



GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL CONVERSATION REPORT

**Proposed lease of land at
20-22 Perrivale Drive, Shepparton to Kids Under Cover**

DECEMBER 2022





Contents

Background	4
Summary of Consultation	5
Who did we hear from?	6
What we heard	7
What happens next?	11

Background

Greater Shepparton City Council (Council) adopted the *Greater Shepparton Affordable Housing Strategy: Houses for People 2020* (the Affordable Housing Strategy) at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 21 April 2020.

In late 2020, the Victorian Government announced \$5.3 billion in funding to realise Affordable Housing across Victoria as part of the Big Housing Build (BHB). The BHB is a four year initiative with 25% of the fund allocated to regional Victoria. Under the BHB, 18 local government areas (LGAs) have been identified for a Minimum Investment Guarantee of \$765 million. The Minimum Investment Guarantee for Greater Shepparton is \$45 million.

On 20 October 2021, Homes Victoria launched a regional round of the Social Housing Growth Fund, part of the BHB, which sought to provide grants to Community Housing Associations (CHAs) to realise new Affordable Housing in nine LGAs in regional Victoria: Greater Shepparton is one of these. Community housing is housing owned or managed by community housing providers. Community housing providers are highly regulated, not-for-profit organisations that specialise in housing the diverse range of tenants who require both public and affordable homes.

In early 2022, Kids Under Cover made enquires with Council as to whether it would provide land on which to develop a Village 21, which is an innovative model seeking to assist at-risk young people to successfully transition to independent living from out of home care.

Kids Under Cover is a not-for-profit organisation focused on delivering the unique combination of studio accommodation and education scholarships as a practical and proven strategy in preventing youth homelessness. The Village 21 Program is an accommodation and support program for six young people between the ages of 18 and 21 who have exited foster care. The program would involve construction of a communal building containing a kitchen, living room and laundry, three two-bedroom studios with a bathroom and two one-bedroom studios

for two live-in mentors, and a communal BBQ area. The purpose of the program is to assist at-risk young people, between the ages of 18 and 21, to successfully transition to independent living from out of home care.

Council officers proposed a number of potential site options and Council-owned lots that were considered suitable given the requirements of Kids Under Cover: 4 Deane Court, Shepparton was initially determined to be the preferred lot. On 24 February 2022, Kids Under Cover formally requested assistance from Council and stated that its preference was 4 Deane Court, Shepparton. On August 1 2022, following the conclusion of the consultation process, Kids Under Cover wrote to Council formally withdrawing its request to lease the land at 4 Deane Court. The advice also requested that Council consider leasing land at 20-22 Perrivale Drive, Shepparton stating that this land better suited its needs, see Figure One.

The land is currently vacant, owned by Council, zoned General Residential Zone and located within an existing residential area. Council officers consider this to be an effective way of realising Affordable Housing outcomes. The site is 1,800sqm in size with the average lot size in the area being 600-800sqm accommodating 3-4 bedroom dwellings. The proposed development seeks to utilise approximately 20-25% of the land for relocatable buildings and hard standing. The remainder of the site would form open space. As a result of this, the proposed development is not considered to be too dense. The site's size at and ideal location within Shepparton will ensure excellent amenity for future residents, enabling them to be securely and appropriately housed.

At the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 20 September 2022, Council resolved, amongst other things, to undertake a community engagement process in relation to its intention to enter into an agreement to lease the land to Kids Under Cover in accordance with Section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act).



Figure One: Location of 20-22 Perrivale, Shepparton (location outlined and shaded in yellow).

Summary of Consultation

Community consultation commenced on Monday, 3 October and was subsequently extended until Monday, 28 November 2022.

Council used multiple methods to engage with key stakeholders and the broader Greater Shepparton community during the additional community consultation phase, including:

- a letter to adjoining landowners and occupiers of land;
- a public notice in the Shepparton News;
- a letter to relevant stakeholders and referral agencies;
- a media release, which attracted media attention from the Shepparton News; and
- an online submission portal on the 'Shaping Greater Shepp' website.

Submissions were invited via an online submission form, by email and by post.

Who did we hear from?

A total of one early submission and 19 subsequent submissions were received, and three verbal briefings were heard by Council during the consultation process, see Figure Two. This included:

- one early submission from Goulburn Valley Water;
- 19 submissions from landowners and residents within Greater Shepparton; and
- three verbal submissions to Council.

Council received 12 objections to the proposal. Submissions that objected to the proposal were:

- Submissions 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16.

Council received six submissions that supported the proposal. Submissions that supported the proposal were:

- 1, 3, 4, 8, 17, 18 and 19.

One early submission from Goulburn Valley Water did not object to the proposal.

COMPOSITION OF SUBMISSIONS

■ Supports ■ Objects ■ Neither supports nor objects

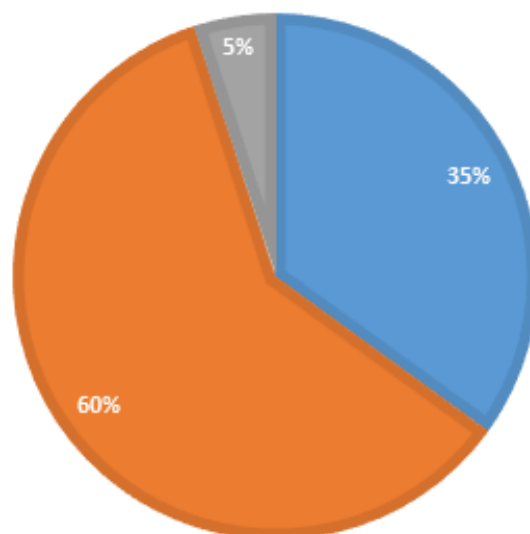


Figure Two: Composition of Submissions.

What we heard

Through the submissions, Council heard a range of comments, queries and concerns. The themes identified in the submissions are listed below, they are also listed in Figure Three:

- crime and safety concerns;
- Greater Shepparton needs more housing for at risk youth;
- the site should be turned into a park/play space;
- proposed development is too dense;
- increased traffic congestion as a result of the development;
- impact on the value of surrounding properties;
- inappropriate location;
- impacts on surrounding residential properties;
- nowhere to put bins for weekly collection; and
- supports the proposal.

Breakdown of themes raised in submissions

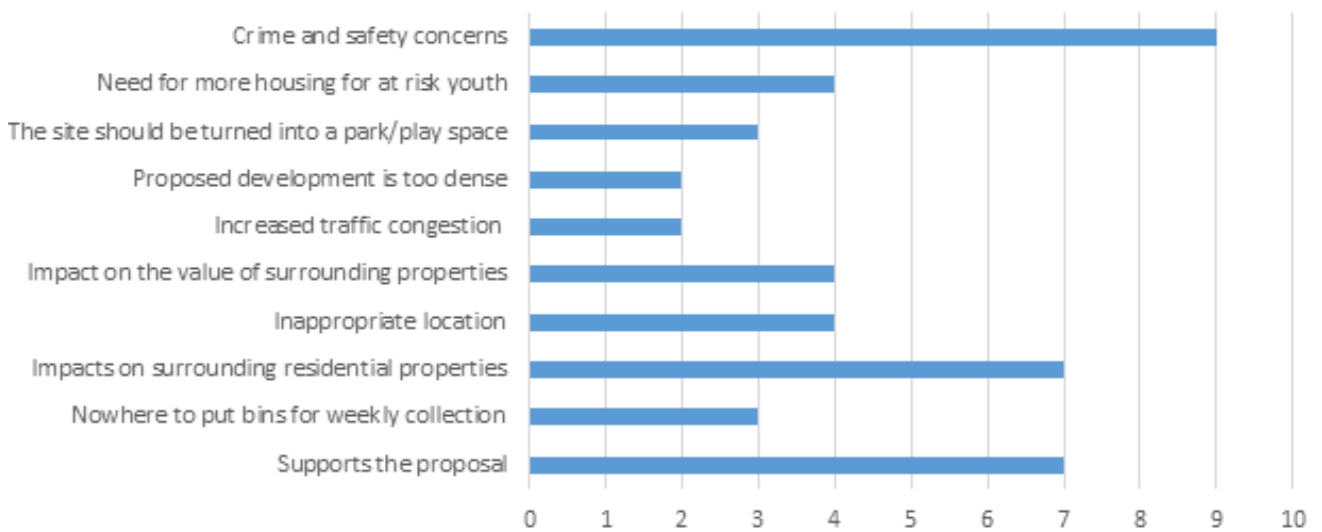


Figure Three: Breakdown of Themes raised in Submissions.

Council officers' responses to each of these themes is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Feedback received to the proposal and Council officers' responses.

Submission Numbers	Feedback Received	Council Officers' Responses
2, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16	Crime and safety concerns.	<p>Council will work with Kids Under Cover to ensure that the ongoing management of the housing provided is safe and successful for existing and future residents.</p> <p>Community housing organisations, just like any other landlord, have obligations under the <i>Residential Tenancies Act 1997</i> to ensure that the privacy, peace and quiet enjoyment of neighbouring residents are not affected by tenants and their visitors.</p> <p>Tenants who do not meet the obligations of the <i>Residential Tenancies Act 1997</i> and the obligations set out by the community housing organisation can be vacated from the property. The <i>Residential Tenancies Act 1997</i> provides a process for this.</p> <p>But, as with any person, serious criminal behaviour can result in a person being arrested on the spot.</p>
1, 3, 4 and 8	Greater Shepparton should provide more housing for vulnerable youths. Example provided was the Youth Foyer.	<p>Council acknowledges the need to realise more Affordable Housing across Greater Shepparton. Council notes that Greater Shepparton had the highest homeless rate in regional Victoria at 5.6 persons per 1,000 people in 2019. This number has likely increased as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic.</p> <p>Council will continue to pursue Affordable Housing opportunities under the <i>Greater Shepparton Affordable Housing Strategy 2020</i>.</p>
2, 6 and 14	The site should be turned into a park/play space.	<p>The <i>Greater Shepparton City Council Play Space Strategy 2020-2030</i> considers that the site is located within a 500m walking catchment of existing parks. These parks include Ducat Reserve, which includes a playground and off-leash dog park, and Rigg Reserve which includes a climbing pyramid, slides and swings. Within 500m there are also smaller open spaces that do not contain infrastructure of this kind.</p> <p>Council officers believe that there is a sufficient and adequate provision of parks to appropriately service the area. As a result, the land had not been previously formalised as open space has not been considered for a playground/park.</p>

Submission Numbers	Feedback Received	Council Officers' Responses
6 and 13	The proposed development is too dense.	<p>The <i>Greater Shepparton Affordable Housing Strategy 2020</i> sets objectives for the integration and realisation of Affordable Housing across Greater Shepparton. It recognises that clustering may be appropriate in situations where there is a lack of land availability or owing to housing agency requirements; reflecting that Community Housing Associations may have practical reasons for the need for moderate levels of clustering, and have experience to determine the optimal mix and scale for any single location.</p> <p>There is limited research and evidence to suggest what an appropriate mix of private market/Affordable Housing is, and that neither the Victorian Government nor the <i>Greater Shepparton Affordable Housing Strategy 2020</i> establish a maximum number of dwellings for any single area.</p> <p>Council officers note that the proposed development will deliver three two-bedroom studios with a bathroom and two one-bedroom studios for live in mentors (subject to design and planning). The proposal is situated in an area that is zoned as suitable for medium density residential development, is located in a well-established residential area, will be designed to meet planning and zone requirements, and will be managed by a Community Housing Association that has experience and expertise in managing housing tenancies.</p>
5 and 16	Increased traffic congestion as a result of the development.	<p>The proposed residents are less likely to own a car as compared to a private rental, and the site is in close walking distance of amenities.</p> <p>Regardless, the development of the site to accommodate the proposal will have negligible impacts on traffic and pedestrian congestion.</p>
10, 12, 14 and 15	Impact on the value of surrounding properties.	<p>This is a common misconception regarding proximity to Affordable Housing across Australia.</p> <p>For most homeowners, it is natural to be concerned about the potential effect on property value as a result of changes in the surrounding neighbourhood. However, there is evidence from a number of studies clearly showing that property values are not affected by proximity to Affordable Housing.</p> <p>Property values are impacted by a large number of factors. In general, property prices have significantly increased in Greater Shepparton since the commencement of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>

Submission Numbers	Feedback Received	Council Officers' Responses
2, 6, 7 and 11	Inappropriate location.	Council has previously determined that housing is a basic human right; every member of our community deserves the certainty of knowing they will have a roof over their head every night. This is regardless of a person's financial circumstances, age, gender, race, religion or sexual orientation. The provision of housing enables participation in community life in Greater Shepparton.
2, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16	Impact on surrounding residential properties. This includes privacy, noise and construction activity.	Any impacts on residents during construction will be managed as part of the planning/building permit process.
10, 11 and 14	Nowhere to put bins for weekly collection.	<p>Council officers believe the development will not have any impact on weekly bin collections. The proposed dwellings are all studios and will not require a high number of bins.</p> <p>The site frontage is 33 metres wide, which allows sufficient room for the bin collection for the proposed development and that of the current residents along Perrivale Drive. The width will also allow for private vehicle access into the property without any impacts on bin collection.</p> <p>Council's Waste Department has also reviewed the concern and concluded that the development of the land will not impede the bin collection service. Alternative pick-up locations have been identified adjacent to 20-22 Perrivale Drive and, if the proposal is successful, residents will be notified of any changes to the preferred bin collection location.</p>
1, 3, 4, 8, 17, 18 and 19.	Supports the project.	Council officers note the response from these submitters.

What happens next?

Council will consider the findings of this community consultation before considering the potential lease of the land at the Ordinary Council Meeting to be held on 20 December 2022.



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