

## Report re *ACT Accessible Housing Innovation Project*

for R&IA Board Meeting 22/5/2020 (via Zoom)

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### PROJECT OVERVIEW, FOR REFERENCE TO PROJECT TASKS

In accordance with the ACT Government Deed of Grant and Schedules 1 & 2, the Project Officer is to undertake the following:

- (i) Identification of current and projected people with disability population and housing circumstance in the ACT (for base data);
- (ii) Identification of suitable housing and associated support options for people with disability in the ACT;
- (iii) Generation and sharing of (i) information on these options, and (ii) strategies to access these options, to individuals with disability, their families and carers and others that may assist them. This includes through the development of a quasi-brokerage arrangement; and,
- (iv) Stimulate pipeline of appropriate, best-practice housing supply to meet the needs of individuals with disability (i.e. supported accommodation (incl. respite), social housing, private housing for rent, and private housing for purchase).

This work will be undertaken through, but not limited to the following means:

- (i) Establishment and facilitation of ACT Housing Solutions Innovation Group (membership to include: NDS; people with disability and their families);
- (ii) Establishment of relationships between social and private housing providers, and initiatives such as Home Ground Real Estate; and,
- (iii) Showcasing the benefits of providing suitably accessible housing across all markets, in terms of its impact upon the formation of a truly inclusive society.

### PROJECT TIMELINE

June 2019	- Application for project funding to ACT Affordable Housing Innovation Fund
Aug 2019	- R&IA advised by ACT Government of successful application to the ACT Affordable Housing Innovation Fund for the <i>ACT Accessible Housing Innovation Project</i>
Nov 2019	- R&IA Project Officer appointed (contract commenced 21 Nov 2019)
Nov-Dec 2019	- Project start-up: establishment of office, IT, etc. - Project planning - One-on-one meetings with key stakeholders as part of onboarding
Feb 2020	- Convene R&IA ACT Housing Forum (held 10/2/2020) - Presentation on project at NDS ACT Disability Sector Forum - Formation of 'Housing Solutions Innovation Group' to assist with project development

Mar 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Convene first meeting of ‘Housing Solutions Innovation Group’; determine outcomes to be achieved with support of HSI, in concert with Project Officer’s other activities</li> <li>- One-on-one meetings with various people with disability, people with disability organisations and other stakeholders</li> <li>- Proposed commencement date of brokerage (31/3/2020, as per Deed of Grant)</li> </ul>
Apr-Jul 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monthly meetings of ‘Housing Solutions Innovation Group’, to support Project Officer’s activities; determine ongoing sustainability of HSI beyond grant period</li> <li>- One-on-one meetings with various people with disability, people with disability organisations and other stakeholders</li> <li>- Activities associated with identified project outcomes</li> </ul>
Aug 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation on project outcomes and identified ongoing activities</li> <li>- Project Officer employment contract finishes</li> <li>- Final report to be submitted</li> </ul>

## SUMMARY OF PROJECT OFFICER’S TASKS

### **Project Planning**

- Development of project plan, with input from R&IA ACT-based directors, to guide the project for its duration. *(completed)*
- Meetings with key stakeholders to seek contextual overview and responses re proposed outcomes; this ensures that the diversity of housing issues faced by people with disability are considered. *(completed)*
- Collation of data and other information (e.g. ABS census data, NDIS operational guidelines, etc.) to inform work on identified housing-related outcomes for needs for people with disability. *(continuing, where appropriate to task)*

### **Housing Solutions Innovation Group (‘HSI’) Meetings**

R&IA is convening regular monthly meetings of the HSI from March to July 2020, with a larger final meeting proposed in August. This is the key forum through which R&IA is assisted to (i) identify barriers for accessing housing for people with disability; and (ii) identify the best means for addressing these barriers at a ‘whole of system’ level for the ACT, and (iii) review of the Project Officer’s work on key identified outcomes. It also provides information sharing (see ‘brokerage’ below) and networking opportunities for members.

To date meetings, conducted on Zoom, have been attended by up to 31 people, drawn from individuals through to disability service providers, local community housing providers, peak NGOs (e.g. NDS, ACT Shelter) and housing industry peaks, and ACT government agencies. Organisation representatives are typically from senior management.

From April on, meetings have had focus themes, with presenters invited to talk on these:

- April: Housing Supply – Increasing the Quantum  
Invited presenters: Adrian Pisarski (National Shelter); Charles Northcote (BlueCHP)

- May: Choice & Control: Aligning housing & service supports  
Invited presenters: Jan Kruger (Imagine More) with Greg Mahony; Marita Walker (NDIA); Melanie Southwell (SDA Alliance)
- June: Housing issues for people with psychosocial disability or Sustainability, liveable cities and social inclusion (to be confirmed)
- July: Identification of means of sustaining work beyond the project (to be confirmed)

A detailed record of meeting has been prepared following each meeting to date, issued to the HSI contacts list.

### **Other Meetings, Forums, etc.**

Along with the HSI meetings and desk research, participation and/or presentation at a range of meetings are key to identifying suitable housing and associated support options for people with disability in the ACT. This includes the following:

#### ***R&IA 'ACT Housing Forum'***, ACT Legislative Assembly Reception Room (10/02/2020)

The Project Officer coordinated this 3hr event, attended by 39 people representing government and non-government agencies, as well as individuals. This had a focus on the following:

- Advocacy for the regulation of a minimum accessibility standard for new housing (through the Regulation Impact Analysis process currently being undertaken by the Australian Building Codes Board ('ABCB'));
- Overview of the *ACT Accessible Housing Innovation Project* and the formation of the Housing Solutions Innovation Group; and,
- Recap of R&IA's 2019 Disability Housing Options Seminar (ACT), including questions posed for government agencies.

#### ***'NDS ACT Disability Sector Forum'***, Hellenic Club, Phillip (19/2/2020)

The Project Officer provided a project overview of the ACT Housing Project to approximately 35-40 representatives from the disability services sector.

#### ***Australian Network on Universal Housing Design Meetings***

The Project Officer is attending monthly meetings of ANUHD and assisting with activities where appropriate; for example, co-authoring ANUHD's response to the Australian Building Codes Board's *Regulatory Impact Statement on the Process for the development of Performance Solutions* (discrete from the core ANUHD focus on the *Regulatory Impact Statement* on accessibility).

### **Brokerage**

The Deed of Agreement notes the provision of brokerage as a deliverable for the project. The outcomes and discussions of this group, and how it better fosters relationships between these different parties, is the correct interpretation of 'brokerage'; it doesn't have a financial context. This recognises, at a systemic level, the need to line up a broad range of parties in order to support people with disability to achieve suitable housing solutions.

Nonetheless - beyond the HSI meetings - the provision of a platform, or other identified means, to provide information to people with disability, their families and others to assist them to better navigate the housing system is still in development. This could include via the R&IA website.

[NB: Any information brokerage by the ACT Housing Project need to account for the project's cessation in August 2020. This is a key activity identified to R&IA's ILC Grant Application submitted on 6/5/2020.]

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### **Stimulation of Housing Supply**

Along with information brokerage, the development and activation of a strategy to stimulate housing supply to meet the needs of people with disability is the key outward facing activity of the project. By August, the project is intended to get to a threshold at which initial phases of this strategy are underway. This needs to consider the impacts of COVID-19, and opportunities that may come from any construction-based stimulus packages. Engagement with ACT Government ministers will be key to ensuring allowance for appropriate accessible housing as part of any works.

This work is still in development, but will include through:

- Establishment of relationships between social and private housing providers, and initiatives such as Home Ground Real Estate; and,
- Showcase the benefits of providing suitably accessible housing across all markets, in terms of its impact upon the formation of a truly inclusive society.

Representatives of relevant ACT Government agencies, the Property Council of Australia (ACT), Master Builders ACT and key ACT-based community housing providers attend HSIIG meetings and are also being met with separately to inform this work.