

Consumers of Mental Health WA (Inc.)

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Submission: Consistent Local Planning Schemes Consultation

25th May 2023

Re: *Part A – Land Uses Terms (& Associated Definitions) (Table 2 (Page 12 – 13) and Appendix A of the Stakeholder Consultation Report)*

About CoMHWA

Consumers of Mental Health WA (CoMHWA) is Western Australia's peak body for and by mental health consumers (people with a past or present lived experience of mental health issues, psychological or emotional distress). We are a not-for-profit, systemic advocacy group independent from mental health services that exists to listen to, understand and act upon the voices of consumers. We work collaboratively with other user-led organisations and a diversity of stakeholders to advance our rights, equality, recovery and wellbeing.

CoMHWA's Position

CoMHWA wishes to address *Part A – Land Uses Terms (& Associated Definitions) (Table 2 (Page 12 – 13) and Appendix A of the Stakeholder Consultation Report)* only, with a specific focus on the proposed exclusion of alcohol and other drug rehabilitation services from the 'community purpose' land use type. We are writing specifically to support WANADA's submission¹ on this matter, as the provision of quality support services for alcohol and other drug services directly impacts mental health. The gap between supply and demand of services has been continually identified by our members as a key priority for improving mental health outcomes.

The current definition of 'community purpose' refers to premises designed for 'services by organisations involved in activities for community benefit'. We assert that the community benefit of Alcohol and Other Drug rehabilitation services is clearly evidenced, and therefore that the community purpose land use type is the only appropriate category for these services. Where rehabilitation, treatment and other support services are readily accessible, there is a corresponding decrease in treatment episodes². This in turn reduces pressure on health, justice and other human service systems. Alcohol and other drug services play a crucial role in reducing the risk of harm.

Excluding AOD services from the community purpose land type will construct additional barriers for the creation of new vital alcohol and other drug services, which in turn will have an impact on how accessible and available supports are for people who need them the most. There are currently not enough supports available to meet current community needs³, and providing services is a key priority of several state⁴ and federal⁵ government strategies.

CoMHWA recognises the need to streamline local planning schemes and how this will improve consistency in local government areas, however we request that alcohol and other drug services remain within the community purpose land use type.

¹ Western Australian Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies (2023) [Submission: Consistent Local Planning Schemes Consultation](#).

² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2022) [Alcohol and other drug treatment services in Australia annual report](#).

³ WA Mental Health Commission (2018) [Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015-2025, figure 21 & 23](#).

⁴ WA Mental Health Commission (2018) [Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015-2025](#).

⁵ Australian Department of Health (2017) [National Drug Strategy 2017-2026](#).