

# **T R A N S C R I P T**

## **LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL LEGAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE**

### **Inquiry into the Redevelopment of Melbourne's Public Housing Towers**

South Yarra – Tuesday 1 July 2025

#### **MEMBERS**

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Michael Galea – Deputy Chair

Ryan Batchelor

Anasina Gray-Barberio

Renee Heath

Ann-Marie Hermans

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Aiv Puglielli

Sonja Terpstra

Richard Welch

**WITNESSES**

Janice McCall,

Dianne Chauser, and

Ekaterina Yurha.

**The CHAIR:** I firstly want to welcome you three here today. Thank you very much for coming along. I am Joe McCracken, the Chair, and we will introduce the rest of the committee as well for you.

**Michael GALEA:** Hello, I am Michael Galea. I am a Member for South-East Metropolitan.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** Ryan Batchelor, Member for the Southern Metropolitan Region.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** Good afternoon. Anasina Gray-Barberio, Northern Metro Region.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Hi. I am Aiv Puglielli for North-Eastern Metro.

**Renee HEATH:** My name is Renee Heath, and I am a Member for Eastern Victoria Region.

**Lee TARLAMIS:** My name is Lee Tarlamis. I am a Member for South-Eastern Metropolitan Region.

**The CHAIR:** I will just read this out as well, and then we will go to you guys. All evidence taken is protected by parliamentary privilege as provided by the *Constitution Act 1975* and further subject to the provisions of the Legislative Council standing orders. Therefore the information that you provide during the hearing is protected by law. You are protected against any action for what you say during the hearing, but if you go elsewhere and say the same thing, you will not be protected by that same privilege. Any deliberately false evidence or misleading of the committee may be considered a contempt of Parliament.

All evidence is being recorded and you will be provided with a proof version of the transcript, so if there are any minor errors that you want to correct, you have the opportunity to do that. Then they will ultimately be made public and put on the committee's website.

I am going to hand it over to you guys to do an introduction. For the Hansard record, would you please state your name and any organisation that you are appearing on behalf of.

**Janice McCALL:** Hello. My name is Janice McCall. I was a tenant in Horace Petty for 45 years, but I have recently moved out.

**The CHAIR:** Okay. Thanks, Janice.

**Ekaterina YURHA:** I am Katrina Yurha. I have been a tenant here for more than 26 years, and I am still waiting. I do not know what is going to happen –

**The CHAIR:** Yes. Thank you, Katrina. Do you want to say anything as well?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** My name is Dianne Chauser. I am a tenant of 58 years – since it has been built.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you very much. I understand, Katrina, you want to make a short opening statement and then we can go to questions.

**Ekaterina YURHA:** Yes. I just want to say the announcement of the demolition and relocation took many of us – not many of us, all of us – by surprise, and it was a bit shocking because, as you see, for many years we have been living here. One of my friends, who is 90 years old, for example, says, 'I'm going to die with this building. Don't move me.' For me, I do not mind if they are demolished, because how many years is it that they have not done anything, any renovation, anything – reimbursement? They have done nothing here, even when we have asked. We were waiting for that because 2 Surrey Road was renovated. They were happy with that, but nothing was done in our building. The windows and everything are shaking. Every six months we are calling for pest control, and they are saying it is because it is an old building and there are gaps in the pipes whatever –

all excuses, but it is really old. Even if you did renovations, we would all have to relocate because asbestos is there. I remember how it happened in my place. We just wanted to put in a nail to hang my TV and all of a sudden there was water coming from the hole and asbestos. A handyman straightaway ran away. I did not know it was asbestos. When I reported this, they sent people with all this cover, and they did not tell me how I have to protect myself, for example. I was like that, how I am, and they were all protected to remove this asbestos. I understand the whole building has asbestos because it is very old. It is also dangerous.

**The CHAIR:** Are you happy if we ask you questions to get some more information? Is that okay?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** Sure. Yes, of course.

**The CHAIR:** I will start off, and then we will go through different committee members. We have only got about 4 minutes each. The time is on my computer here, but we will go to each person as the time comes along. I will start off with my questions. I am interested to hear – each of you have been in the towers for a significant period of time. The question that we are looking at here in this inquiry is whether or not they should be bulldozed and the site redeveloped, and there are 44 different sites across the state. Do you have a firm view about whether you think they should be demolished and redeveloped, or do you think that the current buildings could be saved and redesigned internally to make them more livable? Anyone can pick up on that if they like.

**Ekaterina YURHA:** In my opinion, I cannot say for everyone, it is financial, I understand, for the government – which one costs better: to renovate or demolish. But my understanding is we have to demolish because, from the beginning, everything should be new – from the pipes, everything – because it is really old.

**The CHAIR:** So nice, fresh new things is the best way, you think?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** But everyone wants to stay in this area because we are used to being with this community, and everything connected.

**The CHAIR:** So you do not want to be put somewhere different?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** That is right, because we are already used to being here. For example, for me, unfortunately, the Alfred hospital is my second home most of the time. I need all this community, these friends. Everyone was shocked because I did not want anybody else, I want to see your face and stay connected.

**The CHAIR:** Yes, you are connected to the people around you.

**Ekaterina YURHA:** That is right.

**The CHAIR:** Can I ask, Janice, do you have a view? Do you think they should be demolished or redeveloped?

**Janice McCALL:** Look, I probably think that they should be demolished. I think they have had their time. I know that is not everybody's view, but it certainly is mine. And I have come back today because I moved out five weeks ago and I came back today and they have really, really gone downhill in that short time – really bad, you know, the stairwells. You know, they are not being maintained.

**The CHAIR:** You do not think they are salvageable, or it would probably take a lot of money, perhaps?

**Janice McCALL:** I was going to say a lot of work, they would be. And I loved living here. I raised four children in my flat. And the first flat they offered me was high-rise, and I did not want to go back into high-rise, so I agreed to move out of the area. So I am in South Caulfield and love it.

**The CHAIR:** Okay. Did you have a view at all, Dianne?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Well, I always thought I would live out my life there, so I would say keep them –

**The CHAIR:** You want to keep them?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Yes, keep them –

**The CHAIR:** Okay. That is fair enough.

**Dianne CHAUSER:** because I have lived there so long and I am 79, and I just thought that would be where I would be for the rest of my life. And I do not want to start somewhere else.

**The CHAIR:** Yes. Okay.

**Dianne CHAUSER:** I am too old.

**Ekaterina YURHA:** You are still young, Dianne.

**The CHAIR:** I have got about a minute left, but I want to ask: in terms of the way in which you have been kept informed or not about this particular demolition, how has the communication been to you? Has it been in a written form? Has it been on the phone? How has it been communicated to you?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** To me it has been good, because I did all the meetings I could go to. But when they first moved people over to Bangs Street, people from non-English-speaking backgrounds did not know they were going to community housing, did not know it was a three-year contract. They were not told anything, because that was very early on.

**The CHAIR:** Okay. Yes. Anyone else?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** We were aware because we had a lot of meetings here to talk about it. I volunteer, I have been between for some who do not speak English – there is a lot of Russian community here, Slovenian. I was with them a bit of a translator as well, so they knew what it was. Also, the leaflets were in different languages, were passed on for people in not only English.

**Janice McCALL:** Yes. Most of my information was written or through the meetings with Ana. You know, we heard – yes, yes.

**The CHAIR:** My time has just gone up – it goes that quickly. I will pass on to Mr Batchelor.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** Thanks, Chair, and thanks all of you for coming in today. Janice, I might just ask you: you have recently moved out, five weeks ago – that is right?

**Janice McCALL:** Yes.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** And you said that the first offer Homes Vic made was into a high-rise, and you did not want to go into a high-rise, is that right?

**Janice McCALL:** Yes, because when they came to interview us about moving, I stated that. I said, ‘Look, I don’t want high rise anymore; I’ve done that.’ You know, I have lived it for 45 years, and I just want a peaceful rest of my life.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** So you gave them that information as your preference and then what happened?

**Janice McCALL:** Well, I did not even look at the first, because I had stated – they offered me a high-rise and I said, ‘No, I’m not even looking at it, because I don’t want it.’ They went away and came back with, ‘Would you be willing to look at a one-bedroom on the ground, like a little unit in South Caulfield?’ I said yes and went along and went, ‘Wow, I can move into this,’ and did.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** And you did?

**Janice McCALL:** Yes.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** Okay. It seems like a relatively straightforward process.

**Janice McCALL:** Yes, it was for me. Yes.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** Okay. Dianne, have you just moved out as well, or are you still in 259?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** No. I am still here in 259.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** And Katrina, are you –

**Ekaterina YURHA:** I am still here. I was offered Bangs Street, but I did not know it was community housing, not public.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** Right, not public housing.

**Ekaterina YURHA:** I heard about this, about community housing. What is it? Yes, it is well done. It is very – everything is like a luxury, but very small houses. I did not see myself – but I know it is a bit more expensive than public. Being on disability pension I am really afraid, because more than half my pension is going to my medication – everything. That is what I was worried about – if I could manage or not. And I also said, like Janice, I do not want any more high-rise, because of my health condition. Especially during the pandemic there were a lot of junkie people here. I was afraid, going to leave. Everything was just – I said ‘Not anymore.’ I would love to go to somewhere. They offered me – and I did not apply for this area; I did not know what area I wanted. This area – this was Hampton – nice area, prestigious even, some of it, some of it close to the beach. But for me, anyway, it is far to go to my hospital, to my doctors, because I am not driving anymore. But the actual unit was not livable. That is why I said – why we said – it was shocking.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** In what way?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** This is what should be demolished. It really should be demolished. I do not know how many years old this unit was.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** This was the one you were offered to move into?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** Yes.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** Okay.

**Ekaterina YURHA:** Yes. The area, yes, but the place was shocking, I am telling you. Maybe people who live there now are trying, and slowly, slowly, they have done by the years something themselves – renovating or they are already used to it – because I spoke with neighbours that were 15 years there, 10 years there. But for me, before this I was with my big family. Now I have to of course downsize it, and it is more luxury for me, what they have offered me. Even this, I am complaining it is very old and they have to be downsizing for me, actually, compared to what they offered me.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** Right. And what have they told you about what happens next?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** They told me, ‘One more offer and no more.’ I said no. No ‘one more offer’. I will stay here, then. One more offer and not – I am waiting, I am hoping to be positive. They are good people who are understanding, those who are doing the relocation – Tania and Nikki. We are waiting from them something positive.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** Okay, that is all my time. Thanks so much for coming in today.

**The CHAIR:** Thanks so much. I will pass over to Ms Gray-Barberio.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** Thank you very much, Chair, and thank you all for being here. I will start with you, Dianne. Do you think the government does a good enough job in looking after the buildings, and especially in your context after living there for 56 years?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Absolutely not.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** No, did you say?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Because I am living with leaks and a big hole at the side of the bath that no-one has even put a bit of board on for me, and I just kept waiting. I was going to go to the Ombudsman again, but I thought, ‘I will be moved, I will be moved.’ So I have just lived with it.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** And you have gone to the Ombudsman before?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Yes.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** And did that yield any results for you?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Yes.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** Okay. So I think it is fair to say that you do agree that the standards have dropped in recent years.

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Yes.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** You just –

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Since COVID.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** Since COVID? Okay.

**Dianne CHAUSER:** That was when all the leaks started.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** Okay. And have there been any attempts to remediate that?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Oh, yes.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** We have heard a lot today – and this is for anybody on the panel – about people feeling shocked at their bills after moving into community housing, and that after, they are being offered very big electricity bills and other utility bills that they were not aware of. Do you think people know enough about these sorts of financial expectations or financial burdens before they move out to community housing?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** No. I spoke with my neighbour who was moved into Bangs Street. They were so glad to read of this one, as it was luxury, but now they are shocked after a while – already it has been a couple of months, I think, that they have been living there – because the bills were coming and they are, for them, shocking. And the electricity is not by their choice. Whatever they are given there, they have to follow. This is what the company is.

**Dianne CHAUSER:** The whole building is one company. It is all one.

**Ekaterina YURHA:** They are not happy with the building stuff. For them it is very expensive because they are very old people, sick people and not well. This was a disappointment to me because they did not know everything about it of course.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** And –

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Sorry.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** Go ahead.

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Bangs Street is one – I only found this out last week. It is all run by one company. They do not have a choice to choose their own electricity company.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** So when they move into community housing, it is whatever that organisation has chosen for them?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Yes.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** Okay. Thank you for clarifying that. What are your residents' views of moving from government-run public housing to community housing that is being offered? And do you think people know enough? You spoke, Dianne, earlier about people where English is their second language. What happens to them?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** They talked to a friend of mine, and then she asked me. I had the information on my phone, so I was able to send it to her. Then she told them, the tenants that had already moved.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** Have Homes Victoria improved the way that they are communicating this relocation information to residents?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** I do not know.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** Okay, that is fine. Are you aware that rent is 30 per cent plus Commonwealth rent for community housing, as opposed to public housing, where it is capped at 25 per cent?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Yes.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** How widespread is that knowledge across public housing residents? I know you are aware of it, but is it widespread knowledge across public housing residents that this is what they are signing up for?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** In the beginning I do not think it was. But now we have had more meetings, and the word has been spread around.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** Is that my time, Chair?

**The CHAIR:** Basically. You have got 20 seconds if you want.

**Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO:** That is okay. I will give it to Aiv. Thank you.

**The CHAIR:** I will pass over to Dr Heath.

**Renee HEATH:** Thank you so much for coming in, and well done. It can be scary, I am sure, to sit with a whole panel of people before you. Regarding relocation, you said that you do not want to move into community housing, Dianne, and that you feel less secure having a three-year contract. I was wondering if you would be able to talk us through that.

**Dianne CHAUSER:** It does not feel secure.

**Renee HEATH:** Why does a three-year contract feel less secure? What are you on currently?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** What happens at the end of three years? Can you just be told to move out?

**Renee HEATH:** So is what you are experiencing really a fear for the future and an uncertainty?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Yes.

**Renee HEATH:** And you have not felt that before this?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** No.

**Renee HEATH:** You mentioned that things really changed during COVID.

**Dianne CHAUSER:** That was because of all the leaks and the maintenance.

**Renee HEATH:** Is it correct that because there were not people coming in and out during COVID everything just started to deteriorate?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Yes.

**Renee HEATH:** And is that where things began to go awry?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Yes.

**Renee HEATH:** All right. Is there anything else you want to add? That is all right. Thank you so much.

**The CHAIR:** Okay. I will now pass to Mr Galea.

**Michael GALEA:** Thank you. Chair. Thank you very much, all, for joining us and for sharing your stories and experiences with us today. It has been very valuable. Ms Chauser, I might start with you, if I may. Your submission talks about some of the plumbing issues you have had, and you did touch on them earlier as well. Can you just talk to me a little bit more about the plumbing issues that you have had?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** When COVID first started there were a lot of leaks outside in the communal corridor, and that is how it impacted my bathroom, toilet and laundry.

**Michael GALEA:** I see. Can you tell me what the heating and cooling is like in your apartment?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** We do not get cooling. We get heating in the lounge.

**Michael GALEA:** So what is it like on a very hot day in summer then?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Terrible.

**Michael GALEA:** I realise it is the complete opposite now, but on a hot day it is very difficult?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** It is very bad, especially now I am getting older.

**Michael GALEA:** Can I ask both of you the same question?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** I want to tell you about the air conditioner. Because I have got heart problems, lung problems, the doctor said I need an air conditioner, definitely. They did not give me permission. Anyway, I bought this air conditioner, a window one, done properly, professionally, so it does not fall. Over time they change from office housing, the management. They came to me and said, 'You have to remove it, otherwise you're going to be evicted from here, you're not going to live here.' I said, 'It was done properly. You can call to check if it is not.' Again, I paid to take it down. After a while I could not breathe. I really need air conditioning because it is like an oven, especially in my apartment. At the end of the building it is, all over, just an oven, and my bedroom. I put it again and said come again, because somebody told them I have got this one. After that they decided to do the mobile air conditioner, which for me is like a fan. It does not cool properly. I have to stay in front of this like on the fan. They said the building is not built for air conditioning like that. I believe so. If we had balconies we could do the split ones like others, but there is not a chance to do this.

**Michael GALEA:** But you do not have that?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** For example, regarding the heating, we have got only one in the lounge room. Last night I called around 8 o'clock, because it became cold. I was having a shower – not using cold water, this was warm water from hot – and I started touching the battery. It was warm. It was not hot. So I called the maintenance after hours. They said, 'Oh, yes, we're going to send someone.' They said, 'No, I'm not in this building. I don't know when this happened. Can you send me a picture if it is water coming from hot and not just because there is no water.' I said, 'No, there is water coming, but it's not hot. It's warm.' I sent a picture, and he said, 'I've passed your message for someone else in property.' Yes, in the morning I already checked. It was already hot water. All the time, any problem – all the time some problems.

**Michael GALEA:** Thank you. Thank you for sharing that. Ms McCall, what were your experiences in your old place with heating and cooling?

**Janice McCALL:** Well, I like the summer and I used to have fans, but I have got a split system where I am now.

**Michael GALEA:** Are you finding that to be better?

**Janice McCALL:** Yes, much better.

**Michael GALEA:** I can imagine. You are one of those strange people that like the heat. I am not one of them. But no, that is really good to hear. And your place in South Caulfield, that is not a new build, is it? That is an existing?



**Janice McCALL:** It is like a little one-bedroom unit, and it was built in 1994. It is lovely, actually. I am very happy with it even though I would have liked two bedrooms, but they are big rooms, so I am happy. I was just happy to get away from the nightclub noise here.

**Michael GALEA:** We are in the thick of it here in Chapel Street, aren't we?

**Janice McCALL:** Yes.

**Michael GALEA:** On that note, I think my time is up. Thank you very much.

**Janice McCALL:** Thank you.

**The CHAIR:** Thanks so much. I will now pass over to Mr Puglielli.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Thank you. Good afternoon. Just on the topic of relocations – residents moving from government-run public housing into community housing that is managed by a non-government provider – do you think residents in your community trust these non-government providers? Are you shaking your head, Dianne?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** No, that is just me.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Is that from your experience talking with –

**Dianne CHAUSER:** No.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Okay. From your personal experience?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** The unknown.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Okay. The unknown. How about –

**Ekaterina YURHA:** Mouth to mouth, we tell them – the neighbours – because they are not aware what is community housing. They thought it is the same as the public. So we explained to them what is going to happen financially and what it is – are they going to look after you? And they straightaway said, 'No, only public'. Majority of the neighbours want only public housing. My question is: why are they offering community housing? Why not public housing the same? If it is going to be a new one, why don't public build for us a new one?

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** If it is new, why not public? Is that what you are saying?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** Yes, public. Why only community housing when they build a new one?

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** It is a good question. It is a very good question.

**Ekaterina YURHA:** No budget. No budget, all the time they are saying. Even in old places I said I am not going with carpet because I have got a lung problem. With my nose and everything, I cannot breathe. They said no budget; you can do it yourself. How can I do it myself? All the time no budget. Even when there was a renovation at Surrey Road, why not do it for us? No budget all the time. It is shut down.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Okay. Thank you. During the inquiry we have heard that members of the community have felt pressured by Homes Victoria or relocation officers to move as part of the relocation process, so pressuring them to sign documents to accept offers that are being made. Are any of you aware of this happening in your local community?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** I did not get the question. Say again, please.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Being pressured to sign documents or to accept offers; are you aware of anyone being pressured?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** No, I do not think so. In my knowledge, I do not know.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Not to your knowledge?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** No.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** No? Okay. I only raise it because we have heard it elsewhere. Are any of you aware of any examples of residents who have been told they are limited to only two offers for relocation?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** That is what they said in my experience, yes.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** That was your experience. And in your experience, for example, what are you told will happen after that if you do not accept those two offers?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** I did not tell anybody, but I explained to [REDACTED] VTS, Star Health. He was called [REDACTED] the support coordinator, I think.

**Janice McCALL:** I was led to believe it was after two weeks –

**Ekaterina YURHA:** Yes, and he sent the letter, I think, for my appeal or whatever. Why should it be only one offer if it is not livable in the first place? They should not offer it to me if it is not in a livable condition.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Okay. We have heard a lot about anxiety and uncertainty during this inquiry process. Can I ask: what is the impact of the uncertainty of not knowing when your home will be demolished and not knowing where people in your community are going to go? Are these things making residents in your community anxious, and how is it impacting the health and wellbeing of your communities, as you see it?

**Janice McCALL:** It is definitely making people anxious and stressed.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** The not knowing?

**Janice McCALL:** Yes, not knowing where you are going to go, when – you know, all of those things.

**Ekaterina YURHA:** We know everyone here, and we say not only hello, we are talking. Every neighbour who is living here I know, even from the other buildings.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Can I ask how each of you found out about the demolition plan? Was it on the news? Was it in a letter?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** A knock on the door.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** A knock on the door?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** And that night it hit the news.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Okay.

**Janice McCALL:** And written – you know, we did get notices about it in the mail.

**Aiv PUGLIELLI:** Thank you. I think that is my time.

**The CHAIR:** Yes, that is your time up.

**The CHAIR:** I just want to give everyone an opportunity: are there any last messages you want the committee to hear before we finish up or any last things that you want to say that we have not covered or areas that you think might need more looking into at all? Janice maybe?

**Janice McCALL:** I think we have just about covered everything there is to say.

**The CHAIR:** That is all right.

**Janice McCALL:** I think people are going to be stressed, no matter. That will go on until they move.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. Ekaterina, do you have any –

**Ekaterina YURHA:** No. I would love to have it be much more painless for people who are going to move and relocate.

**The CHAIR:** A painless transition?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** Yes, because there is also anxiety that everyone has, because we all have, for example, a three-bedroom because we had big families. Now everyone is going to leave all their stuff, which is valuable as well – for example, furniture. They cannot fit it in, because they are going to downsize. Also, this is giving us anxiety about that. Of course there is the community as well. Everyone wants this area, because they are used to it, everything. I do not know another area. I am 35 years in Australia, for example. I have always lived in this area and St Kilda in these 26 years, and I know the others have as well. Even for another area I have to go and see where it is and how far it is for me. I do not know that. That is why when I am speaking with other neighbours they are saying, ‘I want only this area.’ They should build for us first the building and then send us, all of us, to this building – much more painless for the whole community.

**The CHAIR:** Yes. That is fair enough. Dianne, do you have any last comments that you would like to make?

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Just, why aren’t they building public housing?

**Ekaterina YURHA:** Yes. That is my question.

**Dianne CHAUSER:** Sorry, that is about it.

**The CHAIR:** That is fair enough. We might bring this session to a close now. I want to thank all of you for your appearance and your evidence today. It is very much appreciated.

**Witnesses withdrew.**