



Dear Minister/Representative,

The national housing crisis is disproportionately affecting some regional communities. One of these is Eden on the NSW South Coast.

Over 400 homes in the region were either destroyed or damaged during the Black Summer bushfires of 2019/20. This tragedy was followed by the COVID-19 restrictions and the escalation of housing and rental prices which placed further stress on community residents.

People most affected are those who are already vulnerable, and recent months have seen an increase in the number of people couch-surfing, living in caravans, tents and in their cars. These include people over 55 years of age (particularly single women), people living with a disability, those leaving domestic violence and people already at housing risk.

Further crisis and transitional accommodation is urgently needed, with the community currently having no emergency accommodation for men or young people.

Anglicare NSW South, NSW West and ACT, with the support of many representatives from the local community, would like to acquire the Ray Wotton Gardens facility at Nullica Close in Eden. These 28 units, which were previously managed by RSL LifeCare as an Aged Care facility, would be repurposed as 19 transitional and long-term accommodation units for vulnerable people over the age of 55 years, and for those living with a disability.

Anglicare already has significant experience as housing support provider, along with programs including emergency relief, bushfire recovery, disability, permanency support programs and retirement living services.

Anglicare's annual rental affordability snapshot research has shown that the region has very few housing options, especially for people relying on government supports. This research has informed and influenced our direction as an organisation, recognizing that without safe and affordable housing, people lack a foundation from which to build their lives.

Anglicare's strategic framework calls for close connection with the local community. Encouragingly, this project is already benefitting from the support, feedback and expertise of local community representatives who understand the urgent need for such a facility.

This as a significant community renewal initiative and I ask for your support to help Anglicare (NSW South NSW West & ACT) acquire this property and provide urgent housing relief to vulnerable community members in the Eden area.