



Spare bedrooms will take on a whole new meaning in a Dandenong estate.

Public housing for all, more or less

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AN INNOVATIVE public housing design with rooms that can be added and removed according to need is the winner of a State Government competition to transform a Dandenong estate.

The design by Brunswick-based Bent Architecture is for a village-style redevelopment in Jesson Crescent, Dandenong, where 15 townhouses will replace six concrete homes.

Architects have designed dwellings with shared walls, allowing neighbouring houses to

be reconfigured from two and three-bedroom to one and four-bedroom townhouses.

The flexibility is missing from traditional public housing lots which, as fixed structures, have not been able to adapt to the shifting demands of the public housing waiting list that now contains an excess of single people or larger families from migrant communities.

"That flexibility we really want to try to achieve more in our public housing stock," Housing Minister Richard Wynne said. "With this design, we've got out of a three-block, old concrete

subdivision, potentially up to 15 houses."

The houses will feature roof-mounted solar panels and rainwater tanks, as well as communal vegetable gardens and fruit trees.

Mr Wynne is to announce Bent Architecture's winning design for the Living Places competition today. He will also announce the winning design for the redevelopment of a 1960s Footscray tower block. The 13-storey public housing tower is to be renovated with sustainable features such as rainwater tanks to harvest water for communal

laundries and double-glazed windows for better insulation.

The design, a collaboration between BKK Architects and Peter Elliot Architecture & Urban Design, will add an extra metre of space to some apartments through the attachment of "window pods" to the building's facade, increasing sunlight.

Designs will be presented to the community for consultation and tenders will be called for later in the year and early next year.

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A Footscray tower block is to be renovated with sustainable features.