

Affordable housing at Macquarie Point, yes please!

14 December, 2015

Shelter Tas, the Peak body for housing and homelessness services in Tasmania, has called on the Hobart City Council to include affordable housing at the Macquarie Point development.

“The Hobart City Planning Committee meets today to consider the planning amendments for Macquarie Point. Shelter Tas made a representation to the Committee outlining the community benefits of affordable housing and how that could happen”, Shelter Tas Executive Officer Pattie Chugg said.

Local government has an important role in the design of the lived environment, including diverse and affordable housing. Successful development can include socially valuable outcomes. Hobart City Council is in a strong position to lead the way on this development.

Many Tasmanians are low income workers who need affordable housing in good locations. Recent analysis from SGS economics shows that low income households, especially single person households struggle in the Tasmanian private rental market, often paying over 60% of their income in rent.

“Low wage workers and apprentices, young and emerging artists, single person households and older people need well-located, affordable housing and secure rental options. Macquarie Point would benefit from housing a broad range of people too”, Ms Chugg said.

“We do not want to see Macquarie Point become an exclusive enclave that is unaffordable to ordinary Tasmanians. The efficiency of the urban economy is enhanced when workers live close to their employment. A diverse and vibrant social environment is good for everyone”, Ms Chugg said.

It is important to plan well for cities and learn from the mistakes of the past when communities were separated by income, which in turn entrenched disadvantage. This could be facilitated by including affordable housing in the Statewide Planning Scheme provisions, and would allow all Councils to support affordable housing.

“Shelter Tas and the Tenants’ Union call on the Hobart City Planning Committee to lead the way and fulfil its obligations to the whole community. The Committee can showcase best practice if they include amendments providing for affordable housing at Macquarie Point at today’s meeting”, Ms Chugg said.

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