

# DRAFT Albury Local Housing Strategy

November 2022



AlburyCity





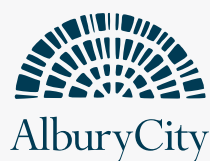
# Acknowledgement of Country

---

AlburyCity acknowledges the Wiradjuri people as the traditional custodians of the land in which we live and work and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, culture, tradition and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contribute to our community.

## Authorship

This document has been prepared by AlburyCity and HillPDA consulting.









# Contents

<b>Terms and definitions</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4 Diversity strategies</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>9</b>	4.1 Strategy four: Boost the proportion of overall housing stock that provides medium and high density options	35
1.1 What is a housing strategy?	9	4.2 Strategy five: Incentivise the private market to provide a wider variety of smaller dwelling options	38
1.2 Why do we need a housing strategy?	10	4.3 Strategy six: Promote the importance of access to housing that meets universal design principles	39
1.3 What are our housing needs?	11		
1.4 What did our community tell us?	12	<b>5 Affordability strategies</b>	<b>42</b>
1.5 What is the role of Council in housing provision?	14	5.1 Strategy seven: Present a clear policy position statement on affordable housing	43
<b>2 Policy, vision and objectives</b>	<b>17</b>	5.2 Strategy eight: Grow our supply of affordable rental housing	45
2.1 Policy alignment	17	5.3 Strategy nine: Grow our supply of social housing	49
2.2 Housing vision	20	<b>6 Resilience strategies</b>	<b>52</b>
2.3 Housing objectives	21	6.1 Strategy ten: Strengthen our social resilience	53
<b>3 Supply strategies</b>	<b>24</b>	6.2 Strategy eleven: Improve the environmental performance of new residential estates	54
3.1 Current housing supply	25	6.3 Strategy twelve: Encourage design and delivery of sustainable homes	55
3.2 Future housing demand	26	<b>7 Action plan</b>	<b>57</b>
3.3 Future housing supply pipeline	27		
3.4 Strategy One: Support delivery of new residential infill to achieve a better balance with new greenfield development	28		
3.5 Strategy Two: Ensure all new housing development is properly supported by infrastructure	30		
3.6 Strategy Three: Actively assist applicants to navigate administrative processes in the development assessment system	31		

# Terms and definitions

Term	Definition
<b>Affordable housing/ Affordable rental housing</b>	<p>Housing that households on very low to moderate income can afford, as defined in the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> and <i>State Environment Planning Policy (Housing) 2021</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very low – 50 per cent of median income</li> <li>• Low – 50 to 80 per cent of median income</li> <li>• Moderate – 80 to 120 per cent of median income.</li> </ul>
<b>Dwellings</b>	All types of housing, from granny flats and studios to apartments, townhouses, terraces, duplexes and standalone homes.
<b>Home ownership</b>	When people own where they live, either outright or with a mortgage.
<b>Homelessness</b>	The lack of a 'home', not the lack of a 'roof', where the space someone lives in lacks security, stability, privacy and safety. Homelessness includes people sleeping rough, living in improvised dwellings or tents, living in temporary shelters and couch-surfing.
<b>Households</b>	One or more persons, at least one of whom is at least 15 years of age, usually resident in the same private dwelling. This means that there may potentially be more than one household within the same private dwelling.
<b>Housing affordability</b>	The ability of a household to afford the cost of housing compared with the financial situation of households. Often measured using the proportion of households living in a given area who experience housing stress.
<b>Housing pipeline</b>	The amount of approved, but not yet completed housing supply for an area. The housing pipeline changes over time as new dwellings are approved, projects are amended or abandoned and dwellings are completed.
<b>Housing continuum</b>	People's diverse housing experiences, including homelessness, home ownership, renting and housing needs for seniors or people with disability. People move back and forth along the continuum depending on life events, aspirations and capacity.
<b>Housing stress</b>	A household is considered to be in housing stress if it has an income in the bottom 40 per cent of either Greater Sydney's or Regional NSW's income distribution and is paying more than 30 per cent of its income in housing costs.
<b>Housing typologies</b>	The shape and form of housing, including the varying scale, layout, number of bedrooms and whether housing is usable and accessible by all people. The availability of different typologies depends on an area's landscape, topography, controls and proximity to centres, services, facilities, and transport.

Term	Definition
<b>Local character</b>	What makes a neighbourhood distinctive and gives a place identity, including the way it looks and feels. A combination of land, people, built environment, history, culture and tradition.
<b>Local Housing Strategy</b>	A long-term plan that establishes the future housing needs for a local government area and describes the approach a council plans to take to meet the housing aspirations of the community.
<b>Social housing</b>	Housing for people on low incomes or people in housing crisis, which the government or community housing providers own or manage. Rents are based on income. Social housing includes what is commonly referred to as public housing.
<b>Specialist housing</b>	Accommodation designed for unique needs such as housing for people with disability (including group homes) or older people (such as residential care units).
<b>Universal design</b>	The design of homes to meet residents' needs across their lifetime. A universally designed home should be easy to enter, easy to move around and easily and cost effectively adaptable. The Liveable Housing Design Guidelines (Liveable Housing Australia) outline design elements for liveable housing.

Source: Adapted from NSW Government Housing 2041 – NSW Housing Strategy









# 1. Introduction

This Local Housing Strategy is the framework that will guide and influence effective planning and policy solutions for the provision of diverse, well designed and affordable housing in the Albury Local Government Area (LGA) for the next 20 years.

## 1.1 What is a housing strategy?

Local housing strategies describe the approach a council plans to take to meet their housing objectives. They are formulated through evidence based research and with input from the community. They enable councils to consider the housing needs of their LGA in a holistic manner and determine where and how housing should be delivered to address these needs.

This Local Housing Strategy was developed by building on two important background documents:



### 1. Housing Evidence Paper

Research and data analysis (quantitative research), including demographic factors, the supply and demand for housing and local land use opportunities and constraints.



### 2. What We've Heard Report

A summary of the community input (qualitative research), including consultation findings on community housing experiences and aspirations.



### Local Housing Strategy

**Together**, these background documents and a strong commitment from local community and housing industry groups, have resulted in the vision, strategies and actions for housing which are presented in this Local Housing Strategy.

## 1.2 Why do we need a housing strategy?

The need for this Local Housing Strategy is identified in our *Local Strategic Planning Statement* (adopted 2020). The Local Housing Strategy will be a supporting document to help to deliver the right kinds of housing to support Albury's future population, in the right locations and at the right times.

In the past five years, especially since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, population growth and housing affordability has grown into a significant community concern. The amount and types of housing being delivered locally is not keeping pace with rates of demographic change.

Planning for housing is an important part of Council's responsibilities. This Local Housing Strategy enables both the government and private sectors to consider the housing needs of the Albury LGA in a comprehensive manner. Using evidence from many sources including input from the community, the Local Housing Strategy establishes:



**The greatest housing challenges we want to address:** By examining demographic trends that are affecting the composition of Albury's households, we can focus on those groups who are most in need of housing.



**The areas we can make the biggest difference:** By examining the supply and demand factors which influence the need for different types of housing, we can focus our efforts on the parts of the housing industry that require more support.



**Using Council's powers and policy levers to achieve housing objectives:** We focus on actions which local government can influence paying regard to local land use opportunities and constraints and also advocacy opportunities to other levels of government.

All LGA's have a continuum of housing supply as shown in Figure 1. The housing continuum is a concept that shows there are diverse housing experiences, including homelessness, home ownership and renting. People move back and forth along the continuum depending on life events, aspirations and income capacity. The focus of the Local Housing Strategy is primarily on affordable housing and market housing sectors because these are the parts of the housing continuum that Council is most able to influence.

**Figure 1: Focus of the Local Housing Strategy within the housing supply continuum**





## 1.3 What are our housing needs?

The Albury LGA offers a wide range of employment and lifestyle opportunities that continues to attract new residents. The *Albury Local Housing Strategy Evidence Paper* contains a comprehensive analysis of the factors that will influence the future of housing in Albury. Key findings from this Evidence Paper are highlighted below:



**We need to house a growing population:** Albury's population as at the 2021 Census was 56,093 people. Population forecasts made by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment project Albury's population to reach 76,341 people by 2041. Growing our population by more than 20,000 people over the next 20 years will require, on average, around 400 new homes each year (see section 3.2).



**We need to meet growing demand for housing for older residents:** Like most communities across Australia, Albury's population is ageing. In 2016, people aged over 65 years old made up 18 per cent of Albury's population. As at the 2021 Census, this figure has grown to nearly 20 per cent. The number of people in these older age groups who are retired or approaching retirement will keep growing.



**We would benefit from greater diversity and choice in our housing:** While families with children are still the dominant household type in Albury, there is a growing trend for smaller household sizes. In 2021, we had approximately 7,000 households (31.6 per cent of all households) that consisted of only one person, a much higher proportion than the NSW average (25.0 per cent). Despite this, only 3.7 per cent of dwellings in Albury were one bedroom, while 73.7 per cent of dwellings had three or more bedrooms. This suggests that there may be an unmet demand for smaller dwellings. The average number of bedrooms per dwelling is 3.1, whilst the average number of people per household was 2.3. As occupancy rates decline, we will need a broader range of smaller dwelling types to provide greater housing choice and meet our population needs.



**Housing must be resilient and adaptable to suit changing lifestyles and consumer desires:**

The COVID-19 pandemic and national housing trends have resulted in people expecting more from their housing. Flexible spaces to facilitate working at home, home schooling, and accommodating visitors or part-time residents are highly sought after. People are concerned about the effects of climate change and natural disasters on housing, and environmentally-friendly dwellings are becoming popular.



**Housing is becoming more expensive:** The cost of renting and purchasing a home in Albury is rising. Over the year ending December 2021, the median rental list price in Albury increased by 16.7 per cent for a house, and 20.8 per cent for a unit. Median rent had increased by \$60 per week for a house and \$50 per week for a unit. Meanwhile, the cost of purchasing a home increased by 27.5 per cent for a house and 30.9 per cent for a unit over the year ending December 2021<sup>1</sup>. Despite recent price rises, our housing stock remains comparatively affordable at a range of price points, relative to both similarly sized regional cities and metropolitan areas of NSW.



**We need more affordable housing:** In 2021, there were 1,010 households in Albury (4.3% of all households) in need of affordable housing as they were unable to access market-priced rental housing. In June 2021, there were 359 applicants on the waiting list for social housing in Albury. The expected waiting time for a studio or one bedroom social housing property is currently between five and ten years.

Around 30 per cent of all rental dwellings in Albury listed within the 12 months to December 2021 were considered affordable to households on a low income, but only 3.1 per cent were affordable to households on very low incomes. These figures dropped to 3.1 per cent and 0 per cent when considering rental dwellings affordable to lone person households on low and very low incomes (respectively)<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> .id (informed decisions) (2022) *AlburyCity Housing Monitor* <https://housing.id.com.au/albury>

<sup>2</sup> .id (informed decisions) (2022) *AlburyCity Housing Monitor Affordability Monitor* <https://housing.id.com.au/albury/affordability-and-availability#>

## 1.4 What did our community tell us?

The *What We've Heard Report* contains a summary of the feedback and ideas provided by the community during the development of the Local Housing Strategy.

It is estimated that in total, over 300 stakeholders participated across six consultation activities (see Figure 2). This included representatives from government agencies, peak bodies, industry groups, community organisations and members of the Albury community.

**Figure 2: Summary of community consultation**





The *What We've Heard Report* contains a summary of aspects of the Housing Discussion Paper that attracted the most comment and interest (see Figure 3):

**Figure 3: Common issues raised throughout community consultation**

### Supply



Most of Albury's greenfield housing growth is likely to continue in the Thurgoona Wirlinga Growth Area

Infrastructure, facilities and community services, especially green space provision, is not keeping pace with new housing developments

Identified preference for large homes and land blocks that suit the needs of young families

There should be more choice and variety in the housing market than there currently is to better meet the needs of families without children (especially lone persons)

### Diversity



There should be a wider housing mix especially medium density typologies like townhouses and duplexes to provide more affordable options for smaller households and households with lower income levels

Desire for strong standards around the quality of built form outcomes for smaller one and two bedroom homes so that they do not impact on the character and amenity of existing neighbourhoods, especially in relation to higher density apartment buildings

Concern that affordable housing is not being designed appropriately, especially when it comes to accessibility (meeting universal design standards).

### Affordability



Support for increased provision of social and affordable housing

More housing is needed that is specially designed and/or made available specifically to meet the differing needs of occupants, particularly disability housing, seniors and aged care housing, student housing and housing for people who are migrating here for employment

There is insufficient private rental housing available and that this is driving the need for more temporary accommodation options and putting people at risk of homelessness

### Resilience




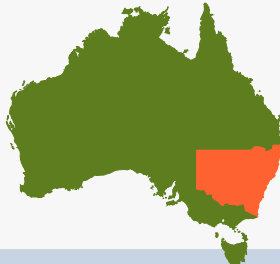

Support for an increased focus on the environmental sustainability of housing, ensuring that higher quality design outcomes are achieved so that both individual houses and the broader urban area are more resilient to the impacts of a changing climate

Current planning rules (across all levels of government) are not adequately addressing the social and environmental impacts of population and housing growth

## 1.5 What is the role of Council in housing provision?

In Australia, housing policy is a web of interrelated decisions influenced by all three levels of government shown in Table 1. Due to this dispersion of responsibilities, delivering a meaningful increase in the supply, diversity and affordability of housing requires a collective effort and commitment across all levels of government.

**Table 1: The roles of different levels of Australia's government in housing policy**

		
Commonwealth Government	NSW Government	Local Government
Responsibility		
<p><b>Policy levers impact primarily on housing demand.</b></p> <p>Responsible for taxation settings such as benefits given to investors (i.e., negative gearing and capital gains tax reductions), provision of finance for social housing (National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation) and provision of welfare support (Commonwealth Rent Assistance).</p>	<p><b>Policy levers impact primarily on housing supply.</b></p> <p>Responsible for approving new land release and zoning laws, collecting stamp duty and land taxes, setting laws relating to rental tenancy and strata. Also funds and provides social housing for (eligible) people who are unable to afford a private rental dwelling.</p>	<p><b>Policy levers primarily through application of zoning laws and development controls.</b></p> <p>Implements the timing and quantity of new land release, provides local services and facilities, levies rates and developer contributions.</p>
Example policy activities		
<p><b>National Housing Supply and Affordability Council</b></p> <p>In June 2022, the federal government committed to setting up this Council to provide a shared resource on national targets, achievements and milestones. Advice from a panel of experts in this Council will inform the development of a National Housing and Homelessness Plan.<sup>3</sup></p>	<p><b>NSW Regional Housing Taskforce</b></p> <p>Set up in 2021, the Taskforce investigated regional housing issues and the planning barriers people are experiencing in buying, renting and building a place to live in the regions. The NSW Government will implement the recommendations to provide 127,000 new homes over the next 10 years.<sup>4</sup></p>	<p><b>Advocacy Strategy 2022-2025</b></p> <p>This Strategy outlines how Council will listen to, represent, promote and advance priority community interests. This includes working to increase investment from State and Federal government for the benefit of Albury. The topic "Improving access to housing" is allocated as Tier 1, meaning projects will have the highest level of focus.</p>

<sup>3</sup> Ministers on the Department of Social Services The Hon Julie Collins MP Speeches National Homeless Conference 8 August 2022 <https://ministers.dss.gov.au/speeches/8756>

<sup>4</sup> NSW Department of Planning and Environment (2022) <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/regional-housing>



Actions from this Local Housing Strategy will be implemented in collaboration, partnership and consultation with private developers, community housing providers and our community. In developing this Local Housing Strategy, consultation activities sought to determine the views of our community on which approach to influencing housing they would prefer to see Council adopt (outlined in Table 2).

**Table 2: Consultation findings on the preferred role of Council in housing**

<b>Role of Council</b>	<b>Level of support</b>	<b>Summary of community sentiment</b>
<b>Advocate to other levels of Government</b>	High	Ensure Albury is getting its fair share of resources
<b>Lead community engagement and broker partnerships</b>	High	Act as a leader and coordinate with local agencies and networks
<b>Review local planning controls</b>	Moderate	Minimise impediments and provide financial incentives Don't add to housing costs or approval times
<b>Undertake partnership projects using Council or other Government owned land</b>	Moderate	Help the Community Housing sector and Specialist Disability Accommodation sector to grow, but don't do their job for them Identify Council, Crown Lands or other public owned lands that could be suitable for mixed tenure residential development, but don't act as the developer
<b>Intervene directly in the housing market to improve affordability and diversity</b>	Moderate	Be more proactive in planning and partnership strategies with social and affordable housing providers to deliver diverse and affordable housing As a last resort, step up to fill the provision gaps in affordable housing

In response to community sentiment, the Local Housing Strategy proposes a tiered approach to Council's implementation of housing strategies that integrates with Council's advocacy model. Most emphasis will be given to proactive raising awareness and presenting a clear signal to other levels of government, our community and industry that Council is serious about addressing housing issues. Moderate emphasis will be given to supporting partners in the government, private and community sectors to deliver housing. Less emphasis will be given to Council directly intervening in the housing market unless there is a clear business case to do so.



## 2. Policy, vision and objectives

To provide policy consistency across the planning system, the vision and objectives of the Local Housing Strategy are designed to align with the other important planning policies that have been developed for NSW, the Riverina-Murray region and Albury.

### 2.1 Policy alignment

This Local Housing strategy forms part of Albury's broader local planning framework, shown in Figure 4.

**Figure 4: Housing policy framework**

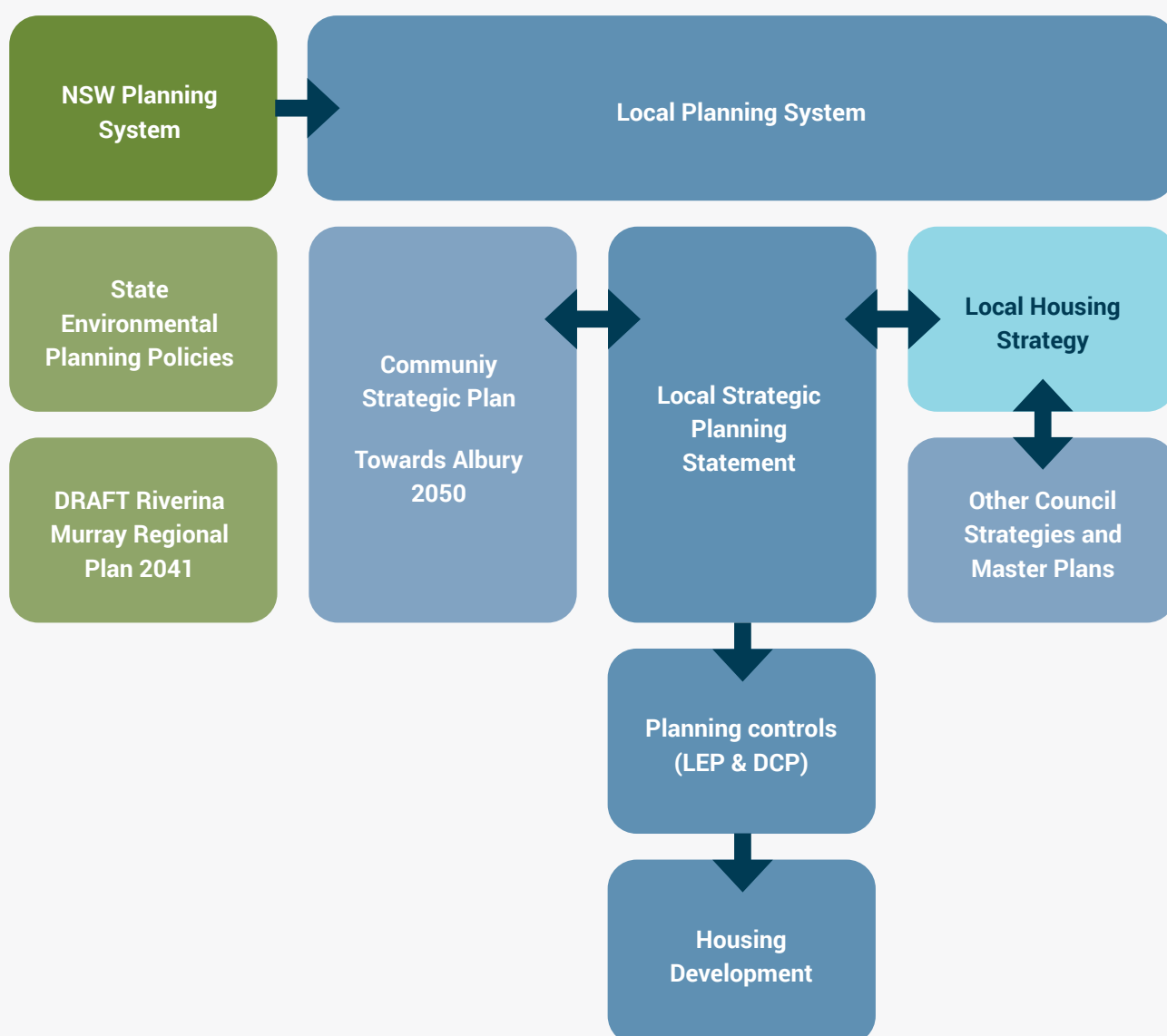




Table 4 provides a summary of how related housing policies and plans are considered and addressed in the development of this Local Housing Strategy. This excludes specific strategies for rural living areas of Albury, which are considered separately to this Local Housing Strategy under the *Rural Lands Strategy for Table Top and Splitters Creek (2015)*<sup>5</sup>.

**Table 3: Summary of housing policy alignment**

Policy	Direction provided	Alignment with LHS Strategy
<b>New South Wales</b>		
<b>State Environmental Planning Policies</b>	SEPP (Exempt and Complying Development Code) 2008 allows complying development for dwellings, one and two storey dual occupancies, manor houses and terraces	Strategy 4
	SEPP (Housing) 2021 aims to increase the supply and diversity of affordable rental and social housing in NSW, including guidance for the design quality of residential apartment development.	Strategy 4 Strategy 8 Strategy 9
	SEPP (Sustainable Buildings) 2022 sets sustainability standards for residential development and starts the process of measuring and reporting on the embodied emissions of construction materials	Strategy 12
<b>Housing 2041: NSW Housing Strategy</b>	Partner with councils to develop modern, fit-for-purpose social and affordable housing on Land and Housing Corporation land and support implementation of local housing strategies. (5.1.1)	Strategy 9
	Support councils to explore potential use of under-utilised operational land for the purposes of housing where this is deemed appropriate by local communities. (5.1.3)	Strategy 8
	Encourage all NSW councils to develop an affordable housing contribution scheme and seek changes to their local environment plan to capture affordable housing contributions under SEPP 70	Strategy 7
	Encourage and support NSW councils to update their planning controls to improve environmental performance, compliance with code and contribution to community net-zero targets	Strategy 12
<b>Regional</b>		
<b>Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041 (Draft)</b>	Councils should consider preparing local affordable housing strategies, either separately or as part of a local housing strategy, to identify solutions and actions to support low-income renters and purchasers (5.2)	Strategy 7
	The department will work with relevant state agencies and councils to identify and clarify the approvals process for local housing strategies to streamline the rezoning process	Strategy 1
	Strategic and statutory planning for the regional cities will aim to increase infill and higher residential densities within or close to the CBD (6.1)	Strategy 1

<sup>5</sup> AlburyCity website (2022) <https://www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au/strategies-and-plans/rural-lands-strategy-for-table-top-and-splitters-creek>


Policy	Direction provided	Alignment with LHS Strategy
<b>Albury LGA</b>		
<b>Towards Albury 2050: Community Strategic Plan</b>	Albury is a liveable city supporting sustainable population growth through the provision of high quality infrastructure, industry-leading services and high levels of amenity whilst being zero emission and a climate resilient city	Strategy 2 Strategy 11
<b>Local Strategic Planning Statement (2020)</b>	Prepare an Affordable Housing Strategy, as identified in the Prevention of Homelessness Strategy (2.1)	Strategy 7
	Encourage a mix of residential development (2.3)	Strategy 4 Strategy 5
	Support infill development and revitalisation of established residential areas (2.4)	Strategy 1 Strategy 4
	Prepare a comprehensive Housing Strategy (2.6)	All strategies
<b>Prevention of Homelessness Strategy</b>	Develop an Affordable Housing Strategy/Policy to look at suitable housing options across the LGA to better cater for the demand and needs of the community and to ensure that a variety of suitable housing is available.	Strategy 7
<b>Advocacy Strategy</b>	Improve access to housing research by AlburyCity, NSW Land and Housing Corporation and other key stakeholders to show there are shortages in public, social and affordable housing.	Strategy 8 Strategy 9



## 2.2 Housing vision

This Local Housing Strategy is consistent with the recently adopted Towards Albury 2050 Community Strategic Plan, as well as Priority Two of our *Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)* to deliver “diverse, well designed and affordable housing.”<sup>6</sup>

In response to research and community feedback, the housing vision within our LSPS has been refined as follows:



AlburyCity is committed to diverse, well-designed and affordable housing opportunities in existing urban areas and our planned Thurgoona Wirlinga Growth Area.

In existing urban areas this will be achieved through compatible infill development that respects our environmental and heritage assets and is focussed around activity centres, providing good access to services and facilities.

We will seek to ensure that housing opportunities and choice provide improved residential amenity and cater for changing household types such as increase in lone-person households and an ageing population.

<sup>6</sup> AlburyCity (2020) *Albury Local Strategic Planning Statement* p. 20



## 2.3 Housing objectives

The objectives of this Local Housing Strategy are structured around four themes – supply, diversity, affordability and resilience. These themes are the same as those set out in the NSW Housing Strategy *Housing 2041*, align with the NSW *Local Housing Strategy Guideline and Template*<sup>7</sup> and are adapted to best reflect the local housing context.

The four housing objectives for Albury are:



**1. Supply:** Our supply of zoned land, serviced land and redevelopment sites are well managed and enable housing development to respond to the requirements of different types of households



**2. Diversity:** There is a greater variety of housing options that offer households a wider range of market choices



**3. Affordability:** We have housing stock that is affordable, stable and supportive of the aspirations and wellbeing of all our residents, especially those in greatest need



**4. Resilience:** Our housing supports community and environmental goals so that residents feel safe, connected, comfortable, are resilient and limits their impact on the natural environment.

These four housing objectives and their supporting strategies are summarised in Table 5. The strategies are detailed in the following sections (section 3 to section 6) and are supported by an action plan outlined in Section 7.

The four housing objectives and their strategies were informed by the supporting documents, *Albury Local Housing Strategy Evidence Paper* and *What We've Heard Report*, and give effect to the directions of state regional and local policies as outlined previously in Table 4.



<sup>7</sup> NSW Government Department of Planning <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Local-Housing-Strategies/Local-Housing-Strategy-Guideline>

**Table 4: Overview of Objectives and Strategies**


Vision			
<p>AlburyCity is committed to diverse, well-designed and affordable housing opportunities in existing urban areas and our planned Thurgoona Wirlinga Growth Area.</p> <p>In existing urban areas this will be achieved through compatible infill development that respects our environmental and heritage assets and is focussed around activity centres, providing good access to services and facilities.</p> <p>We will seek to ensure that housing opportunities and choice provide improved residential amenity and cater for changing household types such as increase in lone-person households and an ageing population</p>			
Supply	Diversity	Affordability	Resilience
Objectives			
Our supply of zoned land, serviced land and redevelopment sites are well managed and enable housing development to respond to the requirements of different types of households	There is a greater variety of housing options that offer households a wider range of market choices	We have housing stock that is affordable, stable and supportive of the aspirations and wellbeing of all our residents, especially those in greatest need	Our housing supports social and environmental goals so that residents feel safe, connected, comfortable and limit their impact on the natural environment.
Strategies			
Strategy 1: Support delivery of new residential infill to achieve a better balance with new greenfield development	Strategy 4: Boost the proportion of overall housing stock that provides medium and high density options	Strategy 7: Present a clear policy on affordable housing	Strategy 10: Strengthen our social resilience
Strategy 2: Ensure all new housing development is properly supported by infrastructure	Strategy 5: Incentivise the private market to provide a wider variety of dwelling types	Strategy 8: Grow our supply of affordable rental dwellings	Strategy 11: Improve the environmental performance of new residential estates
Strategy 3: Actively assist applicants to navigate the development assessment system	Strategy 6: Promote the importance of access to housing that meets universal design principles	Strategy 9: Grow our supply of social housing	Strategy 12: Encourage design and delivery of sustainable homes





LLAK

ADDICTION

611

pj murphy

spray tanni

addicti

611



## 3. Supply strategies



**Objective: Our supply of zoned land, serviced land and redevelopment sites are well managed and enable housing development in the right locations to respond to market demand and the variety of requirements of households.**

Albury is a nationally significant regional city experiencing sustained population growth above 1 per cent per year since the year 2000, which has increased to 1.4 per cent per annum since 2016. Along with our cross border city, Albury Wodonga is recognised as Australia's 20th largest city with a combined estimated residential population of 99,219 people as at 2021. The LGA possesses numerous competitive advantages including a high value environment and strong liveability.

Projections indicate that Albury will continue to experience population growth at a rate of between 1.3 per cent to 1.7 per cent each year, noting there has been a recent acceleration in this population growth arising from impacts induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. This means more housing will be needed to support local economic growth and development of the Albury region to ensure we can attract a workforce to facilitate meeting our full potential in the post-COVID recovery, underpinned by expanding health, education and agribusiness sectors.

### Key supply findings from the Evidence Paper

Current pressures in housing markets are being universally felt across Australia, in both rental and purchase markets. These pressures are mostly driven by cyclical and macroeconomic factors largely stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic:

- House values have reached record highs – the combined value of residential real estate in Australia is just under \$10 trillion (June 2022), up from \$8.4 trillion at the beginning of the pandemic (March 2021)
- Record low interest rates saw many first home buyers taking advantage of favourable conditions during the first year of the pandemic to enter the housing market, with first home buyer owner occupier loans peaking in January 2021
- There have been steep increases in rental prices with the national vacancy rate falling to 1% (June 2022), its lowest level since 2006
- There have been rising rates of internal migration, with a significant uptick in the number of people leaving major cities and moving into regional areas.

Housing supply in regional areas has generally been meaningfully boosted only when federal governments have offered major housing stimulus (RAI December 2021). In that respect, the latest stimulus – HomeBuilder – has been significant for regional areas like Albury.

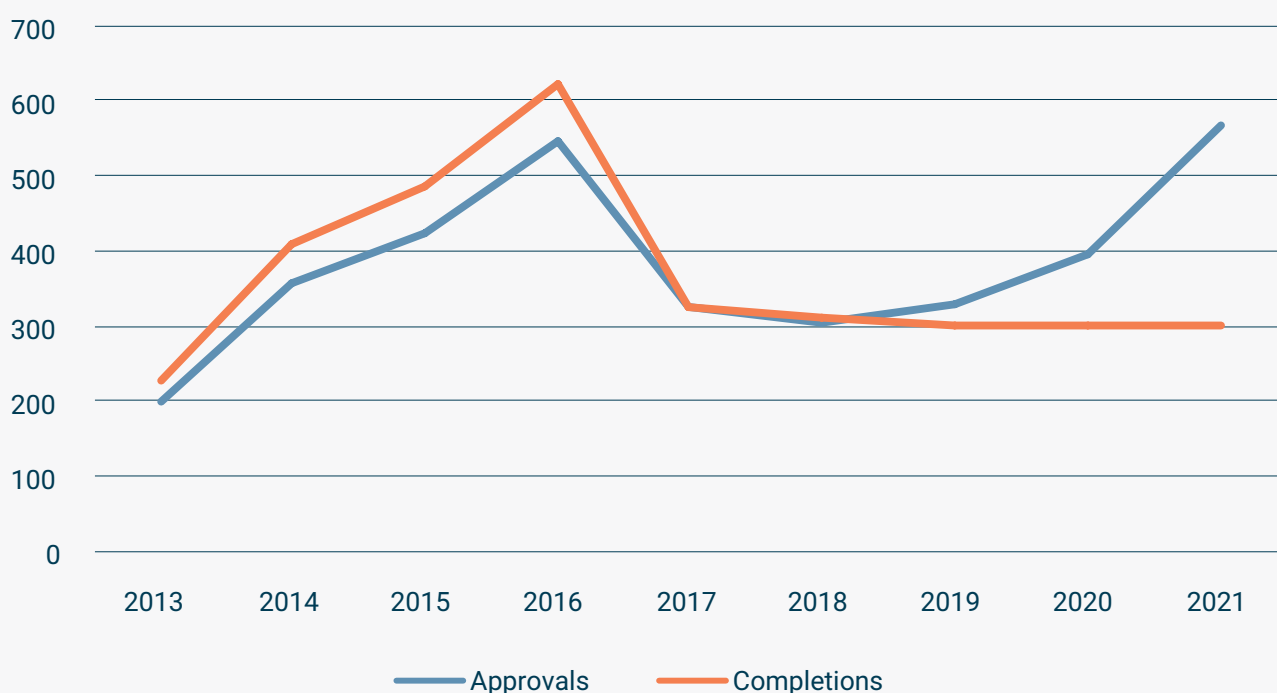




### 3.1 Current housing supply

Until recently, new home building in Albury has generally kept pace with population growth over the long term, producing at least 300 completed homes each year. Since 2019 however, there has been a widening gap between the number of new residential (dwellings) buildings being approved and the number of dwelling completions. When approvals exceed the number of constructions and completions (shown in Figure 5), it indicates that factors other than the planning approval system are shaping housing supply. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, it almost certainly reflects how a recent housing market upturn has coincided with construction material and labour shortages. This is delaying housing completions many months to more than a year later than their approval date. In an economic downturn the opposite is true – building approvals may be much lower than completions as not much is in the housing supply pipeline.

**Figure 5: Number of new dwellings approved versus completed 2013 to 2021**



Source: .id Housing Monitor, Housing Supply Albury City <https://housing.id.com.au/albury/housing-and-approvals#how-is-housing-supply-activity-tracking>

### 3.2 Future housing demand

Based on current knowledge about rates of population growth and household size, it is forecast that by 2036, Albury will require approximately 4,454 additional dwellings beyond 2021 supplies (see Table 6). This means that for the next 15 years, an average supply of 297 dwellings per year will be needed across Albury to meet projected demand. Recent population projections compiled by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment suggest that by 2036, the implied dwelling demand for Albury could be even higher, requiring approximately 8,352 additional dwellings beyond 2021 supplies. This would mean that for the next 15 years, an average supply of 557 dwellings per year would be needed across Albury to meet projected demand (see Table 6).

**Table 5: Forecast population, households and dwellings**

Albury City (LGA)	.id Forecast			Change	NSW Department of Planning and Environment Forecast			Change
Summary	2026	2031	2036	2021-2036	2026	2031	2036	2021-2036
Population	60,003	63,657	67,427	+11,391	60,122	65,503	70,949	+14,913
Change in population (5yrs)	+3,845	+3,653	+3,770		+4,086	+5,381	+5,446	
Average annual change	1.33%	1.19%	1.16%		1.35%	1.64%	1.53%	
Households	24,888	26,361	27,835	+4,407	25,822	28,427	31,150	+7,722
Average household size	2.36	2.36	2.37		2.27	2.24	2.21	
Dwellings (implied demand)	26,757	28,282	29,807	+4,454	28,716	31,646	34,716	+8,352

Source: Population and household forecasts, 2016 to 2036, Prepared by .id (informed decisions)

Source: NSW Common Planning Assumption Projections Local Government Areas (ASGS), Prepared by NSW Department of Planning and Environment 2022



### 3.3 Future housing supply pipeline

Albury's current planning controls facilitate a mix of both greenfield and infill development. As a result of previous planning by Council and the former Albury Wodonga Development Corporation, Albury has already effectively secured a long term supply of greenfield residential zoned land in the Thurgoona Wirlinga Growth Area to meet projected dwelling demand to the year 2060. Recent analysis undertaken by Council suggests that approximately 1,400 hectares of land zoned R1 General Residential is still yet to be developed (shown in Table 7). This undeveloped area is expected to accommodate between 14,000 and 21,000 dwellings, depending on lot sizes and dwelling density. This demonstrates that the adequate supply of appropriately zoned land for development in Albury is not a major housing supply constraint.

**Table 6: Forecast greenfield development potential in Thurgoona Wirlinga Precinct**

Land zoning	Area	Larger lot size/ lower density scenario	Smaller lot sizes/ higher density scenario
<b>R1 General Residential</b>	1,400 ha	14,000 dwellings	21,000 dwellings

In developing this Local Housing Strategy, economic consultancy firm HillPDA estimated the number of appropriately zoned lots within Albury's established urban area that may be suitable for infill development. They did this by identifying parcels of land that are not government owned, are not strata lots, are not affected by heritage provisions, were greater than 1,000 sqm and were located within 400m walking distance of a local retail centre<sup>8</sup>. Based on these assumptions, HillPDA found there are more than 3,600 lots across Albury that may be well suited for infill redevelopment<sup>9</sup>. It is noted there may also be other sites and locations suitable for infill development outside of this criteria.

**Table 7: Forecast infill development potential in Albury LGA**

Land zoning	Estimated number of available lots
<b>R1 General Residential</b>	2,732
<b>R3 Medium Density Residential</b>	210
<b>B1, B2 and B4 business zones</b>	663
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,605</b>

The above analysis of development potential in both greenfield and infill areas provides theoretical evidence that Albury has more than adequate supply of zoned land to accommodate all Albury's future housing demand under both conservative or more ambitious population scenarios. The strategies in this section therefore turn the focus to how to ensure these lots/land parcels are 'development ready' to provide suitable housing. In particular, the supply strategies examine how to maximise the efficiency of Council's infrastructure delivery programs, ensuring our zoned land is well serviced by roads, public transport, parks, healthcare and education services.

<sup>8</sup> This method does not take into account site specific constraints or multiple lots in joint ownership but it provides an indication of the availability of land that could potentially support higher density under current controls and the likely necessity to consolidate land holdings in order to achieve sufficient area to develop.

<sup>9</sup> This is an estimate only and further detailed site by site analysis would be needed to confirm the site suitability of each lot. Other sites across established urban areas outside of the criteria used may also be suitable for infill development.

### 3.4 Strategy One: Support delivery of new residential infill to achieve a better balance with new greenfield development

New development (greenfield housing) in the Thurgoona Wirlinga growth area is anticipated to continue as the main location for most of Albury's future housing growth.

Increasing the share of development that occurs in Albury's established urban areas (infill development) can better utilise existing infrastructure by encouraging more houses in locations that already have good access to a range of existing services and facilities.

When guiding, assessing or reviewing master plans for new housing development in greenfield or infill areas, Council considers a range of land use opportunities and constraints to establish to what degree they can support new housing (examples shown in Table 9).

**Table 8: Examples of some key considerations for future housing development**

	Environmental considerations	Infrastructure considerations
<b>Greenfield housing development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban growth interfaces with conservation zones. These zones form a consolidated network of land with high biodiversity value that needs to be maintained as 'avoided land' (non-development areas) so that threatened species are protected.</li> <li>• Urban growth increases the area in which people, buildings and infrastructure are exposed to risk of natural hazards, requiring a risk-management approach.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversion of vacant land to residential use requires major infrastructure expenditure over an extended period</li> <li>• Large Council resource commitment required, potentially offset by grants from other levels of government.</li> </ul>
<b>Infill housing development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing more impervious surfaces like roofs and driveways produces more runoff and increases stormwater volumes</li> <li>• Areas with heritage conservation values may reduce redevelopment potential in some areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide range of existing infrastructure already available supports efficient use</li> </ul>

To date, infill development in Albury's established urban areas make a smaller contribution to annual new housing supply than new dwellings in our greenfield areas. In the past 5 years (December 2016 to December 2021), of the 1,649 total residential building approvals, 1,003 (60%) were located in the growth areas of Thurgoona, Wirlinga, Springdale Heights and Hamilton Valley<sup>10</sup>.

In the short to medium term, encouraging compatible infill development around activity centres at Albury City Centre and Lavington City Centre is most likely to provide more housing options with good access to public transport, parks, shopping centres, schools and other important social infrastructure. Council has already identified some urban renewal opportunities in the Albury and Lavington City Centres through its CBD Master Plans. Renewing large, consolidated sites in these locations can act as anchors for the City Centres, improving amenity, providing housing, and opportunities for new businesses and services.

<sup>10</sup> AlburyCity Housing Monitor (Housing Supply) (2022) .id , sourced from ABS, Building Approvals, Australia SA1 level unpublished data - quarterly release.



Also in the short term, the upcoming review of the Thurgoona Wirlinga Precinct can examine opportunities to encourage higher density in areas that are, or will be, around neighbourhood and village centres.

South Albury also provides excellent opportunities for housing growth as it has walkable access to facilities and services located in Albury's City Centre and offers a reasonable supply of potential infill development sites. While any potential future development in South Albury is partially constrained by flooding, there is opportunity to review zoning and planning controls for the future development of the area. South Albury also hosts employment-zoned lands containing commercial and industrial uses, and any potential development in this area must consider impacts and opportunities from these uses.

#### **Strategy one Action Plan:**

1. Update the Master Plans for Albury and Lavington City Centres
2. Review the Thurgoona Wirlinga Precinct Structure Plan for opportunities for denser housing around village centres
3. Prepare a Master Plan for South Albury





### 3.5 Strategy Two: Ensure all new housing development is properly supported by infrastructure

Housing growth in the Thurgoona Wirlinga Growth Area needs to be matched with delivery of infrastructure including open space, roads, water, sewer and community facilities. Infrastructure and facility costs associated with the development of Thurgoona Wirlinga Precinct are estimated at around \$550 million.

In developing this Local Housing Strategy, consultation identified that some residents in Thurgoona-Wirlinga Growth Area are experiencing limited access to important infrastructure including shops, schools and public transport. This situation is common in greenfield development where housing delivery and associated population growth take time to reach the thresholds needed to trigger delivery of public facilities or support sufficient demand for the private sector to consider retail and service delivery. While it is challenging to address these issues, better understanding the current and future need for social infrastructure in the LGA and how it can be delivered in a timely and cost-effective manner, will assist the planning for new urban areas and service delivery approaches to improve access to services and facilities.

Council is planning to review the Structure Plan for the Thurgoona Wirlinga Growth Area in 2023-2024. This will include a revised staging plan to help promote the orderly development through allowing housing to be delivered in areas where the incoming population can be best supported by services and facilities or providing with appropriate connections. Imposing a minimum density requirement that is tailored to the locational attributes of each Thurgoona-Wirlinga Growth Area precinct would support each precinct to reach population thresholds for service delivery. A minimum density within the range of 12-20 dwellings per hectare may be appropriate, subject to further investigations as part of the Thurgoona Wirlinga Precinct Structure Plan review.

The Albury Contributions Plan will also be updated to reflect outcomes from the city wide open space and social infrastructure studies and the updated Structure Plan and associated implications for population projections and infrastructure requirements and costings.



#### Strategy two Action Plan:

1. Prepare a social infrastructure strategy
2. Prepare an open space strategy
3. Complete a water and sewer Master Plan
4. Review and update infrastructure contributions plans
5. Review the Thurgoona Wirlinga Precinct Structure Plan for opportunities to improve infrastructure delivery and coordination



### 3.6 Strategy Three: Actively assist applicants to navigate administrative processes in the development assessment system

A key part of Council's role in housing is managing the local development assessment process. In addition to timely and considered assessment of lodged development applications, this includes providing potential proponents clear upfront information and resources on the planning process. This role is especially important because there are many differences between the NSW planning system and the Victorian planning system that can make it more complex for the housing industry to develop new housing in a cross-border context. Helping people to navigate the development process can encourage applicants to lodge development applications and reduce delays in assessment.

Council has recently taken steps to support the timely assessment of development applications including recruiting additional team members and providing planning templates and guidance for potential proponents to use. Further steps are needed to help improve the quality of development application documentation received by Council to avoid, or reduce the need for, additional information to be sought or issues resolved. Clear communication is particularly important when the NSW Government makes changes to planning rules or processes, such as the requirement that from July 2021 all customers must lodge their planning applications through the online NSW Planning Portal.

More flexibility in the planning system can be facilitated by Council increasing and improving the quality of its information provision. Promoting the availability of Council's building and planning advice service to assist proponents may encourage greater uptake by developers. This includes Council supporting customers who want to take an overarching 'spatially led' or 'outcomes focused' approach. This approach builds in flexibility by placing a greater emphasis on allowing proponents to demonstrate that their proposal meets the desired strategic goals of Council in a qualitative manner, without stifling innovation or creativity through rigid implementation of quantitative regulations. This approach was taken in Council's recently updated DCP Part 10 – Development in Residential Zones which now provides performance criteria to accompany design guidelines.

In developing this Local Housing Strategy, consultation identified there are opportunities for Council to better promote our long term land use strategies so that the industry and community have a clearer understanding of Albury's housing supply pipeline and development potential. As noted in section 3.2, there is approximately 1,400 hectares of R1 General Residential zoned land yet to be developed in Thurgoona-Wirringa Growth Area. Further focus is needed on providing the community with confidence on how Council plans to ensure these land parcels are development ready through suitable staging plans and timely infrastructure delivery.

Council produces an annual Development Monitor outlining the production and consumption of vacant land in Albury, as well as the development of housing and sale prices. Over time, this could be transitioned into an online database available on Council's website, such as a smart dashboard to provide timely and clear information on local land supply, lots produced and lots consumed.

#### Strategy three Action Plan:

1. Better information, checklists, forms and other development assistance available on Council's website
2. Improve monitoring and publishing of housing supply statistics
3. Create an interactive Albury development monitor
4. Investigate creating a cross-border development monitor with Wodonga









## 4. Diversity strategies



**Objective: There is a greater variety of housing options that offer households a wider range of market choices**

An inclusive and accessible city requires housing that caters to diverse needs. Providing variety in the housing market is about the right to choice, ensuring people can find homes that best suit their different lifestyles and changing needs. A cultural and attitudinal shift needs to accompany Albury's journey of change from a low density city to a more urbanised city with more medium and higher density housing options, particularly around its commercial centres.

### Key diversity findings from the Evidence Paper

- Albury has smaller average household sizes (2.32 persons per dwelling) compared to the Regional NSW average (2.41 persons per dwelling)
- Albury has a larger proportion of lone person households (31.6%) compared to the Regional NSW average (27.9%)
- Separate houses make up 78.5% of all Albury's dwelling stock, a proportion that has grown over the last decade (it was 75.5% in 2011)
- Nearly 80 per cent of construction approvals since 2016 were for additional detached houses
- The largest change in the number of bedrooms per dwelling since 2016 was 4 bedrooms (+2.8% or +1,274 dwellings) and 5 bedrooms (+0.6% or +239 dwellings)
- Nearly half of Albury's dwellings have a theoretical oversupply of bedrooms (two or more bedrooms that are 'spare' for uses e.g., guest bedroom, study). In many instances, this is likely to reflect regional lifestyle and housing preferences and is a significant benefit of living in Albury for some people, however for others this may reflect a lack of alternative housing options.
- Vacancies in seniors housing facilities in Albury are very low. While most older people prefer to live independently in their existing communities, they often find that traditional family homes have become 'too large' for them, and would prefer to downsize to smaller, lower-maintenance dwellings located near their existing social connections and infrastructure.



As outlined in section 3 (supply strategies), most new housing currently being delivered in Albury is large, detached dwellings in greenfield areas that are well-suited to many family types, especially families with children. There are many other types of housing however that may be more suited and well received by other household types such as multi generational families or single people. These housing typologies, such as townhouses and terraces, dual occupancies, secondary dwellings and manor houses are often referred to as the "missing middle". Like most Australian cities, these housing styles are currently underrepresented in the Albury housing market.

**Figure 6: The Missing Middle**

Source: NSW Department of Planning and Environment (2016) accessed from <https://www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au/projects/missing-middle-design-competition>

Key groups in need of more 'missing middle' market choice of housing size and price options include older people wanting to 'downsize', people with disabilities, students and visiting workforces (especially health workers). Albury needs to change the flow of new housing so more non-detached product is brought to market, moving towards providing more variety in the overall mix of our housing stock.

It is important to acknowledge that traditional, detached styles of housing do provide lifestyle opportunities that are important to Albury residents and acts as a major attractor to potential residents looking to move here. Larger blocks and detached single dwelling homes offer the kind of spacious, relaxed regional way of life that most expect, desire and aspire to. Community consultation findings confirmed there is ongoing local market preference for detached housing which the building industry indicated they are likely to continue to respond to. Making this type of dwelling available however should not be at the expense of reducing choice for people who desire alternatives to this dominant market product.

## Findings from the Albury Housing Preference Survey (215 responses)

- 78.4% of respondents indicated a strong preference for living in a detached home on its own block of land, 8.5% to live in 'missing middle' typologies such as duplex or townhouse, and 6.5% to live in a flat, unit or apartment building.
- When asked to choose only three top features their ideal home would have:
  - The most popular responses included a 3 or 4+ bedrooms (57%) and a large outdoor yard (40%)
  - 15% of respondents indicated having a fully accessible home was very important to them, and 7.5% expressed that having a small home with two or less bedrooms was most important to them.



In developing this Local Housing Strategy, consultation identified a generalised concern that medium and high density housing might negatively impact peoples valued amenity, character and liveability of Albury's neighbourhoods. For some people in Albury, increasing efforts to provide more 'missing middle' housing can be a perceived as a threat to their regional lifestyle, and challenges the expectations they had when they chose to rent or buy into their neighbourhood. This includes greenfield developments where private restrictive covenants may advertise a low density lifestyle, even where local or state planning provisions allow for greater density.

### What are Private Restrictive Covenants?

Some housing developments in Albury are subject to Private Restrictive Covenants and Design Guidelines.

These are a private agreement between landowners commonly applied as a way of an owner who is subdividing land for sale to limit the way the land can be used and developed. They can be used to control the type of building materials used for things like buildings and fences, and to limit development to only one house on a lot or nominate only certain sites for medium density development (such as dual occupancy). For buyers, they can be hard to understand as they often use legal words and unfamiliar jargon.

Private Restrictive Covenants can create confusion as only landowners can enforce a private restrictive covenant. A covenant is not a planning consideration and therefore cannot prohibit development which is permissible in the zone under state and local planning provisions and does not bind Council when considering the merits of a development (as per Albury LEP Clause 1.9A).

Purchasers should check with their conveyancer and/or seek independent legal advice about specific Private Restrictive Covenants.

## 4.1 Strategy four: Boost the proportion of overall housing stock that provides medium and high density options

Including smaller dwelling types in existing urban areas is a logical way of increasing diverse housing where people can stay connected to their neighbourhood. It can provide a greater density of dwellings near City Centre areas that already have high amenity and transport links, enabling people to remain living close to their workplace, family and friends, or educational facility. Smaller dwellings may also result in a lower entry price point for their potential residents, contributing to housing affordability.

Albury's Local Environment Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP) already provide accommodating planning provisions to support appropriate medium and higher density housing. Albury's LEP and DCP include planning controls designed to manage the potential impacts of medium and high density housing including to address such matters as privacy, overshadowing and landscaping. Future and ongoing reviews of the planning provisions needs to ensure there are no impediments to the creation of smaller dwellings. This includes enabling some short term responses to accommodation shortages for some sub-markets, including visiting workers and people at risk of homelessness. It also includes looking at encouraging re-use and refurbishment of underutilised space such as supporting the repurposing of older commercial buildings for housing, or revitalising shop top housing.

Council can also actively promote to the community and industry information on different housing options which may encourage delivery of some dwellings that will increase housing choice. A housing typology is provided in Table 9 (overpage) to explain some common types of housing that occur in regional cities.

### Strategy four Action Plan:

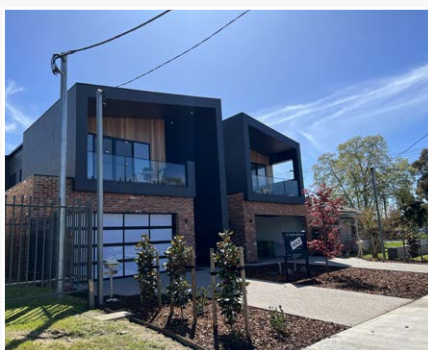
1. Promote 'missing middle' housing typology and good design guidance
2. Host sector education events on housing diversity topics
3. Regularly review planning controls to address any impediments to the creation of smaller dwellings





**Table 9: Housing typology**

					
<b>Apartments (3 or more storeys)</b>		<b>Low rise ('walk up') apartments</b>		<b>Townhouses and terraces</b>	
<p>Smaller and generally more affordable dwelling type in a central location.</p> <p>Suit smaller households on a range of incomes and/or needing easy access to services and facilities.</p> <p>Some developments delivered as premium dwellings with luxury fittings and amenity inclusions, aimed at downsizers and professionals.</p> <p>May include commercial suites on lower levels.</p>		<p>Smaller and generally more affordable dwelling type in a central location.</p> <p>Suit smaller households on a range of incomes and/or needing easy access to services and facilities.</p> <p>To increase the permanent population within the commercial cores by encouraging the development of shop top housing and mixed use developments.</p>		<p>Dwellings attached by a common wall with each of the dwellings is on its own lot of land and each with access at ground level and private open space.</p> <p>Generally less expensive than a detached dwelling.</p> <p>Suit average size households.</p>	
<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Outcome sought</b>	<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Outcome sought</b>	<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Outcome sought</b>
<b>Preferred location</b>	Easy walking distance (approx. 200m) to amenities, shops, services, entertainment and leisure opportunities	<b>Preferred location</b>	Walking distance (approx. 400m) to amenities, shops, services, entertainment and leisure opportunities	<b>Preferred location</b>	Reasonable walking distance (approx. 800m) to amenities, shops, services, entertainment and leisure opportunities
<b>Target dwelling size</b>	Mixed Should include studio, one and two bedroom dwellings	<b>Target dwelling size</b>	Mixed Should include one and two bedroom dwellings	<b>Target dwelling size</b>	Mixed Primarily two and three bedrooms
<b>Focus areas</b>	Albury and Lavington City Centres	<b>Focus areas</b>	Albury, Lavington and Thurgoona City Centres	<b>Focus areas</b>	Adjacent to, and fringe of, Albury, Lavington and Thurgoona City Centres.
<b>Life stage</b>	Young singles, young couples, older couples, older singles, students	<b>Life stage</b>	Young singles, young couples, older couples, older singles, students	<b>Life stage</b>	Young couples, older couples, small families



Dual occupancies and duplexes		Secondary dwellings		Detached dwellings	
<p>Two dwellings on one lot of land, either attached or detached, each with its own access and private open space. Can be separately titled or strata titled and attached or detached.</p> <p>Generally less expensive than a detached dwelling.</p>		<p>Smaller, separate dwellings on the same lot as a detached dwelling, often referred to as a granny flat. Requires a large lot.</p> <p>A relatively low cost dwelling type.</p> <p>Suit smaller households on a lower income.</p>		<p>A house on a single lot which has traditionally been the most common form of housing in Albury LGA.</p> <p>Relatively high cost dwelling type.</p> <p>Suit larger size and multi-generational households</p>	
Aspect	Outcome sought	Aspect	Outcome sought	Aspect	Outcome sought
<b>Preferred location</b>	Low density residential areas	<b>Preferred location</b>	Low density residential areas	<b>Preferred location</b>	Low density residential areas
<b>Target dwelling size</b>	Two and three bedrooms	<b>Target dwelling size</b>	One or two bedrooms.	<b>Target dwelling size</b>	Two or more bedrooms.
<b>Focus areas</b>	All residential areas excluding in major centres (Albury, Lavington and Thurgoona City Centres) which are suited to higher density housing	<b>Focus areas</b>	All residential areas excluding in, or adjacent to, major centres (Albury, Lavington and Thurgoona City Centres) which are suited to higher density housing	<b>Focus areas</b>	All residential areas excluding in, or adjacent to, major centres (Albury, Lavington and Thurgoona City Centres) which are suited to higher density housing
<b>Life stage</b>	Young couples, older couples, small families	<b>Life stage</b>	Singles, older singles and couples	<b>Life stage</b>	Couples and families

## 4.2 Strategy five: Incentivise the private market to provide a wider variety of dwelling types

In developing this Local Housing Strategy, consultation with the local housing industry found that in Albury, many developers and builders consider the construction of smaller dwellings to be less efficient, commercially unfeasible or cost ineffective when compared with building traditional project homes on greenfield sites. Stakeholders identified issues of regulation, planning controls and approval processes that need to be addressed to enable more 'shovel ready' land for smaller dwellings.

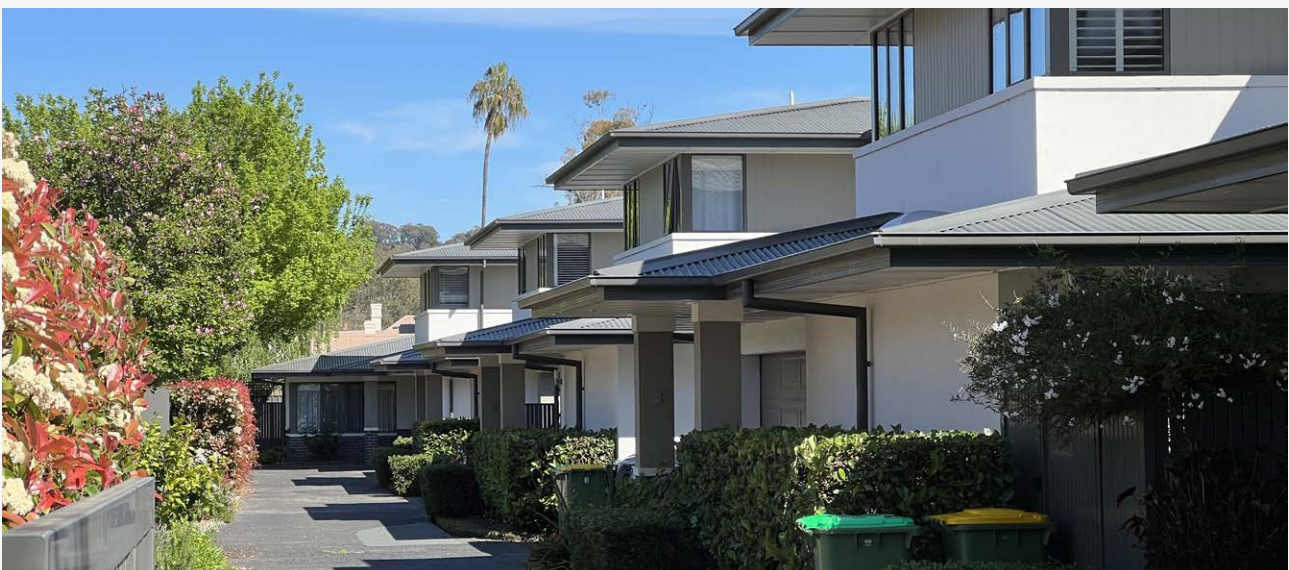
To support better business cases for developers and investors to provide more 'missing middle' dwelling types, incentive mechanisms are needed to encourage a more diverse mix of new housing stock. In the Albury context, using Planning Agreements to reduce development costs is the main type of incentive considered likely to succeed. This includes mechanisms such as waiving, reducing or reimbursing development fees, reducing parking requirements, or offering exemptions or deductions in return for the inclusion of smaller dwellings in a development proposal.

### What is a Local Planning Agreement?

Planning Agreements are negotiated between a developer and a council for the provision of infrastructure to support communities.

Council has an existing voluntary Planning Agreement policy (2014) that enables developers to dedicate land free of cost, pay a monetary contribution toward, and/or directly provide dwellings for the development of affordable housing. Planning Agreements are negotiated on a case by case basis and have potential to be utilised for large scale housing projects in Albury.

Even though they rely on developer willingness, there is potential for Council to encourage the use of Planning Agreements to offer developers a range of financial or planning incentives in return for delivering housing projects that meet objectives of this Local Housing Strategy, including projects that deliver smaller dwelling options.



### Strategy five Action Plan:

1. Review the Voluntary Planning Agreement Policy (2014) for potential to encourage large scale projects that deliver smaller dwelling options.





### 4.3 Strategy six: Promote the importance of access to housing that meets universal design principles

In addition to ensuring the Albury housing market offers a diverse typology of dwellings, the functionality of housing also needs to be diverse. This means dwellings should allow for adaptability across their lifespan, including meeting design requirements for people with differing access needs, especially to address housing barriers experienced by people with disability and older people with access requirements. The concept of 'universal design' is about designing things so that as many people as possible can use it. In the housing context, this means more than whether a dwelling meets access standards, but whether the dwelling makes it easy for people to 'age in place'.

To date, housing that supports universal design principles remains undersupplied.<sup>11</sup> This has arisen both because the building industry perceives it results in higher design and construction costs, but also because consumers don't request it, potentially as they don't necessarily fully understand or realise its benefits – especially when they purchase their homes at a stage of life when household members are very physically competent. Developing a home as a universal designed dwelling at the design and construction stage can be up to 22 times more efficient (in terms of cost to the homeowner) than retrofitting.<sup>12</sup> At a whole of community level, having more housing constructed using universal design principles has substantial public value by reducing the need for, or level of care needed, provided to people accessing disability or aged care services in their home.

#### What are important universal design attributes for housing?



Level dwelling access and dwelling entrance: a safe and continuous, step free path of travel - and at least one level (step free) entrance into the dwelling



Wide internal doors and corridors to facilitate comfortable and unimpeded movement between spaces (1m-1.2m)



Direct entry from parking space into the house, to enter and exit the dwelling easily



Reinforcement of bathroom/ toilet walls so grabrails can be easily installed where needed



A bathroom with a hobless shower recess



Non slip flooring / slip resistant floor coverings



Internal stairways with a continuous handrail on one side to reduce the likelihood of injury and enable future adaptation

More information about universal design is available via Livable Housing Design Guidelines at [livablehousingaustralia.org.au](https://livablehousingaustralia.org.au)

<sup>11</sup> At the National dialogue on universal housing design convened in 2010, the agreed targets for voluntary uptake of Livable Housing Guidelines (LHG) for all new residential housing were to be 100 per cent to Silver level by 2020. This has not occurred. Exploring the economic value embedded in housing built to universal design principles RMIT University and Longevity Group Australia, p4. <https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2020-09/apo-nid308331.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Liveable Housing Australia (2014, p. 10). Liveable Housing Design Guidelines. < [https://livablehousingaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SLLHA\\_GuidelinesJuly2017FINAL4.pdf](https://livablehousingaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SLLHA_GuidelinesJuly2017FINAL4.pdf)>.

At present, NSW planning legislation (*State Environmental Planning Policy, SEPP 65*) and Albury Development Control Plan (DCP) provisions require that residential flat developments should aim to achieve a benchmark 20% of units incorporating universal design principles and techniques (DCP Part 10-F-31). Increasing the provision of universal design in low and medium density dwellings would allow for more housing to be flexible, adaptable and meet the access and 'aging in place' needs of residents. Universal design principles have benefits not only for people with disabilities, but would improve outcomes for people with prams, temporary injuries, pregnant people, and older people.



#### Strategy six Action Plan:

1. Advocate for raising the requirements for housing to meet higher adaptable standards
2. Promote information on flexible housing design on Council's website
3. Maintain existing requirements for universal design features in new apartment dwellings
4. Include more objectives and advice on universal design in the next review of the Albury DCP







eyeclinik  
ALBERT WOODHURST

STEAN NICHOLLS



## 5. Affordability strategies



**Objective: We have housing stock that is affordable, stable and supportive of the aspirations and wellbeing of all our residents, especially those in greatest need.**

A fundamental premise of housing policy is that all households deserve to have access to safe, well designed and affordable housing.

While much of Albury's housing remains relatively affordable when compared to similarly sized regional cities, recent rapid price increases mean that there are vulnerable groups in the community who are being progressively priced out of Albury's private rental housing market.

Albury's tight rental market and limited supply of lower cost dwellings is contributing to more people experiencing housing stress. This is driving people into precarious housing arrangements and putting them at greater risk of experiencing homelessness. The Albury Prevention of Homelessness Strategy (endorsed 28 October 2019) included a commitment that Council will make it a priority to address the issue of homelessness across our City.

### Key affordability findings from the Evidence Paper



- Housing affordability is arguably the most pressing issue affecting regional communities across NSW.
- Many people, particularly young adults, are finding it increasingly difficult to save up a deposit to enter the private housing market. The median house purchase price in Albury spiked by almost 25 per cent and rentals by almost 15 per cent in the year leading up to June 2021.
- Most households with moderate and higher household incomes are still able to purchase and rent housing in Albury, but if price increases continue, affordable options may disappear, resulting in an increase in housing stress.
- Low income households in Albury have limited housing options. During 2021, only 53 properties (3%) of all rental listings in the Albury LGA would have been affordable to households on a very low income – and almost all of these listings were 1 or 2 bedroom units.
- Unit housing stock is predominantly older and limited to established urban areas, suggesting there are opportunities for more affordable housing to be provided in greenfield areas so that low income households also have access to a full range of housing lifestyles.
- It is estimated there are 1,010 Albury households (4.3% of all households) who were in need of affordable housing at the 2021 Census. Of these households, lone person households were the most likely to be unable to access market priced rental housing.
- Approximately 2,445 Albury households (12%) were experiencing housing stress (2016 Census).
- Albury's overall residential vacancy rate (the proportion of unlet dwellings to the total rent roll) has been at consistent, record lows throughout 2021 and 2022. In June 2022, it was 0.5%.

As discussed in the diversity strategies (section 4), increasing the supply of smaller dwellings is one way to broadly help to ensure more affordable options are available in the Albury housing market. In addition to this, specific strategies are needed to deliver housing for the designated purpose of housing people in our community who are most in need.

## 5.1 Strategy seven: Present a clear policy position statement on affordable housing

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) states that the “maintenance and provision of affordable housing” is one of its objectives (section 1.3(d)). To give further emphasis to this objective, there is opportunity for Council to clearly state that it is committed to facilitating more designated affordable housing. Principles such as the ones listed below will set out Council’s expectations and send a signal to encourage the private market to deliver the particular affordable housing products desired to achieve wider social benefits. These principles can also be stated on Council’s webpage, cross-referenced in Council’s Advocacy Strategy and other strategic documents, reiterated at government and industry forums, and used when advocating for change.

The City of Wodonga’s Housing Strategy (2019) contains an affordable housing vision, being “People on lower incomes and vulnerable households can access housing that is affordable, appropriate and have security of tenure.”<sup>13</sup> The Wodonga Housing Strategy’s affordable housing objectives and actions recognise the need for council to increase supply of quality affordable housing available for lower income households through the application of planning mechanisms available under Victorian Planning legislation. A consistent approach between Albury and Wodonga Council’s is likely to yield the greatest benefit for the Albury Wodonga community.

### Proposed Affordable Housing policy position statement

AlburyCity recognises a responsibility to promote access to affordable housing in recognition of the human right of all people to access housing that is secure and safe, enabling them to live with dignity and achieve positive social and equity outcomes. Within the limitations of its role and legislative obligations, Council will seek to encourage and support increased supply of affordable housing to meet the current and future needs of our community.

The provision of affordable housing in AlburyCity will be governed by the following principles:

1. Affordable housing is to be created and managed so that it supports community cohesion, providing for socially diverse residential neighbourhoods representative of all incomes.
2. Affordable housing is to be provided across the City in well serviced locations that allow people to maintain their established neighbourhood ties and continue to access to essential social, health, education and other community services.
3. Affordable housing can be created and managed in a variety of ways under a range of innovative funding, financing and delivery models, so long as the land and buildings are always made available for the purpose of affordable housing provision as an ongoing, continuous and perpetual use.
4. Affordable housing is to be constructed to a high quality standard (including energy efficiency features designed to save occupants on heating and cooling costs) and is to be integrated into and compatible with other housing in the area.
5. Affordable housing is to be made available (rented) to eligible tenants on very low, low or moderate income households, or a combination of these.

To actualise the proposed affordable housing policy position, the NSW Planning system enables Council to implement planning mechanisms to encourage the delivery of affordable housing for very low, low and moderate income households. This is in recognition that without subsidy, the private market is less likely to provide dwellings targeted at these households.

<sup>13</sup> City of Wodonga (2022) Wodonga Housing Strategy 2019 (p72) <https://www.wodonga.vic.gov.au/About-Council/Our-Organisation/Corporate-documents/Plans-and-strategies>

During the development of this strategy a wide range of options for Council's involvement in affordable housing were explored with stakeholders. Various affordable housing mechanisms available to local government under the EP&A Act were investigated to see which ones would be realistic and achievable in our local context. Through these processes, the planning lever with the most potential to yield a positive outcome in Albury is for interested developers to enter voluntarily into Planning Agreements with Council (see previous diversity section page 38).

In the longer term, there is also the potential for Council to develop an Affordable Housing Contributions Scheme (also called inclusionary zoning). Under the NSW Government *Housing 2041: NSW Housing Strategy*, the Department of Planning and Environment is committed to continuing to work with councils on the economic feasibility of making further changes to their Local Environment Plans to develop such a scheme.<sup>14</sup> These types of Schemes are highly dependent on developer contributions being collected through rezoning proposals, which has limited applicability under Albury's current land use settings but may change in the future.

#### Strategy seven Action Plan:

1. Publish and promote the affordable housing policy position statement and principles
2. Encourage the use of Planning Agreements for projects that meet affordable housing objectives
3. As part of the next review of Albury's Development Contributions Plan, investigate the feasibility of an Affordable Housing Contributions Scheme
4. Advocate for local affordable housing at government and industry forums



#### Strengthening our City through reconciliation

Through the Reconciliation Action Plan, AlburyCity is committed to providing equal opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience significant housing challenges. In Albury, Aboriginal households are paying similar rents and mortgages costs to non-Aboriginal households despite their incomes being on average substantially less than non- Aboriginal households. Proportionally, there are substantially more Aboriginal households who are renting their dwelling. In Albury, only five percent of Aboriginal households own their dwelling outright compared to 23 percent for non- Aboriginal households.

This all suggests that closing the housing affordability gap is a critical issue for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households.

We would like to thank those representatives of of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities who have provided input to the development of this Strategy. We hope that this Strategy will help facilitate and build stronger relationships to achieve better housing outcomes for our community.

<sup>14</sup> NSW Government *Housing 2041: NSW Housing Strategy*, Priority 5 page 23 <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Housing/A-Housing-Strategy-for-NSW>



## 5.2 Strategy eight: Grow our supply of affordable rental housing

Increases in the cost of renting in the private market disproportionately affect very low income households who have few affordable housing options available. This can force low income households into sub-standard accommodation or even homelessness. Rental options for low income households are generally concentrated in the more disadvantaged neighbourhoods within the Albury LGA which can lead to unfair stigmatisation of these suburbs.

A lack of affordable rental housing is also impacting Albury's local economy because people who would like to move here for employment opportunities are unable to secure accommodation in order to relocate. This is especially a growing issue for Albury's health and community services sector which is struggling to attract a sufficient workforce to meet current needs.

### NSW Growing Regions of Welcome

The NSW Growing Regions of Welcome (GROW) pilot program (launched in 2021) aims to connect interested people from migrant and refugee backgrounds living in Western Sydney with lifestyle and employment opportunities in regional NSW. The Murray and Riverina regions are now providing a gateway, through the NSW GROW pilot program, for newcomers to live and work here.

Supporting this relocation requires access to a well functioning private rental market. Newcomers (migrants) are largely consumers of local private rental markets, having negligible access to social or community housing options on arrival.

Along with securing employment, ensuring that newcomers to Albury can find appropriate private rental housing is critical to programs like GROW succeeding in attracting and retaining workers and their families to resettle in Albury.

Find out more about GROW at [www.multicultural.nsw.gov.au/nsw-grow](http://www.multicultural.nsw.gov.au/nsw-grow)



As part of this Local Housing Strategy, a site performance criteria (Table 10) has been developed to identify preferred land locations in Albury that may be most suitable for future affordable housing projects.

**Table 10: Site criteria for preferred location of affordable housing developments**

Category		Proposed performance criteria
	<b>Public/active transport</b>	Within comfortable walking distance (200m- 400m) of a bus stop (with a good level of service). Direct access/ adjacent to paved pedestrian walkway or a cycleway
	<b>Social infrastructure</b>	Nearby (800m – 2km) to a community facility (e.g. community centre, library, community garden)
	<b>Education</b>	Within walking distance (400m – 800m) of a public school or childcare centre
	<b>Healthcare</b>	Nearby (800m – 2km) to a General Practitioner or hospital
	<b>Retail and services</b>	Nearby (800m – 2km) to a shopping centre, a village centre or other employment area
	<b>Open space and recreation</b>	Within walking distance (200m - 400m) of a playground, park, sports field or aquatic centre
	<b>If no to any of the above:</b>	Could the service or facility be provided within the development? Are there mitigating factors about the site context that reduce the significance of the criteria?
Category		Proposed restriction criteria
	<b>Site zoning</b>	Would the site need to be rezoned to accommodate the proposed use? Is the site subject to any additional controls e.g. Floor Space Ratio, building height
	<b>Site ownership</b>	Is the site ownership consolidated? Is it publicly or privately owned?
	<b>Site constraints</b>	Identify if the site is constrained in any significant way, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Located adjacent to a heritage object or within a Heritage Conservation Area</li> <li>• Located adjacent to incompatible use that may impact on potential sensitive receivers</li> <li>• Subject to any hazards, i.e. bushfire, flooding etc.</li> </ul>

Any applicant who is developing affordable housing projects in Albury may be eligible for an exemption from paying local infrastructure contributions. Clause 3.7.1 of the *Albury Infrastructure Contributions Plan (2014)* allows for Affordable Housing Development applicants to be exempted from both section 7.11 (formerly section 94) contributions and section 7.12 (formerly section 94A) levies.

In developing this Local Housing Strategy, consultation with local Community Housing Providers (refer page 48) and other community services examined a range of initiatives and potential new options for Council to intervene in the market to provide more affordable housing. In the Albury context, the Community Housing sector expressed a preference that Council support them through building awareness and improving understanding of affordable housing needs and brokering partnership opportunities as they arise.

### **Ways Council can support Community Housing Providers**

- Advocate to other levels of government on behalf of the CHP sector for the retention, upgrade and growth in supply of new affordable housing dwellings
- Act as 'matchmaker' with private developers where there is an opportunity to include affordable rental housing as part of proposed development
- Provide a robust and solid evidence base (including research contained in this Local Housing Strategy) that Council and CHPs can use to apply for funding and grant opportunities
- Inform and educate the local community on how the provision of affordable housing contributes to sustainable communities, potentially reducing community opposition to affordable housing developments
- Directly partner with the CHP sector to build fit for purpose affordable rental dwellings on council owned land (noting various delivery model options available)
- Help identify underutilised land owned by other levels of government (for example Crown land, State Government land) that could be transferred to Council or CHP ownership (through dedication or purchase) for affordable housing projects or alternatively sold with revenue generated to be invested in affordable housing projects.



### **Strategy eight Action Plan:**

1. Undertake an audit of Council owned and other government land to identify opportunities for potential future delivery of affordable housing projects
2. Continue to exempt affordable housing projects from development contributions levies
3. Advocate to other levels of government for more support for affordable housing projects





### What is a Community Housing Provider?

Community Housing Providers are not-for-profit organisations that build and/or manage affordable housing with three defining characteristics:

1. They are targeted to tightly defined eligible households
2. They are let to tenants at a discount to market rents
3. They are typically delivered with government financial support

As charitable not-for-profit organisations, CHPs:

- Do not require developer margins
- Reinvest their surpluses in expanding their housing services
- Are fully responsible for the ongoing management and maintenance of the housing they develop
- Are experienced property and tenancy managers
- Ensure affordable housing is targeted to income eligible household.

The benefits of working with a registered CHP include:

- Access to tax advantages including access to lower borrowing rates through the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation which can mean they can develop affordable rental housing at lower cost than for-profit developers.
- Ensures that affordable rental housing is retained locally in perpetuity, supporting local community priorities.
- Structure enables them to undertake private sector borrowings as well as seek capital funds from Federal and State governments.

The *Housing Act 2001* (NSW) provides the legislative framework for the social housing sector in NSW. The *Community Housing Providers (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012* (Cth) provides the legislative basis for the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH). The NRSCH sets out performance requirements for registered community housing providers including sufficient revenue to meet operating costs, sound financial and governance arrangements, and strong risk management processes. It is the NRSCH that specifies the following three categories of registration:

1. Tier 1 – incorporated companies (under the *Corporations Act 2001*) that are large scale with more than 350 tenancies, manage development activities at scale and have more complex relationships with parent/subsidiary entities and contractual partnerships
2. Tier 2 – companies or other incorporated bodies with small scale housing development activities
3. Tier 3 – incorporated organisations with no, or only one-off or very small scale involvement in housing development (usually managing fewer than 100 tenancies).

As of June 2021, there are currently 169 registered CHPs in NSW, of which 24 are Tier 1 providers and 17 are Tier 2 providers. There are five (5) CHPs which are known to have existing dwelling assets within Albury:

- Argyle Community Housing Ltd (Tier 1)
- Common Equity NSW Ltd (Tier 2)
- Homes Out West (Tier 2)
- St Vincent de Paul Housing (Tier 2)
- Woomera Aboriginal Corporation Albury (Tier 3)

Other housing providers who are based in the Albury area but who are not on the NRSCH Register include:

- YES Unlimited, a NSW Specialist Homelessness Services and lead agent for all homelessness services in Southern Murrumbidgee
- Beyond Housing (Based in Wodonga, Victoria Housing Register, January 2019).

## 5.3 Strategy nine: Grow our supply of social housing

Albury's social housing stock is ageing and is no longer meeting the needs of residents. There is a major shortfall in social housing designed for one and two person households. More people are ending up on waitlists for social housing, with average wait times currently between 2 and 5 years for most dwelling types.<sup>15</sup>

### Key social housing findings from the Evidence Paper

- There are around 970 social housing dwellings owned by LAHC in the Albury LGA. Of these:
  - About 60% are 3 to 4 bedroom cottages built in the 1960s and 1970s
  - About 70% accommodate 1 or 2 person households, indicating many under-occupied homes.
- The median age of tenants is close to 50 years of age, 10 years higher than the average for Regional NSW
- As of June 2022, there were 349 households on the social housing waitlist in Albury.
  - More than 300 of households on the waitlist are single people or couples applying for either 1 or 2 bedroom homes



In May 2022, the NSW Government Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) and AlburyCity entered into a Collaboration Agreement to work together to identify potential sites to fast track the delivery of more social and affordable housing for people in need. Through this relationship, Council plays an active role in facilitating the renewal of social housing estates into mixed tenure precincts that provide modern, resilient and well designed housing.



Image of signing of the Collaboration Agreement, from left to right: AlburyCity CEO Frank Zaknich, Mayor Kylie King, Member for Albury Justin Clancy MP, Peter Brackenreg LAHC Executive Director, Delivery South.

<sup>15</sup> NSW Land and Housing Corporations Albury Local Area Analysis; <https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/land-and-housing-corporation/plans-and-policies/local-area-analyses/albury-local-area-analysis> (accessed January 2022)

LAHC has identified Albury as a priority area for the renewal and growth of its portfolio, in line with the continuing population and economic growth of the Albury region. LAHC is planning to deliver 540 new social homes and around 700 dwellings for the private market in Albury by 2032.

The *NSW State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021* (Clause 42)<sup>16</sup> allows for residential development carried out by, or on behalf of, the NSW Land and Housing Corporation that results in 60 dwellings or less on a single site being eligible for development to be carried out without Council consent.

Council can assist LAHC to build confidence in our community that the renewal of social housing in Albury will contribute to provision of sustainable, inclusive neighbourhoods for people from all walks of life. The media has a significant influence on how social housing is viewed by the wider public, and negative associations of social housing tenants are fuelled by unsympathetic portrayals on television, social media and in print. It is important for Council to help challenge this narrative and stereotypes by countering misinformation with relevant facts such as those discussed throughout this Local Housing Strategy. It has been repeatedly demonstrated that the feared negative impacts of planned social housing developments rarely eventuate once those developments are complete and occupied. By working with LAHC to ensure good design of social housing renewal projects, improved amenity can also see surrounding property values of private market housing increase.

#### **Strategy nine Action Plan:**

1. Under the Collaboration Agreement, work with NSW Land and Housing Corporation to achieve a 20% increase in the overall number of social housing dwellings by 2032
2. Develop a communications plan for social and affordable housing projects
3. Review the Albury Prevention of Homelessness Strategy
4. Host an Affordable Housing forum event that brings people together to discuss affordable housing opportunities



<sup>16</sup> NSW Government Legislation *State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021* Current version for 12 August 2022 to date (accessed 12 October 2022) <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/epi-2021-0714#sec.42>







## 6. Resilience strategies



**Objective: To deliver housing that is matched to community and environmental goals so that Albury's residents feel safe, connected, comfortable and limit their impact on the natural environment.**

Housing is resilient when it endures and responds to natural and social change. Resilient housing projects invest in both physical infrastructure and community programs to support residents to survive, recover and thrive when shocks and stresses come along. If we design and build more resilient housing, we strengthen the city as a whole.

The main components of housing resilience addressed in this section are:

- Better understanding and managing the social impacts of development, including access to community facilities and public open spaces that allow people to form connections to their neighbourhoods
- Smarter land use planning that supports sustainable and hazard-resilient communities, including keeping people safe from extreme weather events
- Creating sustainable and comfortable places to live that are adapted to Albury's changing climate, reducing people's exposure to extreme temperatures and lowering energy costs, making sure homes are built safely and last a long time.

### Key resilience findings from the Evidence Paper

- Australia's climate has warmed (on average) by 1.44 degrees Celsius since national records began in 1910.
- Albury will face an increasing number of days per year with maximum temperatures over 35 degrees Celsius.
- Urban areas can be significantly hotter than surrounding natural areas due to the Urban Heat Island effect which may exacerbate the effects of heatwaves on vulnerable Albury residents.
- Albury's iconic location on the banks of the Murray River with its surrounds of forested hills support high environmental amenity and make Albury an attractive place to live, but also render it increasingly vulnerable to floods and bushfires.



Council passed a resolution in August 2022 for a target of net zero emissions by 2040. Many of the actions Council is already doing will contribute to ensuring our housing strategies reflect environmental sustainability principles.

### What actions Council is already doing to create more resilient housing

- Adopted Towards Albury 2050 which includes net zero by 2040 Carbon Community Emission Targets
- Consulting the Sustainability Advisory Committee on development of planning policy
- Working with Wodonga Council to implement the Joint Regional Natural Environment Strategy
- Developing an Urban Forest Strategy
- Signed a joint statement to State and Federal Building Ministers seeking stronger energy performance standards to the National Construction Code 2022
- Monitoring climate change indicators to amend flood or bushfire risk mapping
- Increasing our tree planting for more shade and less heat
- Providing more electric vehicle charging stations at key destinations

## 6.1 Strategy ten: Strengthen our social resilience

Resilient housing is not just about action at the level of individual dwellings, but about how the cumulative effects of urbanisation affect whole developments, and their neighbouring developments. As our understanding of sustainability and environmental issues deepens, so too has continued pressure for development. There is a continuing need for more land to meet housing needs, but future growth scenarios need to thoroughly consider the impacts of continuing urban sprawl which both intensifies environmental pressure and can make it more difficult for people to stay connected to social networks, jobs and support services.

Community consultation findings noted widespread concern that social infrastructure and open space provision is not currently keeping pace with the rate of new housing development. Like many greenfield suburbs across NSW, recently developed areas of Albury (such as Thurgoona) have lower levels of access to social infrastructure when compared with established parts of the Albury LGA (such as central Albury and Lavington). Though this is likely to become more equitable as development within Thurgoona-Wirringa Wirringa Growth Area matures, keeping a focus on meeting the social infrastructure needs of all residents across Albury is important. As discussed earlier at strategy two, ensuring all new housing development is properly supported by infrastructure is essential to support incoming populations. To promote liveability and encourage social cohesion, it is important to locate housing near social infrastructure such as schools, health facilities and community facilities.

Section 4.15(b) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* (1979) requires Council to consider the likely social, environmental and economic impacts of planning proposals. For significant development applications including for large scale residential development in new urban areas, this should include a requirement to demonstrate how households will have access to a comprehensive range of social infrastructure.

### Strategy ten Action Plan:

1. Ensure Social Impact Assessments are requested and provided for significant rezoning proposals, major developments and other Planning Proposals which are likely to have significant social impacts





## 6.2 Strategy eleven: Improve the environmental performance of new residential estates

In developing this Local Housing Strategy, consultation indicated that the two sustainability issues of strongest concern were the need to cool our new urban areas through establishing and maintaining tree canopies and being smarter about storm water management.

Tree canopies are an important means of maximising the amenity and attractiveness of urban environments by creating more shade, improving ambient temperatures and producing cleaner air. Tree planting and minimising the loss of established trees in residential developments contributes to an integrated and connected network of green infrastructure. AlburyCity is well-positioned to address this priority as through recent amendments to Albury DCP Part 5 Vegetation Protection and the Urban Forest Strategy currently being prepared. This strategy seeks to create a thriving urban forest to deliver a range of benefits to the community's physical and mental well-being, landscape character, biodiversity, and climate resilience. Effective use of trees and landscaping will also have a strong impact on reducing overland water flows during intense storm events.

Managing stormwater effectively helps to maintain, protect and improve the health of Albury's waterways. This is achieved by minimising the impacts of urban development on the natural water cycle. Left unmanaged, urban stormwater can pollute waterways, cause erosion, sedimentation and increase flooding. Like some other Councils in NSW, Albury is exploring opportunities to encourage Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles as the best practice approach to the planning and design of urban environments, encouraging development that is more attuned to the natural hydrological and ecological processes of the surrounding environment. Water Sensitive Urban Design principles encourage on-site utilisation, collection, treatment of water flows as part of an integrated treatment in addition to, or in lieu of, conventional stormwater treatment measures.



### Strategy eleven Action Plan:

1. Complete an Urban Forest Strategy
2. Consider opportunities to further encourage Water Sensitive Urban Design
3. Update planning controls to further reflect Council's commitment to net-zero targets



## 6.3 Strategy twelve: Encourage design and delivery of sustainable homes

The design and delivery of sustainable dwellings was most recently explored in the *Review of Albury DCP 2010 Part 10 – Development in Residential Zones* (2018) and associated Council reporting. Sustainability was found to be a key community issue for residential development, including ecologically sustainable development, heat island effects and solar protection. Updates to *Part 10* included a guideline to specify a minimum proportion of housing sites to be landscaped to ensure sufficient area is available for planting of trees and landscaping and protect a minimum area for absorption of rainwater into the ground. Some improved design guidance was also included for west-facing rooms to help optimise winter sun and summer shade.

Consultation for this Local Housing Strategy confirmed that there is broad support for Council to continue its strong focus on environmental sustainability, especially as it relates to improving energy efficiency (reducing 'running' costs). Dwellings that are poorly designed in terms of thermal performance have negative effects for the environment, but also residents, as heating and cooling is expensive to operate and maintain. This included Council advocacy for the NSW State Government to raise sustainability standards including the NSW Building Sustainability Index to improve health and financial outcomes of residents. While noting some concern expressed from local industry representatives about potential cost implications and difficulty sourcing supplies of products that meet higher sustainability ratings, it is expected that more products and suppliers will become available in response to the new BASIX requirements across NSW and costs reduced as they become more common place.<sup>17</sup> The benefits for households are significant through ongoing energy bill savings, better health outcomes and increased resilience to weather extremes. It can also potentially reduce the need for governments to invest in expensive electricity generation and network augmentation.

### What is BASIX?

The NSW Building Sustainability Index (BASIX) requirements apply to all residential dwelling types and are part of the development application process. Household energy, water use and thermal comfort performance are regulated by the NSW State Government via the BASIX scheme.

In parallel to BASIX are the other government and non-government rating tools, including Green Star, NatHERS and NABERS. Different government, and non-government actors have operationalised these rating systems to achieve resilience objectives through policy.

For residential development in NSW, Councils are not able to set higher standards than those included in BASIX. The standards are a baseline that individual home builders can exceed if they choose to.

The NSW Government has now adopted reforms for residential development to increase the BASIX sustainability targets and developed a new materials index to assess the embodied energy of materials. The new State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022 will commence on 1 October 2023. This updated state policy includes increased energy and thermal performance standards of residential dwellings from 5.5 to 6 star outcomes to at least 7 star outcomes. Combined with Council recent amendments to DCP Part 10, these standards provide a firm foundation for encouraging more resilient dwelling design.

### Strategy twelve Action Plan:

1. Undertake advocacy and education initiatives for residents and builders encouraging and promoting sustainable development



<sup>17</sup> Claims about the cost of meeting energy efficiency ratings vary. The regulatory impact statement provided with the recently announced improvements to Australian housing performance standards is available from the Australian Building and Construction Commission website [https://consultation.abcb.gov.au/engagement/consultation-ris-proposed-ncc-2022-residential/supporting\\_documents/Consultation%20RIS%20%20Proposed%20NCC%202022%20residential%20energy%20efficiency%20provisions.pdf](https://consultation.abcb.gov.au/engagement/consultation-ris-proposed-ncc-2022-residential/supporting_documents/Consultation%20RIS%20%20Proposed%20NCC%202022%20residential%20energy%20efficiency%20provisions.pdf)







# 7.0 Action plan

The table below sets out a plan for how Council will implement the strategies in the Local Housing Strategy.



Actions identified as a high priority will become projects that are advanced into Council's delivery program and Advocacy Strategy, while moderate and low priority actions will be addressed as Council resources become available.

Timeframes provided are an estimate of when the project is likely to be delivered and/or operational. It anticipates that short term actions will be completed within 3 years, medium term within 6 years and longer term within 10 years.

To ensure the actions remain relevant, the Local Housing Strategy will be reviewed every 5 years.



**Table 11: Action plan**

Actions	Timeframe	Priority
<b>Supply objective: Our supply of zoned land, serviced land and redevelopment sites are well managed and enable housing development to respond to the requirements of different types of households</b>		
<b>Strategy one: Support delivery of new residential infill to achieve a better balance with new greenfield development</b>		
1.1 Update the Master Plans for Albury and Lavington City Centres to provide additional development guidance on key opportunity sites to achieve housing density objectives	Short	High
1.2 As part of the review of the Thurgoona Wirlinga Precinct Structure Plan, review planning controls for areas nominated for denser housing around neighbourhood and village centres	Short	High
1.3 Prepare a Master Plan for South Albury to identify long term future dwelling potential	Medium	Moderate
<b>Strategy two: Ensure all new housing development is properly supported by infrastructure</b>		
2.1 Prepare a city wide social infrastructure strategy	Short	Moderate
2.2 Prepare a city wide open space strategy	Short	High
2.3 Complete a city wide water and sewer Master Plan	Short	High
2.4 Review and update the <i>Albury Infrastructure Contributions Plan</i> (2014) to incorporate findings of actions 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3	Short	High
2.5 As part of the review of the Thurgoona Wirlinga Precinct Structure Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update the staging plan to reflect an improved approach to infrastructure delivery and coordination</li> <li>• Review and update the schedule of future works to be funded</li> </ul>	Short	High
<b>Strategy three: Actively assist applicants to navigate the development assessment system</b>		
3.1 Provide better information to applicants by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertaking ongoing monitoring of and improvements to checklists and forms available on Council's website to reflect legislative reforms and encourage the full range of matters to be addressed to ensure applications include all required information</li> <li>• Composing quarterly City Development email newsletters providing up to date information and articles relating to planning and development news</li> <li>• Promoting Council's free pre-lodgement service more widely, especially for more complex proposals</li> </ul>	Short	High
3.2 Improve monitoring and publishing of regular housing supply statistics by enhancing the annual Development Monitor to include information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Median housing market price information including private rental vacancy rate</li> <li>• Short stay accommodation sector indicator</li> <li>• Housing affordability indicator</li> </ul>	Medium	Moderate



Actions	Timeframe	Priority
<b>Strategy three: Actively assist applicants to navigate the development assessment system</b>		
3.3 Transition the annual Development Monitor into an interactive format with improved accessibility such as a real time online dashboard to improve the timely release of data	Medium	Moderate
3.4 Continue to investigate the development of an Albury-Wodonga development monitor to improve knowledge of the broader land supply environment and inform any required changes in the future (as per the Two Cities One Community Strategy)	Medium	Moderate
<b>Diversity objective: There is a greater variety of housing options that provide households a wider range of market choices</b>		
<b>Strategy four: Boost the proportion of overall housing stock that provides medium and high density options</b>		
4.1 Better convey what is meant by housing diversity by refining, publishing and circulating NSW Department of Planning and Environment good design guidance including fact sheets on 'missing middle' housing types	Short	High
4.2 Educate on housing diversity by hosting industry and community events to consult, disseminate information and/or provide general guidance to showcase local best practice and promote quality medium and high density development typologies	Medium	Low
<p>4.3 Regularly review planning controls in the Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plan to address impediments to the creation of smaller dwellings including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing increased guidance for small scale shop top housing</li> <li>• Consider amending the 500 metre buffer co-location control for residential flat buildings or change it to only effect developments over a certain size</li> <li>• Review DCP Part 17 (off street parking) to consider reducing or removing requirements for smaller dwellings and ensure alignment with the NSW Apartment Design Guide and best practice. The review should aim to reduce the required parking rates in locations with good levels of accessibility, noting that developers can exceed the minimum provision rate if the Albury housing market requires more car spaces.</li> <li>• Explore providing additional R3 Medium Density Residential zones in appropriate locations as part of the next Land Use Strategy Review</li> <li>• Engage with NSW Department of Planning and Environment to advocate for boarding/ rooming house developments to align further with Victorian planning system (Wodonga) on exemption pathways in specific zones</li> </ul>	Medium	Moderate

Actions	Timeframe	Priority
<b>Strategy five: Incentivise the private market to provide a wider variety of smaller dwelling options</b>		
5.1 Review and update Council's <i>Voluntary Planning Agreement Policy</i> (2014) to better promote financial incentive opportunities for developers of projects that deliver smaller dwelling options, subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a suitable criteria that would need to be met</li> <li>• Undertaking a business case and/or feasibility testing to assess the financial impact to Council's budget</li> </ul>	Medium	Moderate
<b>Strategy six: Promote the importance of access to housing that meets universal design principles</b>		
6.1 As opportunities arise, and in consultation with the AlburyCity Access and Inclusion Committee, advocate for change to the NSW Government around raising requirements for housing to meet higher adaptable standards	Ongoing	High
6.2 Promote flexible design including information on home modification, assistive technologies and the Livable Housing Australia (LHA) Guidelines	Medium	Moderate
6.3 Maintain and enforce existing requirements for at least 20% of new apartment dwellings to include universal design features to support ageing in place as per existing Apartment Design Guideline standards.	Ongoing	High
6.4 At the next review of Albury DCP Part 10, include objectives and advice relating to how dwellings (other than apartment dwellings covered at action 6.3) should be designed in accordance with Silver Level Livable Housing Australia (LHA) Guidelines, noting that under current State policy recommended standards would be unenforceable (i.e. relies on voluntary delivery by the private market)	Long	High



Actions	Timeframe	Priority
<b>Affordability objective: We have housing stock that is affordable, stable and supportive of the aspirations and wellbeing of all our residents, especially those in greatest need</b>		
<b>Strategy seven: Present a clear policy position on affordable housing</b>		
7.1 Publish affordable housing policy position statement and principles on Council's website to make information clearly available to developers, affordable housing providers and the community	Short	High
7.2 Review and update Council's <i>Voluntary Planning Agreement Policy</i> (2014) to clearly outline affordable housing objectives and encourage opportunities for Council to secure resources in perpetuity for affordable rental housing by negotiating for developers to dedicate land free of cost, make a monetary contribution or provide other material public purpose benefit (including dwellings that voluntarily achieve and comply with gold or platinum Liveable Housing Australia certification)	Medium	High
7.3 As part of the next review of Albury's Development Contributions Plan, develop a business case and/or economic feasibility testing of a modest affordable housing contributions scheme and, if assessed as financially viable, apply to the Department of Planning and Environment for its application under <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021</i>	Short	Low
7.4 Continue to monitor housing affordability indicators in Albury to inform future reviews of Council's affordable housing policy position and advocate for local housing issues at government and industry forums.	Ongoing	High
<b>Strategy eight: Grow our supply of affordable rental housing</b>		
8.1 Undertake an audit of underutilised Council owned and other government land using the performance criteria outlined in Table 10 (Page 46) of this Strategy to identify suitable opportunities for potential delivery of affordable rental housing projects as either joint venture delivery or government acquisition or dedication of land	Medium	Moderate
8.2 Ensure all eligible affordable housing development applications continue to be exempted from development contribution levies to help reduce development costs (section 7.11 and 7.12 of the <i>Albury Infrastructure Contributions Plan 2014</i> )	Ongoing	High
8.3 Continue to participate in state led housing policy reforms and advocate on behalf of the Community Housing sector for local issues with accessing and delivering affordable housing to be addressed	Ongoing	High

Actions	Timeframe	Priority
<b>Resilience objective: Our housing supports social and environmental goals so that residents feel safe, connected, comfortable and limit their impact on the natural environment</b>		
<b>Strategy nine: Grown our supply of social housing</b>		
<p>9.1 Under the Collaboration Agreement, work with NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) to achieve a 20% (200+ dwellings) increase in overall number of social housing dwellings by 2032 through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing Master plans over key precincts to support large scale housing estate redevelopment in targeted locations, with initial priorities being East Albury (short term) and Lavington (medium term)</li> <li>• Identifying sites that are potentially suitable for social housing and facilitate development of social housing without the need for development consent within the provisions for SEPP (Housing) 2021</li> </ul>	Long	High
<p>9.2 Develop a communications plan for social and affordable housing projects that promotes adoption of a respectful, consultative and consumer led approach to challenge pejorative narratives and/or stigmatisation or stereotyping of tenants</p>	Short	High
<p>9.3 In the next review of the Albury Prevention of Homelessness Strategy, expand actions related to advocacy on behalf of groups in the community identified as being in greatest need, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</li> <li>• Recently arrived migrants</li> <li>• Older women</li> <li>• Women experiencing or escaping from domestic violence</li> <li>• People recently released from prison</li> </ul>	Short	Moderate
<p>9.4 Host an Affordable Housing Forum event that brings housing industry representatives together to discuss affordable housing opportunities and assist to create community dialogue between sectors including government agencies, developers, real estate agents, community service providers and home builders.</p>	Medium	Moderate
<b>Strategy ten: Strengthen our social resilience</b>		
<p><i>See also See also Action 2.1 and Action 2.3 - Prepare a City Wide Social Infrastructure Study and Open Space Strategy</i></p>		
<p>10.1 Drawing on appropriate NSW Department of Planning and Environment guidance on preparing and submitting a Social Impact Assessment (SIA), ensure new developments and planning proposals take into account social considerations as part of the environmental impact process. This includes ensuring SIAs are requested and provided for significant rezoning proposals, major developments (e.g. more than 300 dwellings) and other Planning Proposals which are likely to have significant social impacts</p>	Medium	Moderate

Actions	Timeframe	Priority
<b>Strategy eleven: Improve the environmental performance of new residential estates</b>		
11.1 Complete the city wide Urban Forest Strategy (being prepared) and subsequently prepare updates to planning controls to reflect relevant outcomes, anticipated to include urban tree canopy targets	Short	Moderate
11.2 Further enhance existing Council provisions relating to Water Sensitive Urban Design, considering opportunities to adapt the relevant provisions of the NSW draft Urban Design Guide (2021) within Council's Development Control Plan and/or Engineering Guidelines	Short	High
11.3 In the next scheduled review of Part 10 of the Development Control Plan, update planning controls to further reflect Council's commitment to net-zero targets such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further support Passive Design including clarity in lot orientation controls and diagrams</li> <li>• Investigate use of discretionary regimes to achieve higher than minimum standards for energy and water use performance in larger residential developments</li> </ul>	Medium	Moderate
<b>Strategy twelve: Encourage design and delivery of sustainable homes</b>		
12.1 Undertake advocacy and education initiatives for residents and builders encouraging and promoting sustainable development that is 'beyond BASIX' standards, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light coloured roofs</li> <li>• Passive design elements (siting/orientation, shading and solar access, eaves, cross ventilation, insulation) including pathways to achieve Passive House certification</li> <li>• 'Circular Economy' principles, especially diversion of construction/ building waste from landfill</li> <li>• Ways to reduce the costs of constructing resilient homes</li> <li>• Support for trials and initiatives that include renewable power supply/ sharing (energy hubs and mini grids) shared battery arrangements in new developments, particularly where there is benefit to our most vulnerable communities</li> <li>• Electric Vehicle 'EV' readiness</li> <li>• Preparing for risks of extreme weather events (flooding, bushfire, storms, drought and heatwaves)</li> </ul>	Medium	High



# **DRAFT Albury Local Housing Strategy**

November 2022

553 Kiewa Street Albury NSW 2640

PO Box 323, Albury NSW 2640

P: (02) 6023 8111

E: [info@alburycity.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@alburycity.nsw.gov.au)

W: [alburycity.nsw.gov.au](http://alburycity.nsw.gov.au)

📷 [@alburycity](https://www.instagram.com/alburycity)

