

To Northern Beaches Council

Introduction

Project Independence (PI) is an innovative social housing provider for people with an Intellectual Disability (ID). It represents a new and unique model of homeownership, not only in Australia but also internationally. This new social housing model is based on ten residents living in separate homes built on a single block of land, with additional accommodation for a live-in coordinator to support the residents (also within the same precinct). Residents are generally aged between 18 and 60 and may live at PI for several years while building equity and independent living skills or may choose to live at PI for their lifetime.

The PI model addresses key housing issues affecting people with ID, including:

- **Housing supply:** increasing access to suitable, safe and affordable housing whilst reducing the pressure on the Social Housing waiting list and creating housing affordability for the demographic with the lowest rate of home ownership in Australia.
- **Resident wellbeing:** increased financial responsibility and independence, choice and control over housing options, improved social connections and independence. The fostering of an environment that enables supported decision making by residents.
- **Family wellbeing:** Family and carers feel supported and have improved independence, increased confidence in housing options, security in regard to housing tenure for the residents and reduced stress.
- **Economic Empowerment:** Economic services and mechanisms support home ownership for people with ID giving them economic empowerment and support for future homeownership models.
- **Service delivery:** Quality assured housing protects the rights of residents, meets suitability requirements and fosters independence and wellbeing.

Proposed arrangement:

Platino for Project Independence, on Lot 1 No 5 Skyline Place will:

- Complete the design and construction of the premises to the requirements of Project Independence.
- On completion create a separate stratum, which will be transferred to Project Independence in perpetuity.

The agreement is conditional upon the approval of the development by Council or the relevant consent authority.

Project Independence will own and operate the premises in accordance with the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) and the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Commission standards.

Residents will have the opportunity to achieve home ownership in this highly sought after, innovative housing model that offers home ownership as opposed to a rental model.

The Premises

PA Studios have prepared a development application for a mixed-use development.

A part of the ground floor of the development shows an area reserved for use by Project Independence, designed to suit our requirements.

The proposed Project Independence premises, as shown comprise:

- Permanent accommodation for 10 persons with Intellectual Disabilities
- Two 'houses' to each accommodate five residents with common Kitchen, living and laundry facilities
- a Common Living Room, comprising a lounge, dining space and kitchen for residents where residents socialise and enjoy their evening meal together
- ten resident suites with personal living space and access to a private courtyard with independent access
- accommodation for the live-in coordinator or carer
- outdoor area directly accessed from the Common Living Room.

The premises are accessed at ground level and residents will have their own unique access, exclusive to that of the main building. Residents will be able to use the common landscape area and the community gardens associated with entire development.

Social connection and integration within a broader community is vital for people with ID as they develop independent living skills, making the incorporation of PI homes within this development with active seniors and in a location with access to public transport and amenities a key benefit of this project.

Planning Support

We strongly endorse the proposal and support the planning application. Provision of such housing is essential for those with an Intellectual disability and strongly supported by the Board of PI. This particular project will create new opportunities for Sydney residents to access this form of housing, including the support and partnership offered to the families of those with ID.

The collaboration with Platino Properties offers an opportunity that may otherwise not be possible. Platino have worked hard to understand the PI model for inclusion within an integrated development.

They have prepared a design solution that captures the successful elements of other PI Homes and will be a compatible facility within the development and local community.

It is our expectation, as have been proven in other jurisdictions that the demand for this facility will exceed the available accommodation and highlight the need to pursue other similar opportunities across Sydney.

We welcome any direct contact for further information if required.

Yours faithfully,



Glenn Keys AO
Chair Project Independence