

Plugging housing gap

New social housing project in St Marys answers demand for properties

EMILY FESZCZUK

Calls for more social housing are being answered with construction starting on a \$7.6 million housing renewal project in St Marys.

An official sod turn was held last Friday at Lethbridge Street, St Marys, to celebrate the start of the project which, when completed, will provide 21 new homes for vulnerable people in the community.

Tom Zeaiter Constructions Project Manager, Andrew Zeaiter, said the team is grateful to be partnering with the NSW Government, NSW Land and Housing Corporation, and Root Partnerships on the project.

"The site was previously occupied by two ageing and out-dated cottages and will soon be replaced by 21 new modern social housing apartments," he said.

"These homes will support a better quality of living for people in the area as well as generate vital economic activity and jobs."

With the area re-zoned for higher density development, the complex is designed to meet environmental standards, including a common rainwater tank to deliver water



Andrew Zeaiter, Brayden Kenny, Naveen Chandra and Tomislav Ugarkovic at the sod turn in St Marys last week.

and energy savings for future tenants.

"The four-storey architecturally designed apartment building will consist of 13 one-bedroom and eight two-bedroom homes, with basement parking and extensive landscaping to soften the streetscape," Director of Tom Zeaiter Constructions, Tom Zeaiter said.

"All of the 21 new homes are designed to meet accessibility standards, with four of them also adaptable for full accessibility."

Minister for Water, Property and Housing Melinda Pavey said the new homes will be beneficial for the different groups involved.

"Building these new homes will inject money into local businesses and the local economy, supporting about 38 jobs during construction at a time when we need them most," she said.

"It will also help us replace older housing stock which is typically under occupied, costly for the government and tenants to maintain and lack contemporary environmental standards."

With St Marys set to become a transport interchange for the aerotropolis, Ms Pavey said it will complement future developments.

DEAR WEEKENDER

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Weekender's 30th birthday

Happy Happy Birthday to the lovely *Western Weekender*! (Editor's Desk, *Weekender* March 12). In the past I was stuck with that silly *Penrith Press* to read the local news, but once the *Weekender* came, the local news became more informative and more interesting to read. And the Editor is such a friendly man and it's such a pleasure to read his great columns each week featuring all his quips and quibbles of that present time! All the fun sporting info and local area updates are a great pleasure to read and we would all be lost without this great magazine in our possession. Getting to read it both online and in person makes it easier to catch up on all the news of the week too! So once again Troy, thanks so much for everything and I look forward to the next 'ish' of Penrith's terrific magazine! Until then take care and stay safe and well.

DIANA MCCARTY, EMU PLAINS

30 years of keeping it local

Western Weekender is the best paper we have ever had in the Penrith area. Love that the news is back on Facebook too. Happy Birthday.

DENISE GEE, VIA FACEBOOK

Apartment concerns

Those poor folks who invested in certain apartment buildings around

the CBD only to find faulty construction with the owners up for the cost of repairs, and not even able to live in them. Some of the companies have gone broke and taken over by others and none seem to take responsibility for the faults. Let us hope this sort of circumstance does not happen in the many apartments being built throughout Penrith, some seem to be erected so fast you never know what little surprises might lay ahead for buyers. I can only suggest that renters or buyers find out the use by crack date if possible, it's only reasonable, and if they get no answer then purchase a property 30 years or older instead, which has stood the test of decades. The question I ask, is how those faulty building jobs ever got passed by Government building inspectors?

RICHARD MERRELL, PENRITH

One win, one loss

It is good to see that Penrith Council has finally fixed the silly turning situation from Woodriff Street into Nepean Village. Cars always used to make the turn, uncertain about whether it was legal or not - given the traffic island in the centre was oddly placed. But just down the road, they've got it wrong. A round-a-bout at the intersection of York Road and Preston Street? Are they serious? Totally unnecessary.

DON NELSON, VIA EMAIL

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