

Council acts to address housing crisis

In a move designed to provide people with a wider range of safe housing options, Kyogle Council has revoked its temporary accommodation policy.

The removal of the policy will also give people displaced by natural disasters and who require temporary accommodation more options while they await more permanent housing.

Introduced in 2013, the temporary accommodation policy permitted landholders to live in temporary accommodation – sheds, caravans, relocatable homes, tiny homes – on their properties for just 12 months and only while a permanent dwelling was under construction.

Council unanimously resolved at its 14 March Ordinary Meeting to revoke the policy in response to the ongoing housing affordability crisis and the unprecedented February floods which have left up to 6,000 homes across the Northern Rivers uninhabitable.

Council's Acting Director Planning and Environmental Services Amanda Clark said the Temporary Accommodation Policy was introduced before the housing crisis and did not take into account the wide range of living arrangements land owners had pursued since then.

Ms Clark said the policy had also effectively stopped Council from helping people, who were living in temporary dwellings on their property without approval, address health, safety and environmental risks, particularly in regard to water supply and waste disposal.

With the cancellation of the policy, Council will fall back on the Local Government Act 1993 and associated regulations which allow people to live in temporary accommodation on their property as long as they have Council approval and it meets set standards designed to manage health and safety risks.

The legislation does not limit the location of the temporary accommodation or the length of time people can live in it.

Kyogle Council Mayor Cr Kylie Thomas said Council was taking decisive action to help people in housing crisis and those displaced by the floods.

“This is immediate action from Councillors in response to the current housing issues,” Cr Thomas said.

“It provides a pathway for staff to work with residents to help them find a way out of the housing crisis and achieve safe, and healthy living arrangements.”

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