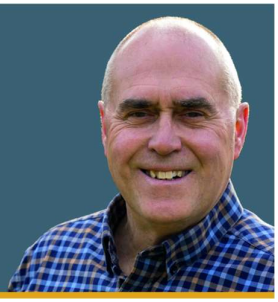

MEDIA RELEASE

More homes in existing spaces: Lennon says focus on turning empty city space into homes.

Hobart mayoral candidate Harvey Lennon wants Council to help convert suitable vacant and underused upper floors and commercial spaces into inner-city housing.

"Hobart has a housing shortage while parts of existing buildings remain empty or underused, or substantial empty spaces lie around them," Mr Lennon said.

“Most people I’ve spoken to don’t want really super tall buildings in our city. And I agree with that, we need a sensible balance when it comes to building height.

“But what we should be doing in Hobart is using the many empty spaces above existing buildings, and around them, to deliver more homes in our city.

“To build smart, attractive and functional, reasonable height medium-density living spaces.

“My plan would include fast-tracking suitable proposals and making appropriate Council-owned land available for community housing, and develop incentives to make urban home development attractive.

"Where conversion is safe and practical, Council should help remove unnecessary delay and support more people to live close to jobs, services and public transport."

Mr Lennon said each proposal would still need to meet planning, heritage, building safety and accessibility requirements.

"Not every space will be suitable. We need a clear and efficient assessment process, not lower standards," he said.

Mr Lennon said more residents in and around the city centre would also support local shops, hospitality businesses and services outside traditional office hours.

"Council must use the levers it has. That includes faster decisions on suitable conversions and identifying Council land that could support well-designed community housing, as well as partnering with Government to develop new incentive programs," Mr Lennon said.

“With council-led incentives and partnering with government, we can encourage investors to build more homes for inner-city living,” he said.

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