

Construction firms to grab a share of NSW social housing plans

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NSW is pressing ahead with a major social housing development that has attracted interest from several of the country's biggest construction companies.

Under the plan confirmed yesterday, the renewal project at Ivanhoe, near Macquarie Park in Sydney's north, will more than double the existing 259 social housing dwellings. The project will see 556 new social housing dwellings, at least 128 new affordable housing dwellings and 1900 private dwellings on the 8ha site.

NSW Social Housing Minister Brad Hazzard said the Ivanhoe development would be used as a blueprint for future projects in Telopea, Riverwood and Waterloo.

"The three shortlisted organisations represent the top echelon of the private development sector and strong community housing providers," Mr Hazzard said.

"This is an extremely positive response to the Communities Plus program and shows how government, the private sector and community housing

providers can be innovative and band together to deliver more housing and better social outcomes.”

The shortlisted groups are: Exemplar Living, owned by Lend Lease with St George Community Housing and Capella Capital; Frasers Property with Mission Australia and Citta Property Group; and Stockland with Evolve Housing and Brookfield Multiplex.

Meanwhile, Housing Industry Association chief economist Harley Dale said yesterday new home starts in Australia this year remained strong, primarily driven by more Australians looking to build their own homes.

“The current new home building boom is unlike any other that has come before it,” Dr Dale said. “It is the longest and largest in Australia’s history and has provided an unprecedented economic boost to the nation, without which domestic demand would be in, or close to, recession.

“This cycle is marked by substantial regional divergences in the levels of activity in various markets around the country, and the mix of dwelling types being built has changed dramatically,

“As the down cycle in new home building unfolds, the record pipeline of medium/high density dwellings in particular creates considerable uncertainty as to the timing and magnitude of the decline in construction.”

The HIA has forecast a peak of more than 232,500 dwelling starts to have been reached in the past financial year.

But it said dwelling starts next financial year were expected to fall because of the present political and economic environment.