**Item 8.3**
**At Council**
**26 October 2026**

# Relevant Information for Council

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| **FILE:** | **X132804** | **DATE:** | 23 October 2026 |
| **TO:** | Lord Mayor and Councillors | | |
| **FROM:** | Graham Jahn AM, Chief Planner / Executive Director City Planning, Development and Transport | | |
| **SUBJECT:** | Information Relevant To Item 8.3 – Post Exhibition - Housing for All Discussion Paper | | |

## Alternative Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

(A) note the issues raised in public consultation on the Housing for All discussion paper (the discussion paper), as provided in the Housing for All discussion paper - Engagement Report, shown at Attachment A to the subject report

(B) endorse the Housing for All Discussion Paper - Interim Implementation Plan (the interim implementation plan), shown at Attachment B to the subject report, subject to the following amendments:

(i) on page 12, following the sub-section about "Housing for people who need more support" insert a new sub-section as shown in bold as follows:

**Alternative Housing**

**Alternative housing models, including housing co-operatives, community land trusts, meanwhile uses, homeshares and innovative construction methods can improve affordability, meet diverse housing needs and strengthen communities.**

**Our discussion paper highlights that while planning is generally not a barrier, funding, legal complexities, financial feasibility and access to land can make these models difficult to deliver. It identifies opportunities for the City to advocate for other levels of government to help address these challenges.**

(ii) on page 13, following Action 4.5, insert a new Action 4.6 as shown in bold as follows:

| # | Action | Action Type | Timeframe | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | **Short term** | **Medium Term** |
| **4.6** | **Support innovative approaches to housing delivery to promote housing diversity and affordability and advocate to other levels of government to streamline their delivery paths** | **Advocacy** | **X** | **X** |

(C) note the matters raised in the Housing for All discussion paper - Engagement report which will inform further local strategic planning to address housing supply, affordability and diversity concerns in the local area. This may include, but is not limited to, the preparation of any local strategic planning statement and associated local housing strategy in accordance with any direction or instruction of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

(D) note the Interim Implementation Plan will be incorporated into the future update of the City of Sydney Local Strategic Planning Statement and associated City of Sydney Local Housing Strategy.

## Purpose

To provide an Alternative Recommendation for Council consideration.

## Background

At the meeting of the Equity and Housing Committee on 19 October 2026, further information was sought on the following:

- the potential to incorporate an action to support co-housing projects into the Housing for All discussion paper - Interim implementation plan (Interim Plan), and
- the terminology used in the interim plan to refer to social housing, affordable housing and public housing.

## Housing co-operatives

A housing co-operative is generally membership-based, with each member in the housing co-operative granted the right to occupy a housing unit or space. Housing co-operatives come in many forms. Some co-operatives are rental whereas others are member-owned, also known as equity co-operatives. Many cooperatives are formed for particular cohorts (for example older women, students, people with shared language).

Most housing co-operatives charge rent to their members, generally set at a portion of household income. While this may ensure affordability for residents, it can also result in rental revenue which is inadequate to cover costs in the long term and is generally not sufficient to support the development of new housing. This means that a significant subsidy is generally required to support new housing.

Common Equity NSW (CENSW) is the peak body for housing co-operatives in the state. CENSW owns and leases properties and sub-leases them to housing co-operatives. CENSW is a registered Tier 2 community housing provider.

There is no impediment in the City's planning controls to developing co-operative housing, nor is there any impediment to co-operatives seeking support from the City under various programs, where certain criteria can be met, including:

- discounted land sales for affordable and diverse housing - depending on the nature of the land offered for sale, there is the possibility for co-operatives to make and offer or to partner with a not-for-profit community housing provider. The recent example is the discounted sale of surplus property owned by the City to Common Equity who are partnering with All Nations Housing Co-operative to establish the first dedicated housing project for transgender (trans) women. This type of assistance is well suited to the scale and needs of housing co-operatives; and

- small scale funding under the Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund, Innovation and Ideas or Community Services grants.

This memorandum provides an Alternative Recommendation for an action to be included in the Interim Plan explicitly stating the City's high level support for alternative housing models, including co-operative housing, and for ongoing advocacy to other levels of government to support its delivery.

## Defining non-market housing types

There is frequent inconsistency in how housing types are defined in legislation and policy, used in media and used in the common language, particularly subsidised housing types. This can lead to conflation in the understanding of issues and responses.

Establishing consistent definitions and terminology is essential for clear and effective policy. Figure 1 outlines terms commonly used in housing policy.

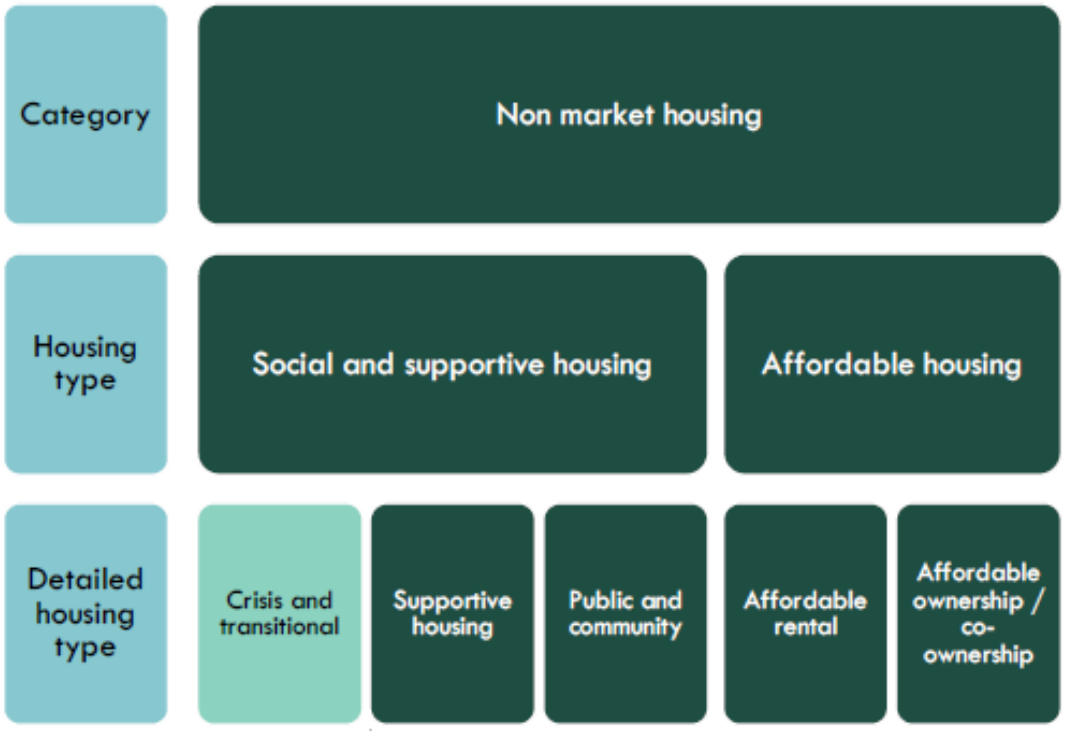



**Figure 1:** Non-market housing (Per Capita - Centre for Equitable Housing, September 2026)

Although it is acknowledged that the above terms are regularly used interchangeably in the public discourse, the terminology generally used by the City in its policies and in communication with the community is summarised as follows:

- social housing - an umbrella term for housing typically let to households in the lowest income quintile for no more than 30% of income. It includes:
    - public housing - housing that is owned and managed directly by the state government and allocated principally to households on the waitlist;
    - community housing - housing owned and/or managed by not-for-profit community housing providers (CHPs) and allocated generally on the same basis as public housing.
- supported housing - an umbrella term for housing for people needing direct support and service provision. This includes crisis accommodation and accommodation for people with disability. It is not generally means tested. It can be provided by government, not-for-profit providers and the private sector
- affordable housing - while the term can be used widely in common language to refer to housing that is on the lower end of the cost spectrum, when referenced in housing policy and legislation, it is generally used as an umbrella term for "non-market" housing that can be rented or purchased by a very-low-, low- or moderate-income households without that household being in "rental stress" i.e., without rent exceeding more than 30% of household income. It can include:

- affordable rental housing - often simply (and confusingly) referred to as 'affordable housing', which may include:
    - income based affordable rental housing - housing delivered by government or CHPs and rented to target households for no more than 30% of income. This type of affordable rental housing is supported by the City's Affordable Housing Program
    - discount to market affordable rental housing - housing that is delivered by private developers and others, rented to target households at a discount to market rent (typically a 25.5% or 20% discount in NSW). This type of housing may not always strictly meet the definition of affordable housing where the discount is insufficient to reduce rents below 30% of household income.
- social housing - while technically 'social housing' falls in the definition of affordable housing as defined in the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, it is generally understood to be separate from what is otherwise referred to as 'affordable housing' in most policy contexts. As noted above, the City uses social housing to mean public and community housing.
- affordable ownership e.g., co-operative housing - an uncommon model in Australia, largely owing to challenges with securing initial subsidy in the long term. Models such as Community Land Trusts seek to address these issues but have had limited traction to date.

**Memo from Graham Jahn AM, Chief Planner / Executive Director City Planning, Development and Transport**

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Approved



**GRAHAM JAHN AM**

Chief Planner / Executive Director City Planning, Development and Transport