

Architectural Design Guide for Specialist Domestic Violence Accommodation

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Housing Plus

HousingPlus



Domestic Violence Statistics in Australia



1.



2.



3.



4.

1. AHURI (2021). [Housing, homelessness and domestic and family violence](#)
2. AIWH (2018). [Specialist Homelessness Annual Report 2017-18](#)
3 & 4. Samantha Donnelly (2020). [Design Guide for Refuge Accommodation for Women and Children.](#)

Objective

Create safe places that support women and children to recover and thrive

How

Establish the high-level design standards for new and refurbished specialist domestic and family violence accommodation in Australia, which leads to new fit for purpose accommodation.



Developing the Guide



CUSTANCE



01.
Housing Plus
secures funding
with NHFIC

02.
Engage leading
Architecture firm,
Custance Architects

03.
Conduct literature
review of DFV
accommodation

04.
Consultation with the
sector for learnings
and Case Studies

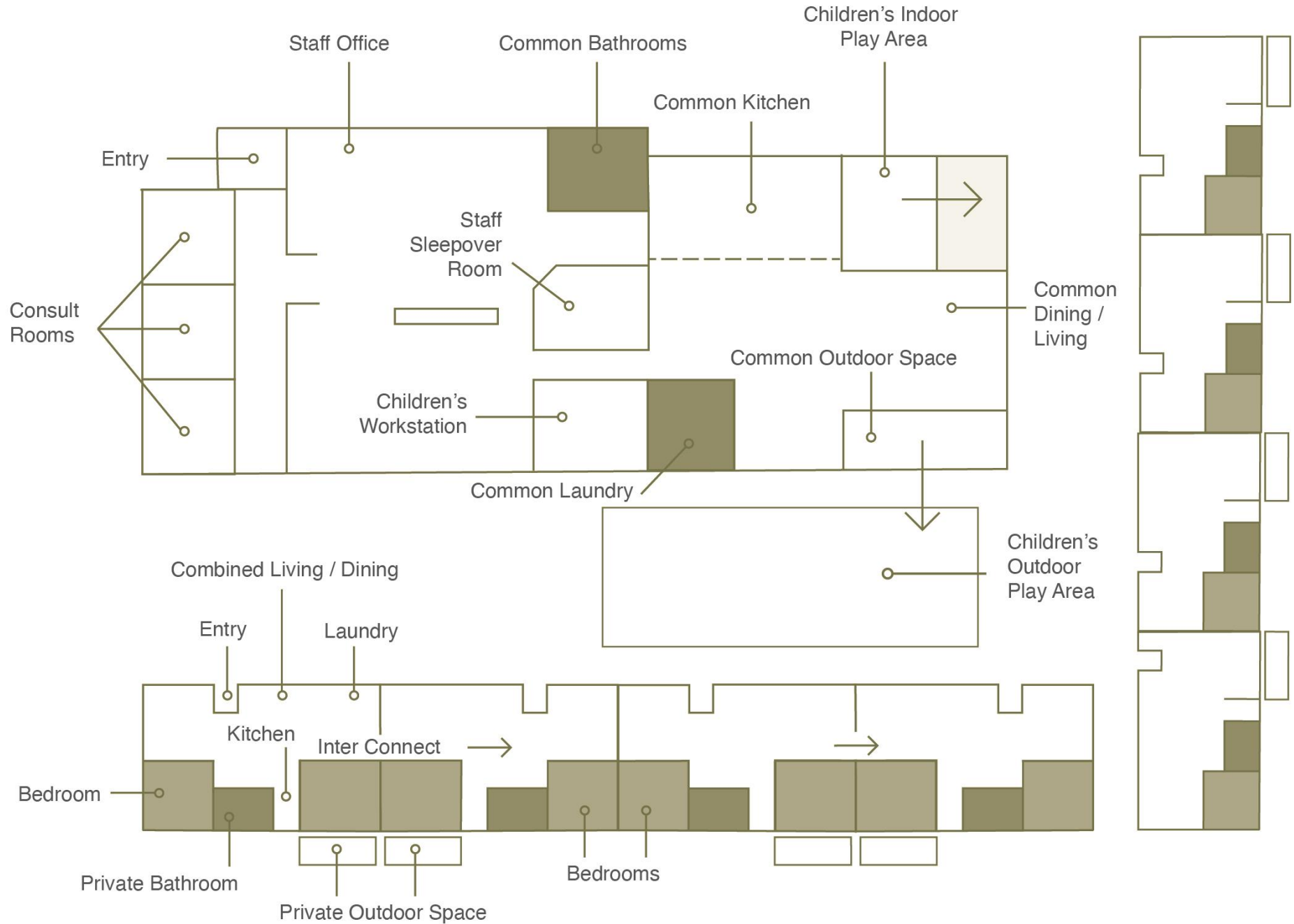


Building Typologies

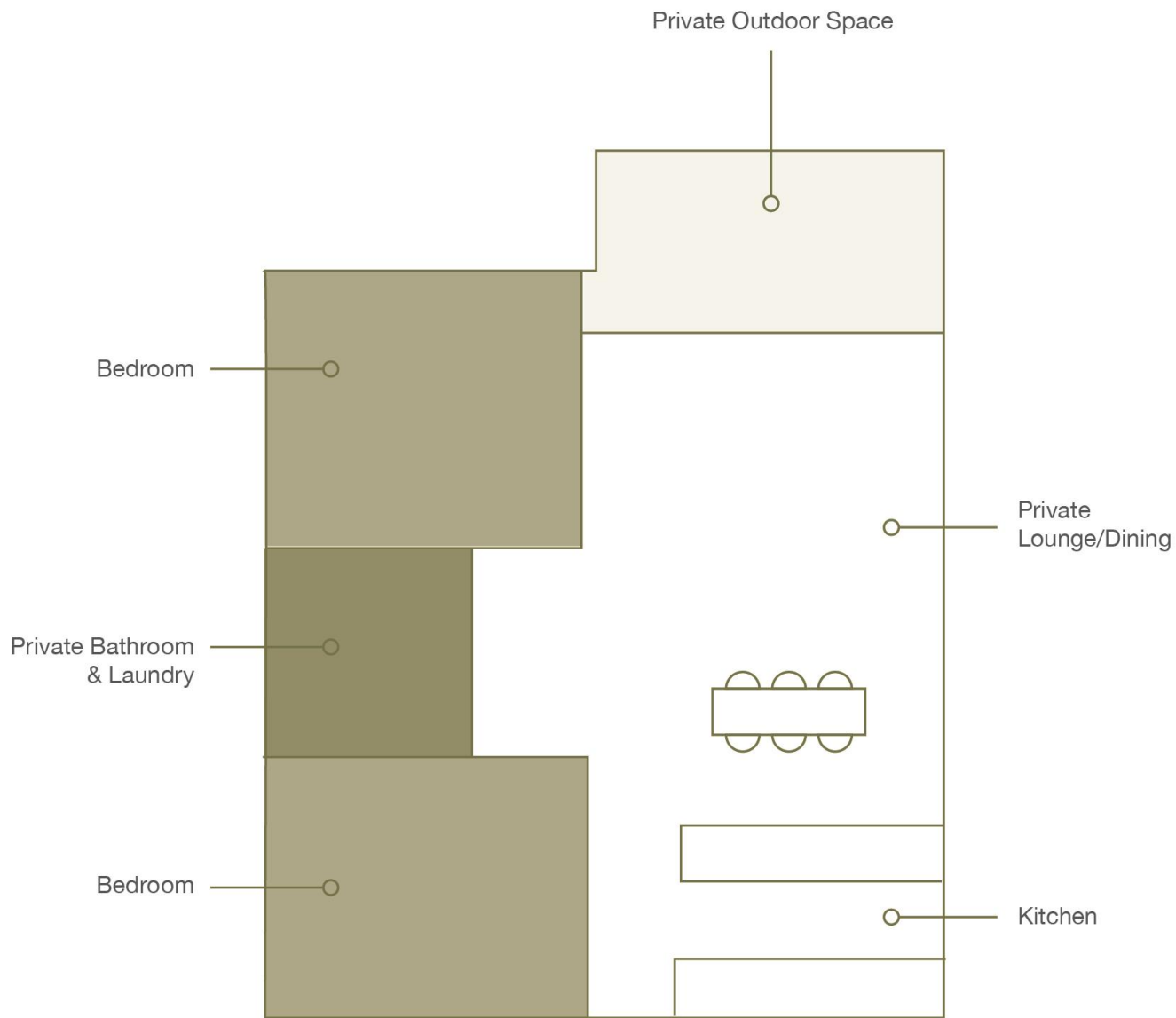
Dwelling Feature	Core and Cluster	Independent Living	Refuge / Shelter
Bedroom	○	○	○
Private bathroom and laundry	○	○	●
Common bathroom and laundry	○		○
Private kitchen	○	○	
Common kitchen	○		○
Private lounge and dining	○	○	
Common living and dining	○		○
Private outdoor space	○	○	
Common outdoor space	○	●	○
Consultation Rooms	○		●
Staff Office	○		○
Staff sleep over room(s)	●		●
Children's play & work area(s)	○	●	●

○ Included ● May be included

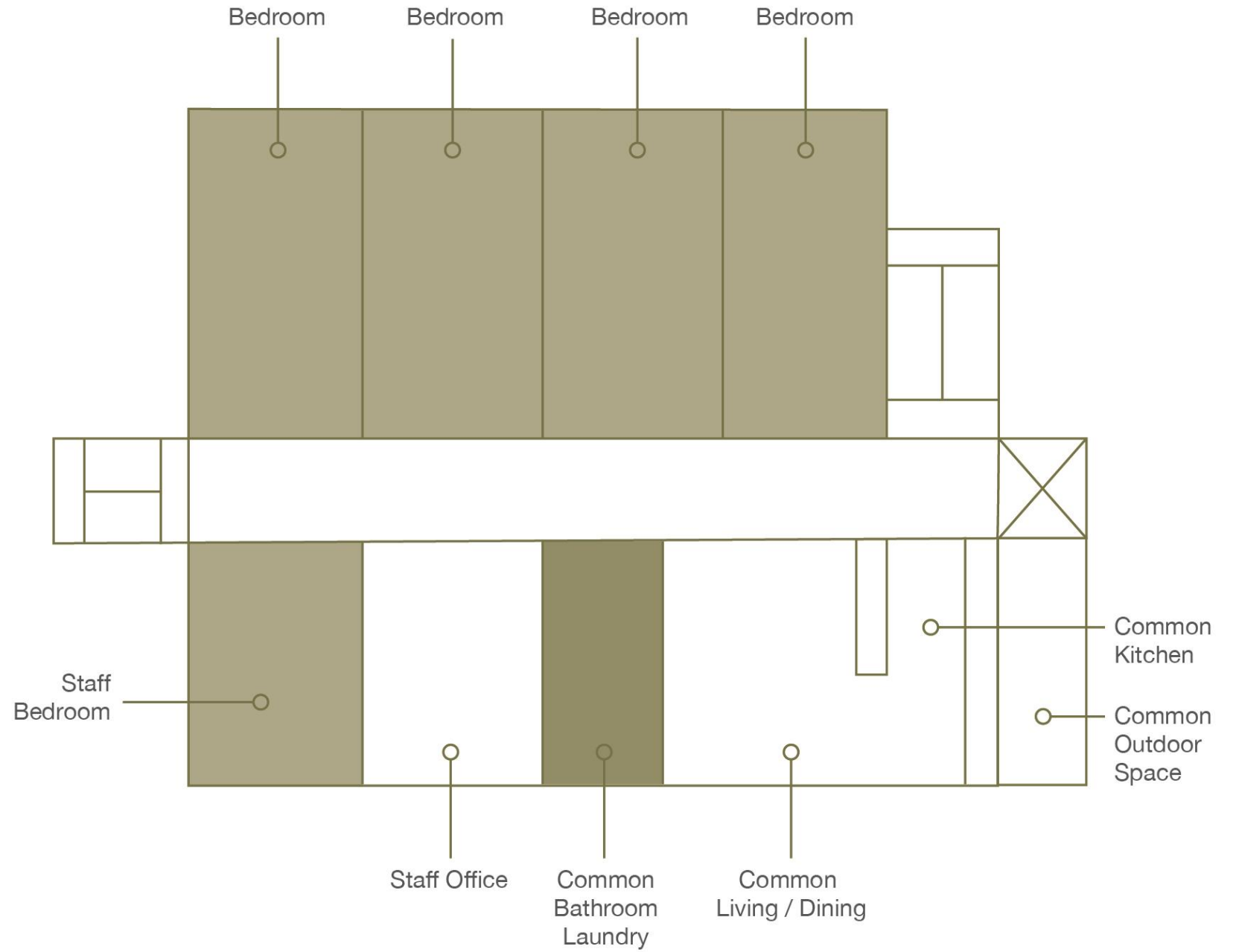
Building Typology: Core & Cluster



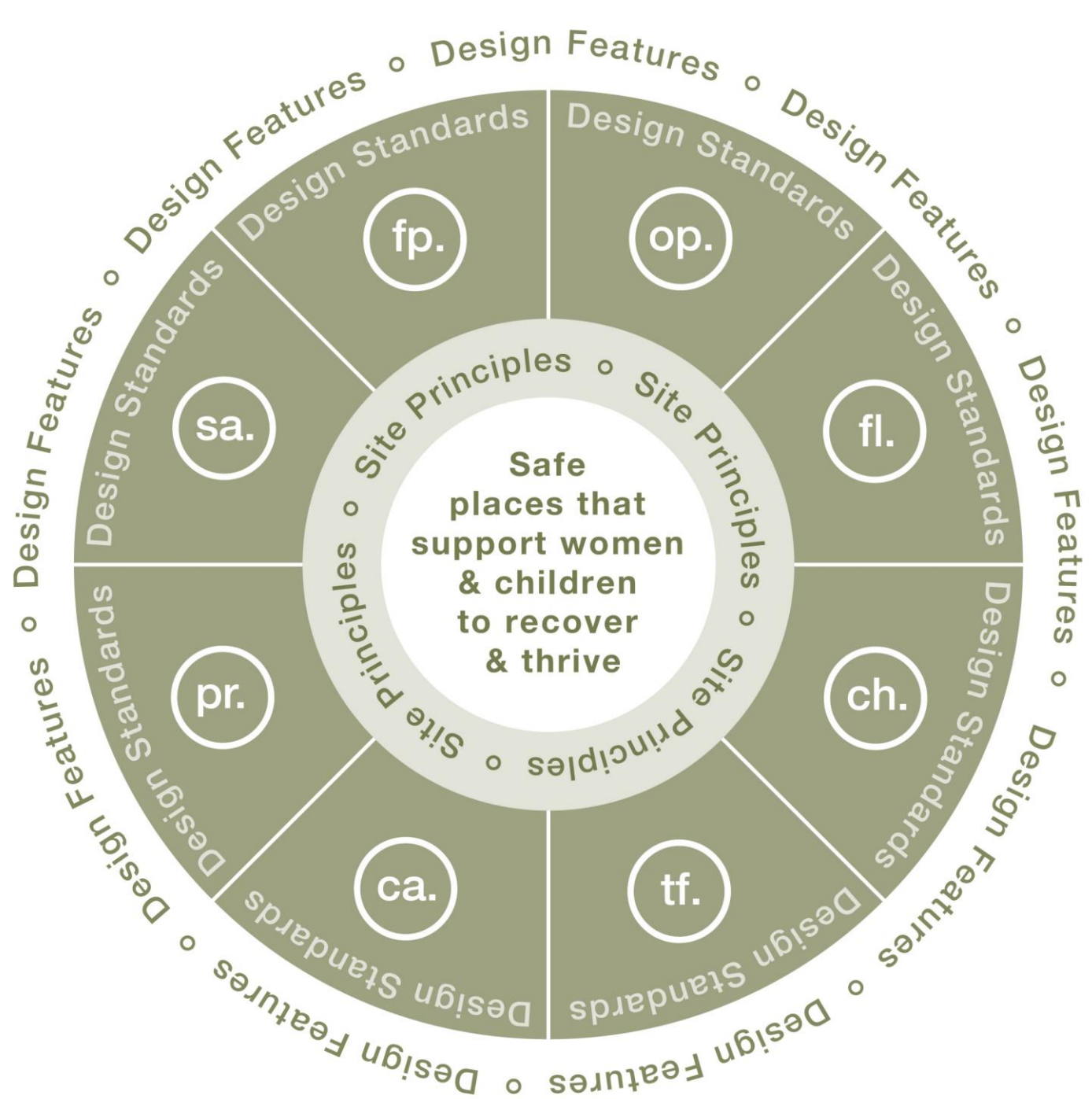
Building Typology: Independent Living



Building Typology: Refuge / Shelter



About This Guide



Site Principles

Project Objectives & Brief

Needs Analysis for specialist DFV Accommodation in local area

Project objectives and target outcomes

Funding Opportunities

Brief for Development Professionals

Site Identification

Local planning controls and zoning

Site proximity to local services

Land cost vs market

Density and best use

Community support / objection

Urban design and local character of neighbourhood

Vehicle and pedestrian access

Site safety, considering perpetrator access and child safety

Cultural significance requirements or considerations

Location of underground services and easements

Environmental considerations including contamination

Typical Development Professionals: Buyers Agent, Real Estate Agent, and Planner

Site Due Diligence

Site constraints, local planning controls, and opportunities

Development requirements

Housing type proposed and planning pathways

Detailed location of existing services on the site

Service upgrade requirements

Detailed survey

Geotechnical analysis

Contamination analysis

Land tax and land title assessment

Location of underground services and easements

Environmental considerations including contamination

Typical Development Professionals: Planner, Surveyor, Environmental Scientist, Engineer, and Lawyer

Development Feasibility

Concept plan(s) to determine yield

Options analysis for best use of site

Determine costs relating to land, professional fees, construction & statutory fees

Determine costs relating to operations

Secured and potential funding

Target returns

Typical Development Professionals: Architect, Quantity Surveyor or Estimator

Design Standards



Safety

Good design supports a safety centred approach where clients, staff, and stakeholders feel safe. The physical building design will promote and ensure a safe and secure environment. Safety includes physical safety, as well as mental and emotional safety.



Trauma Focused Design

Good design means creating calm spaces that promote relaxation, health and recovery through light, texture, colour, and space.



Children Inclusive

Good design is designed for children. Children need to live, play and recover from trauma in a safe and secure environment. They need robust design and furnishings and a place of their own.



Privacy, Dignity & Independence

Good design reflects the families need for 'normality' and allows families to interact and be together in their own space, recover from trauma and to build the skills and capability they need to transition out of the accommodation. It is a space that people can be proud to call home.

Design Standards



Culturally Appropriate Design

Good design considers what people value as cultural needs to enable them to feel immediately 'at home' and should consider the cultural, religious and familial demographic of the location.



Operational

Good Design considers and integrates all operational requirements relevant to each provider. Building maintenance policy and strategies, facilities management and performance management will need to be considered when undertaking equipment/material selection, through use of hard-wearing materials with quantifiable warranties. It should be easy to maintain, robust and liveable. The design should ensure maximum end value and future alternative use options.



Fit for Purpose

Good design should consider the built form, urban context and streetscape, and through sympathetic material selection and well considered passive design integration, meet the clients' expectations and objectives and comply with the relevant codes for construction.



Flexibility & Adaptability

Good design means the accommodation can meet the needs of many different family structures and levels of independence. The building form is adaptable to meet different family sizes or accessibility challenges.

Design Features

Privacy, Independence & Dignity

- Acoustic privacy between rooms
- Communal room facilities for interviews/ meetings/ courses to access advice, services, information and fellowship.
- Obvious wayfinding on site.
- Designated areas on for private conversations– private space as part of accommodation.
- Offer a choice of private and communal space throughout to facilitate choice.
- Accessibility considerations.
- On site "boutique" for clothing selection and small personal items.

Safety

- CCTV, perimeter and entry cameras/back to base monitoring/fob access.
- Multi layered entry sequence.
- Screening to street/perimeter fencing.
- Exterior lighting
- Screened/concealed parking areas / building acts as the barrier.
- Clear Sight lines from the rooms and reception.
- Consider how deliveries/ maintenance/access to services are managed.
- Duress alarm in rooms.

Culturally appropriate design

- Use of colour/murals/art.
- Spaces for cultural practices i.e Yarning circle.
- Consideration to First Nations people local to the area of the development.
- Use of native species in landscape.
- Early collaboration with varying ethnicity/indigenous groups depending on site location.
- Religious factors to be considered in design.
- Consideration of particular dietary requirements – food prep/storage etc.
- Flexibility to cater for larger than average family groups and multi-generational families.

Fit for Purpose

- Consideration of built form, urban context and streetscape.
- Materials selection sympathetic to surroundings.
- Ensure all passive and sustainable design requirements are met.
- Comply with all relevant codes for construction.
- Design with the ability to adapt to meet the changing needs of clients.

Operational

- Service requirements such as bin storage to be considered
- Indoor/outdoor maintenance to be minimised where possible
- Consideration that materials must be robust and hard wearing
- Generous provision of storage including cage storage on site for large items
- On site staff accommodation - ability for staff to secure site/ contact police etc without leaving their room
- Consider if the design ensures future alternative use options

Flexibility & Adaptability

- Flexible communal spaces.
- Ability to "personalise" own living space .
- Accommodation needs to be adaptable to cater to families of varying size and needs & risk.
- Adjustable furniture, interconnecting rooms, moveable walls.
- Generous and adequate storage for personal belongings.
- Consider modular construction techniques for ease of expansion/contraction.
- Kitchens, bathrooms and living rooms (silver housing standards) designed with adaptability in mind.
- Communal and staff areas to be adaptable to suit site and operations.

Children Inclusive

- Landscaped play areas, green spaces, court facilities if space allows.
- Adjustable/adaptable accommodation to provide privacy for older children.
- Teenage/tech zones - separate space for teens to 'escape' to.
- Clear sightlines to play areas from living and communal areas.
- Homework areas for school aged children.
- Consider needs of younger children – pram storage, change facilities in rooms, low bathtub etc.

Trauma Focused Design

- Consideration of sensory factors such as light, temperature and noise.
- Clear logical layout of spaces to reduce confusion and stress.
- Spaces for healing – gardens, meditation, outdoor.
- Ability to house pets on site.
- Counselling spaces.
- Less clinical feel to spaces.
- Soundproofing between rooms is paramount – well sealed rooms, double glazing.
- Small, comfortable private space off arrival area.
- Entry to facility – Sensory factors to consider on arrival.



CASE STUDY

The Orchard



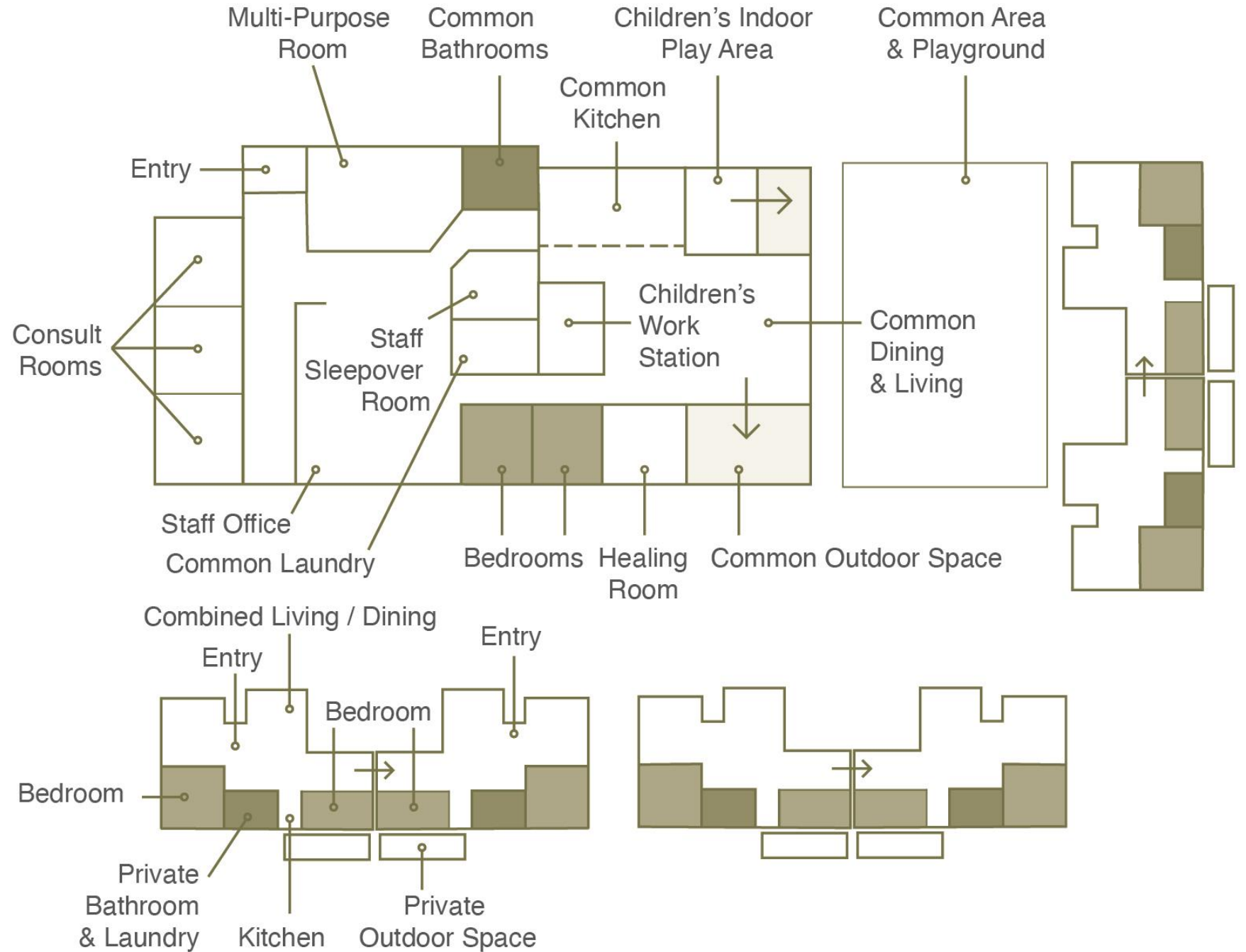
The Orchard - At a Glance

Location	Regional New South Wales
Client	Housing Plus
Completion	November 2020
Type	Core & Cluster
Accommodates	All groups - regional. Up to 3 months but can stay longer or shorter depending on needs
Scale	6 x 2 Bedroom Interconnecting Apartments

- Features
- Culturally Appropriate Design
 - Aboriginal women’s healing room designed by Aboriginal staff and community.
 - Yarning circle outdoors in the common area.
 - Consultation with elders and aboriginal staff and clients prior to and at stages throughout the build.
 - Platypus and the 3 rivers for the paths.



Case Study: The Orchard



Case Study: The Orchard



Accessing Alternative Funding

- Government Grants
- Community Fundraising
- Corporate Sponsorship

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