

**ATTACHMENT B**

**LETTER FROM HAMMONDCARE  
DATED 23 MARCH 2016**



23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016

# ATTACHMENT B

Ms Monica Barone  
Chief Executive Officer  
City of Sydney  
Town Hall House  
456 Kent Street  
Sydney 2000



Dear Ms Barone,

## **HammondCare – Darlinghurst**

HammondCare plans to build a residential care home for 47 older people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Darlinghurst, Sydney (subject to Council approval). This service will cater for people who have complex clinical and high care needs.

The proposed site for this service is at 118A Darlinghurst Road, currently a car wash, adjacent to St John's Church. HammondCare is committed to a 40 year lease of the site.

### **Outline of the project**

HammondCare's Darlinghurst aged care home will provide accessible, long-term and individualised care for the aged who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in inner Sydney. Residential care to the aged who are homeless combines a number of HammondCare's strengths: individualised care underpinned by case management, psycho-geriatric care and support for people whom other providers might find challenging to support.

The proposed aged care home in Darlinghurst is in close proximity to other services that support this group, including St John's Rough Edges Café and St Vincent's Homelessness Health Service. Staff at St John's Rough Edges Café will work with us providing additional social support to residents. HammondCare is also working with St Vincent's Homelessness Health Service to establish a referral pathway between the services. HammondCare has established linkages with other services in the area including Wayside Chapel and Lou's Place.

### **Aged who are homeless or at risk of homelessness**

As you are aware, homelessness is a significant problem in the inner Sydney region. Indeed, the City's own February 2016 survey recorded the highest number of people sleeping rough since the Count started. In addition:

- The most recent Australian census estimated there to be 3,306 homeless people living in inner Sydney.<sup>1</sup>
- The 2015 Sydney Vulnerability Index found that 15% of people sleeping rough or in crisis services were over 55 years old. This is consistent with other studies that show that the numbers of older people experiencing homelessness in later life is growing significantly, and an increasing number are older women.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011b, 'Data Cube: 2049.0 Census of Population and Housing: Estimating Homelessness\_2011 Statistical Area Level 2', ABS, <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/2049.02011?OpenDocument>

<sup>2</sup> Large, J and Klinger, B 2013, 'Ageing and Women's Homelessness: Overcoming the bag lady syndrome', *Women's Property Initiatives*, p 9.

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- Rough sleepers constitute less than 13% of the overall cohort, with the vast majority either ‘couch surfing’ with friends or family, or passing through temporary accommodation without security of tenure.<sup>3</sup>

## Why is this service needed?

There are a number of services in inner Sydney that assist the general homelessness population, including accommodation, health, and drug and alcohol services. However, international studies consistently show that older homeless people are more vulnerable and require fundamentally different service models to homeless people generally.<sup>4</sup> This is supported by the City’s own Homelessness unit surveys that show that a very significant proportion of the older group who are homeless need more than accommodation but, rather, need intensive on-going support potentially for the rest of their lives.

Currently, there are three services in inner Sydney provide long-term accommodation to the aged who are homeless: Annie Green Court, Frederic House and Charles Chambers Court. These services are experiencing unprecedented demand for their services and, in addition, typically provide lower – or ‘hostel’ – levels of care.

HammondCare – Darlinghurst will not only provide ‘hostel’ accommodation for the aged who are homeless but will also provide high levels of physical and psychological care as would be expected within a nursing home. We will also be working closely with those other services.

## What financial support is needed for this project?

This service will operate under the *Aged Care Act* and will receive subsidies from the Australian Government for its recurrent costs.

HammondCare had sought capital funding for the project from the Australian Government in the most recent Aged Care Approval Round, which listed homelessness as a priority area. The results of this Approval Round were announced in March and, unfortunately, our application was unsuccessful. Indeed it is noted that the Australian Government significantly wound back capital grants this year: only \$1.7m of capital grants were made to NSW approved aged care providers compared to grants of \$21.2m in the previous Aged Care Approval Round.

HammondCare seeks the financial support of the City of Sydney towards the construction of this much-needed service. HammondCare has one-third of the capital in hand and is actively fund-raising for the additional \$10 million. HammondCare asks the Council to consider a capital grant of up to 10% - which is \$1.5 million – towards the capital cost of this service.

HammondCare undertakes that it does not intend to change the use for this service and, indeed, any such change would require the approval of the lessor, St John’s Church. However, if the Council determines to support this project financially, HammondCare would guarantee to refund Council’s capital contribution less depreciation should use of the building change over the life of the development.

With all good wishes,  
Yours sincerely



**Dr Stephen Judd**  
Chief Executive

<sup>3</sup> Rota-Bartelink, A and Lipmann, B 2007, ‘Causes of homelessness among older people in Melbourne, Australia’, *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 31, pp 252-258.

<sup>4</sup> Crane, M et al. 2005, ‘The causes of homelessness in later life: findings from a 3-nation study’, *Journals of Gerontology Series B-Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 60 (3), pp 152-159.