



**Mark Speakman**

Attorney General and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

**Gareth Ward**

Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Friday, 30 October 2020

### **A SAFE AND STABLE HOME FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN ESCAPING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

Women and children escaping domestic violence will secure housing and the support they require as part of a new homelessness project in Orange.

Attorney General and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence Mark Speakman and Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services Gareth Ward today announced the completion of the Core and Cluster project named 'The Orchard'.

The cluster refers to homes or units accommodating families surrounding a core - office space and communal areas where residents access specialist services like counselling as well as practical supports to rebuild their lives.

Mr Speakman said the homes would provide women and children privacy, independence and access to specialist homelessness and domestic violence services.

"Having a safe and secure place to sleep is vital for women and children escaping the horror of domestic violence - without this fundamental support, victims can be forced to continue enduring abuse for fear of destitution," Mr Speakman said.

"The Orchard will ease that terrible burden and provide much-needed support too."

Mr Ward said the NSW Government has committed \$4 million to trial the Core and Cluster model in four regional areas across NSW as part of its [Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023](#).

"This is the first purpose-built, state-of-the-art domestic violence centre to be built in regional NSW," Mr Ward said.

"When victims of domestic violence flee their homes, we want to connect them to the services they need to prevent them becoming homeless. This new facility will do just that."

The six fully furnished self-contained units include air-conditioning and security systems. The centre also has multiple outdoor areas, a playground for children and healing and wellness rooms.

Housing Plus CEO David Fisher said the facility would offer different types of support to women and children in the Central West.

“The Orchard sets a new standard for accommodation and services that we believe will make a real difference to victims’ recovery,” Mr Fisher said.

“Now more than ever we need a safe place for women and their children escaping domestic violence. In August, the Central Women’s Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (WDVCAS) received 315 referrals; 50 of these women were assessed to be at serious threat of further injury or death.”

For confidential advice, support and referrals related to domestic and family violence, contact: 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732), The NSW Domestic Violence Line (1800 656 463) or Men's Referral Service (1300 766 491).

If you are in danger or in an emergency, contact Triple Zero (000).