

FACT CHECK SHEET

14 February 2017

How large is the Defence Housing Australia (DHA) site? How much of it will be developed?

The DHA Mount Lofty site is 379.19 hectares. However only a small portion of it will be developed, with a significant portion of the site to remain undeveloped.

Will development of the DHA Mount Lofty site proceed soon?

No. DHA is commencing work on a masterplan for the site. The masterplan will take many months to finalise and will benefit from the contributions of local residents. Following comprehensive engagement with local people, DHA plans to lodge a development application with Toowoomba Regional Council some time in 2018.

What are the survey pegs for?

The survey pegs identify various things that are historical to the site, not the future. For example, the total landholding is currently spread across 7 Lots (titles). Survey work has progressed well with completion of field surveys, this data is being calibrated and validated.

Will the Mount Lofty escarpment be developed?

No. The escarpment is not developable and is recognised as an area of high value to the community. DHA is in regular discussion with Toowoomba Regional Council planning officers and the Parks and Recreation Services Branch about Council's vision for the escarpment and Jubilee Park.

What about Jubilee Park?

Jubilee Park will be expanded as a result of the DHA project.

Adjoining the DHA Mount Lofty site to the east, Jubilee Park will be significantly expanded through a contribution of land by DHA to the community. This could enable Jubilee Park to become a regionally significant park.

How many Lots will DHA develop at Mount Lofty?

Because only a small portion of the site will be developed, the number of Lots will be significantly less than the highly exaggerated media reports on the proposed number of Lots. They are incorrect and are based on no data from, or discussion with, DHA. Baseline surveys are underway, and preliminary planning studies are still to be conducted. It is too early in the lengthy planning process for DHA to identify the exact number of Lots to be developed in the future.

Will all the homes at the Mount Lofty community be exclusively for Defence families?

No. DHA plans to create a sustainable residential community for Defence members and their families, as well as local families. Some of the Lots will be retained by DHA on which homes will be built for Defence families, with the remaining Lots to be made available for public purchase. Homes for Defence families are scattered throughout new communities; this facilitates integration and cohesion amongst community members.

Will the Mount Lofty community be small-Lot housing?

DHA plans to create a cohesive residential community for Defence families and other new residents. Social cohesion is best achieved by a development that offers a mix of housing Lot sizes, that meet the needs of different household types and sizes.

Will the Toowoomba housing market be flooded by DHA housing?

No. DHA develops, and markets, our projects in stages. Stages are developed and marketed in line with the demand for housing from Defence members and their families, as well as local buyers.

What do DHA homes and communities look like?

The housing developed in DHA communities is comparable to contemporary housing in other residential developments. DHA is renowned for building award-winning houses as well as utilising parklands and other amenities to create an enhanced community environment. Suitable improvements for Mount Lofty will be identified through consultation with local stakeholders and Toowoomba Regional Council.

Does DHA build the houses?

No. DHA engages local builders to build quality homes for Defence members that suit the local environment, thus creating jobs for many builders and tradespeople in Toowoomba. For the Lots that are sold to the public, buyers choose their own builder.

Why would Defence members want to live at Mount Lofty?

Defence members have the same needs and desires as other sectors of the community. They want to live in established communities where their children can attend local schools without long commutes, and they can shop, dine and enjoy recreational activities that are local. They want to be part of a vibrant community where they can develop friendships with neighbours, and their children can play with other local children.

Why does DHA sell some of the land it develops to the public?

The sale of surplus land and dwellings generates revenue to support DHA's ongoing development and construction program, delivering quality homes for Defence members and their families, where and when they are needed. DHA receives no funding from the federal government, and has no obligation to return a profit to government on individual developments. However, 60% of the collective profit is paid to the federal government, and 40% is retained by DHA.

What are unexploded ordinances and how will they be dealt with?

Unexploded ordinances are munition devices that did not explode when they were employed. There may be unexploded ordinances on some areas of the Mount Lofty site. DHA is in the process of engaging an unexploded ordinance (UXO) expert consultant, this consultant will comprehensively review the site and review historical Defence information. Ultimately, this consultant will guide the masterplan.

What about bushfire risk?

DHA is in the process of engaging a bushfire expert. This consultant will be on the masterplan project team to report on the hazard and management of bushfire. There are clear standards in planning and land management legislation about the management of bushfire risk. These will be adhered to in the DHA project.

Where can I find out more?

For further information, please contact us as follows:

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