Submission '*Homes NSW 211A-215 Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour September 2025'*

The provision of affordable housing is a complex problem in most cities.
I believe the site chosen at *211A-215 Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour* is unsuitable mainly from an urban future planning frame but it is also highly inappropriate if the targeted social housing residents are to be mostly seniors.
In the consultation report, *'The majority of current social housing tenants in the LGA are older, past working age, living alone and relying on the age, disability pension or other pension for income'. S*eniors do not need to be located close to schools, work places and a busy noisy road and they don't want to be restricted from enjoying warmer protected north facing areas and walking along quiet laneways. *211A-215 Harbour Drive* would better serve the community as a green space designated for public and cultural uses. It should provide visual amenity with recreational use for surrounding school children and provide space to establish a community garden for nearby affordable housing residents.[1]
This site could also be very useful as a safe assembly operational zone in times of disaster management.

I believe that several issues raised in the feedback reported in the Coffs Harbour Consultation report *Homes NSW 211A-215 Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour September 2025'* have not been adequately resolved so proceeding is foolish.

- I believe that this site location is unsafe for 'senior' residents because it is too close to schools and Harbour Drive. The close proximity to schools and the noisy busy road poses serious psychological and physical threats to senior residents' safety. Residents with frailty and memory issues will have an unacceptably higher risk of accidents. In addition the narrow or absent footpaths may make maneuvering on mobility frames or scooters and inadequate parking difficult and will likely fuel tension and anxiety.

[1] EG proposed significant state development **'Uniting Coffs Harbour 19A-21 Gordon Street' -** Mixed use development comprising a place of public worship, cafe, retail, commercial floorspace and 150 residential units including affordable housing.

- It is likely in any higher density living community (social housing or not) there will be a few residents with mental health, antisocial behavior and/or addiction problems. Such behaviours in close proximity to the local schools poses legitimate safety threats that are not able to be adequately managed. For example I live close to the adjacent creek walkway and witness almost daily violent language and behavior emanating from various tormented and addicted souls. I am glad I do not have small children here.
- Parking would become be a huge issue, it is already an issue on Curacoa and North Streets now without this development in this space.
- As stated in the report on existing social housing in the region they *'are becoming less and less efficient to manage'. 'The Community Housing Provider (CHP) who is selected to deliver and manage the property will be responsible for managing tenancy issues and complaints'* . I remain unconvinced that any CHP will adequately manage the proposed complex. The proposed new build project with higher density living will create more issues.
- And reduced warmth ,sun exposure (vit D), shelter from wind with the north facing unit restrictions due to school proximity to schools, is not ideal for seniors.

So it is my view that alternative sites and strategies need to be explored further in order to find better fit solutions to fulfil the future social housing outcomes in the region. *The local council is exploring innovative solutions to support affordable housing provision. The City will collaborate with Homes NSW to support redevelopment of existing social housing to deliver an increase in affordable housing and dwelling diversity.*[2]

Perhaps in the collaboration between state and council actions , separate social housing villages could be part of the mix some new built complexes targeting young families playgrounds etc and other refurbished homes for seniors with quieter spaces improved social accessibility, mobility and care services

[2] affordable-housing-strategy-2024_final-adopted_june-2024.pdf

I advocate for revitalizing the current cottages with separate individual one bed spaces alongside joint living spaces with built capacity for care, wheelchair access and shared services/carer manager arrangements?

The bottom line on this proposal at this site is that the most important stakeholders; future residents of the complex, neighbours and nearby school communities require more education and consultation time to gain a deeper understanding of better viable strategies and options relevant for the next 20 years.
Finally for any alternative site chosen, such as the 150 affordable housing units proposed around the corner on Gordon St , I would suggest modifications like less homes on the site, more car parking, widened footpaths and greater reassurance to community and neighbouring schools that there will be live-in managers to support residents to reduce risk of harm, waste mismanagement and pollution.

Tolerance and acceptance for new social housing projects may prevail when all available strategies and sites are shared with all stakeholders' and respective needs are heard and met and reassurance that human resources will be provided to competently manage safety concerns.

Lastly, I hope that the urgency to build on this land at *211A-215 Harbour Drive* that has been idle for so long, can better serve our community.

> *'Our cities and communities are in a state of constant evolution, and the strategies we implement today will significantly influence the future liveability and sustainability of our urban environments'*.
>
> *https://urbis.com.au/insights-news/anticipating-the-future-navigating-urban-planning-trends-in-australia/*

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