suitable for larger families.</p> <p>Increase choices for residents, provide flexible, adaptable options.</p> <p>Use air space over ground level car parks for affordable housing, retaining car parking below.</p>	<p>The Action Plan will promote diversity of housing stock to landowners, developers and the community to broaden the options available to meet the needs of various groups within the community. The implementation of Action I. 2.1 will determine how Council may be able to utilise resources such as car parks for Affordable Housing.</p> <p>Rental stock is largely privately owned, so Council has limited capacity to impact supply. Council is not able to provide direct subsidies and rate concessions for Affordable Housing, as they may distort the distribution of the rates burden, unfairly impacting some groups of ratepayers. Council will explore the feasibility of incentives such as grants for renovations to affordable rental properties with the assistance of the Stakeholder Reference Group (Action F 2.1).</p> <p>Smaller, 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings will be the initial focus of the Strategy, having the highest level of need as demonstrated in Figure. 4 on page 28. Some smaller households are forced to occupy larger residences due to these shortages, and are consequently experiencing housing stress. Providing appropriate residences for these households is expected to release some larger dwellings to the market.</p>

	Barriers	Opportunities	Council officers' response
Council's role	<p>Housing is external to Council's core business; there is a lack of understanding of homelessness, and of what the community wants.</p>	<p>Council should take some real steps to address affordable housing as a community responsibility.</p> <p>Council should take effective and efficient action.</p> <p>Council should support Social Housing Providers through reduced rates, land packages, expedited planning permits, etc.</p> <p>Council should review some of its inner CBD properties to provide housing over these sites.</p> <p>Council leads all discussions/planning for Affordable Housing and should commit to a 20 year plan.</p>	<p>Housing provision was and still is predominantly market-based activity, rather than a direct responsibility of Council, beyond its role as Planning Authority. With the addition of the objective to 'facilitate the provision of Affordable Housing' in the PAEA, Council now has broader scope to act, reflected in actions to obtain the <i>Voluntary Affordable Housing Grant</i> and prepare the Affordable Housing Strategy.</p> <p>The strategy is the first of its kind in Greater Shepparton, providing the strategic justification to explore the extent of Council's capacity to impact existing housing provision systems.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the potential to act has not been accompanied by increased funding. Council will continue to carefully manage its financial resources to maximise benefits to the community.</p> <p>Market conditions and issues surrounding housing insecurity and homelessness are changeable, responding to a wide array of factors.</p> <p>Council have elected to monitor progress and review the strategy in 2027, to enable a flexible response to changes.</p>

	<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Council officers' response</b>
<b>Cohorts at risk</b>	<p>There are numerous groups whose needs are not met, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, women and children experiencing family violence, those who are socio-economically disadvantaged, people who are receiving Newstart, Disability or aged pensions, people who live alone.</p> <p>In particular, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are over-represented in homelessness and housing insecurity, homeless on their traditional land.</p>	<p>Provide supported housing for young people prior to establishments such as the Youth Foyer.</p> <p>Provide boarding houses, and a caravan park with long-term leasing.</p> <p>Provide targeted approaches to meet the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.</p> <p>Provide more rentals in the \$150-200 per week range.</p> <p>Increase programs to support transitional housing, so people can move into private renting. Support people and families through the journey to stable housing.</p> <p>Give support to maintain tenancies, including skill development, mental and physical health support.</p> <p>Council should assist to maintain quality of homes.</p>	<p>There are numerous support agencies providing specialised knowledge and approaches to the needs of cohorts at high risk of homelessness. Although circumstances differ, the need for housing is widespread. In this inaugural strategy, Council is focusing on actions within its existing capacity that may increase the stock of housing in general, with the intention of working with these agencies to investigate more targeted responses over time</p> <p>Council will work with the Stakeholder Reference Group to investigate potential assistance to maintain tenancies and the appearance of subsidised housing (Action F. 2).</p>

	Barriers	Opportunities	Council officers' response
<b>Community</b>	<p>Affordable housing, like social housing, is heavily stigmatised in the community, which has mental health impacts, creating uncertainty, depression, and feelings of futility in people who have no other choices.</p> <p>There is still a view that homelessness is the result of personal actions and choices, and empathy is low.</p> <p>Property owners are concerned over potential property damage or devaluation through having subsidised housing nearby, but there is a lack of political will and support to address these concerns.</p> <p>People have expectations of what housing should be and should have.</p> <p>There is much good will and support for affordable housing in the community, but this needs to be translated into roofs over peoples' heads, through a whole-of-community approach.</p> <p>Shepparton is becoming divided into nice and not-so nice areas.</p>	<p>Involve people in the process - if they are part of the journey and have a voice and not being talked at or done to then their sense of ownership, commitment and pride increases.</p> <p>Establish dialogues and create connected communities, shift cultural perceptions around 'low income' housing, educate the community. Establish community hubs in new developments.</p> <p>Affordable housing needs to be designed better, including amenity and sustainability, to change community perceptions.</p> <p>Create a consortium of organisations locally to pool resources / funds / Ideas to make changes, such as promoting innovation by example, research tangible actions, interaction between housing providers, investigate use of Council-owned land for Affordable Housing.</p> <p>Bring property owners together to discuss and develop incentives.</p> <p>Affordable Housing needs to be in a safe and secure area.</p>	<p>Cultural understandings of housing are deeply embedded in Australia, including the perception that homelessness is correlated with degeneracy and criminality. For most homeowners, their property is their biggest investment, so it is natural to be concerned about the potential effect on its value as a result of changes in the neighbourhood. However, there is evidence from a number of studies showing property values are not affected by nearby social housing; similarly, there is no evidence supporting a link between social housing and increased crime.</p> <p>Council is keen to facilitate means to involve a broader cross-section of the community, creating wider familiarity with the current manifestations of homelessness, enabling goodwill to be translated into built outcomes, and providing outcomes that have both short and long term benefit.</p> <p>It is envisaged that the Affordable Housing Reference Group will provide a forum to pool local resources and ideas , and create dialogues with and beyond our community.</p>



	Barriers	Opportunities	Council officers' response
Crisis Accommodation	<p>There is not enough crisis accommodation, only a little for those escaping family violence.</p> <p>Some temporary accommodation is substandard, as providers exploit the housing support system.</p> <p>Boarding house regulations are too stringent.</p>	<p>Develop a local homeless shelter.</p> <p>Council should assist with locating and fitting out more emergency crisis temporary accommodation for people sleeping rough.</p>	<p>Increasing the amount of crisis accommodation has been identified as a goal of the Affordable Housing Strategy.</p> <p>The <i>Residential Tenancies (Rooming House Standards) Regulations 2012</i> are state legislation to ensure the security, safety, amenity and privacy of residents. Council has no jurisdiction to address the regulations.</p> <p>Additional options for emergency accommodation may reduce reliance on substandard dwellings. Occupants or agencies who suspect a temporary dwelling does not comply with health and safety standards should contact Council.</p>

	<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Council officers' response</b>
<b>Data</b>	<p>It is difficult to identify and address such a broad scope of needs; issues are often cyclic, with homelessness as both cause and effect.</p> <p>Data on the extent of the issue is difficult to obtain and sometimes inaccurate; not everyone applies for support as waiting times are so long.</p>	<p>Share data, stories, and needs assessment/analysis, demonstrate that we don't have enough resources to match the vulnerability of our population.</p>	<p>Council recognises that the nature of homelessness in itself creates difficulties in collecting adequate data, as methods such as the Census are predicated on address, that homelessness and housing insecurity is heavily stigmatised, so people may be reluctant to identify themselves or seek assistance, and that personal situations vary greatly, so data accuracy is fluid. In addition, causes and effects of homelessness may be cyclic; for example, mental health conditions or drug addiction may arise through homelessness as well as causing it.</p> <p>The Minister for Planning has specified regard for official estimates of housing need as a criterion for determining appropriate Affordable Housing.</p> <p>Council has taken inspiration from the 'housing first' approach used in Finland, the only European country with a declining homelessness rate, to focus on attaining additional housing stock rather than treating causes.</p> <p>By identifying 'at risk' and 'potential' types of housing need, Council hopes to implement interventions to increase the availability and affordability of housing in the private market, enabling people in difficulties to find solutions before their situations deteriorate to the point of becoming 'acute'.</p>

	Barriers	Opportunities	Council officers' response
Location	<p>Lack of public transport services.</p> <p>Lack of access to doctors, maternal and child health care, kindergartens and schools, playgrounds and nature reserves, and other services.</p>	<p>Increase public transport within Shepparton and to outlying towns, to support housing in cheaper outer areas and enhance existing stock.</p> <p>Build more units in locations close to amenities and public transport. Design streets for walkability – wider footpaths, paths on both sides of the street, shade trees.</p> <p>Increase public space and facilities. Design open spaces for inclusion of all ages, including children and grandparents.</p>	<p>The State Government has established a range of criteria that is required to be considered in relation to Affordable Housing, which includes locations giving access to services and facilities. These criteria will be utilised in assessing future Affordable Housing projects.</p> <p>Council continues to advocate to the Department of Transport for improvements to public transport services in Greater Shepparton, and will investigate measures to improve streetscaping and facilities in areas with established social and/or affordable housing.</p>

	Barriers	Opportunities	Council officers' response
Planning	<p>Planning laws create red tape and restrict availability of land.</p> <p>Planning decisions are inconsistent, and sometimes result in poor outcomes, such as undesirable, dilapidated areas of concentrated social housing.</p> <p>Community engagement in planning slows the process and creates barriers by enabling objections from land owners that inhibit the supply of Affordable Housing.</p>	<p>Open up land for residential housing.</p> <p>Allow second dwellings on established properties.</p> <p>Rezone commercial buildings in the CBD and allow residential development above businesses. Increase density to revitalise the CBD.</p> <p>Utilise sites such as the Shepparton Hotel, and the former Mooroopna Hospital. Plan for use of former school sites for Affordable Housing.</p> <p>Relax planning and building regulations to accommodate demand for housing.</p> <p>Waive/aid in paying infrastructure costs for development.</p> <p>Mooroopna's CBD should be flood-proofed to encourage development close to services.</p>	<p>Planning laws exist to balance individual ownership rights with overall community benefit through the 'fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use and development of land', by assessing each site-specific application in relation to a high-level overview across the municipality.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the consequences of specific decisions are not always foreseeable. Community consultation and the objections process ensure that the process is robust and transparent, particularly through the Planning Scheme Amendment process which enables regulations to evolve in response to changing needs.</p> <p>While the immediate need for housing is urgent and planning processes may be perceived as unnecessary delays, it is important that the current need does not engender additional problems in the future.</p> <p>Council will consider changes to the Greater Shepparton Planning Scheme that may facilitate Affordable Housing outcomes, while maintaining consideration of long-term impacts. In some cases, such as allowing second dwellings on established properties, Council will advocate to the State Government to implement changes. Council does not have capacity to force the owners of properties such as the Shepparton Hotel and Mooroopna Hospital to provide specific outcomes, but will negotiate for positive outcomes if the opportunity arises.</p>

	Barriers	Opportunities	Council officers' response
Supply and funding	<p>Housing supply is dependent on the free market, and there is little incentive for developers to include Affordable Housing in new developments.</p> <p>Affordable Housing needs funding and support from the State Government as it's such a big issue, but the government can't and won't provide enough funding for the amount of housing needed.</p> <p>There are conflicting understandings of what is needed - affordable purchase or affordable rental.</p> <p>Landlords own too many properties, depriving others of the chance to buy.</p> <p>Land availability is limited; greenfield developments have limited access to services and public transport, while renovating older houses closer in is expensive.</p> <p>Delivering housing is expensive in money and time; new estates are dependent on the uptake of blocks and delays erode the feasibility of Affordable Housing.</p>	<p>Consider making developers offer a certain amount of affordable land blocks in new developments/lobby State government for planning law changes that INSIST on a % of affordable housing (ownership &amp; rental) in each new development and if that's not suitable developers to pay a larger development contribution back to council which council will then pass onto an affordable housing provider to invest in AH.</p> <p>Develop alternative/flexible funding sources. Enable private sector to be more involved in Affordable Housing provision. Use philanthropic sources for investment in short-term housing for young people. Create Partnerships between Council and investors.</p> <p>Encourage state government support to increase housing stock. Increase understanding of limitations experienced by housing providers and lobby for appropriate funding levels.</p> <p>Define what 'Affordable Housing' is for Greater Shepparton – access to rental market, creation of new markets where needed, targets that can be achieved within a defined period?</p> <p>Advocate for removal of negative gearing.</p>	<p>Council acknowledges that housing supply systems have developed over an extended period, entrenching development practices. Cultural understandings of housing forms and functions are likewise embedded, creating a number of stereotypes and assumptions that inhibit the delivery of Affordable Housing outcomes. Unfortunately, the issues around Affordable Housing supply have grown to the extent of requiring significant funding and time resources to address.</p> <p>At this stage, mandatory inclusion of Affordable Housing or payment of developers' contributions is dependent changes to State Government legislation. Council will continue to advocate for these changes, as well as funding and other measures to facilitate Affordable Housing.</p> <p>Council will continue to seek ways to involve alternative funding sources, landlords, investors and developers to increase supply of Affordable Housing.</p>

	Barriers	Opportunities	Council officers' response
Vacancies	<p>Properties are left vacant, or not considered for their potential to provide housing.</p> <p>Unused land and buildings could provide housing.</p> <p>Coordination of services would help to utilise available stock.</p>	<p>Reduce the number of investment properties that aren't occupied, provide incentives for owners. Maximise use of existing stock.</p> <p>Utilise vacant land for temporary/crisis/co-op/social housing.</p>	<p>Council has no authority to compel private landowners to utilise their properties for Affordable Housing purposes. It is expected that the AHRG will consider whether appropriate incentives are available to motivate occupancy.</p>

Table 14: Collated consultation responses

### Feedback on Draft Strategy

Council authorised the *Draft Greater Shepparton Affordable Housing Strategy 2019* for exhibition for six weeks beginning 20 October 2019 and concluding on 2 December 2019. The period was extended until 16 December to accommodate late responses. Ten submissions were received, demonstrating a significant understanding and keen interest in the potential for future actions.

Table 15 outlines the key points contained in the submissions, and Council officers' responses.

It was noted that several comments on the first draft sought enhanced recognition of a particular group in need of Affordable Housing within the Strategy. The heightened vulnerability of some households to homelessness is recognised, however, the broad range of households that require assistance highlights that housing stress and homelessness can impact anyone, regardless of age, gender, or employment status. Given Council's current resources and capacity, the Strategy focuses on the 'Housing First' approach, which prioritises stable housing as a means to enhance recovery from or management of factors contributing to housing vulnerability. Council is aiming to facilitate a number of housing outcomes through the actions in the Strategy, to target the needs of specific cohorts.

#	Comment/Feedback	Council response
1	Congratulations on an outstanding Strategy	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.
	My observation is that within the community there is a prejudice to be allocate rental properties to a certain part of the community due to past experiences, so rentals are held back and only made available to preferred clients. The bias in our community from the "haves to the have nots" is a difficulty that is hard to overcome.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.
	Also developers are extremely reluctant to financially risk including low cost housing in their developments as their brand is effected by poorly maintained rentals	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.
	The only way to overcome the short supply of homes is by way of partnerships between Governments, developers, builders and financial organisations to develop shared equity homes.	Council agrees that developing partnerships between the myriad actants involved in housing will play a key role in addressing housing shortages. Shared equity homes are one of the options that the AHRG are expected to explore.
	There is a large opportunity to purchase older existing dwellings at lower prices than constructing new dwellings, this may be a good short term fix.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission for future consideration by the AHRG.
2	The action plans and objectives outlined make sense; although they seem to be discussion points for the future rather than the immediate action I see desperately needed.	Council agrees that action on provision of Affordable Housing to alleviate acute housing need in the community is needed immediately, however, analysis of Council's resources and capacity has determined the actions outlined in the Strategy to be the most effective actions for Council to impact housing supply as soon as possible.
	Nothing in the draft clearly outlines what investors can contribute now.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission for future consideration by the AHRG.
	I have been looking to add smaller dwellings, which are identified as a shortage, to existing blocks, but there needs to be more flexibility and funding support. If investors were able to develop second dwellings on a block quickly and cost effectively, it would make an impact in 12-15 months instead of 3-5 years.	The regulations regarding construction of a second dwelling on a block are set by the State Government, and Council has no jurisdiction to implement changes.
	Poor quality and underutilised public housing stock is identified for redevelopment, but renovations need to be cost-effective, not inflated to become prohibitively expensive.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.
	In renovating properties, tenants need input so they feel valued in the process and look after the property instead of causing damage that increases costs to owners.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.

	Having certainty on locations where secondary dwellings could be built would help landlords provide housing at below market rent.	Council recognises that a degree of certainty is an important factor for the allocation of investment funds on all scales, however, there are a number of elements that may impact it. At the moment, secondary dwellings are subject to both planning and building legislation at the State level, which is beyond Council's jurisdiction to amend. A Ministerial Advisory Committee has been set up by DELWP to investigate possible models and options to facilitate Affordable Housing, which may include secondary dwellings. Their report is expected to be available in the near future. More information is available from: <a href="https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/policy-and-strategy/affordable-housing/planning-mechanisms-for-affordable-housing-advisory-committee#overview">https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/policy-and-strategy/affordable-housing/planning-mechanisms-for-affordable-housing-advisory-committee#overview</a>
3	'At risk' housing need should also refer to 'lack of employment'	The definition has been revised to include 'lack of employment'.
	There is also need for larger accommodation for migrant families - 5+ bedrooms	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission for future consideration by the AHRG.
	What about smaller towns, how can affordable housing be included so older residents can downsize within their community, freeing up larger homes?	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission for future consideration by the AHRG.
	What about spaces above retail stores (i.e. CBD), that could be used for short-term rentals?	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission for future consideration by the AHRG.
	Strategy should look at CALD housing needs	Council recognises the CALD community as being vulnerable to housing insecurity, although to date the data available is mostly anecdotal. In the absence of sufficient resourcing for widespread action, Council is focusing on systems to procure more housing, with the intention of facilitating cohort specific responses on a project-by-project basis.
	Location of premises - look at learnings from Neighbourhood renewal and clustered units.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission for future consideration by the AHRG.
	Table 2 could be strengthened by a stronger commitment to develop affordable housing that is "dispersed" - some good examples of options in the table but need to explicitly move away from large estates and build homes throughout the general community	The Framework to guide outcomes notes that appropriateness of Affordable Housing in terms of location, built form and integration need to be considered on an application specific basis.
	Strategy should include commitment to building dwellings that are 'environmentally friendly' - i.e. with good energy ratings. Ongoing running costs make a significant difference over the duration of tenancy.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.
	Needs to be consistency in data use and targets through the document, also clarity about who are priority groups.	Document has been reviewed with data and priority groups now consistently referenced.



	Note that DHHS is soon to release an Aboriginal Homelessness and Housing strategy that has been developed by Aboriginal Housing Victoria.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.
4	The Draft appears comprehensive, and there are some significant initiatives and actions which will undoubtedly make a real difference when implemented, however, timelines appear to have been constrained.	Council received grant funding from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning to enable the preparation of the Strategy. A condition of the grant was that the funds should be spent within a specific timeframe.
	It is disappointing not to see acknowledgement of the number of people in housing crisis as a result of fleeing domestic violence, or who are forced to remain in a violent relationship due to lack of places to go. Some women are not counted as they are too afraid to seek social housing due to privacy and safety concerns.	The number of people in housing crisis as a result of fleeing domestic violence is acknowledged as a key cause of homelessness and housing insecurity. Council recognises that available data on homelessness and housing insecurity is inherently conservative, due to difficulties in collection and factors including safety and stigmatisation, particularly in regard to women's homelessness. Unfortunately there is no local data available on relation to how many women do not leave a violent situation due to a lack of housing alternatives.
	There should be information on the turnover of crisis, to transitional, to permanent housing, and a specific strategy, or target to support women in crisis.	Data is not publicly available.
	Targets are not measurable, specific, or challenging.	The Targets have been reviewed following community consultation, however, it remains very difficult to determine goals that can be directly impacted by Council's actions, for which the impacts of Council's actions are measurable through accessible, consistent and appropriate data sources, and that are broadly applicable across the municipality. The indicators selected will be used when the Strategy is reviewed in seven years' time; more specific sub-targets are expected to be determined and monitored by the AHRG, and reported to the public via the dedicated webpage on Council's website.
	With demand increasing much faster than supply, targets should likewise increase by year until the identified requirement of 42% in 2036 is reached. Or increase targets by 158 dwellings per annum.	Targets for long term supply are extrapolated from current trends and based on assumptions, but actual requirements will fluctuate, so future objectives are indicative. For example, actual need in the present is much higher than 158 dwellings, so setting that as a target would be inadequate.
	The Table on page 20 is confusing - it does not appear consistent with information and assumptions provided. It also assumes demand will remain the same, but this appears unlikely given expected population increase.	Level of forecast housing stress is noted to be conservative and based on current data as this is the only reliable indicator.

Actions are mostly impressive, but don't actually match up with objectives e.g., there is no objective 5	The Objectives and Actions in the Strategy have been reviewed and amended.
The objective to increase investment in crisis accommodation is a long-term objective, it does not actually address emergency housing or crisis accommodation, nor is it specific to women fleeing domestic violence, who are often the ones seeking crisis accommodation.	Revised Goal to increase supply of crisis accommodation. In practice it is expected DHHS or housing agencies would prioritise women fleeing domestic violence when resulting any new housing.
Other measures such as 'enhanced Community understanding', 'support tenant engagement' and 'maintain landscaping' are not going to help people in crisis. Likewise actions for the 'medium' term.	Council has assessed a broad array of avenues through which it has capacity to impact housing, relative to three classifications of need: acute (including crisis), at-risk, and potential. Crisis accommodation is largely the province of Social Housing providers; Council's capacity to facilitate it is reflected in other actions, such as advocacy for funding, and an audit of its own assets for suitability. The actions listed are expected to enhance ongoing efforts to deliver Affordable Housing outcomes; Council recognises that issues that have developed over an extended period and reached such a level of complexity cannot be solved quickly.
An understanding of housing needs may not motivate a developer or investor to decrease market-driven rental or housing prices, or make more dwellings available.	Council acknowledges that at this time, the inclusion of Affordable Housing in market-driven contexts is entirely voluntary. The Strategy aims to give Council a strong strategic basis to negotiate with relevant parties to promote its inclusion, as well as increasing public awareness to generate consumer-driven demand.
What does 'at-grade' car parking mean?	'At-grade' car parking is level with the street.
Why does Council need to investigate how to use its own land?	Council owns a large number of assets across Greater Shepparton, which may or may not still be required for their designated purposes. The audit specified in Action L 2.1 will consider whether assets are available and suitable for Affordable Housing purposes, giving consideration to the Ministerial Notice on Affordable Housing suitability and any physical constraints on the site, and what form of housing may be suitable, e.g. transportable cabins may be required where land is needed for another purpose in the future, while 1-2 bedroom units or apartments may provide maximum benefit on a site close to Shepparton's education precinct.

	There should be actions specified for all of the priority risk groups. It would be good to see specific actions for women with disabilities, older women, youth and women fleeing domestic violence. The only action mentioned is motherhood statements regarding advocacy and seeking funding, which is something Council will be doing any way for all groups.	Many of the identified cohorts, while experiencing varying circumstances that have contributed to their housing vulnerability, have common needs for housing as a built form. Council aims to increase the overall supply of housing, primarily through systemic approaches such as collaboration between actants and importation of innovative, proven models, enabling customisation to the needs of specific cohorts on a project by project basis.
	The objective to 'improve housing diversity' could be 'change planning requirements to ensure all new housing developments included one, and two-bedroom properties'. The <i>Shepparton &amp; Moorooopna 2050 Regional City Growth Plan</i> identifies that there are going to be several thousand new residences built. Council could include in the planning/development permits the need to include appropriate properties which can be utilised under the Affordable Housing Strategy.	Unfortunately state government regulation decrees that the inclusion of Affordable Housing in residential developments MUST be voluntary, so Council can only negotiate with developers to deliver the types of housing that are needed at price points that are within the affordable range for very low, low and moderate income households (i.e. costing up to 30% of household income). The Affordable Housing Strategy provides a strong evidence base and strategic directions to support negotiations.
	Would it be possible to include an action to investigate rate reductions to motivate housing diversity?	Council does not support the use of its rating strategy as a means to provide incentives as it may distort the distribution of the rates burden and unfairly impact other groups of ratepayers as a result. Some concessions are available, but these are considered on a case-by-case basis.
	Was a community forum undertaken in the pre-draft consultation phase?	In the pre-draft consultation phase, Council conducted a public survey rather than a forum, in order to provide broader and more equitable access to contribute. The number of responses somewhat exceeded expectations for Council's first foray into the Affordable Housing area. Council will consider a wider range of consultation activities for future engagements.
	The way that the responses to the community and organisations surveys are presented suggests community responses are not as important. I am sure members of the community would have provided more than has been included in the brief bullet points.	Differences in the method of presentation of feedback response reflects variances in practice between Council officers and the project consultant, which have been rectified in the <i>Issues and Opportunities Paper 2020</i> . Each response received was considered with equal weight in preparation of the <i>Affordable Housing Strategy 2020</i> .
	The draft Strategy provides an excellent framework to implement more Affordable Housing for the vulnerable in our community. It is a bonus that the Shepparton & Moorooopna 2050 Regional City Growth Plan is being developed at the same time, so that Council can ensure the plans work together and projected growth includes Affordable Housing.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.
5	This is an important strategy to address long-term issues in this diversely populated community. The situation is critical and needs immediate attention.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.

	It is difficult for families and single women, with or without children to deal with all the agencies involved without advocacy and support.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.
	Many people are now unable to achieve their basic living needs because of change to the family unit or unemployment. Disabled and people suffering mental illness are unable to find housing due to their special needs.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission. Council recognises that changing circumstances can precipitate a housing crisis through the identification of an 'At-Risk' need category. People with a disability and people suffering mental illness have also been identified as cohorts who are vulnerable to housing insecurity.
	I rue the reduction of public housing, especially as many former government funded houses have been sold off at affordable prices to private investors but are now rented at high cost.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.
	Some local investors own three or more former public houses; should a cap be put on how many can be owned, to let others purchase?	Rental properties are an important part of the housing market in Greater Shepparton, as not everyone has the means or wishes to purchase a home, and Council has no jurisdiction to influence who is able to purchase on the free market. Action P1.3 reflects Council's intention to explore incentives for private landlords to provide rental units in the Affordable range.
	A housing co-operative could purchase several of these homes, putting rules and inspections in place to prevent damage, which sometimes leaves properties uninhabitable and requires expensive repairs.	Council would welcome the establishment of alternative tenure types to offer wider choice to residents.
	There are also examples of investors buying houses and renting them out to more people than is healthy, even with sheets dividing living areas into sleeping quarters. More investigation is needed.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission for future consideration by the AHRG.
6	I appreciate that women's housing issues are acknowledged in the targets, objectives, and specialised housing requirements sections, that insights have been taken from the Australian Human Rights Commission entitled Older Women's Risk of Homelessness: Background Paper, Exploring a Growing Problem, April 2019, and that the advocacy role of the Women's Charter Committee is mentioned. In view of this however, I am disappointed that in the sections outlining the substance of the strategy, women's issues appear to be no longer relevant or addressed. I request that there be more substantial engagement with the issues underlying the vulnerability of women.	As Council's first Strategy, the focus has been on broader actions that build Council's capacity to act and that create the necessary foundational systems and relationships to enable ongoing engagement and increasing efficacy in addressing the issues underlying the vulnerability of women, and other cohorts. Although not specifically linked to women's issues, the actions in the Strategy are expected to address women's housing need on a number of levels. In particular, the AFRG is intended to provide an avenue to implement and/or adapt the mechanisms outlined in the Australian Human Rights Commission report, and those utilised successfully elsewhere, on a project by project basis to tailor outcomes to specific needs.

<p>Specifically, the Response and Framework for Action on Page 40 loses the earlier specific reference to women, and on page 34, the issues of women are cited under Specialised Affordable Housing Requirements, but no related key opportunities are mentioned.</p>	<p>Council officers apologise for the oversight that removed 'women' from the listing of vulnerable groups in the Strategy's objectives in the Consultation Draft.</p>
<p>A broader view of the role of women at the very least in the context of community development and social capital should be addressed in any housing affordability strategy, associated policy frameworks accessible to council, and wider contexts including the Shepparton and Mooroopna 2050 Regional Growth Plan and other Council Plans.</p>	<p>Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.</p>
<p>The Action Plan fails to take up solutions suggested in the references and prior consultation, e.g. Australian Human Rights Commission Background Paper: <i>Older Women's Risk of Homelessness: Background Paper, Exploring a Growing Problem, April 2019</i>.</p>	<p>The pre-draft consultation garnered many suggestions and comments, which were carefully considered in the formulation of the Strategy, in conjunction with a careful assessment of Council's current resources and capacity. Unfortunately, it was not possible to include all of the responses in the final document; as Council's first foray into the Affordable Housing arena, an approach that puts foundational systems and mechanisms in place was considered to be appropriate. Other suggestions have been retained for future consideration, particularly where alternative methods could enhance specific projects, or are applicable to specific groups, such as older women.</p>
<p>The pre-draft consultations in Appendix 2 were rich with insights and suggestions but the strategy does not clearly show how input from the forum was addressed in the Action Plan. Revisions to the draft should clearly show where the consultation input comments submitted have been included or omitted, and why.</p>	<p>Following the community consultation phase, the evidence of need, policy context, and community consultation outcomes have been assembled in a separate document to enable elaboration of the comments and insights received, and Council's responses.</p>
<p>Improvements in the consultation process and timeframe are needed. If, as stated in Section 2, page 21 on the Alignment with Council's Goals, Roles and Values, the sentiments of advocacy groups such as the Women's Charter Advisory Committee and others are really important to Council, no less than 8 weeks, and preferably a longer period should be allowed for comments to be solicited and consolidated in consideration of the monthly timeframe in which committees such as these are able to convene.</p>	<p>At time of writing, Council is undertaking a review of its consultation practices, to develop a new policy, procedure and toolkit that will update the <i>Community Engagement Strategy 2009</i>. The Building and Planning Department's standard duration at present varies between 4-6 weeks, depending on the topic, and late submissions are accepted, although they may not be included in the relevant Conversation Report. In some cases, there are time-sensitive issues involved; in this instance Council is keen to begin implementing measures that may improve housing situations for residents, particularly as actions may take extended periods to deliver. Planning offices will consider longer timeframes and closer liaison with Advisory Committees in future.</p>

	The Draft Affordable Housing Strategy should undertake continued consultation especially with the risk groups identified	Action C. 2.1, to establish an Affordable Housing platform on Council's website is expected to provide a key conduit for communication both to and from the community, in conjunction with the Affordable Housing Reference Group. Further consultation will be conducted as appropriate when individual actions are implemented and/or projects undertaken.
7	There is a shortage of housing in Shepparton, I am concerned that if another Depression hit us, we would be in trouble. The closure of Mooroopna Fruit Cannery puts additional pressure on Shepparton. Council could put cabins on a large block of land with support in place.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission. Council will consider a number of housing options, assessing their requirements and the available resources. One of these is the Harris Transportable Housing Project run by Launch Housing in Melbourne, which positions relocatable cabins on unused land. Action L 2.1 is to audit Council's assets to identify sites which may be utilised to achieve Affordable Housing outcomes, with further advocacy to obtain suitable sites belonging to other government agencies as part of Action L 2.4.
	Individuals should be assessed to find out why they are homeless before support is offered.	Council recognises the complexity of individual and societal factors that contribute to housing insecurity, and the speed at which circumstances may change; as a consequence, Council is focusing on Finland's 'Housing First' approach, which found people are better able to address other issues once they have a stable dwelling. This approach was successful in reducing the number of homeless people in the country by a third between 2008 and 2018. Finland is the only country in the European Union with a falling homelessness rate.
8	The Committee would like to congratulate Council on its current progress with the development of the Affordable Housing Strategy, with the issue of housing instability and homelessness having a substantial impact on the Greater Shepparton community.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.
	The inclusions of these priority groups provide some great scope as to the focuses of the strategy.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.
	The committee's recommendation is that women in a general sense and single mothers are included as a priority group and within the framework.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission. The framework has been determined by the Ministerial criteria, Council's capacity, and the 'Housing First' approach of the inaugural strategy. Through the implementation of the Strategy, Council aims to develop the organisational foundations and resources to enable targeted responses to address the needs of each cohort.

	While much of the reporting data is retrieved from third party reports, there would be value in greater gender desegregation, to have greater quantifiable information of the at risk groups within our community.	Council agrees that greater gender segregation would be useful, however, data availability is limited.
	Outlined targets, objectives and actions provide a good foundation for future advocacy and related initiatives, however, there is opportunity to place more emphasis on women in the objectives.	Council officers apologise for the oversight that removed 'women' from the listing of vulnerable groups in the Strategy's objectives in the Consultation Draft. The objectives, targets, and actions have been revised to be more relevant to Council's capacity and the collaborative approach that will be facilitated by the AHRG. Through the implementation of the Strategy, Council aims to develop the organisational foundations and resources to enable targeted responses to address the needs of each cohort.
	There needs to be greater emphasis on explicit effects of housing affordability on genders within our community, taking into account challenges for women of colour and those identifying as part of LGBT+ community	The evidence of need in the Consultation Draft has been expanded to further explore the effects of housing issues on women and other vulnerable cohorts.
9	There are a number of organisations addressing the issue of homelessness from different approaches so it is important to connect the dots to avoid redundancy.	Council agrees that the duplication of services is to be avoided, to maximise the efficacy of available resources. Action C. 1, which establishes the Affordable Housing Reference Group, aims to promote communication and collaboration between actants to mitigate potential redundancies.
	The City of Hollywood (Florida) formed a Multi-Agency Task Force, including social service, health and law enforcement agencies, to take a unified approach in identifying available services and help connect those in need with the various providers. More recently a smaller Homeless Task Force is taking the same approach.	Action C. 1, which establishes the Affordable Housing Reference Group, aims to promote a unified approach between agencies, individuals, companies and Council, to identify possibilities for innovation through collaboration, and maximise efficient use of resources
	City of Hollywood police officers also work with local court system to break the cycle of minor offences related to homelessness leading to incarceration and future escalation.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission for future consideration by the AHRG.
	City of Hollywood operates Family Reunification program, liaising with relatives and funding a bus ticket and personal items for a homeless person to rejoin familial support where appropriate. Funded by textile collection bins, remittance by textile entity goes to program support.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission for future consideration by the AHRG.
	Finding affordable housing for those experiencing homelessness appears to be a global issue. It is the same here in the City of Hollywood where finding both temporary and long term housing solutions is very difficult.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.

	Broward County operates a Landlord Recruitment Initiative, where the county matches landlords who have available rental properties with those experiencing homelessness. Rent is guaranteed by local government, funded by State & Federal Governments, administered through homeless assistance organisations.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission for future consideration by the AHRG.
	The Hollywood Youth Ambassador Program is to foster open and positive communication between city government, law enforcement, and the youth of our community. Students serve as liaisons and discuss youth-related issues, while learning and participating in their local municipal government. Youth Ambassadors are tasked with developing and implementing education and awareness programs designed to create safer communities.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission for future consideration by the AHRG in formulating proposals for youth support.
10	Strategy succeeds in identifying and categorising the range of issues and affected parts of community.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.
	Council to be congratulated on taking proactive approach to guide future efforts.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission.
	However, I am concerned that it does not address a) lack of housing stock to meet needs of most vulnerable; b) more flexibility needed in planning; c) heritage constraints on properties in central areas.	<p>There are a broad variety of factors that contribute to heightened vulnerability to housing issues, often combining to increase susceptibility, with different cohorts affected in differing ways. Community Housing providers are adept at supplying the allied support services to the most vulnerable; Council does not have capacity to replicate these services, aiming instead to decrease demand by facilitating the availability of dwellings for those with less complex needs.</p> <p>Planning systems are regulated by legislation, and as such Council has limited scope for flexibility. Under Action P 1.3, Council will assess the Greater Shepparton Planning Scheme to pursue opportunities to facilitate delivery of Affordable Housing.</p> <p>Similarly, heritage constraints on private properties are regulated through the Heritage Overlay, under the Greater Shepparton Planning Scheme, which is applied through a detailed and rigorous process. As the Planning Authority and in response to the Ministerial Notice on criteria for Affordable Housing, Council is obliged to take comprehensive planning considerations into account when facilitating Affordable Housing, ensuring that the objective 'to balance the present and future interests of all Victorians' is fulfilled through avoidance of concomitant issues, such as the irreparable loss of heritage fabric.</p>



	I am concerned for youth entering the market, especially those with limited resources, forced out of home due to domestic violence etc., with no rental history, and no fixed address.	Council officers acknowledge and note the contents of this submission. Young people and those experiencing domestic violence have been identified as vulnerable cohorts.
	Youth needs to be a key target, to better care for at-risk people rather than treat problems once they become homeless.	There are a number of vulnerable cohorts in Greater Shepparton, of which youth is one. Through the implementation of their Affordable Housing Strategy, Council aims to develop the organisational foundations and resources to enable targeted responses to address the needs of each cohort.

Table 15. Responses received during Draft Consultation

DRAFT

## Pre-draft Consultation Survey Questions

#	Organisational Survey	Public Survey
1.	<p>What sector do you work in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Housing</li> <li>• Other not-for-profit sector</li> <li>• Property Development and/or sales</li> <li>• Local Government</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	<p>Which of the following best describes your living arrangements?</p> <p>a) Tenure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homeless/short term options (couch-surfing, tent, emergency housing, etc.)</li> <li>• In long term community or social housing</li> <li>• Rental, without lease</li> <li>• Rental, with lease</li> <li>• Owning, with mortgage</li> <li>• Owning, no mortgage</li> </ul> <p>b) Bedrooms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less than one person/couple per bedroom (you have spare bedrooms)</li> <li>• One person/couple per bedroom (no spare bedrooms)</li> <li>• Each adult/couple has own bedroom, some/all children share</li> <li>• More than 1 unrelated adult per bedroom (not a de facto couple)</li> </ul>
2.	<p>On a rating of one to ten, where 10 is 'very important', how important do you think the issue of Social and Affordable Housing is to Greater Shepparton's social and economic growth?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not important</li> <li>• Somewhat important</li> <li>• Important</li> <li>• Very Important</li> </ul>	<p>On a rating of one to ten, where 10 is 'very important', how important do you think the issue of Social and Affordable Housing is to Greater Shepparton's social and economic growth?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not important</li> <li>• Somewhat important</li> <li>• Important</li> <li>• Very Important</li> </ul>
3.	<p>Why do you rate the issue in this way (not important, somewhat important, important, very important)? (text box)</p>	<p>Why do you rate the issue in this way (not important, somewhat important, important, very important)? (text box)</p>
4.	<p>What do you see as the key challenges or issues impacting on the delivery of new Social and Affordable Rental Housing in Greater Shepparton? (text box)</p>	<p>What do you see as the key challenges or issues that limit the delivery of new Social and Affordable Rental Housing in Greater Shepparton? (text box)</p>
5.	<p>Considering the role of Local Government, what is your level of support for each of the following potential Council actions? (Note that these options are listed for survey purposes only and are not currently endorsed Council positions):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for increased State Government investment in Social Housing</li> <li>• Provide Council land to Housing Agencies for development as Social Housing</li> <li>• Seek to negotiate with private land owners to have Social and Affordable Housing included in developments</li> <li>• Support budgeting courses for lower income households</li> <li>• Implement a community engagement process to increase community support for Affordable Housing</li> <li>• Allow increased development of private sites if Affordable Housing is provided</li> <li>• Fast-tracking planning applications for Social Housing (not support, support, strongly support, unsure)</li> </ul>	<p>Which areas do you think Council should prioritise for Affordable Housing (tick all that apply):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shepparton/Mooroopna/Kialla</li> <li>• Larger townships</li> <li>• Smaller townships</li> <li>• All areas</li> <li>• Unsure</li> </ul>
6.	<p>The State Government is supporting Local Council's to negotiate with land owners to secure an Affordable Housing Agreement as part of the planning approval process. If the Council was to seek to negotiate, what is your level of support for the following potential incentives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased development yield / capacity (i.e. build more dwellings)</li> </ul>	<p>Are there any specific opportunities you would like Council to consider supporting or taking action to increase the supply of Social and Affordable Housing?</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced planning contributions</li> <li>• Other incentives such as reduced rates for Housing Agencies</li> <li>• Other (please state)</li> </ul>	
7.	<p>If Council was to take actions to facilitate more Social and Affordable Housing, do you think it should focus on (select one):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Housing or other Affordable Rental Housing</li> <li>• Affordable home ownership</li> <li>• Both Social/Affordable rental and home ownership</li> </ul>	Other comments?
8.	<p>Which areas do you think Council should prioritise for Affordable Housing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main townships</li> <li>• All areas</li> <li>• Unsure</li> </ul>	
9.	<p>Please note any specific opportunities you would like Council to consider supporting or taking action to increase the supply of Social and Affordable Housing?</p>	
10.	Other comments?	

Table 16: Pre-draft consultation survey questions

DRAFT

## References

- <sup>i</sup> ABS
- <sup>ii</sup> The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) understands 'homelessness' as 'home'lessness, not 'roof'lessness. The statistical definition states that when a person does not have suitable accommodation alternatives they are considered homeless if their current living arrangement is in a dwelling that is inadequate; or has no tenure, or if their initial tenure is short and not extendable; or does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations.  
(<https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/4922.0Main%20Features22012?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=4922.0&issue=2012&num=&view=>)
- <sup>iii</sup> ABS
- <sup>iv</sup> Department of Health and Human Services (2019) Rental Report, time series,
- <sup>v</sup> Assuming cost to Government of \$250,000 per dwelling.
- <sup>vi</sup> Nepal, B., Tanton, R. & Harding, A. 2010, 'Measuring Housing Stress: How Much do Definitions Matter?', Urban Policy and Research, Vol. 28, No. 2, p. 211-24.
- <sup>vii</sup> *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- <sup>viii</sup> Victoria Government Gazette 6 June 2019)
- <sup>ix</sup> The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) understands 'homelessness' as 'home'lessness, not 'roof'lessness. The statistical definition states that when a person does not have suitable accommodation alternatives they are considered homeless if their current living arrangement is in a dwelling that is inadequate; or has no tenure, or if their initial tenure is short and not extendable; or does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations.  
(<https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/4922.0Main%20Features22012?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=4922.0&issue=2012&num=&view=>)
- <sup>x</sup> SGS Economics and Planning
- <sup>xi</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission (2019) <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/age-discrimination/projects/risk-homelessness-older-women>
- <sup>xii</sup> Data provided by homeless service agencies and combined by Affordable Development Outcomes
- <sup>xiii</sup> Aboriginal Housing Victoria, Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Summit - Documents and Background Papers, 2019. Available at: <https://ahvic.org.au/communications-and-resources/vahhf>
- <sup>xiv</sup> Data provided by agencies and combined by Affordable Development Outcomes.
- <sup>xv</sup> Smith & Hetherington 2016, <https://www.eldertenant.org.au/content/the-adequacy-the-age-pension-australia-assessment-pensioner-living-standards>
- <sup>xvi</sup> ID Consulting (2019)
- <sup>xvii</sup> Wiesel, I. and Habibis, D. (2015) NDIS, housing assistance and choice and control for people with disability, AHURI Final Report 258, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Melbourne
- <sup>xviii</sup> ID Consulting (2019)
- <sup>xix</sup> <https://www.ato.gov.au/individuals/super/withdrawing-and-using-your-super/first-home-super-saver-scheme/>
- <sup>xx</sup> <https://www.liberal.org.au/latest-news/2019/05/12/helping-australians-buy-their-first-home>
- <sup>xxi</sup> DHHS (2016) Housing assistance additional service delivery data 2018/19
- <sup>xxii</sup> Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2019), Planning Mechanisms for Affordable Housing, version dated 30/5/19
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Council Plan 2017-2021, p. 2.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> ID Consulting (2019) Community Profile
- <sup>xxv</sup> [http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/Final\\_report\\_version\\_4\\_Sep09\\_\(3\).pdf](http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/Final_report_version_4_Sep09_(3).pdf)
- <sup>xxvi</sup> ID Consulting (2019) Social Atlas
- <sup>xxvii</sup> ID Consulting (2019) Population forecast
- <sup>xxviii</sup> ID Consulting (2019) Community Profile
- <sup>xxix</sup> Department of Social Services (DSS) (2018) DSS Payment Demographic Data, December 2018, Greater Shepparton, author's analysis
- <sup>xxx</sup> DSS (2018) *ibid*
- <sup>xxxi</sup> ID Consulting (2019) Community Profile
- <sup>xxxii</sup> DHHS (2019) Rental Report, Time Series, 2017-18 median rents by dwelling type,  
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-01/melbourne-spreads-and-regional-renters-struggle-to-find-a-home/10929658>
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> DHHS (2019) Rental Report, Time Series, 2017-18 median rents by dwelling type, author's analysis
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> DHHS (2019) Rental Report, Time Series, published March 2019, Author's analysis
- <sup>xxxv</sup> DHHS (2018) Rental Report, Time Series, published March 2019, Author's analysis
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> ID Consulting (2019) Community Profile
- <sup>xxxvii</sup> ID Consulting+ special catalogue order; Australian Bureau of Statistics- 2016 Census of Population and Housing - June Release - ID: 2016OUTPUT- for Dwelling Records- Local Government Areas (2016 Boundaries), tenure by households in the bottom 40 % of household income
- <sup>xxxviii</sup> ID Consulting (2019) Social Atlas
- <sup>x</sup> Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2019) Victorian Property Sales Report, sales by house and unit types by suburb, October 2017 – December 2018
- <sup>xi</sup> Victorian Valuer General (2019) Residential Price Statistics 1998 – 2019, Greater Shepparton
- <sup>xii</sup> ID Consulting (2019) Social Atlas, with further analysis by Affordable Development Outcomes using ABS data
- <sup>xiii</sup> ID Consulting (2019) Social Atlas
- <sup>xiv</sup> Davern, M., Roberts, R. & Higgs, C. (2018), Neighbourhood Liveability Assessment of Shepparton: The application of indicators as evidence to plan for a healthy and liveable regional city. RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia
- <sup>xv</sup> ABS (2016) 2049000006\_2016 Census of Population and Housing: Estimating homelessness, 2016, Table 6.1,
- <sup>xvi</sup> ABS (2016) and analysis by Affordable Development Outcomes
- <sup>xvii</sup> Note that whilst considered a small proportion, a person may present and be recorded as a client at more than one agency and therefore be represented more than once in the data.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Data provided by agencies and combined by Affordable Development Outcomes. Note that a person may contact a service but not be recorded as a client.
- <sup>xix</sup> Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Housing Assistance Delivery Data 2017 – 18. As this data is expected to be more robust than self-reported Census data, the DHHS figure is used for the purposes of analysis. When comparing against 2016 dwelling numbers, the DHHS reported number of Social Housing dwellings as at 2015-2016 (1,635 dwellings) is used.