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MEDIA RELEASE

GSC targets more affordable rental housing in greater Sydney

Greater Sydney Commission proposals to oversee implementation of affordable rental housing targets across Sydney is an important sign it is committed to addressing the chronic need for long term affordable housing options for lower income households.

NSW Federation of Housing Associations CEO, Wendy Hayhurst said the GSC's Greater Sydney Region Plan released today should ensure that when land is rezoned in parts of Sydney, between 5-10% of additional floor space is used to build affordable rental housing.

Ms Hayhurst said the targets would be dependent on viability tests, which she also said must be transparent to give the community confidence that the affordable housing numbers delivered are not reduced and the system is not exploited.

"The GSC has recognised the strain ordinary Sydney people are under as a direct result of the cost of housing in Sydney. The strain comes from long commutes, little time with families and stress about making ends meet," she said.

"Requiring well designed affordable housing on rezoned land means the whole community shares with the landowner in the unexpected windfall created by a planning decision. It's also a no brainer for government, reducing the amount it needs to raise from taxes to fund affordable housing.

"We would have liked to have seen targets extended to meet the needs of essential service workers on moderate income who as recent research has shown are being pushed to the outer edges of Sydney and beyond. The Federation will continue to argue for 30% affordable housing targets on government owned land to help meet their needs.

"The important thing is that the GSC has recognised that housing is essential infrastructure and that it has a major impact on Sydney's economic productivity through its effect on health and wellbeing, the amount people can spend on goods and services and the level of congestion on our roads and public transport."

Ms Hayhurst said she was pleased the plan does not preclude local councils from negotiating additional affordable housing in their local communities

She said the Government should require that all affordable housing be managed by not for profit registered community housing providers.

"It is good news that the GSC has highlighted the poor choice of rental housing options and insecure rental agreements for renters in Sydney who need affordable, secure options if they are to stay in here in Sydney," Ms Hayhurst said.

"The Federation's members look forward to hearing more about the plans from the GSC in the coming weeks."

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