

Watpac & Housing NSW announce \$95M Villawood Housing Joint Partnership

Watpac will develop and build a mix of social and private housing at Kamira Court in Villawood, Sydney

Housing Minister Frank Terenzini and Member for Fairfield Joe Tripodi today officially launched the \$95-million Kamira Court, Villawood Urban Renewal Project.

Mr Terenzini said this public-private joint partnership, with a wholly owned subsidiary of Watpac Limited, is another great milestone in the Keneally Government's drive to increase the supply of affordable housing.

"This Government remains determined to increase the supply of homes for low income earners struggling to purchase their own home, while making sure people in need have access to modern, well-designed social housing.

Mr Tripodi said this project provides a great opportunity to markedly increase affordable housing in Villawood, which is a high demand area.

"It's also a big win for Housing NSW tenants as this project will change the face of local public housing – 111 state of the art social housing units designed to better meet the needs of an ageing population.

"This project will create a stronger and more inclusive community, building on the firm foundations created by decades of Villawood residents and community leaders.

"This is a fantastic location for our new housing development - it is close to transport, shopping and other community facilities and it will be a great place to live, Mr Tripodi said.

Mr Terenzini said the Kamira Court Villawood Urban Renewal Project will include a mix of social and private housing, and will be built on the 1.5 hectare vacant site at the former Kamira Court public housing area at Villawood.

"All 111 units will be for seniors but there will be an additional 169 privately-owned and affordable units which will address the need for better integrated housing.

"The social housing units will all be managed by a third party when they are built which will grow community housing in the area and provide an alternative landlord for the social housing tenants.

"These units have been designed to meet the requirements of seniors living and feature internal community rooms, accessible design and level access to nearby transport and community facilities.

"Watpac is in discussions with UnitingCare Ageing concerning the provision of various new community amenities including such facilities as a wellness centre, day activity centre, library, cafe, function rooms and training/community services.

Mr Terenzini said Housing NSW has signed a partnership agreement for the project with Watpac, which was selected because of its proven track record in delivering multi-unit residential developments, including major projects for Housing NSW.

"The procurement and assessment process that lead to selection of Watpac was extensive. Extensive.

"A number of community consultation workshops have been undertaken on the project since 2005 with Fairfield City Council and various interest groups including local residents, adjoining land owners and shop keepers.

"I'd like to assure residents and community leaders alike that they will continue to be consulted on this redevelopment, and everything will be done to make the transition as inclusive as possible.

"If one word describes this project, it's 'partnership' - with Housing NSW, Watpac, and community groups all working together."

Greg Kempton, Watpac's Managing Director, supported the Minister's pledge for consultation and communication which will play a big part in the successful renewal of Kamira Court."I am very pleased that Watpac is able to play an integral role in the process of providing high-quality housing for those in the community who need it most," Mr Kempton said.

"As both the developer and the builder, we are committed to working closely with the community and all stakeholders in delivering this project to the exceptional standards Watpac has become known for.

"We anticipate the Kamira Court project will create approximately 150 jobs during Stage 1 of the works, which will ultimately benefit the community not only through offering opportunities for employment, but also through supporting surrounding businesses.

"We are looking forward to continuing to assist Housing NSW realise its vision for state-of-the-art social housing."

Construction of the 111 senior's social housing units and Stage 1 of the affordable housing is expected to start in March 2012 and is due for completion in May 2013.

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