



ADDENDUM

Meeting: General Meeting

Date: Wednesday, 18 June 2025

Location: **Council Chambers,
Georgetown**

Commencing: **9.00am**

Councillors: Cr Hughes
Cr Royes
Cr Tincknell
Cr Ryan
Cr Carroll

Agenda Attached

Mark Watt
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Local Government Act Qld 2009

Section 4(2) of the *Local Government Act Qld 2009* state that the local government principles are:

- a) Transparent and effective processes, and decision-making in the public interest
- b) Sustainable development and management of assets and infrastructure, and delivery of effective services
- c) Democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement
- d) Good governance of, and by, local government
- e) Ethical and legal behavior of councilors and local government employees

Local Government Regulation 2012

Section 254(J) Closed meetings:

- (1) A local government may resolve that all or part of a meeting of the local government be closed to the public.
- (2) A committee of a local government may resolve that all or part of a meeting of the committee be closed to the public.
- (3) However, a local government or a committee of a local government may make a resolution about a local government meeting under subsection (1) or (2) only if its Councilors or members consider it necessary to close the meeting to discuss one or more of the following matters –
 - a) The appointment, dismissal or discipline of a chief executive officer
 - b) Industrial matters affecting employees
 - c) The local government's budget
 - d) Rating concessions
 - e) Legal advice obtained by the Council or legal proceedings involving the local government including, for example, legal proceedings that may be taken by or against the local government
 - f) Matters that may directly affect the health and safety of an individual or group of individuals
 - g) Negotiations relating to a commercial matter involving the local government for which a public discussion would be likely to prejudice the interests of the local government
 - h) Negotiations relating to the taking of land by the local government under the *Acquisition of Land Act 1967*
 - i) A matter the local government is required to keep confidential under a law of, or formal arrangement with, the Commonwealth or a State
 - j) An investigation report given to the local government under chapter 5A, part 3, division 5 of the Act.
- (4) However, a local government or a committee of a local government must not resolve that a part of a local government meeting at which a decision mentioned in section 150ER(2), 150ES(3) or 150EU(2) of the Act will be considered, discussed, voted on or made to be closed.
- (5) A resolution that a local government meeting be closed must –
 - a) State the matter mentioned in subsection (3) that is to be discussed; and
 - b) Include an overview of what is to be discussed while the meeting is closed. meeting be closed must state the nature of the matters to be considered while the
 - c) meeting is closed.
- (6) A local government or a committee of a local government must not make a resolution (other than a procedural resolution) in a local government meeting, or a part of a local government meeting, that is closed.

OPEN SESSION AGENDA

1. CONSIDERATION OF ADDENDUM REPORTS

- 1.1. Independent Living (Affordable Housing) Policies & Tender Application applicable to Units 2B & 2C,
Lot 5 Forsayth Road, Georgetown

2. CONCLUSION

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General Meeting	18 June 2025
Subject	Independent Living (Affordable Housing) Policies & Tender Application applicable to Units 2B & 2C, Lot 5 Forsayth Road, Georgetown
Classification	Open
Author	Renee Bester, Director of Corporate Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Etheridge Shire Council has partnered with the State of Queensland under the Affordable Housing Program to construct two residential dwellings (Units 2B & 2C of Lot 5 Forsayth Road, Georgetown) aimed at supporting eligible residents with access to housing. The construction of these homes is nearing completion, and Council must now take the necessary steps to operationalise the allocation process.

This includes developing and adopting appropriate housing policies (e.g., eligibility, tenancy management, and rental rates) and initiating a formal tender or application process to allocate the homes in a fair, transparent, and compliant manner. Opening applications will ensure the project objectives are met and will enable Council to assess interest and demand from within the community.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorse the development of C059 – Independent Living (Affordable Housing) Eligibility Policy, C060 – Independent Living (Affordable Housing) Allocations Policy and C061 – Independent Living (Affordable Housing) Rent Policy to guide the allocation and management of the two dwellings being Units 2B & 2C of Lot 5 Forsayth Road, Georgetown;
2. Approve the initiation of an open public tender application process for tenancy of the two affordable housing dwellings; and
3. That pursuant to section 257(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2009*, Council delegate to the to the Chief Executive Officer its power to implement policy documents and manage the application process including the issue of rental leases for Units 2B & 2C of Lot 5 Forsayth Road, Georgetown in accordance with relevant legislation including *Housing Act 2003* and *Housing Regulations 2015*, and funding requirements of the Delivery Deed and Operations Deed held with the Department of Housing.

BACKGROUND

The Queensland Government's Affordable Housing Program aims to increase housing security for low-to-moderate income households, particularly in rural and regional communities. Etheridge Shire Council successfully secured funding under this initiative to construct two residential dwellings.

The construction of both houses is now complete. Under the funding deed, Council is contractually required to finalise the agreement by 13 December 2025. However, the Department has advised that tenants should ideally be in place by 30 June 2025 to meet the intent of the program and support early activation of the homes.

To meet these obligations, Council must now adopt appropriate housing policies outlining eligibility criteria, tenancy arrangements, and rental conditions. Following adoption, a formal public tender or application process will be opened to allocate the homes to eligible community members in a fair and transparent manner.

Council will be responsible for assessing applications, selecting tenants, and ensuring ongoing compliance with the program's requirements.

LINK TO CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Aim 4: Quality social infrastructure makes the shire a desirable place to live
 Corporate Outcome 4.2: An invigorated community with a variety of multi age services

BUDGET & RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

There are no predicted additional construction costs to Council. However, moving into the operational phase, the following budget and resource considerations must be addressed:

1. Policy Development and Administration

Staff resources will be required to finalise and implement appropriate housing policies, manage the application/tender process, assess submissions, and prepare tenancy agreements. While this work may be absorbed within existing

staffing levels, it is likely to place temporary pressure on administrative and governance teams. Council may need to consider short-term additional support or backfilling arrangements to ensure timely delivery without impacting core functions.

2. Ongoing Tenancy Management

Following the allocation of the dwellings, Council will assume responsibility for ongoing tenancy management, including rent collection, property inspections, maintenance coordination, tenant liaison, and regular compliance reporting to the State. These functions may exceed current staff capacity. Council should assess whether internal resources are sufficient or if it is more efficient to engage a property management provider or allocate budget for additional staffing to support these ongoing responsibilities.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Housing Regulation 2015

Operations Deed and Delivery Deed with Department of Housing

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

If endorsed, the implementation of three new policies.

CONSULTATION

Please consult Council's Community Engagement Policy in conjunction with the IAP2 Spectrum for guidance.

Consultation	Tick	Policy Consideration	Action
Inform	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Endorsement of 3 new policies	Make policies publicly available. Implement tender process for Units 2B & 2C

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk Assessment Outcome: Low

1. Community members may perceive the policy or selection process as biased, unclear, or unfair, leading to reputational damage or complaints
 - a. Mitigation: Ensure policies clearly define eligibility criteria, assessment methods and decision making processes. Advertise the tender process widely and provide clear guidance to applicants. Document and minute decisions and maintain transparent audit trail for selection process.
2. Policies or the application process may inadvertently breach state funding conditions, delaying finalisation of the deed or affect future funding eligibility
 - a. Engage with the funding body to review draft policies and processes before adoption and ensure legal review to confirm alignment with the deed and program guidelines.

Report Prepared By:

Renee Bester, Director of Corporate Services

Date: 13/06/2025

Report Authorised By:

Mark Watt, Chief Executive Officer

Date: 13/06/2025

ATTACHMENTS

Independent Living (Affordable Housing) Eligibility Policy
 Independent Living (Affordable Housing) Allocations Policy
 Independent Living (Affordable Housing) Rent Policy



ESC - C059 Independent Living (Affordable Housing) Eligibility Policy

Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria Independent Living Complex at Lot 5 Forsayth Road, Georgetown

POLICY VERSION AND REVISION

Version History	Meeting date	
	Resolution number	
Approval by CEO		
Effective date	Review date	
[Build Completion Date under Delivery Deed]	30/06/2026	
Policy Author		
Director of Corporate Services		
Current incumbent		
Renee Bester		
Implementation Officer		
Current incumbent	Contact number	Official file no.
	4062 9090	



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1. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Etheridge Shire Council is committed to delivering affordable housing for elderly residents in our community who struggle to access safe, secure, and suitable options in the private market. Our commitment to enhancing the quality of life for Shire residents includes the development of an Independent Living Complex at Lot 5 Forsayth Road, Georgetown for elderly residents over 65 years of age.

To support this initiative, Council has entered into an agreement with the State of Queensland (represented by Department of Housing and Public Works) for the funding of two two-bedroom dwellings within the Independent Living Complex. Under this agreement, Council has specific obligations regarding the assessment of Affordable Housing Applicants to ensure they meet the Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria. Dwellings must only be allocated to individuals who satisfy these criteria.

2. PURPOSE & SCOPE

This policy sets out the criteria and procedures to guide Council Officers in making decisions that comply with the funding agreement, while promoting consistency, fairness and a coordinated approach to managing applications for the Affordable Housing Program across two units within the Complex (Units 2B & 2C). As an Exempt Provider under the *Housing Act 2003* (Qld), Council is committed to delivering affordable housing services to individuals aged 65 and over and must apply the Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria outlined in section 19K of the *Housing Regulation 2015* (Qld).

This policy applies to all Etheridge Shire Council employees involved in processing applications for Affordable Housing dwellings within the Independent Living Complex located at Lot 5 Forsayth Road, Georgetown.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

3.1 DUE DILIGENCE INVESTIGATIONS

- 3.1.1. An Applicant is an individual who applies to become an Affordable Housing tenant.
- 3.1.2. Council must only let dwellings to Applicants who meet the Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria.
- 3.1.3. Council Officers are responsible for properly processing applications to determine whether or not each Applicant satisfies the Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria.
- 3.1.4. In evaluating Applicants for Affordable Housing, Council Officers must conduct thorough due diligence investigations to determine whether an Applicant meets the Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria.

3.2 AFFORDABLE HOUSING ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants and existing Affordable Housing tenants who are renewing an existing tenancy agreement must meet all the following criteria:

3.2.1. Age

Applicants must be aged 65 years or older.

Council holds a QCAT exemption under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld).

3.2.2. Australian Citizenship and Residence Status.

The Applicant Must

- a. an Australian citizen;
- b. a permanent resident of Australia;
- c. have a Permanent Protection Visa or a Resolution of Status Visa;



- d. qualify for permanent residency status through agreements between Australia and another country;
- e. have a Safe Haven Enterprise visa;
- f. have a Bridging Visa and have applied for a Protection Visa or a Resolution of Status Visa;
- g. on a Temporary Protection Visa; or
- h. on a Bridging Visa if previously held a Temporary Protection Visa which has expired.

If the Applicant has applied for permanent residency, a Permanent Protection Visa or a Resolution of Status Visa, these criteria will be satisfied.

3.2.3. Queensland Residency.

The Applicant must live in Queensland.

An exception may be made if an Applicant is applying from another Australian state or territory and can provide evidence that they are moving to Queensland.

3.2.4. Property Ownership.

An Applicant and all household members must not own, or part-own, property within Australia or overseas, including:

- a. a residential home (e.g. house, flat, unit or townhouse);
- b. vacant land including rural property;
- c. a manufactured or transportable home;
- d. improved or unimproved commercial or industrial property;
- e. property owned through a Property Trust.

Some exceptions may apply for example:

- a. in the case of domestic and family violence, marriage breakdown, extreme hardship;
- b. if the vacant land is in a natural disaster area;
- c. if the Applicant owns or part-owns property and needs housing on a temporary basis.

3.2.5. Liquid Assets Limit¹

The combined liquid assets of the Applicant and all household members must not exceed:

- a. single-person household: \$129,278; or
- b. 2 or more household members: \$164,896.

Liquid assets include but are not limited to:

- a. money;
- b. shares, fixed investments, managed funds;
- c. property trusts;
- d. superannuation payouts (if the person has reached the preservation age); or
- e. the value of caravans, mobile homes and live-aboard boats

3.2.6. Liquid Assets Limit

Applicants will need to show evidence of the total income for all people in their household before any deductions such as tax and superannuation are taken out.

For eligibility, the household's combined gross weekly assessable income must be less than:

¹ Figures are calculated as at 30 June 2024 and are subject to a 2.5% per annum escalation on 1 July each year



Household type	Low-income: maximum annual threshold ^{2 3}
First Adult	\$70,274.52
First Sole Parent	\$77,301.97
Each Additional Adult	\$19,620.26
Each child	\$11,771.18

For ease of application, the initial income limits for various household compositions are shown in the below table.

Household type	Low-income: maximum annual threshold ^{4 5}
1 adult	\$70,274.52
2 adults	\$89,894.79
3 adults	\$109,515.05
Sole parent, 1 child	\$89,073.16
Sole parent, 2 children	\$100,844.33
Sole parent, 3 children	\$112,615.51
Couple, 1 child	\$101,665.97
Couple, 2 children	\$113,437.14
Couple, 3 children	\$125,208.32

4. DOCUMENTS

4.1 DOCUMENTS – NEW APPLICATIONS FOR AFFORDABLE

The documents that Council Officers must obtain from each Applicant include:

- 4.1.1 passport or birth certificate (or other official citizenship certification);
- 4.1.2 proof of current address (Driver's Licence, 18+ Card or other comparable evidence);
- 4.1.3 2 current payslips with the Applicant's tax file number redacted;
- 4.1.4 a current bank account statement;

² These figures exclude overtime.

³ Figures are calculated as at 30 June 2024 and are subject to a 2.5% per annum escalation on 1 July each year.

⁴ These figures exclude overtime.

⁵ Figures are calculated as at 30 June 2024 and are subject to a 2.5% per annum escalation on 1 July each year.



- 4.1.5 ATO summaries or income statements/payment summaries from MyGov for the Applicant and each anticipated household member for the previous 3 years with the Applicant's tax file number redacted or an equivalent example to demonstrate the combined tenant income;
- 4.1.6 a signed declaration from the Applicant stating that the Applicant and each household member does not own or part own any real property assets or hold any liquid assets (e.g. shares) that exceed the levels provided in the Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria and otherwise declaring that they meet the Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria; and
- 4.1.7 a signed declaration from each household member who provided an ATO summary or income statement/payment summary from MyGov in accordance with clause 4.1.4 that it acknowledges that:

"The Landlord is collecting information, including Personal Information, for the purposes of assessing the tenant's eligibility to be charged a subsidised rent under the Project and for administering, monitoring, auditing, evaluating and promoting the Project.

The Landlord may access, collect, use, disclose and share information with the State and any State Government agencies for these stated purposes, these include but are not limited to the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works.

The State will not disclose personal information to any other third party for any other purpose, unless with consent or as required by law."

4.2 RENEWING AN EXISTING TENANCY AGREEMENT FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Renewal of existing Tenancy Agreements will be assessed through the Chief Executive Officer (or a delegated officer).

Prior to offering a renewal of an existing Tenancy Agreement for Affordable Housing, Council must ensure that the current tenant continues to meet the Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria. To satisfy this requirement, Council must obtain the following documents from the tenant:

- 4.2.1 a recent payslip or letter of employment from an employer of the current tenant;
- 4.2.2 the latest ATO payment summary or income statement/payment summary from MyGov (with the tax file number redacted) for the current tenant and each household member or anticipated household member;
- 4.2.3 a statutory declaration from the current tenant declaring that the information otherwise provided by the current tenant as Applicant and for each household member prior to occupying the tenancy has otherwise remained unchanged. Where the current tenant's or a household member's circumstances have changed and the current tenant is unable to make this declaration, the current tenant is required to advise Council of the change in circumstance and provide the documentation required under clause **Error! Reference source not found.**;
- 4.2.4 where the current tenant has renewed their passport or drivers' licence, a copy of that new passport or driver's licence; and
- 4.2.5 a signed declaration from each household member who provided an ATO summary or income statement/payment summary from MyGov in accordance with clause 4.24.2.1 that it acknowledges that:

"The Landlord is collecting information, including Personal Information, for the purposes of assessing the tenant's eligibility to be charged a subsidised rent under the Project and for administering, monitoring, auditing, evaluating and promoting the Project.

The Landlord may access, collect, use, disclose and share information with the State and any State Government agencies for these stated purposes, these include but are not limited to the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works.

The State will not disclose personal information to any other third party for any other purpose, unless with consent or as required by law."



5. CESSATION TO MEET ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA – EXISTING TENANTS

5.1 An existing tenant fails to meet the Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria if:

- 5.1.1. the tenant's income exceeds the income eligibility limits in the Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria for two consecutive years; or
- 5.1.2. the tenant ceases to meet any other Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria.

5.2 Within 10 Business Days of making an assessment, Council Officers must notify the existing tenant that their tenancy agreement cannot be renewed and will end on the later of:

- 5.1.3. the remaining term of the current tenancy agreement; and
- 5.1.4. if the term of the tenancy agreement will end sooner than the date which is two (2) months after the date Council is able to issue the notice to the existing tenant, no earlier than:
 - a. the date Council is able to give notice to the existing tenant in accordance with the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 (Qld) that Council is not renewing the tenancy agreement; and
 - b. the date two (2) months after the date the notice is given.

6. AMENDMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The State Government may amend the Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria as necessary to effectively achieve its objectives. If the State issues a written directive to amend these criteria, Council must implement the changes within 20 business days of receiving the directive, unless Council chooses to raise a dispute in accordance with the funding agreement.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

As a funded provider of Affordable Housing, Council must implement the Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria consistently and fairly and operate within the requirements of the funding agreement, this Policy and all relevant legislation, regulations, directives, information standards and/or policies at the time of publication.

When implementing the Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria, Council must make decisions fairly and transparently, using principles compatible with human rights as described in the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld).

If an Applicant does not meet the eligibility criteria and is consequently precluded from being granted a dwelling, Council is not in breach of its obligations under the *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)* in making a determination of non-eligibility. However, Council must ensure the decision is clearly documented, the reasons are communicated to the Applicant, and the Applicant is advised of their right to request a review or to provide any additional documentation necessary to meet the eligibility criteria.

8. TERM

This policy commences on [Build Completion Date under Delivery Deed] and will remain in force for the entire term of the funding agreement. It cannot be repealed or replaced by any other policy until [20 years from commencement date].

9. RECORD KEEPING

Subject to compliance with applicable privacy laws, Council Officers must retain copies of all documentation required under this Policy to meet Council's audit and reporting obligations to the State



Government. All documents must be recorded and stored in accordance with Council's records management policies and procedures.

10. REVIEW

This policy must be reviewed annually on 30 June to ensure that all figures subject to fixed percentage increases are adjusted by 2.5%.

11. NON-COMPLIANCE

Non-compliance with the provisions of this policy may result in disciplinary action being taken in accordance with Council's policies and procedures.

12. RELATED DOCUMENTATION

Allocations Policy

Rent Policy

13. LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

Housing Act 2003

Housing Regulation 2015

Human Rights Act 2019

Public Records Act 2002

Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008

Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Regulation 2009



ESC - C060 AFFORDABLE HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY AND ALLOCATIONS PLAN

Independent Living Complex at Lot 5 Forsyth Road, Georgetown

POLICY VERSION AND REVISION

Version History	Meeting date	
	Resolution number	
Approval by CEO		
Effective date	Review date	
[Build Completion Date under Delivery Deed]	30/06/2026	
Policy Author		
Director of Corporate Services		
Current incumbent		
Renee Bester		
Implementation Officer		
Current incumbent	Contact number	Official file no.
	4062 9090	



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1. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Etheridge Shire Council is committed to delivering affordable housing for elderly residents in our community who struggle to access safe, secure, and suitable options in the private market. Our commitment to enhancing the quality of life for Shire residents includes the development of an Independent Living Complex at Lot 5 Forsayth Road, Georgetown for elderly residents over 65 years of age.

To support this initiative, Council has entered into an agreement with the State of Queensland (represented by Department of Housing and Public Works) for the funding of two two-bedroom dwellings (Units 2B & 2C) within the Independent Living Complex. Under this agreement, Council has specific obligations regarding the assessment of Affordable Housing Applicants to ensure they meet the Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria. Dwellings must only be allocated to individuals who satisfy these criteria.

2. PURPOSE & SCOPE

Once applicants are deemed eligible under the Eligibility Policy, Council must allocate the service.

This policy applies to the Chief Executive Officer and any officer who is delegated decision-making responsibilities for matching eligible applicants to the two dwellings within the Independent Living Complex (Units 2B & 2C) located at Lot 5 Forsayth Road, Georgetown (“Decision-Maker”).

This policy outlines the criteria and procedures for determining whether a person is eligible to receive the service and provides guidance to the Decision-Maker to ensure compliance with the funding agreement and section 19L of the *Housing Regulation 2015* (Qld).

3. POLICY STATEMENT

3.1 OUTCOMES

This Policy requires the Decision-Maker to achieve the following outcomes:

- 3.1.1. Support eligible applicants who have been assessed as having the greatest housing need.
- 3.1.2. Ensure all vacant dwellings are filled by making offers to applicants in a timely manner.
- 3.1.3. Match eligible applicants to dwellings that best meet their assessed needs at the time of allocation and when changes occur during the tenancy.

3.2 ALLOCATIONS PLAN

- 3.2.1. Council will provide affordable housing to low-income elderly, specifically those aged 65 years and older who meet the eligibility criteria contained in the Eligibility Policy.
- 3.2.2. The process for advertising vacant dwellings is as follows:
 - a. Vacancies will be advertised through Etheridge Shire Council’s website, social media platforms and printed newsletters.
 - b. Applicants will be required to apply for tenancy and provide all requisite information as required under the Eligibility Policy.

3.3 ASSESSMENT

- 3.3.1. All applications will be assessed through the Decision-Maker.
- 3.3.2. The Decision-Maker must accept and assess all applications to determine which eligible applicant best matches the vacancy.
- 3.3.3. The Decision-Maker must identify the eligible applicant whose requirements, needs and circumstances best match the vacancy, taking into consideration the match to the local community and access to services that the eligible applicant may need.



- 3.3.4. The Decision-Maker must ensure that any decision made following the assessment of all applications is compatible with human rights.
- 3.3.5. The Decision-Maker must have in place a clearly documented decision-making process for matching eligible applicants and must keep records of their matching decisions

3.4 OFFERS

- 3.4.1. The Decision-Maker is responsible for the final allocation decision.
- 3.4.2. The Decision-Maker must make an offer of housing to the eligible applicant whose requirements, housing needs and circumstances best match the vacant dwelling.
- 3.4.3. All applicants must be notified of the allocation decision in writing and in accordance with Council's communications protocol.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

As a funded provider of Affordable Housing, Council must implement the Allocations Plan and the Allocations Policy consistently and fairly and operate within the requirements of the funding agreement, this Policy and all relevant legislation, regulations, directives, information standards and/or policies at the time of publication.

When implementing this Allocations Policy, Council must make decisions fairly and transparently, using principles compatible with human rights as described in the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

5. TERM

This policy commences on [Build Completion Date under Delivery Deed] and will remain in force for the entire term of the funding agreement. It cannot be repealed or replaced by any other policy until [20 years from commencement date].

6. RECORD KEEPING

All applications, decision-making processes, matching decisions and other relevant information and documents must be recorded and stored according to Council's records management policy and procedures.

7. NON-COMPLIANCE

Non-compliance with the provisions of this policy may result in disciplinary action being taken in accordance with Council's policies and procedures.

8. RELATED DOCUMENTATION

C059 – Independent Living (Affordable Housing) Eligibility Policy
C060 – Independent Living (Affordable Housing) Rent Policy

9. LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

Housing Act 2003

Housing Regulation 2015

Human Rights Act 2019

Public Records Act 2002

Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008

Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Regulation 2009



ESC - C061 AFFORDABLE HOUSING RENT POLICY

Independent Living Complex at Lot 5 Forsayth Road, Georgetown

POLICY VERSION AND REVISION

Version History		Meeting date	
		Resolution number	
Approval by CEO			
Effective date		Review date	
[Build Completion Date under Delivery Deed]		30/06/2026	
Policy Author			
Director of Corporate Services			
Current incumbent			
Renee Bester			
Implementation Officer			
Current incumbent		Contact number	Official file no.
		4062 9090	



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1. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Etheridge Shire Council is committed to delivering affordable housing for elderly residents in our community who struggle to access safe, secure, and suitable options in the private market. Our commitment to enhancing the quality of life for Shire residents includes the development of an Independent Living Complex at Lot 5 Forsayth Road, Georgetown for elderly residents over 65 years of age.

To support this initiative, Council has entered into an agreement with the State of Queensland (represented by Department of Housing and Public Works) for the funding of two two-bedroom dwellings within the Independent Living Complex. Under the terms of this agreement, Council has specific obligations relating to rent setting and associated costs, conducting annual rent reviews, collecting rent, and managing arrears.

2. PURPOSE & SCOPE

- 2.1. This Policy outlines the criteria and procedures relating to rent paid by a tenant for the service and provides guidance to ensure compliance with the funding agreement and section 19N of the *Housing Regulation 2015 (Qld)*.
- 2.2. This Policy provides:
 - 2.2.1. the criteria and procedures relating to rent paid by a tenant for the service including for example:
 - a. setting the amount of rent;
 - b. calculating rent payments;
 - c. collecting rent; and
 - d. managing rent arrears; and
 - 2.2.2. provides for:
 - a. explaining rent calculations to the tenant and dealing with queries about rent;
 - b. giving the tenant a choice of ways to pay rent;
 - c. preventing the tenant from getting into serious arrears of rent,
- 2.3. This policy applies to the Director of Corporate Services, any officer delegated with decision-making responsibilities relating to rent and all officers who interact with tenants of the dwellings (2B & 2C) within the Independent Living Complex located at Lot 5 Forsayth Road, Georgetown.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

3.1 SETTING OUT THE AMOUNT OF RENT

This Policy requires the Decision-Maker to achieve the following outcomes:

- 3.1.1. The rent to be charged to a tenant who is eligible to be allocated with an affordable housing unit under the Tenancy Agreement must be no more than 75% of the market rent for that dwelling ("Subsidised Rent").
- 3.1.2. In determining the market rent, Council must obtain a market valuation report for each dwelling from an independent, qualified valuer at the following times:
 - a. on the commencement date of the funding agreement; and
 - b. annually thereafter, on each anniversary of the commencement date, as part of Council's annual reporting obligations.

3.2 RENT REVIEWS

- 3.2.1. The term of any Tenancy Agreement must not exceed 12 months.



- 3.2.2. If an Eligible Tenant continues to meet the Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria, as determined under the Eligibility Policy, and has not breached the terms of the Tenancy Agreement during the preceding 12 months, Council must offer the tenant a further 12-month tenancy upon expiry of the current term and must include a rent review conducted in accordance with clause 3.2.3.
- 3.2.3. The Subsidised Rent for each Tenancy Agreement will be reviewed and adjusted, if applicable, on the commencement date of the new Tenancy Agreement. The revised Subsidised Rent must be calculated in accordance with the Subsidised Rent review mechanism outlined in clause 3.1.
- 3.2.4. Subsidised Rent may only be increased once in any 12-month period. This limitation applies irrespective of any change in tenancy during that period.

3.3 OTHER COSTS UNDER THE TENANCY AGREEMENT

- 3.3.1. Eligible Tenants are responsible for the payment of charges for utilities including electricity, water, gas and/or telecommunications as may be supplied by Council for the benefit of the Eligible Tenant (excluding any utilities supplied directly to an Eligible Tenant by a utility provider).
- 3.3.2. Where an Eligible Tenant establishes accounts in their own name with third-party providers, they are responsible for all associated charges.
- 3.3.3. Apart from the charges for utilities, Eligible Tenants must not be charged by Council for any other amount other than the Rent for their occupation of the Affordable Housing Dwelling.
- 3.3.4. Clause 3.3.3 does not prevent Council from recovering from Eligible Tenants any amounts that would be payable by tenants to landlords under a tenancy agreement for non-recurrent charges, such as Council's costs incurred if a tenant defaults in performance or causes damage to a dwelling.

3.4 COLLECTING SUBSIDISED RENT

Subsidised Rent must be paid by the Eligible Tenant on the **[insert]** day of each week.

3.5 METHOD OF PAYMENT

The Tenancy Agreement must state at least two ways for the tenant to pay the Subsidised Rent.

3.6 MANAGING PAYMENT ARREARS

- 3.6.1. The Director of Corporate Services is responsible for managing payment arrears.
- 3.6.2. It is a condition of the Tenancy Agreement that tenants pay their Subsidised Rent by the due date.
- 3.6.3. Repeated late payments or failure to pay the Subsidised Rent and utilities charges may result in termination of the Tenancy Agreement.
- 3.6.4. If the tenant falls behind in paying Subsidised Rent or utilities, or a tenant breaches a repayment agreement, Council shall issue a Notice to Remedy Breach to pay the outstanding amount.
- 3.6.5. If the tenant does not pay the arrears or enter into a repayment agreement with Council within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the Notice to Remedy Breach, the Director of Corporate Services may issue a Notice to Leave. In deciding whether to issue a Notice to Leave, the Director shall ensure that the decision is compatible with human rights.
- 3.6.6. Upon receiving a Notice to Leave, the tenant has fourteen (14) days to either pay the outstanding rent or vacate the dwelling.



3.7 EXPLAINING RENT CALCULATIONS TO THE TENANT AND DEALING WITH RENT QUERIES

- 3.7.1. Tenants are encouraged to direct any rent-related queries to the Director of Corporate Services (or their delegated officer).
- 3.7.2. Explaining rent calculations to a tenant involves providing a clear and understandable explanation of how their rent is determined in accordance with clause **Error! Reference source not found.**
- 3.7.3. If a tenant disagrees with a Subsidised Rent or market value assessment, they may request a formal review. The housing provider will conduct the review.

3.8 PREVENTING THE TENANT FROM GETTING INTO SERIOUS ARREARS OF RENT

- 3.8.1. Council's Affordable Housing Scheme is intended to provide safe, secure and stable accommodation for the most vulnerable and elderly people in our community.
- 3.8.2. Council's management practices shall ensure that tenants are assisted to stabilise their housing circumstances and Council shall be committed to working with tenants to help them maintain their tenancy by:
 - a. regularly reviewing rental ledgers and providing tenants with early opportunities to address late payments and resolve issues before they escalate;
 - b. assisting tenants to understand their rights and responsibilities under the Tenant Agreement; and
 - c. linking tenants to appropriate support services.
- 3.8.3. Tenants experiencing difficulty meeting their rental obligations should be encouraged to contact the Director of Corporate Services as early as possible to enter into a repayment agreement. This agreement will outline how the tenant will repay any rent arrears while continuing to meet their ongoing rental commitments.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

As a funded provider of Affordable Housing, Council must implement the Rent Policy consistently and fairly and operate within the requirements of the funding agreement, this Policy and all relevant legislation, regulations, directives, information standards and/or policies at the time of publication.

When implementing this Rent Policy, Council must make decisions fairly and transparently, using principles compatible with human rights as described in the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld).

5. TERM

This policy commences on **[Build Completion Date under Delivery Deed]** and will remain in force for the entire term of the funding agreement. It cannot be repealed or replaced by any other policy until **[20 years from commencement date]**.

6. RECORD KEEPING

All rent payments, repayment arrangements, correspondence, and case notes, must be recorded and stored according to Council's records management policy and procedures.

7. NON-COMPLIANCE

Non-compliance with the provisions of this policy may result in disciplinary action being taken in accordance with Council's policies and procedures.



8. RELATED DOCUMENTATION

C059 – Independent Living (Affordable Housing) Eligibility Policy

C060 – Independent Living (Affordable Housing) Allocations Plan and Allocations Policy

9. LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

Housing Act 2003

Housing Regulation 2015

Human Rights Act 2019

Public Records Act 2002

Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008

Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Regulation 2009