

Housing Diversity Statement

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Responsible Department – Strategic Development

This version includes all amendments and administrative updates to 4 September 2012.

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Preamble

In accordance with a resolution of Council on 21 June 2005 to include definitions of Council, Councillors and Council officers in all Council policy documents, the following definitions are provided:

Council – means Casey City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the Local Government Act 1989

Councillors – means the individuals holding the office of a member of Casey City Council

Council officers – means the Chief Executive Officer and staff of Council appointed by the Chief Executive Officer.

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this *Housing Diversity Statement* is to articulate Council's position for a diverse range of housing types within the City of Casey prior to preparing a '*Housing Strategy*'. The statement also encourages innovative ways to build in flexibility in housing to suit the changing needs of the Casey community.

2. Scope

This statement covers all aspects of Council's activities with respect to the promotion of housing diversity within Casey.

3. Statement

3.1. Introduction

The City of Casey has consistently been one of the largest and fastest growing municipalities in Victoria over the past 15 years and can expect to continue to grow significantly over the next 20-30 years not only in its growth areas but also in the established areas with infill development.

Casey is expected to grow from 253,400 people in 2012 to 450,000 people in 2036, meaning just under an additional 200,000 people will be living in Casey within the next 25 years. Casey will also see an increase of 65,000 additional households, bringing the total households expected in 2036 to 155,500.

This Housing Diversity Statement should be read in conjunction with Clause 16 – Housing of the *Casey Planning Scheme*.

3.2. Policy context

The City of Casey established an Affordable Housing Taskforce in April 2009, which ran for a one-year term. The Taskforce was established following the emergence of a number of significant issues around housing affordability in the City of Casey. The Taskforce assisted Council in identifying issues associated with housing affordability in Casey and offered policy objectives and actions to resolve these issues.

It was determined that key issues affecting housing affordability in the City of Casey are a lack of diversity in the types of dwellings available in the municipality and a lack of rental accommodation opportunities. The Affordable Housing Taskforce had a role in contributing to policy objectives and actions that form part of the review of the *Casey Housing Strategy*.

More recently, the impact that a lack of rental accommodation has on the community has become more apparent. Increasing house prices and interest rates has meant that many households have been less able to purchase a home than with previous generations. The increased demand for rental accommodation is not matched by supply and competition to secure one of the few available rental properties is high. Further contributing to this issue is the lack of supply for smaller rental properties for households with only 1 or 2 persons.

There are limited alternative accommodation types available in Casey for those who cannot access or afford a private rental home. Public and social housing are also in short supply (it is estimated that there are less than 2,000 public or social housing dwellings in Casey) and so alternative forms of housing are starting to present more frequently in Casey such as private rooming houses.

The City of Casey has recently prepared a Rooming House Policy that identifies this issue and seeks to advocate for greater supply of more appropriate and long-term housing options and to improve the quality of rooming house accommodation in Casey. On this basis, consultation for the Rooming House

Policy was extended to consider housing diversity issues more broadly. These issues are discussed in section 3.3

3.3. Key Issues

Housing in the City of Casey has mainly been targeted to family groups over the past 10-15 years. The result of this is that Casey's housing market is predominantly made up of 3, 4 and 5 bedroom dwellings and very few 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings. New data from the 2011 Census has shown a moderate increase in the supply of 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings since the 2006 Census; from 2,500 dwellings (4.9% of total dwellings) in 2006 to 6,400 dwellings (7.9% of total dwellings) in 2011. However, 3 bedroom dwellings still make up half of the housing stock in Casey (49.4% of total dwellings) and dwellings with 4 or more bedrooms represent 40.7% of total dwellings in Casey. By comparison, 35,150 households (43.7% of total households) in Casey have 1 or 2 persons usually resident, 15,200 households (18.9% of total households) have 3 persons usually resident, 17,700 (22.0% of total households) have 4 persons usually resident and 9,400 (15.4% of total households) have 5 or more persons usually resident. So our housing stock continues to be one-dimensional in nature with 3 to 4 bedroom houses prevailing while our household types are getting smaller.

Casey is beginning to experience emerging market segments that require a different form of housing to the large family home. Emerging segments include students, singles, couples without children, single parents, empty nesters, retirees and elderly people.

The consequence of Casey's housing market being so focused to family homes is that choice is limited and therefore these groups pay for houses which are too big and exceed needs, often leading to financial strain. These groups are expected to continue to grow substantially as Casey's population matures and changes over time.

Two other emerging markets in the City of Casey are single parent families and multi-generational families. Single parent families require a family home but are often unable to afford housing costs of current market stock on one income. Multi-generation family households require a dwelling that can house a larger family; however some are often unable to afford the types of large homes available within the municipality.

The City of Casey has identified the need to address these market segments in new housing development, by encouraging greater diversity and therefore choice to suit people within the Casey community at various stages of the life cycle.

Furthermore, the City of Casey has identified a need for housing to be accessible and visitable (that is the ability for a person with impaired or limited mobility to access the home of their friends or family) to provide greater choice in housing for people with limited or impaired mobility. The City of Casey encourages consideration by developers of the *Liveable Housing Design Guidelines*, prepared by Liveable Housing Australia on behalf of the Australian Government. This includes 16 liveable housing design elements, such as dwelling access, dwelling entrance, car parking, internal doors and corridors, toilets, showers, reinforcement of bathroom and toilet walls, internal stairways, kitchen space, laundry space, ground (or entry level) bedroom space, switches and power points, door and tap hardware, family/living room space, window sills and flooring.

3.4. Housing Strategy Review

The City of Casey is planning to review the *Casey Housing Strategy 2005*. The purpose of this review is to bring the Strategy in line with recent State Government policy changes and to include objectives around housing affordability, opportunity, choice and preferred location for increased residential densities.

The Housing Strategy review will also consider Casey's anticipated housing capacity and how it can be distributed across the municipality. This will include strategies around increasing densities near key activity nodes (shops/jobs, public transport links, etc.) whilst protecting key areas the community value.

3.5. Housing Diversity

Housing diversity is defined as a variety of types, form, functionality and tenure of housing, where:

- **Type** refers to the lot density, number of storeys and number of bedrooms within the house.
- **Form** refers to the building heights, building mass, materials, design and internal layout of the house. Form also relates to the relationship of dwellings to neighbouring dwellings.
- **Functionality** refers to the accessibility, adaptability and flexibility of the house to cater for different household needs.
- **Tenure** refers to the financial and ownership arrangement by which a person or organisation occupies a house.

The City of Casey encourages all new housing developments to provide a balanced mix of diverse housing options for the Casey community and to consider opportunities to provide alternative and innovative options, particularly based around tenure arrangements, which can assist in addressing housing affordability issues.

3.6. Objectives

The following section identifies objectives of the *Housing Diversity Statement*. These objectives have been prioritised in the following categories:

- (a) Short term objectives; which are immediately achievable and seek to fill the gaps that exist within Casey's current housing stock.
- (b) Medium term objectives; that require further thought and innovation to deliver an outcome in the current policy framework.
- (c) Long term objectives; that will be considered through the review of the *Casey Housing Strategy 2005* and will involve policy change.

The objectives have been amended as part of the 2012 review. The review of the objectives is included in Appendix 1 – Review of Housing Diversity Objectives.

3.6.1. Short term objectives

- To identify and retain existing public, social and affordable housing.
- To work with the development industry to provide a range of housing types and densities in Casey in appropriate locations in accordance with the guidelines identified in Appendix 2 – Preferred Housing Densities.
- To work with the development industry and research institutions to research and pilot development of Studio, 1 and/or 2 bedroom dwellings within new or multi-lot residential developments.
- To advocate to State Government via the proposed Metropolitan Strategy for a strong policy framework to encourage a range of housing densities and low cost housing options across all of Melbourne's growth municipalities.
- To encourage the development industry to provide 'accessible' and/or 'adaptable' dwellings, whereby the minimum provision includes the structural components (such as door widths, entry levels and room sizes, etc.) of the Liveable Housing Design Guidelines prepared by Liveable Housing Australia on behalf of the Australian Government.
- To facilitate and encourage partnerships between developers, builders and low cost housing providers to deliver diverse housing options within Casey.
- To support ongoing research to improve the excellence of affordable and diverse housing.

3.6.2. Medium term objectives

- To advocate to the development industry to provide greater flexibility in available housing products to meet the changing needs of a household over time.

- To advocate for housing that balances Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) principles with the cost of construction and materials to provide housing products that are affordable to construct and to operate on an ongoing basis.
- To advocate for innovative tenure models for housing to meet the needs of the community.
- To advocate for innovative housing forms that are functional, flexible, affordable and of a high quality design.
- To advocate to the development industry to provide opportunities for affordable and larger or adaptable homes to suit the needs of multi-generational family units within areas where these families are located.

3.6.3. Long term objectives

- To investigate policy mechanisms within the Casey Planning Scheme that can facilitate housing diversity requirements.
- To support ongoing research to effectively monitor housing affordability in the City of Casey.

4. Administrative updates

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters this document must be by resolution of Council.

5. Review

The next biennial review of this document is scheduled for completion by 31 January 2014.

Glossary

Accessible/Accessibility	The ability for a person or people with impaired or limited mobility to comfortably and readily access and live independently in a dwelling.
Adaptable/Adaptability	The ability to easily modify or extend a home at a minimum cost to coincide with changing individual lifestyle and community needs.
Affordable Housing	Housing available to low income households (the bottom 40% of the income distribution) at less than 30% of the household income.
Crisis/Emergency Accommodation	Temporary accommodation provided on a not-for-profit basis by an agency which receives homelessness support funding from the State Government.
ESD (Environmentally Sustainable Development)	Where consideration has been given to reducing the greenhouse gas emissions in the construction methods, material choices and long-term operation of a dwelling and surrounding property.
Housing affordability	Housing that is generally available to all households at less than 30% of the household income.
Housing Diversity	The range of housing available to a local community by housing type, form functionality and tenure.
Housing Stress	A situation in which a household is paying more than 30% of the household income on housing costs. Also defined as mortgage stress and rental stress.
Median House Price	The sale price value of homes sold within the given timeframe, where houses sold are divided into two units so that one half of houses were sold for more than the median house price and one half of houses were sold for less than the median house price.
Median Household Income	The income level of households, where the income level represents the sum of the individual incomes of each person aged over 15 years present in the households, and where the identified group is divided into two units so that one half of households have incomes above the median household income and one half of households have incomes below the median household income.
Public Housing	Housing that is funded by the government and is available to eligible recipients.
Rooming House	<p>A building in which there is one or more rooms available for occupancy on payment of rent in which the total number of people who may occupy that room or those rooms is not less than 4. Common characteristics of rooming houses include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily single room accommodation. • Shared access to common facilities such as bathrooms, kitchens, laundries and living areas. • No formal supports are present on the premises. • The owner and their family generally do not live on the premises. • Increasingly used by long-term homeless people or those in housing crisis.

Shared Housing	<p>Generally defined by the City of Casey to include housing where some amenities are shared between unrelated residents, such as rooming houses, emergency/crisis housing, student housing and hostels.</p> <p>Shared housing in the <i>Casey Planning Scheme</i> is defined as a building, including outbuildings normal to a dwelling, to house a person, people and any dependants or two or more people, where the total number of habitable rooms does not exceed 10.</p>
Social Housing	<p>Housing that is owned and managed by housing associations or providers and is in part funded by Government means and directed towards eligible recipients.</p>
Student Housing	<p>Housing specifically provided for students that is associated with a recognised education institution.</p>
Sustainable/Sustainability	<p>The retention of a resource, whether it be natural or other (e.g. a sustainable housing stock provides suitable housing for all household types within a community).</p>
Vacancy Rate	<p>A measure to assess the availability of rental properties in an area. Low vacancy rates suggest strong rental sales due to pressure from demand.</p>
Visitable	<p>The ability for a person or people with impaired or limited mobility to comfortably and readily access a dwelling as a guest.</p>

Appendix 1 – Review of Housing Diversity Objectives

Short Term Objectives

Short Term Objectives	Progress	Action
To identify and retain existing public, social and affordable housing.	The objective is being achieved.	The objective is ongoing and will be retained as a short term objective of the <i>Housing Diversity Statement</i> .
To advocate to the development industry to provide a proportion (notionally 20%) of Studio, 1 and/or 2 bedroom dwellings within all new multi-lot residential developments, where appropriate.	The objective is being achieved.	Review of this objective has revealed that the notional provision is below adequate for developments within or adjacent to activity centres and high frequency public transport. As such, the objective is replaced by the density guidelines included in Appendices 2 and 3. In addition, a new objective has been inserted to facilitate a pilot residential development delivering Studio, 1 and/or 2 bedroom dwellings.
To advocate to the development industry to provide a proportion (a minimum of 50% ground floor dwellings) of 'accessible' and/or 'adaptable' dwellings, where the functionality of dwellings consider the key features identified in the State Government 'Visible and Adaptable Features in Housing Regulatory Impact Statement'.	This objective is being achieved.	Review of this objective has revealed that the notional provision is regularly misinterpreted, or accessible features are only provided in part, rendering parts of the dwelling inaccessible. As such, the objective is amended to provide for 'accessible' and/or 'adaptable' dwellings, whereby the minimum provision will now reference Liveable Housing Victoria's <i>Liveable Housing Design Guidelines</i> , which have been prepared on behalf of the Australian Government.
To facilitate and encourage partnerships between developers, builders and affordable housing providers to deliver diverse housing options within Casey.	This objective is being achieved.	The objective is ongoing and will be retained as a short term objective of the <i>Housing Diversity Statement</i> .
To explore the option of a <i>demonstration project</i> with a key project partner to implement these short term objectives and requirements – <i>the Casey Smart Housing Certification Project</i> .	This objective has not been achieved.	The objective is important but has not been able to be implemented in the short term. Further work has identified that Council cannot progress this project further. Hence, the objective has been deleted.

<p>To support ongoing research to improve the excellence of affordable housing.</p>	<p>This objective has been achieved</p>	<p>The purchase of housing and affordability data, along with an ongoing commitment to review the <i>Casey Housing Strategy 2005</i> supports ongoing research and advocacy for housing policy in the City of Casey. The objective is ongoing and will be retained as a short term objective of the <i>Housing Diversity Statement</i>.</p>
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Medium Term Objectives

Medium Term Objectives	Progress	Action
To advocate to the development industry to provide greater flexibility in available housing products to meet the changing needs of a household over time.	Achieving this objective is underway.	The objective is ongoing and will be retained as a medium term objective of the <i>Housing Diversity Statement</i> .
To advocate for housing that balances Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) principles with the cost of construction and materials to provide housing products that are affordable to construct and to operate on an ongoing basis.	This objective has been achieved in part with establishment of the Selandra Rise Community Place, . .	The Selandra Community Place is a sustainable home demonstration project that shows how energy and water consumption can be reduced through housing design and appliance choice. The objective to advocate for ESD principles in new homes is important and will be implemented through the review of the <i>Casey Housing Strategy 2005</i> . The objective will be retained as a medium term objective of the <i>Housing Diversity Statement</i> .
To advocate for innovative tenure models for housing to meet the needs of the community.	Achieving this objective is underway.	The objective is somewhat achieved through advocacy-based policy directions included in the <i>Rooming House Strategy</i> . The objective will be retained as a medium term objective of the <i>Housing Diversity Statement</i> .
To advocate for innovative housing forms that are functional, flexible, affordable and of a high quality design.	Achieving this objective is underway.	The objective is being achieved through a selection of proposals. The objective is ongoing and will be retained as a medium term objective of the <i>Housing Diversity Statement</i> .
To advocate to the development industry to provide opportunities for affordable and larger or adaptable homes to suit the needs of multi-generational family units within areas where these families are located.	This objective has not been achieved.	The objective is important and will be implemented through the review of the <i>Casey Housing Strategy 2005</i> . The objective will be retained as a medium term objective of the <i>Housing Diversity Statement</i> .

Long Term Objectives

Long Term Objectives	Progress	Action
To investigate policy mechanisms within the Casey Planning Scheme that can facilitate housing diversity requirements.	This objective has not been achieved.	The objective is important and will be implemented through the review of the <i>Casey Housing Strategy 2005</i> . The objective will be retained as a long term objective of the <i>Housing Diversity Statement</i> .

<p>To prepare a 'Sustainable Housing Design Guide' to consider ways to increase energy, water and materials efficiency in housing balanced by construction costs.</p>	<p>This objective has been achieved by others.</p>	<p>The South East Councils Climate Change Alliance's (SECCCA) Sustainable Homes Program provides a facilitation service to residents building new homes to provide them with information on how the design of a home can help to reduce energy consumption and costs. This service is conducted at the Selandra Community Place in Cranbourne East, which is demonstration project showing features of the home that contribute to lower levels of energy consumption through design and household appliance choices. The Sustainable Homes Program provides a better and more proactive platform for improved sustainable housing design than the objective to prepare a Sustainable Housing Design Guide. As such, the objective is deleted.</p>
<p>To support the preparation of accessible housing design guidelines.</p>	<p>This objective has been achieved by others.</p>	<p>The objective has been achieved through the preparation of the <i>Liveable Housing Design Guidelines</i>, which have been prepared by Liveable Housing Australia on behalf of the Australian Government. As such, the objective is deleted.</p>
<p>To strategically plan for increased densities of housing around key activity nodes and other appropriate locations whilst protecting valued areas from inappropriate development.</p>	<p>This objective has been achieved.</p>	<p>The objective has been achieved through identifying housing density guidelines appropriate to the proximity to activity centres and other activity nodes. The objective will be replaced by short term objectives that encourage the use of the new housing density guidelines and advocate for strategically planned densities through the preparation of a new State Government Metropolitan Strategy.</p>
<p>To support ongoing research to effectively monitor housing affordability in the City of Casey.</p>	<p>Achieving this objective is underway.</p>	<p>The purchase of housing and affordability data, along with the forthcoming review of the <i>Casey Housing Strategy 2005</i> enables this objective to be achieved. The objective is ongoing and will be retained as a long term objective of the <i>Housing Diversity Statement</i>.</p>

Appendix 2 – Preferred Housing Densities

High, medium and low density housing can be defined in a number of ways. What is high density in Casey could be considered as medium or even conventional density in inner-City areas. The following table outlines the definitions for housing density that are relevant to the City of Casey:

High Density	50 or more dwellings per hectare
Medium Density	20 – 50 dwellings per hectare
Conventional Density	15 – 20 dwellings per hectare
Low density	Less than 15 dwellings per hectare (one dwelling on a lot)

The preferred locations for higher housing densities are around activity centres, high quality public transport and well-serviced open space. The following tables outline preferred locations for housing density in the City of Casey:

	Within AC boundary	Within 400m of AC	Within 800m of AC
Principal Activity Centre (PAC)	High Density	High Density	Medium Density
Major Activity Centre (MAC)	High Density	High Density	Medium Density
Large Neighbourhood Activity Centre (NAC)	High Density	Medium Density	Medium Density
Medium Neighbourhood Activity Centre (NAC)	Medium Density	Medium Density	Conventional or Medium Density
Small Neighbourhood Activity Centre (NAC)/Convenience	Medium Density	Conventional Density	Conventional Density

Other locations	Preferred density
Within 400m of a train station	High Density
Within 800m of a train station	Medium Density
Along existing, direct, high frequency bus routes (Principal Public Transport Network)	Medium Density
Reasonably sized and well-serviced open space	Medium Density

Notes

- Distances are based on a walkable route from the development proposal to relevant infrastructure, amenity or service.
- Density measures refer to the Net developable area which excludes communal driveways and communal open space.
- Development proposals exceeding these parameters are discouraged.
- Development proposals that exceed these parameters will be asked to demonstrate a significant Net Community Benefit such as affordable/social housing supply, ESD features, high quality and substantial public open space contribution or positive design response. Retaining larger lots in one ownership (and avoiding land fragmentation) is also desirable to enable future redevelopment of housing.

Appendix 3 – Preferred Housing Diversity within and around Activity Centres

There are very few options for 1 and 2 bedroom homes in the City of Casey despite a growing proportion of the population living in 1 or 2 person households. The following table outlines the preferred ratios of housing diversity by bedroom numbers around activity centres in Casey:

	Within AC boundary	Within 400m of AC	Within 800m of AC
Principal Activity Centre (PAC)	>60% 1 bedroom >30% 2 bedrooms	40-60% 1 bedroom 30-40% 2 bedrooms	>40% 1 or 2 bedrooms
Major Activity Centre (MAC)	>50% 1 bedroom >40% 2 bedrooms	40-50% 1 bedroom 30-40% 2 bedrooms	>30% 1 or 2 bedrooms
Large Neighbourhood Activity Centre (NAC)	50-60% 1 or 2 bedrooms	40-50% 1 or 2 bedrooms	20% 1 or 2 bedrooms
Medium Neighbourhood Activity Centre (NAC)	20% 1 or 2 bedrooms	20% 1 or 2 bedrooms	20% 1 or 2 bedrooms
Small Neighbourhood Activity Centre (NAC)/Convenience	20% 1 or 2 bedrooms	20% 1 or 2 bedrooms	20% 1 or 2 bedrooms

Notes

- Studio apartments are included as 1 bedroom dwellings.
- Development proposals providing more or less than the preferred amount of 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings are discouraged.
- Development proposals that go against the guidelines will be asked to demonstrate a significant Net Community Benefit such as affordable/social housing supply, ESD features, high quality and substantial public open space contribution or positive design response.

References

City of Casey (2005) *Casey Housing Strategy*. City of Casey, Narre Warren

City of Casey (2012) *Casey Planning Scheme*. City of Casey, Narre Warren

City of Casey (2009) *Council Plan 2009-2013*. City of Casey, Narre Warren

City of Casey (2009) *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2009-2013*. City of Casey, Narre Warren

Liveable Housing Australia (2012) *Liveable Housing Design Guidelines*. Liveable Housing Australia, Sydney

List of Amendments

Date	Approving Authority	Description
4 September 2012	Strategic Development Department	<i>To review the Casey Housing Diversity Statement and introduce objectives for a range of housing densities in Casey, including identifying preferred housing density guidelines; and increasing the preferred housing diversity guidelines within and around activity centres and other activity nodes in Casey.</i>



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