

Kyeema Centre Inc.

A00518L

Support Services for people with disabilities.



LG:kd

10th October 2008



The Executive Officer
Family and Community Development Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

(email: paul.bourke@parliament.vic.gov.au)

Dear Sir,

Re: Support Accommodation Written Submission

My name is Lionel Gee and I am the CEO of Kyeema Centre Inc (Kyeema) in Portland. Our service has undertaken a comprehensive process to assess the need for Supported Accommodation within Kyeema and the Glenelg Shire. This has been undertaken through meetings and surveys from the people we support and families; as well as from the opinions of Barb Enscoe (Community Based Programs Manager), an independent advocate and myself. The following information we are submitting has the full support of the Kyeema Board and a number of people we support and families who utilise Kyeema Services.

Kyeema is a service for people with disabilities that has existed within Glenelg Shire for the last 41 years. We are the biggest disability service within the shire and provide Day Programs; have 2 Business Services (Seawinds Nursery and Windward Industries) and Community Based Programs which include Individualised Support and Overnight, Weekend and Holiday Respite for Children and Adults. In total we have around 90 people we support and 70 staff.

Within Kyeema we have Family Forum Meetings every 3 months, as well as client Self Advocacy (Have Your Say Committee) Meetings on a monthly basis. The issue of Supported Accommodation for the people we support has been raised at these meetings on a regular basis. The demand for Supported Accommodation is high, within our organisation, and within the Glenelg Shire itself; the trend is now that it is not just an issue with aging carers over 65 years of age but with younger carers as well.

50 Lalor Street, PO Box 86
Portland VIC 3305

Phone (03) 5521 7820

Fax: (03) 5523 3846

Kyeema has a vision of society where-in people participate as regular members of the community, unrestricted by disability or prejudice.

Discussions and written feedback with the people we support and families has indicated the following points:

- People want and require Supported Accommodation now and in the future in the local area
- A demand for building Independent Living Units was also clearly apparent
- Management of the properties needs to be done by a private organisation as they understand the needs of existing clients and the local communities
- All the people we support surveyed do not want to live with their parents all their lives
- Families and the people we support are prepared to have their concerns heard at any meeting that is arranged on the issue
- All 5 people we support surveyed and 17 survey responses received from families, indicated that they have or will have a need for supported accommodation

Currently there are 3 Supported Accommodation facilities in Portland all run by DHS and they are the only facilities that exist within the Glenelg Shire. The closest alternatives are in Hamilton and Warrnambool which are an hour away. Over the last two years we have had two people who were aging move to Warrnambool; as the existing DHS Supported Accommodation facilities in Portland were, and still are full. The facilities were also not age appropriate.

18 people currently reside in the 3 DHS houses, but as stated the demand for more Supported Accommodation in the region is nearly the same as the current occupancy.

More facilities will allow the demand to be met as well as lead to improved client compatibility within residences. Facilities in Heywood, Casterton and other major towns within Glenelg Shire should also be considered.

Under the current conditions people are forced to continue living with ageing/older carer's. Many of these carer's are unable to meet their children's needs, due to their own physical limitations and ill health. People are unable to mix with their peers, they are denied opportunities that other members of the community take for granted, and their lives are poorer for it. Families are forced to live their lives in fear of the future.

Within the Commonwealth, State and Barwon South-West Region there seems to be no structure or plan in place to address current and future Supported Accommodation needs.

Families are left unsupported, without any security for their sons and daughters. Kyeema has one case where the family are in crisis, and the client concerned is on waiting lists in both Victoria and South Australia for Supported Accommodation.

We believe that possible solutions to the problem should include:

- Funding needs to be made available from Commonwealth and State Governments to build more Supported Accommodation facilities; in order to reduce current waiting lists as well as meet the “untapped demand”
- A State-wide Survey and Forums need to be conducted in order to establish issues of concern, planning processes and the true demand of what is required. This must include people from different cultural backgrounds and indigenous communities.
- The direction of the Victorian State Plan needs to change to include more Supported Accommodation
- In building new facilities the design of these facilities needs to be considered. Many previous facilities were built around an open plan design which is often inappropriate when staff have to deal with behaviours of concern from different clients. Quiet areas so to speak need to be guaranteed in each facility
- All major towns within the Barwon South West and Southern Grampians regions and Disability Services within these towns, need to be considered as possible relocation options for the people we support as part of the Colanda Redevelopment
- Disability organisations need to be able to partner with Affordable Housing Associations and or Aged Care providers in order to meet the demand in the area of Supported Accommodation. Shared equity arrangements between providers in these sectors need to be explored to a higher degree (eg. the Wallara Accommodation Redevelopment in Melbourne)
- More money to build these facilities should be sourced from the private sector, philanthropic trusts and even service clubs. Within Portland one of the DHS facilities was built by the RSL. Kyeema is currently trying to build a Respite House, and we have received a large amount of funding from various Trusts

In conclusion, we have clearly shown that the demand for more Supported Accommodation is high within our region. The uncertainty for the people we support and their families can't continue.

We believe that we have proposed a number of viable solutions to the problem and we look forward to being part of the solution.

Thank you for taking the time to read our submission and initiating the Inquiry into Supported Accommodation.

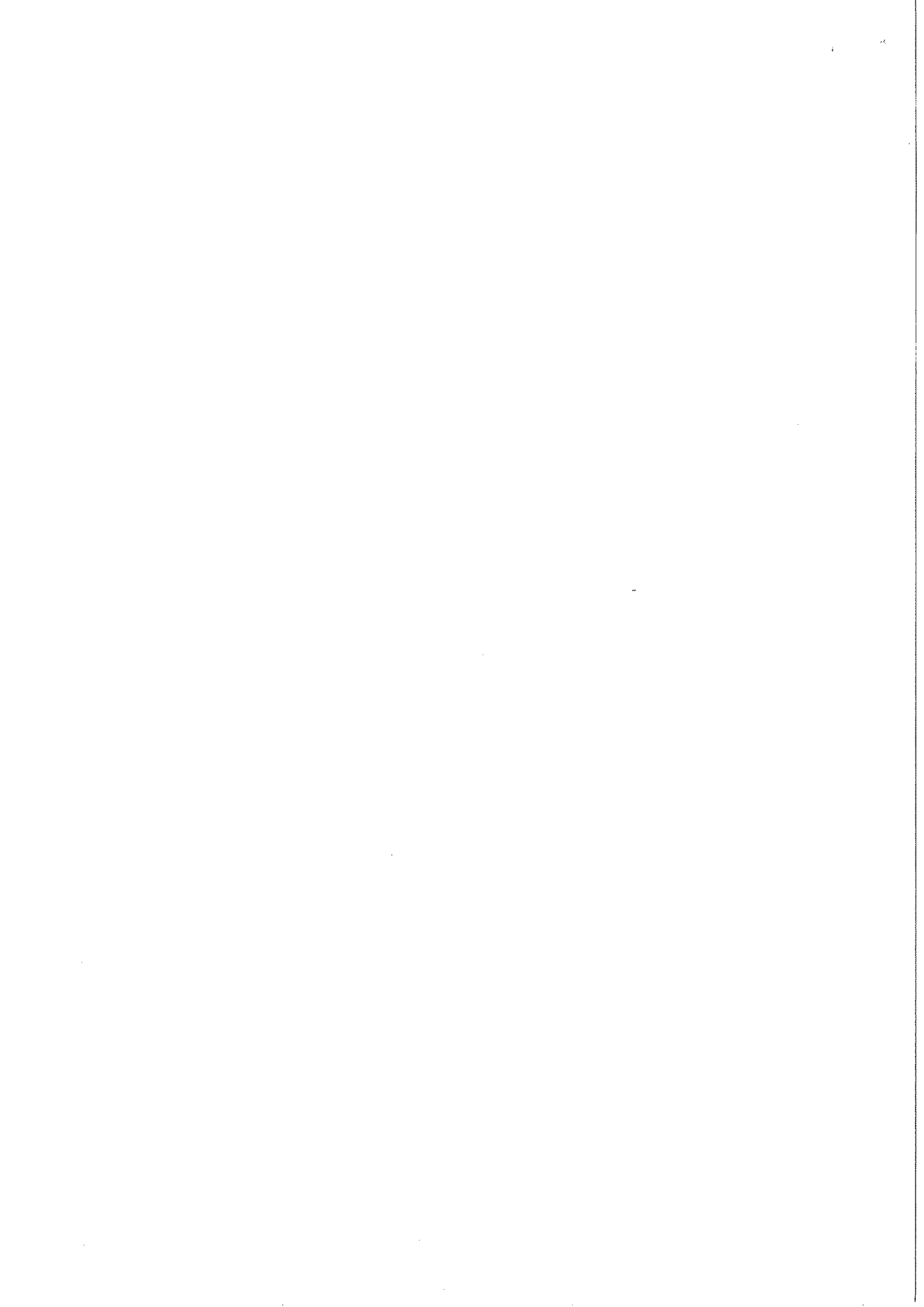
Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me by phoning: (03) 5521 7820, 0438 566 883 or email: lionel@kyeema.com.au

Yours Faithfully,



LIONEL GEE

Chief Executive Officer
Kyeema Centre Inc.



Kyeema Centre Inc.

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24 September 2008

As Addressed

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Full Supported Accommodation/Independent Accommodation

We are attempting to measure the amount of unmet need in the Portland region, in regards to housing. It has been sometime since we asked carers/families about their needs, and needs change with time.

1. Are you interested in acquiring supported accommodation for your son/daughter?
 Yes No
2. If so, would you prefer for that accommodation to be in the local area?
 Yes No
3. There is currently no more local supported accommodation available; do you believe that this needs to change?
 Yes No
4. What type of accommodation do you believe your son/daughter requires?
 Independent - able to live independently or semi independently
 Full Supported Accommodation in a house, sharing with other people with special needs.

Reminder that the Family Forum will be held on Wednesday 1 October at 9am at Kyeema Centre. Would you kindly complete and return this letter to Kyeema before that date, as this information is required by early October to allow us to send a submission.

In the meantime, should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on 5521 7820 or 0438 566 883.

Yours faithfully,

LIONEL GEE

Chief Executive Officer

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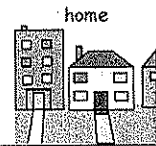
**SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION INQUIRY / SUBMISSION
QUESTIONS.**

HAVE YOUR SAY COMMITTEE

Portland does not have any available housing, for people with special needs.

Can you give respond to the following questions?

Do you believe Portland needs supported accommodation options for people with special needs?



What type of options do you think we need (please tick the boxes, to what you think is best)

Full time shared accommodation

Independent Units - For people to live alone, with support

Other ways.....

Have you been asked to take part in Planning for future housing needs?

Yes

No



If you wanted to find out about Housing, who would you ask to help you?



