

**MEDIA RELEASE
MAY 2022**

PERMIT APPROVED FOR VMCH'S PREMIUM KEW RETIREMENT LIVING PRECINCT

The City of Boroondara has issued a permit for VMCH's premium retirement living precinct at its 1.6ha site in Studley Park, Kew. The Woods Bagot-design, at 6 and 14 Studley Park Road, will comprise 108 luxury apartments and see the restoration of three existing heritage buildings. It will include spectacular amenities, expansive green spaces and deliver a new public café.

The apartments will feature house-like proportions with sweeping views over Studley Park and residents will enjoy a high level of services and a vast range of amenities unlike anything currently on offer in the area.

The Landscape Masterplan, by award-winning Oculus Studios, has carefully considered a number of high value trees, centring them as part of large green spaces for residents and the public.

Council's urban designer described the development as "meticulously crafted and thoughtfully and expertly executed to suit the site and locale" noting "the architectural expression reinvents familiar features of the arts and crafts movement in an imaginative manner to provide local relevance and allow the new buildings to talk to their historic neighbours and nestle comfortably within their surroundings".

Describing his team's process, Woods Bagot principal and regional design leader (Australia/New Zealand) Peter Miglis said, "we wanted to create a soulful community by layering design's past, present and future."

"Nestled in this precinct is our vision for the contemporary direction of retirement living, as a space for wellness that remains deeply embedded within its context and community. This is a site that carefully balances privacy and community, protection and connection," he continued.

At the 2016 Census, 36 per cent of Kew's population was listed as over 50, but limited retirement living options currently exist to support the area's ageing population.

In its 2021 review of the permit, City of Boroondara's Principal Planner Seuna Byrne noted:

"Council's municipal strategic statement identifies interrelated key issues of the municipality's aging population, a desire to age in place and a lack of housing diversity."

VMCH CEO, Sonya Smart said she was excited to commence work on the project, after two years of planning and community consultation.

"We are so pleased that the City of Boroondara has endorsed this project. This site has long been a part of our history, and this permit will allow us to bring it back to life.

"Everything from the precinct's design through to the way we take it to market and the facilities and services we'll deliver to residents will push the envelope for retirement living in Australia.

"We know from our research that people aged over 60 are not 'retiring' in the traditional sense. They are entering a thrilling new phase in life where they have more time to focus on themselves – they're more active, more engaged and even more indulgent than generations before them."

VMCH Chief Property Officer Jason Uzice added:

"VMCH is writing a bold new narrative for retirement living. Downsizing doesn't mean compromise.

“ It’s not just about the architecture. Every aspect of the design is geared towards an active, social and low-maintenance lifestyle, while delivering the sense of community that is the hallmark of all VMCH projects.”

Approximately 410 jobs will be created during construction with an additional 35 jobs created after completion through the management and on-site management components.

The design will achieve high environmental performance targeting a 7.0-star NatHERS rating average for all apartments with 100% renewable energy (gas free), on-site power generation through rooftop solar, rainwater capture and re-use, Electric Vehicle enabled and incorporation of passive solar design principles.

This project is set to add to VMCH’s quality retirement portfolio having delivered many leading projects such as those in Camberwell and Hawthorn, with others planned in Ivanhoe East, Box Hill, Wantirna and Bundoora.

- ENDS -

For more information or to arrange an interview contact:

Nat Cheeseman – Account Director, Papermill Media
nat@papermillagency.com.au / 0417 317 637

ABOUT VMCH

VMCH is a Catholic, for purpose organisation and provides services to more than 9,000 people across Victoria. VMCH operates across 50 local sites located in metropolitan and regional Victoria. VMCH’s Mission is to create choices, offering hospitality, and building inclusive, compassionate and sustainable communities. While we’ve been around for over a century, we’re always moving forward. We stay true to who we are by supporting people and families to live their best lives, providing a place to call home and spaces to learn and grow.