

"My Home"

Town of Victoria Park
Locked Bag 437
Victoria Park WA 6979

Attention: Ms Amie Groom
Cc: Ms Natalie Martin Goode
Mr Robert Cruickshank
Mr Nigel Molyneux
Ms Laura Sabitzer

2 February 2021

Dear Amie

**RE: (NEW) DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION 5.2019.587.1
LOT 1 (257) BERWICK STREET VICTORIA PARK**

On behalf of "My Home", I am pleased to submit this application for the development of **five (5)** temporary houses on the above lot in Victoria Park.

This is a new application following discussions with the Mayor, CEO, Planning Department, the Town's lawyers and feedback from previous Public Comments on the previously submitted application for the site (DA257). We believe the new application addresses the items flagged as areas of concern.

The number of dwellings on the site has been reduced from eight (8) to five (5).

"My Home" Overview

"My Home" is a new initiative to provide housing for homeless people at no cost to government. "My Home" is a proposed three-way partnership between government, not-for-profit and the private sector, and is based on the Housing First model. The Housing First model is guided by the principle that a homeless individual's primary need is to obtain stable housing firstly, followed by the provision of support services that can help the individual re-engage with the community and ultimately become self-sufficient.

Key elements of the "My Home" project are as follows:

- Government provides vacant land at no cost that has been identified for long term future use such as road widenings, railway expansions etc. A number of sites has already been offered by the WAPC, including Lot 1 (257) Berwick Street.
- Private sector funds the construction of housing - small demountable homes that can be constructed quickly and can be easily relocated to other sites if the land is needed for future government projects.
- A Community Housing Provider (CHP) leases the land at peppercorn rent for 15 years (nom.). During this time, the CHP maintains the property and provides ongoing management of the tenants along with providing access to employment, health, legal

and social support services. The CHP takes a percentage of the tenants' Centrelink payments to fund this ongoing management.

- Each site can be specifically targeted for particular homeless cohorts, for example over-55 women, with appropriate support services provided.
- Private sector contributions are tax deductible and provide opportunities to promote brand identity and corporate social responsibility.
- Architect designed homes will be sympathetic to surrounding development to minimise community opposition and respond sensitively to local planning policies.
- Can be used as a pilot project to trial new innovations in low-cost sustainable building practices (e.g. alternative construction methods, energy efficient design, solar panels, water recycling, new construction materials etc.).
- The model has proven success in other parts of Australia and around the world, e.g. Harris Transportable Housing Project by Launch Housing, Melbourne.

The project has been developed by My Home Australasia Limited. The "My Home" board members are Michelle Blakeley Architect, Kathleen Gregory AM and Ben Martin (Managing Director, Morphis Developments Pty Ltd) who have liaised with professionals in town planning, project management, architectural design, engineering, construction and community housing services to develop the project model and house typology.

The Development

The proposed development consists of

- 2 x land portions of the land identified as Residential R30 & Regional Scheme Reserves - Other Regional Roads' under the Town's Town Planning Scheme:
 - 1 x 175m² lot (House 1)
 - 1 x 218m² lot (House 2)
- two (2) single storey single bedroom detached houses on individual land portions on the land identified as Residential R30 & Regional Scheme Reserves - Other Regional Roads' under the Town's Town Planning Scheme.
- three (3) single storey single bedroom detached houses on the land described as 'Other Regional Road' under the Metropolitan Region Scheme.
- Four (4) x car parking bays including one (1) Universal Access bay, motorbike bay, bicycle parking.
- landscaping and paths connecting each house to the primary street (Berwick Street) and the parking area.

The proposed development is intended to provide temporary housing for homeless people on land that is owned by the State Government and has been identified for long-term use. The site is zoned partially 'Urban' and partially 'Other Regional Road' under the Metropolitan Region Scheme and 'Residential R30 & Regional Scheme Reserves - Other Regional Roads' under the Town's Town Planning Scheme and is ultimately earmarked for the widening of Kent Street.

"My Home" has obtained support from both the Department of Planning and Department of Communities for the use of the subject land as outlined in this proposal. Enclosed is a letter from Hon Simone McGurk MLA, Minister for Community Services, confirming support for the project as it aligns closely with the State Government's 10 Year Strategy to End Homelessness.

The site is ideally located within close proximity to shopping, medical, education and public transport facilities.

The land is currently vacant and relatively flat therefore the development is a straightforward low-risk proposal that will not prejudice outcomes over the broader area. All services are already available to the site.

Included in this application are:

- MRS Form 1 Application for Development.
- Town of Victoria Park Development Application Form
- Certificate of Title for the subject land
- Letter of support from Hon Simone McGurk MLA, Minister for Community Services.
- Drawings and Design Information:
 - ✓ Site Plan
 - ✓ Land Portion Plan
 - ✓ Landscape Plan
 - ✓ On-site Parking and Vehicle Access/Exit Plans
 - ✓ Typical Floorplan
 - ✓ Street Elevations
 - ✓ Parking Gradient Section drawing
 - ✓ Site Survey Drawing
 - ✓ Colour Perspective Render
 - ✓ Materials / colour palette schedule.

In response to the Matters Identified in the preliminary review of the application by the Town's planners and engineers (received by email 14/01/2021) we note:

- 1 All houses are within the zoned land portioned.**
- 2 Houses have been moved away from the east boundary so that there is sufficient space for vegetation to provide acoustic screening for residents and visual screening of the rainwater tanks from the street. The rainwater tanks are to be Zincalume custom orb in keeping with the materials palette of the Weatherboard Precinct policy. There is also a berm created by the difference in level between the street level and the site level along the east and north east boundaries. This will also reduce acoustic and visual impact of the development.**
- 3 There are four car parking bays, a motorcycle bay and bicycle parking within the development. Justification of the number of car parking bays being one less than the R-codes 5.3.3 is that there is a bus route along Kent Street and a bus stop adjacent to the site. It is likely that some of the tenants will not own a car because of their prior 'homeless' circumstances. There is a motorbike bay and bicycle parking spaces on the site to encourage alternative modes of transport. A convenience shop is opposite the site on Kent Street, a major shopping centre is 500m and the Albany Highway retail precinct is 600m from the site and are walkable.**
- 4 The dimensions of the car bays are 2.4m x 5.4m. There is a Universal Access bay allowance to one of the bays.**
- 5 The setback of the parking bays to the nearest boundaries is now in excess of the required 6m (refer Parking Plan drawings)**
- 6 There is now sufficient parking area to enable cars to exit the site in a forward gear. (refer Parking Plan drawings)**

Further information required for assessment.

a. Relevant drawings to enable assessment of the application are enclosed.

b. Details:

- There are no street fences and walls. Visual privacy and separation are provided by boundary planting of shrubs.
- A Colours and Materials schedule with weatherboard elements is included in this application.
- Outdoor living areas for each house is identified on the site plan and is exceeds R-Codes requirements

- Landscaping and trees are detailed on the Landscape Plan. An existing large tree on the north west boundary corner is to be retained.
- c. Bin store, clothes drying area and other external fixtures are identified on the site plan.
- d. Finished paved levels of vehicle parking and access areas are identified on the drawings. A Section drawing showing gradient of 1:14 from crossover into parking area is included.
- e. Location of soakwells is shown on the Site Plan.
- f. No retaining walls are required. Geocell stabilising fabric will be used on the slope between the street ground level and site ground level (refer Elevation drawings).
- g. Extent of paved vehicle area, driveway and crossover and proposed materials is indicated on the Site Plan
- h. Pedestrian access within the site and to the adjacent footpaths is indicated on the landscaping plan.

In addition to the documents and drawings in this application, we provide the following information about the development:

1. What is a “My Home” house?

The houses are 30m² with bedroom, kitchen, living and bathroom/laundry spaces. The site will be landscaped with vegetable gardens, fruit trees and outdoor living spaces.

There are on-site shared parking bays, however it is expected that majority of the tenants will not own their own cars therefore the bays are primarily for visitor parking. There is a public transport bus route along Kent Street with a bus stop within close walking distance.

The homes are designed and will be built to Passivhaus principles to ensure a comfortable living environment. This includes good thermal and acoustic insulation, double glazing (reducing noise from the railway as well as reducing thermal transfer), sealing of the building envelope to minimise air leakage, cross ventilation with ceiling fans, solar panels and rainwater collection tanks.

Underlying the design and planning of the houses has been the question “Would I be comfortable living in this house?” The design, construction and fit-out provide a home which demonstrates to the tenant that their community cares and respects that he/she should have reasonable quality of life.

The homes incorporate acoustic attenuation features in response to the proximity to the Berwick Street/Kent Street intersection and heavy traffic flow. These features include double glazing, additional wall and roof insulation, a vegetation buffer around the perimeter of the site and water tanks on the Kent Street side of the homes.

2. “My Home” response to local planning policies

The development meets the setback requirements of the R-codes (WA) R30 zoning of the adjacent residential lots. **Clause 1 - Setback of Buildings Generally A1.**

The design responds to the Town of Victoria Park *Local Planning Policy Streetscape, General Provisions and Development Relating to Weatherboard Houses, Weatherboard Precincts and Weatherboard Streetscapes.*

- The homes respect the need to enhance the streetscape to protect investment in existing weatherboard houses. **Clause 11 P3**
- The homes are sympathetic to the traditional weatherboard houses, but in a contemporary style.

- The traditional freestanding weatherboard form and proportion has been retained as well responding to the street and side setback, building height, roof shapes of the original weatherboard model. **Clause 11 A2**
- Features consistent with traditional weatherboard houses:
 - weatherboard plank external wall cladding
 - Zinalume Custom Orb roof sheeting
 - verandah to full width of house
 - verandah roof at different pitch to main roof
 - simple pitch roof profile; timber profile UPVC window frames
 - front door facing primary street and parallel to the street
 - front elevations parallel to primary street
 - front and side setbacks consistent with adjacent houses
 - soft landscaping to street boundaries.
 - Zinalume Custom Orb rainwater tank **Clause 11 A2**
- Roof shape, height, pitches and material are consistent for all five houses, and is a contemporary interpretation of the simple roof profiles of traditional weatherboard houses. Because of the small house footprint (31m²), the roof shape and pitch has been adapted to be proportionate balanced with the house size.

The verandah roof allows for good orientation for solar panels. It meets the main roof above the front elevation, consistent with the traditional weatherboard model. The resultant pitch of the main roof is 12 degrees (nom.). From the primary street, the roof shape reads as a simple pitched roof consistent with traditional weatherboard models.

Clause 11 A2 P3 (a)

- The wall height for the primary street elevation is similar to that of houses predominant in the adjacent single storey weatherboard houses. **Clause 11 A2 P3 (b)**
- The eaves match weatherboard houses in the street block, in that there are no eaves to the east and west (side) elevations and a verandah extending from the front elevation. **Clause 11 A2 P3 (f)**
- The windows are UPVC (white) double glazed. The frames have a traditional timber frame profile and read as timber frames from the street. UPVC frame are being used because their very efficient thermal performance and low maintenance. **Clause 11 A2 P3 (h)**
- There are no attachments to the main roof. Solar panels are incorporated into the verandah roof, facing north. Rather than being read as a 'stuck on' attachment, the panels themselves are the roof above the verandah and are contained within weatherboard overhangs at either end. This is a contemporary interpretation of the weatherboard house model which was originally a utilitarian, low cost housing solution (with no allowance for solar panels!). The design is a balance between acknowledging the traditional model, the need for contemporary sustainable, energy efficient housing and the need for solar panels to face north. **Clause 11 A2 P3 (i)**
- The dwelling frontages are parallel to and orientated toward the primary street. **Clause 11 A2 P3 (l)**
- The front doors are at the front of the dwellings, parallel to and orientated toward the primary street. **Clause 11 A2 P3 (m)**
- The external walls of the houses are 100% weatherboard plank cladding. **Clause 11 A2 P3 (n)**
- The material, colours and finishes match those of a traditional weatherboard house – painted weatherboard cladding, Zinalume Custom Orb roof sheeting, timber verandah floor, timber – look painted window frames. **Clause 11 A2 P3 (o)**
- The external cladding is Weathertex Classic Smooth Weatherboard planks. The planks are 200mm wide x 9.5mm thick. Paint finish (white). The Weathertex product is being used because it is cost efficient, durable, and is not subject to twisting and warping. The material

is 97% hardwood timber fibre and 3% natural wax for water repellence. **Clause 11 A2 P3 (o)**

- The profile of the weatherboard planks is 9.5mm thick. **Clause 11 A2 P3 (q)**
- The roofing material is Zinalume Custom Orb **Clause 11 A2 P3 (s)**
- The rainwater tanks are Zinalume Custom Orb. **Clause 11 A2 P3 (t)**
- The site is clear of vegetation except for two clumps of shrubs against the rear and west boundaries, and a tree adjacent to the Berwick Street boundary. The shrubs do not provide shade covering and will be removed to enable development. The tree will be retained. **Clause 11 A2 P3 (x)**
- The front and side setback areas will be soft landscaped garden. Trees for shade and shrubs for privacy and acoustic attenuation will be planted around the lot perimeter. **Clause 11 A2 P3 (y)**
- There will be a 1000mm wide garden bed with reticulation along the side boundary adjacent to the shared internal vehicular accessway. This includes a geocell stabilized earth slope between the street ground level and the site ground level. **Clause 11 A2 P3 (z)**

3. How will the tenants be managed?

A registered Community Housing Provider will be the manager of the property and tenancies. The organisation will have established policies and procedures in place which span all stages of tenancy and property management, and which are currently being used for low-income affordable housing.

The CHP's policies and procedures commence once the potential tenant applies for housing.

The first interaction with a potential tenant is via an application for housing and an interview. The purpose of the interview is as follows:

- a) To ascertain the potential tenant's housing needs
- b) To ascertain any support needs the tenant has, to determine whether these can be addressed with CHP staff or are beyond what can be provided by the CHP (e.g. mental health support) and, if support is required, whether it is already in place or referrals are needed via the CHP's tenant support team.
- c) The CHP will allocate properties that have the best possible chance of resulting in a stable, successful tenancy and will not have a negative impact on themselves or the wider community.

4. How will support services work with the project and tenants?

Some tenants will require minimal support services, some will be able to use public transport to go to required services, some will need home visits from outreach workers.

A CHP outreach worker undertakes a support-needs assessment at the point of interview to ensure support needs are identified before an allocation is made. This is vital to ensure that tenancies have the optimum chance of success and a relationship is established between the tenant and his/her outreach worker.

Following allocation, the tenancy will be managed by a CHP outreach worker whose primary task is to ensure that both parties' rights and responsibilities are met. Tenancy management procedures are designed to ensure that any issues are pro-actively addressed with the tenant. There are continual touchpoints with residents at move in, at a six-week check-in visit, at regular routine inspections and at other points such as maintenance visits, tenant support visits or at other points requested by the tenant.

5. Term of tenancies.

The anticipated term of the land lease between the Stage government and the CHP is 15 years.

Tenants will be able to live in their houses for as long as they need to become self-sufficient in the private housing sector. This could be the time it takes for skills training, financial stability, rehabilitation and personally resilient to manage their life. Therefore, a tenant could live in a house for less than a year or for the rest of his/her life.

The land lease will include a clause which, if the State government requires the land for government use, then the houses will be relocated to another site.

6. Who are the tenants?

Homeless people are from all walks of life, from many socio-economic backgrounds and all demographics.

Not-for-profits support agencies have identified homeless women over 55 years of age would be appropriate tenants for the homes.

7. Supply and demand of accommodation for homeless people in Western Australia.

Accordingly, the many homeless people are not sleeping rough (primary homelessness) but are in some other form of insecure housing tenure such as couch surfing, sleeping in their car or staying with relatives. Many people who are on the State government social housing waitlist are homeless.

In recent years, arising principally from a sharp decrease in affordability and accessibility in the private rental market, the number of people on WA's social housing waitlist has declined. However, there remains approximately 15,000 households on the waitlist. This number will likely rise as the private rental market rebalances and predicted little growth in social housing in WA. Organisations working with the homeless services sector generally agree that financial stress from the impact of Covid-19 restrictions will also add to the demand for low income affordable housing and a significant increase in numbers of homeless people in Western Australia.

Over 50% of waitlist applicants are single person households. Single occupant housing is in high demand for the homes.

Homes built under the "My Home" project will be fully self-contained which is preferable to dormitory or lodging house accommodation as the houses can truly be called "My Home".

Summary

The proposed development has been designed to be sympathetic to the surrounding residential area and local planning policies and provides an opportunity to support the community of Victoria Park by providing housing for those who find themselves in desperate circumstances.

We trust that the proposed development responds adequately to the matters identified by the Town's engineers and planners.

We look forward to the Town's favourable determination of the proposal. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Yours faithfully



Ben Martin
Project Manager
"My Home"