

BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL RETIREMENT LIVING AND AGED CARE PLANNING INCENTIVES EXPLANATORY NOTE



At the end of August 2016, Brisbane City Council (BCC) released its planning incentives for retirement living and aged care facilities to cater for the future needs of an ageing population.

The key components of the policy include:

- a reduction in development infrastructure charges administered by BCC by 33 per cent for a three year period for eligible schemes;
- an additional two storey allowance in medium and high density locations, where best practice design standards are met;
- consideration of proposals in privately owned sport and recreation areas — but only where a clear community benefit is incorporated into the facility; and
- future amendments to City Plan 2014 that would include a streamlined new code for assessing aged care and retirement living development applications.

INFRASTRUCTURE CHARGES REDUCTION

BCC has reduced infrastructure charges by 33 per cent for retirement and aged care accommodation developments that are "compliant" with the City Plan 2014 and demonstrate a "quality living environment that is fit for purpose and provides design quality". The following table provides a comparison between existing and reduced BCC charges for qualifying developments.

Development	Type	BCC Unit Charge (Previous)	BCC Unit Charge (Incentive)	Savings
Retirement Facility (ILUs & ALUs)	Suite with 1 or 2 bedrooms	\$8,000	\$5,360	+\$2,640
	Suite with 3 or more bedrooms	\$12,000	\$8,040	+\$3,960
	Bedroom that is not within a suite	\$8,000	\$5,360	+\$2,640
Residential Care Facility	Per m ² GFA (not including stormwater network)	\$104	\$69.68	+\$34.32

The 33 per cent reduction only applies to BCC charges. Charges administered by Queensland Urban Utilities (QUU) for water and sewerage networks are not the subject of an incentive for a reduction.

The BCC reduction is available for development approvals given between 1 September 2016 and 31 December 2019. An infrastructure agreement is required to be entered into with BCC to reduce the charges and must be completed prior to the development commencing operation. Whilst the details have not yet been released by BCC a commitment to commencing operation within a certain timeframe is expected to be included in the infrastructure agreement.

AMENDMENTS TO BRISBANE CITY PLAN 2014 (CITY PLAN)

Amendments will be made to the City Plan to help streamline development applications for upgrading or developing new retirement living or aged care facilities, including:

- the creation of a planning code that would specify greater building height on large sites
- lowering the level of assessment to code assessment for retirement/aged care facilities in the following zones:
 - Community facilities (major health care zone precinct and Community purposes zone precinct);
 - Specialised centre zone (major education and research facility zone precinct);
 - Low density residential, where the development complies with building height outcomes; and
 - Low-medium density residential, where the development complies with existing building height outcomes;
- increasing allowable building heights by two storeys as code assessable in the Medium and High Density Residential Zones;
- opportunities for co-location of retirement/aged care facilities on privately owned sport and recreation zoned land (e.g. Golf courses and bowls clubs); and
- lowering the level of assessment for conversion of retirement facilities (or parts thereof) to aged care facilities to self-assessment.

The proposed amendments to the City Plan will be released for public consultation in late 2016/early 2017, with formal amendments expected to be adopted by the end of 2017.

COMMENT

The package of planning incentives represents the culmination of an extensive review by the Lord Mayor's Taskforce into Retirement and Aged Care that was established in 2015 to identify measures to address the rising demand and costs of developing facilities for an ageing population.

The generous reduction to infrastructure charges will be particularly welcomed by developers of retirement and aged care facilities who are facing significant land prices and rising construction costs. The 33% reduction is immediate for qualifying development approvals but there is some doubt as to how the eligibility criteria will

be interpreted since it will be at the discretion of the Assessment Manager. Unfortunately, the reduction is only available to new development approvals and not permissible changes.

Whilst the changes to the City Plan will not be formalised under the end of 2017, there is an opportunity to take advantage of the locational and built form incentives now through impact assessable applications. Such applications would carry a degree of risk from community backlash but Council has indicated that they would support proposals seeking to take advantage of the incentives ahead of their adoption into the City Plan.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information or to discuss any aspect of the above, please contact



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