

PROPOSED YOUTH SANCTUARY – BAGOT ROAD – SUBIACO – FAQs

What is being proposed?

Plans are under way for a new Youth Sanctuary in Subiaco, offering help and support to young people experiencing suicidal thoughts. It will be a residential centre and will provide early intervention for people aged between 16 and 24 who are confronting suicidal thoughts, regardless of their mental health diagnosis. This is an opportunity to work with them before they reach crisis point.

Why is it needed?

Suicide is the leading cause of death among young people in Western Australia, surpassing even the number of young people who die on our roads. The significant rise in the number of young people seeking mental health crisis support has prompted increased investment in youth mental health in WA.

Where will it be located?

The Sanctuary will be set up by converting Samaritans House at 60 Bagot Road, Subiaco. Previously the Samaritans ran their emotional support phone line from here and, before the COVID pandemic, it was also a drop-in centre.

Who will run the service?

It is being established by three organisations with world-leading expertise in youth suicide support – Ruah Community Services, Samaritans WA and Telethon Kids Institute. All three organisations will bring a wealth of experience to the Sanctuary and to the support services which will be available to the residents.

How will young people find it?

GPs, other health professionals and counsellors will be aware of the service and can discuss it with young people they feel may be suitable. Details about the service will also be on the websites run by Ruah, The Samaritans and the Telethon Kids Institute. An awareness campaign will be planned prior to the service opening.

Where will the young people staying at the Sanctuary come from?

They could come from anywhere. Youth suicide is an issue that can affect us all – it could be your sister, daughter, friend who needs support, or someone just like them. Suicide knows no socio-economic or geographical boundaries. The Sanctuary will be available to any young person who is suitable and will benefit from its support.

How long will they stay there and what help will they receive?

The Sanctuary will provide a residential, non-clinical, care program for young people who will stay there for four nights receiving early intervention and support from experienced staff. The program

will be based on the Maytree model from the UK, which has been operating successfully for 20 years.

Who will be eligible for the service?

The Sanctuary is designed to help young people, aged between 16 and 24, who are experiencing suicidal thoughts. They won't need a mental health diagnosis to use the facility and can be referred there by anyone, including family, friends or health professionals. Or they can refer themselves. Currently young people experiencing suicidal thoughts have no choice but to end up in a hospital emergency department which is far from ideal. All referrals will be assessed by trained staff prior to admittance to ensure they are eligible for early intervention and do not require crisis care.

How many people will go to the Sanctuary each day?

The Sanctuary will accommodate just five clients and up to five staff at any one time. There won't be a drop in facility and there will be no visitors. The discreet and highly contained nature of the service, along with the small number of places, means that there will be little impact, if any, on local residents.

What will be done to make sure there is no anti-social behaviour?

The Sanctuary will be as the name suggests – a quiet, peaceful home for five young people who will be getting support to help them through a difficult period. They will be supported by trained staff and volunteers and the focus will be on the young people and their recovery. Additionally, those who apply for a place at the Sanctuary will be carefully screened to ensure that they will benefit from the support. The service will be discreet with no visible street-facing signage.

What disruptions will there be during renovations?

All the work involved in the conversion will be carried out inside Samaritans House, with no changes needed to the exterior of the building. The work involved is likely to be no different to minor alterations at any other home in Subiaco, so the conversion process should have little or no impact on local residents.

Where are the plans up to at this stage?

The Development Application for 60 (Lot 2) Bagot Road, Subiaco was lodged with the City of Subiaco on 2 September 2022. Key to the application is the change of use of the existing building from 'Office' to 'Residential Building' and internal alterations to the existing building. The site is 802 square metres and has a 2014m frontage to Bagot Road. The Certificate of Title does not contain any limitations, interest, encumbrances or notifications.

The proposed land use involves short-term accommodation for people aged 16 to 24. The building is a single storey with pedestrian and vehicle access from Bagot Road. It is not heritage listed nor located in a heritage area. It is currently zoned 'Urban' under the Metropolitan Region Scheme (MRS) and 'Residential' with a density of R20 under the Local Planning Scheme No. 5 (LPS5).

How much parking will be provided



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The current plan includes four standard car parking bays and two drop-off (or short stay) bays. Residents will be dropped off to the site by friends/family/others and the people dropping off the residents are not permitted to stay on-site. Residents will only arrive during normal business hours and not after 5pm or on weekends.

Who is paying for the Sanctuary?

The State Government is providing \$3 million to set up this pilot scheme, in response to the growing mental health crisis and the lack of services currently available for young people.