

Hobart Women's Shelter

Safe, Quality Homes for Tasmania's Women and Children Facing Homelessness

Project Overview

February 2022



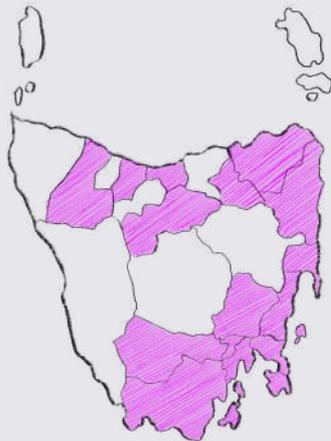
“Our vision is to create a safe and inclusive community free from homelessness, violence, inequality and injustice.”

- Hobart Women's Shelter

Project Background

The Problem

The Hobart Women's Shelter supports women from almost all Local Government Areas in Tasmania. Recent data from the Hobart Women's Shelter shows a disturbingly large number of women and children were turned away from the Hobart Women's Shelter during the last 18 months. The increasingly high numbers of women seeking crisis accommodation in 2020 has not been seen since the Shelter opened almost 50 years ago in December 1974.



Map of the Tasmanian Local Government Areas where women lived in the week before they came to the Hobart Women's Shelter.

From July 2020-December 2021, over 800 women and almost 1000 accompanying children from across Tasmania sought crisis accommodation at the Hobart Women's Shelter. Over 1351 women and children seeking accommodation at the Hobart Women's Shelter were turned away due to a lack of space. This represents 7 out of 10 women and 8 out of 10 accompanying children turned away from our crisis accommodation services. These figures are more than double the national number of women who are turned away from crisis accommodation across Australia. These are the women who know to ring the Hobart Women's Shelter indicating the demand in Hobart for crisis, transitional and permanent housing is likely to be significantly higher.

Every day the Hobart Women's Shelter listens to women say how they will attempt to survive by sleeping in cars, separating children and leaving them with different friends. This lack of a permanent housing solution in Tasmania with a focus on women and children will have damaging social, psychological and educational repercussions for this generation and the next unless something can be done to change this.

Women in Tasmania form 71% of all people who are not assisted by specialist homelessness services in Tasmania. This represents the highest proportion of women unassisted in any State in Australia. In 2019/2020 the Hobart Women's Shelter received 40% of all calls for crisis accommodation in Tasmania. We expect this to be higher in 2020/2021.

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We can see that women and their children are being disproportionately affected by the impact of the COVID19 pandemic and that the growth of social housing for women in Tasmania has not kept pace with the need. The pandemic has increased the economic stress and vulnerability faced by hundreds of thousands of Australian families and women who never thought they would experience homelessness. Family violence is a leading cause of homelessness for women in Australia and, during COVID19, violence against women and girls has been named the shadow pandemic by UN Women.

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Tasmania has an affordable housing crisis that is particularly damaging for women and children facing violence and the Hobart Women’s Shelter is seeking your assistance to find a solution that addresses the gendered nature of the problem.

The recent Equity Economics Report: [Nowhere To Go - The Benefits Of Providing Long Term Social Housing To Women That Have Experienced Domestic And Family Violence](#) states that family and domestic violence is the primary reason women and children seek specialist homelessness services, but only 3.2% are currently receiving the long-term housing solutions they need.

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Hobart Women’s Shelter Unassisted Records 2016-2021.

“Despite the fact that accommodation is often the primary focus of shelters, around one-third of women accessing services are unable to be housed.” - Shelter from the Storm Report, 2021, Paul Ramsay Foundation.

The State Government’s Housing Dashboard (Oct 2021) shows that the average waiting time for priority housing applicants had gone up from 57.4 weeks in November 2020 to 78 weeks in October 2021 and the number of applications on the housing register has increased from 3755 to 4506 over the same period.

The lack of permanent social housing for women in Tasmania has an impact on the ability of the Hobart Women’s Shelter to provide crisis accommodation as women are staying longer at the shelter as there are very limited permanent housing solutions for them.

Project Background

The Solution

The Hobart Women's Shelter is embarking on a project that aims to increase the number of permanent housing places for women and children facing homelessness. We are developing a prototype for a house that uses rapid assembly and other methods to provide a greater guarantee of the price per housing unit and length of time to deliver.

Building more permanent homes for women and children means that there are more exit points from the Shelter and consequently more women and children experiencing family violence and homelessness will be able to access Hobart Women's Shelter crisis accommodation services.



Based on discussions with women with lived experience of violence and homelessness, this project aims to create homes that are uniquely designed to ensure safety, respect and connection to community. The prototype also incorporates research on trauma-informed design.

The Hobart Women's Shelter, in collaboration with a Community Housing Provider, is seeking to obtain financial support from the Federal Government to reverse the lack of housing options for women and children facing violence in Tasmania.

Investing in safe, quality housing for women and children facing family violence delivers national economic benefits, creates jobs, saves lives and avoids government budget costs in the longer term when women and children come to crisis medical and housing services.

The recent Equity Economics Report: [Nowhere To Go - The Benefits Of Providing Long Term Social Housing To Women That Have Experienced Domestic And Family Violence](#) shows that there is an immediate need for an additional 16,810 social housing units in Australia, to provide women somewhere to go when their only option is to leave their homes due to domestic and family violence.

Equity Economics analysis shows that the provision of 16,810 social housing units would:

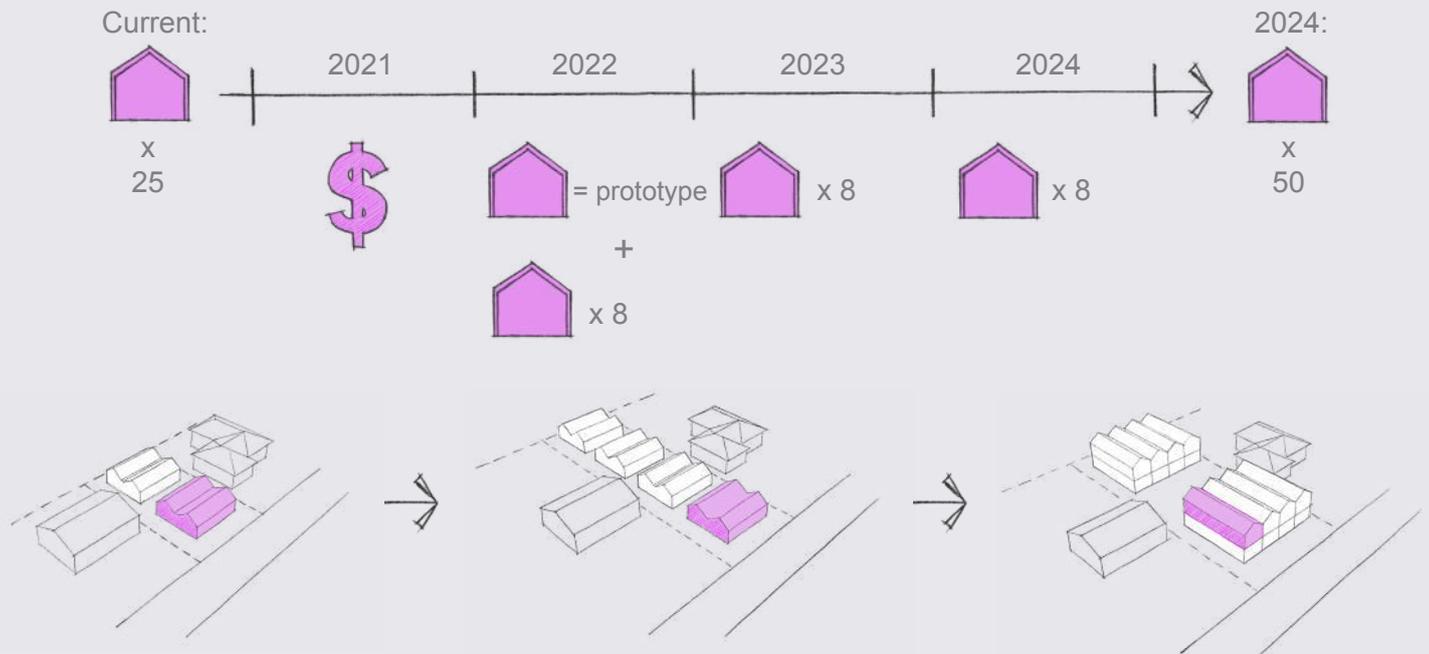
- Cost up to \$7.6 billion, with costs to Government potentially lower through partnering with community housing providers and utilising other innovative financing models;
- Deliver immediate economic benefits of \$15.3 billion and create 47,000 jobs across the economy;
- Would avoid \$122.5 million in a year in costs due to women returning to a violent partner; and
- Would avoid \$257 million a year in costs due to women experiencing homelessness after leaving their homes due to family and domestic violence.

The Current Plan (2022-2024):

50 Homes By HWS 50th Anniversary

The Hobart Women's Shelter currently has 25 crisis units. Our plan is to expand the accommodation options for women by building 25 permanent / long-term homes. In total 50 homes to mark 50 years of service by the Hobart Women's Shelter.

Goal to build an average of 8 units a year for the next three years (2022-2024).

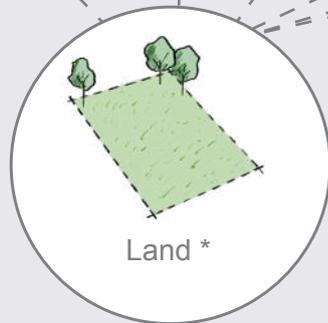
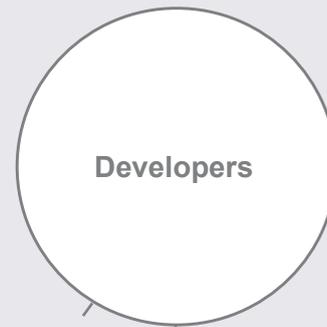


Medium-Term Plan (2024-2030):

Expand Permanent Housing for Women in Tasmania

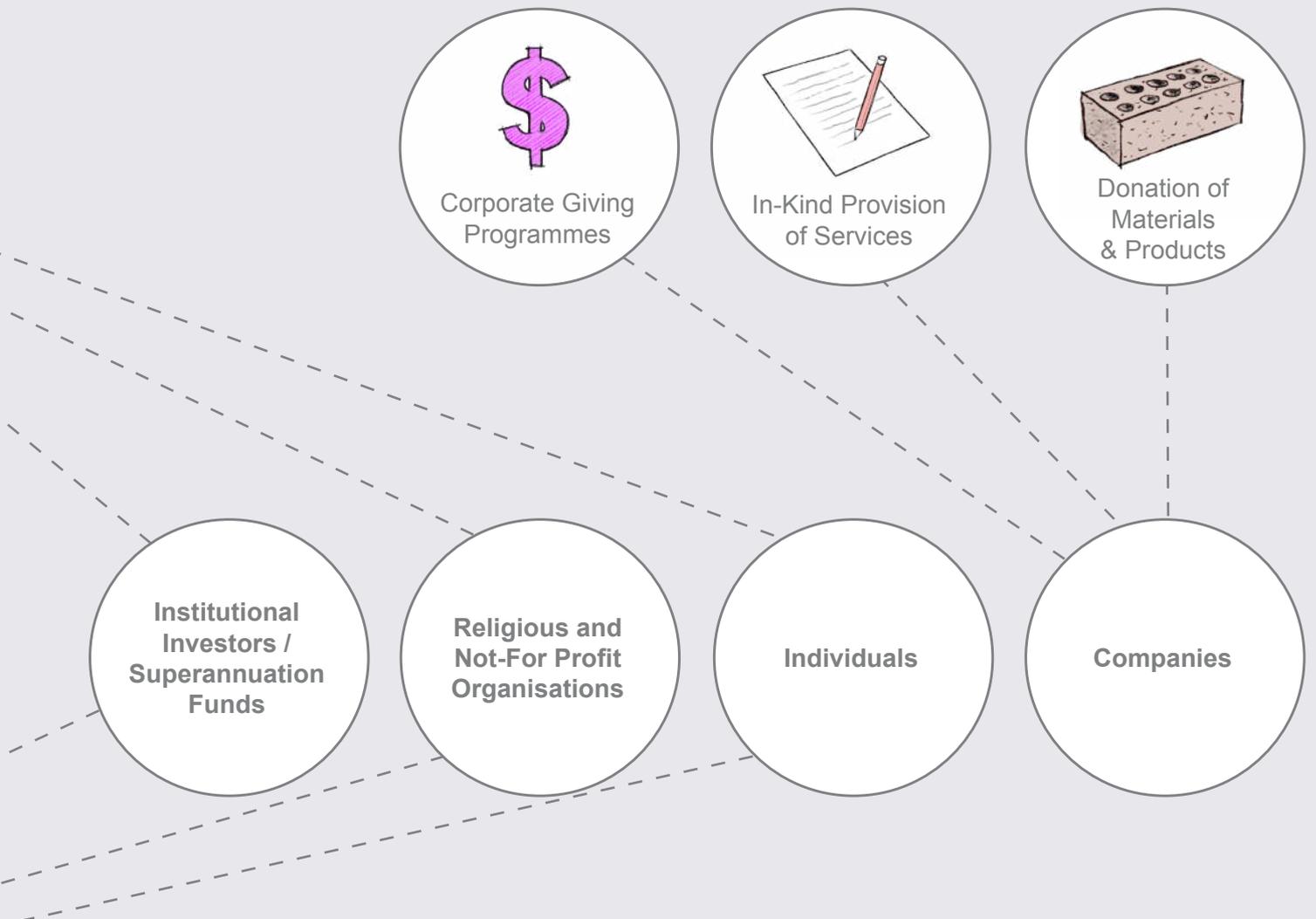
Hobart Women's Shelter, in collaboration with a Community Housing Provider, will advocate for additional funding for permanent housing units for 40- 60 women and up to 130 children across one or more locations.

Seeking Project Partners for:



* Could be a sub-division of an existing block or a donation of a large block of land.

** Integrate 10% housing for women facing homelessness, older women, women with a disability and women key workers into developments using a dispersed, integrated approach.



“Delivering mixed tenure for communities of diverse means is not a new idea. ...Where high-net worth individuals occupy dwellings indiscernible in specification and layout from low-income residents.”

- Professor Rob McGauran
‘Investment in Affordable Housing Quality: Why the Industry should support it’, 2022.

Guiding Principles

Design Principles

The project adopts the 9 design principles put forward in the UTS report by Samantha Donnelly: [‘Design Guide for Refuge Accommodation for Women and Children’, 2020.](#)

Safe

- Fencing
- Openings
- Landscaping
- Private Areas
- Internal Spaces
- Physical Envelope

Private

- Acoustic Privacy
- Neighbour Proximity
- Exterior Spaces
- Visual Privacy

Dignified

- Ethical
- Composed
- Self-Esteem
- Physical Comfort
- Culturally Respectful

Flexible

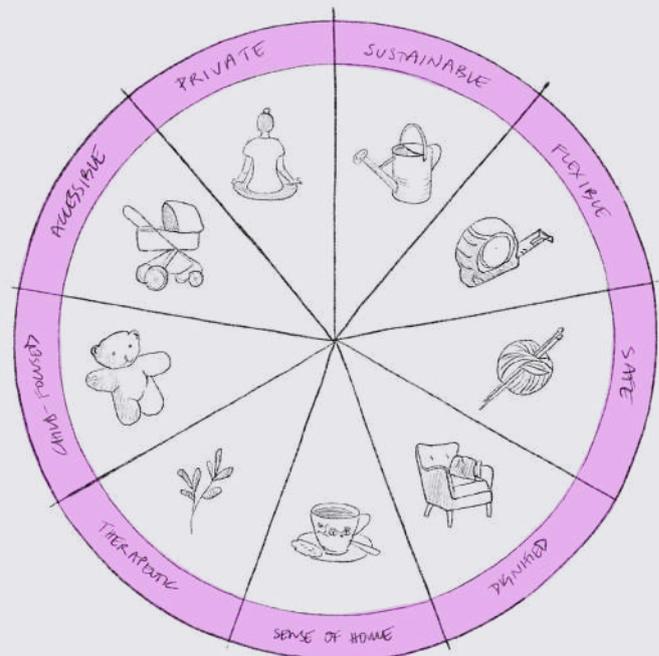
- Ranges of family sizes
- Easily transformed interior spaces
- Responsive to diverse needs

Accessibility

- Mobility
- Sight-impaired
- Children/prams
- Mental Health
- Thresholds
- Pets Space

Child-Focused

- Sightlines
- Communal Space
- Learning Spaces
- Exterior Spaces



Sustainable

- Water and energy consumption
- Materials
- Thermal Performance
- Material & Product Durability
- Quality of Construction
- Building Maintenance

Therapeutic

- Sensory Environment
- Visually Quiet
- Increase Natural Light
- Cool Colour Schemes
- Quality of Lighting
- Storage

Sense of Home

- Belonging
- Family Space
- Memory
- Control
- Comfort
- Furnishing
- Aesthetics



“Purpose-built accommodation goes beyond addressing pragmatic requirements of shelter. Good design may provide better physical safety and psychological wellbeing through strategic spatial design that directly considers parent-child needs. Good design integrates quality of space, light and material to enhance wellbeing.”

- Samantha Donnelly, ‘Design Guide for Refuge Accommodation for Women and Children’, 2020.

Guiding Principles

Sustainability Features

Passive Design

- Adaptable siting and window placement for optimal solar gain and natural ventilation
- Maximise natural daylighting

Energy Efficiency

- Minimum 8-star energy rating
- High-Performance Building Envelope
- Energy-efficient hot water system
- Energy-efficient heating system
- Double Glazing
- Energy-efficient light globes
- Energy-efficient appliances
- Solar power
- Provision for electric vehicle charging

Materials

- Low-maintenance
- Low embodied energy
- FSC certified timber elements
- Non-toxic materials and finishes
- End-of-life recycling and re-use

Waste and Recycling

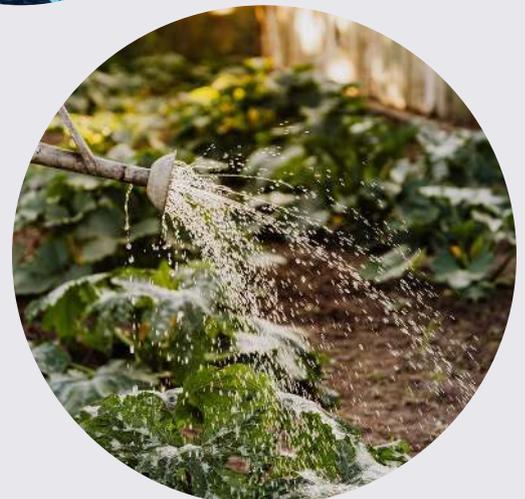
- Waste minimisation during construction (see design for rapid assembly and sustainability)
- Adequate provision for recycling, household general, and food waste composting.

Water

- Rainwater tank
- Water-saving plumbing fixtures and appliances
- Drought resistant/low-water-use planting and water-saving landscape design.

Low-energy homes create a wide range of physical and mental changes. Several households spoke about health improvements from higher indoor air quality. Purpose-built low-energy homes also give economic empowerment to low-income households.

- [The Conversation: 'Low Energy Homes Don't Just Save Money, They Improve Lives' 2017](#)



Future-Proofing

Long-Term Affordability

“We found that the households:

- Were \$1,000 a year better off as a result of reduced utility consumption (including solar feed-in tariff);
- Purchased 45% less electricity than the control households (and 73% less than the standard industry practice);
- Consumed 22% less water (30% less than the industry standard);
- Had 40% less CO2 environmental impact from power use (63% less than the industry standard); and
- Were comfortable with the indoor temperature of their house for 10% more of the time (even without air conditioning).”

- [The Conversation: ‘Sustainable housing’s expensive, right? Not when you look at the whole equation’ 2016.](#)

‘Live and Adapt’

The home and garden are liveable and adaptable to changes in lifestyle and climate.

- Modular design for economy, replication and future adjustments.
- Provision for incorporating future technologies.

Accessibility

Designed to the [Liveable Housing Australia accessible design standards](#) and to meet NCC compliance requirements.

Low-Maintenance

Easily accessible building services (plumbing, electrical, mechanical) for future upgrades.

Building Life Cycle

Consideration of building components over the lifetime of the building, through to disassembly, re-use and recycling.

Health and Wellbeing

Emphasis will be placed on the quality of the indoor environment for the health and wellbeing of families, with regard to:

- Indoor air quality
- Natural light and ventilation
- Colours and finishes
- Heating and cooling
- Liveable and adaptable for future household needs

“Better environmentally sustainable design features make a big difference to community housing providers and clients... it not only improves the built environment and makes life a lot more comfortable for people, less hot in summer, warmer in winter, but it also reduces utility costs and frees up funds for other uses.”

- Jack Panton, General Manger - Housing Supply, Launch Housing

Design Features

Aesthetic & Durable Materials and Finishes



High windows for natural light and privacy / security



Daybed Nook



Drought-tolerant and low-maintenance gardens



Daylight and privacy



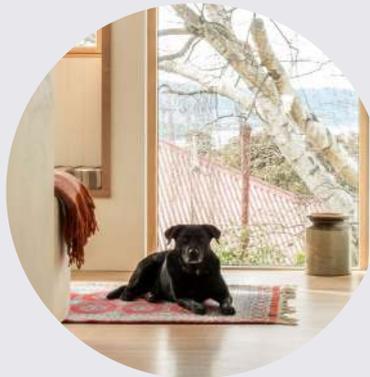
Nurturing Spaces



Blending functionality and personality



Beautiful small spaces



Pet-Friendly



Durable, low-maintenance materials and products



Private Courtyard



Aesthetic and dignified

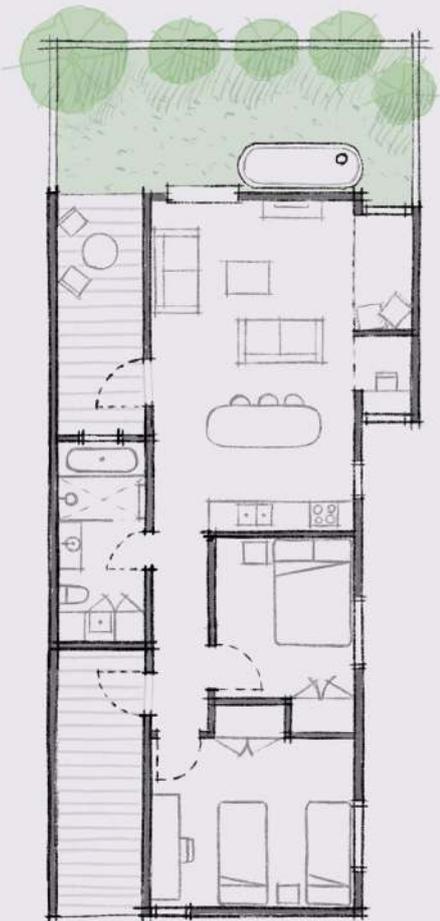
Concept Design

Floor Plans

The homes have been designed using modules that suit modular and prefabrication construction. The different arrangements; linear, L-Shaped and Compact, have been designed to suit potential land sizes and constraints.

All homes designs have a private courtyard garden (ideally oriented to the north for sun access), a front and rear door (for security and safety), and an open-plan flexible living/dining/kitchen space.

2-Bed, Linear

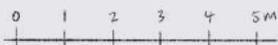


Floor Area: 75m²
Length: 15m
Width: 7.5m

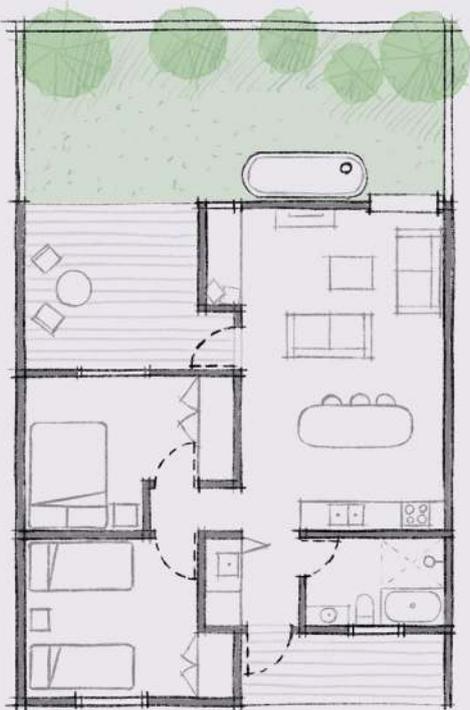
2-Bed, L-Shaped



Floor Area: 77.25m²
Length: 10.5m
Width: 12.5m

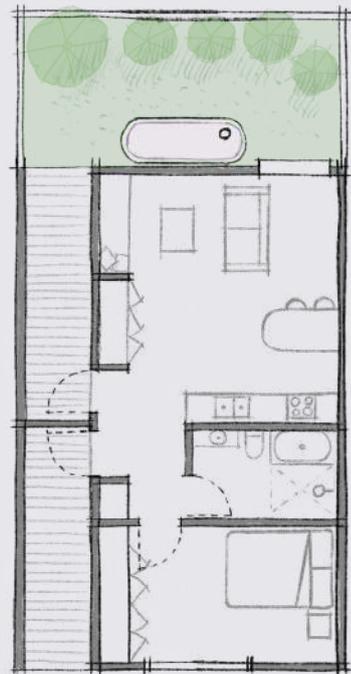


2-Bed, Compact



Floor Area: 75m²
Length: 10.5m
Width: 9m

1-Bed, Compact



Floor Area: 40m²
Length: 10.5m
Width: 6m

Project Delivery

Rapid Construction

Our goal is to use rapid assembly and other construction methods to provide a greater guarantee of the price per housing unit and length of time to deliver.

One such solution is prefabrication, where parts or the whole of a house is constructed off-site in a controlled environment, potentially reducing site construction time by up to 50% per dwelling, and site installation time of as little as 6 weeks.

The types of prefabrication include:

- **Component-based construction** (such as engineered timber structural elements)
- **Panelised** (factory-built wall, floor and roof elements)
- **Volumetric/Modular** (transportable factory-built modules)
- **Bathroom pods** (factory built 'plug-in' modules)
- **Hybrid** combinations of above

The advantages of prefabrication are:

Speed

The off-site fabrication process can take place in the factory, in parallel to site preparation activities. This can reduce the overall construction period of a project significantly.

Safety

Health and safety is easier to control in a factory, for example most of the work can be conducted at waist height, and workers know the machinery and systems of the factory.

Sustainability

Minimum site disturbance, tightly managed material flow and construction waste, and pre-

planned assembly and disassembly can reduce the environmental impact of construction.

Quality

A predetermined quality can be achieved in a factory-controlled process, and the indoor environment means buildings and components are protected from climate extremes and vandalism.

Clean

On-site wet trades can be minimised or eliminated as elements are pre-formed, pre-poured or pre-applied in the factory context.

Technology

The interface between emerging computer-aided design technologies and fabrication technologies is set to revolutionise construction

Value

Faster time to occupation, leading to lower site overheads due to less time on site.

Certainty

There is greater cost certainty due to minimal weather delays, plus there is an earlier design freeze due to requirements of the manufacturing process.

Skills

In communities with a shortage of skilled trade labour, the prefabricated building production line can be organised to employ less skilled labour, working under supervision.

(source: [PrefabAus](#))



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