

From: Inquiry into the Public Housing Renewal Program [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 3 November 2017 10:46 PM
To: phrp
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into the Public Housing Renewal Program

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into the Public Housing Renewal Program

Professor Ian Porter

T: [REDACTED]
E: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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We (myself and my wife, Elizabeth) will discuss each aspect of concern in the review briefly below, but are particularly willing to talk to the committee. We will discuss this in relation to the proposed development at Markham as this allows us to context all comments to actual experience over the past 3 years. Firstly some introductory comments.

Our house backs onto the Markham Estate and we have been intimately involved in the developments of the Estate over 3 years. We have lived with the previous public housing units at Markham since 1980 and grown up in harmony with public housing residents. We are appalled at the autocratic process followed by the State government and the efforts by them to supposedly follow a fair process. They have tried every non democratic trick to avoid any compromise suggested by local residents and Council and set up a process which defies belief.

We ask that this government be made to follow fair process, including consultation with residents and development of a plan for Markham which favours rather than destroys housing for people in need. We also ask the housing be planned to fit with the neighbourhood character and local planning rules, i.e. that local government be in control of the planning of any proposal and not a government that disregards its own planning rules.

1. the adequacy of a proposed 10 per cent increase in public housing (or 1,100 public units) on the sites given the size of the waiting list for public housing.

Response: Totally inadequate. Government has disguised the fact that whilst they may be increasing the number of units, they are not increasing bedroom numbers and are selling off at least 70% of public land. They are using sales of private housing on the major part of the development to fund (and reap massive profits for government) the public housing. Under an FOI request submitted by ARAG/[REDACTED] (an Ashburton resident) an email surfaced which identified that government had gloated about a super profit from Markham before plans had been released to the residents. It is still estimated that government will make a massive profit yet they kept telling the public that the project was cost neutral.

There is also an inequity in the model used for different suburbs and this is purely political. Preston received government support of \$20+ million whereas Markham received nothing. Any government funding will reduce the number of the private units required to build the public.

2. the ability to cater for all demographics including families, couples and singles with the proposed housing

mix;

Response: Family units have been compromised to single units

3. the effects on current public housing tenants, including:

- a. whether they will be moved to accommodation that is secure, stable and fit for purpose;
- b. whether they will be moved to accommodation that is close to existing social support networks, educational, health and welfare services;
- c. whether current tenants will be able to return to the estates;

Response: 3c It appears unlikely under the Markham model that any previous tenants will be returned back to new units. It has already taken two years of fruitless planning and still is a shambles. The new dedicated housing unit now appears only for aged public (39 dedicated units) and the rest for a small number of small families that are peppered throughout the planned estate (21 units) of supposedly 225 units that are being built (i.e 163 private dwellings).

4. the allocation of parts of the sites between the proposed new public and private housing units;

Response: Please do not allow this to happen. At Markham Avenue over 70% of the land is proposed to be sold, yet this land is all in an area of aboriginal sensitivity, it contains manna gums (which are to be removed) which are symbolic for the aboriginal people and show complete disrespect. These established trees which could easily be retained are only needing to be removed because of the massive overdevelopment of Markham in the back streets of Ashburton. It should never have been proposed that 56 public housing units be replaced by 225 mostly private.

5. the lack of public condition assessments of the estates or alternative options such as refurbishment of all or part of the existing housing units;

6. the proposed significant increase in density and heights and any local environmental impacts, such as the loss of open space and mature vegetation;

Response: Please do not let this happen. At Markham 76 of 82 established trees (many native and some indigenous) are planned to be removed to allow for a massive underground car park. There has no consideration given to the change in the hydrology yet the site borders the Ashburton forest and is 40 metres from Gardiners Creek. The forest contains remnant bush of two important Ecological Vegetation Groups (EVCs) to Victoria and the impact of this development on the survival of the plants within the EVCs will be huge.

7. the removal of planning controls from local councils, and planning implications surrounding communities including existing neighbourhood character, traffic flow and provisions of services;

Response: Nearly 500 local Ashburton residents marched down High Street objecting to the State government taking over planning controls for this development. The local Boroondara Council, The Greens, The Liberals, and the Public Housing Association voiced their disgust at the proposed changes. This is not democratic and is turning Victoria into a dictatorship. Please do not let this happen.

8. the proposed loss of third party appeal rights;

Response: Again a breakdown in democracy. I cochair an important UN committee for the Montreal Protocol. Every country in the world is represented and we achieve all outcomes by 100% consensus. It works and ensures everyone has a say and is involved. It also ensures the best Decisions are achieved.

9. the transparency and genuine community consultation with affected residents, neighbouring communities and the broader Victorian community regarding the short, medium and long term implications of the PHRP model as currently proposed;

Response: There was and has been no consultation. Despite promises that the community and local Council would be consulted this did not happen. We sent numerous emails asking for a chance to put forward alternative suggestions. No-one from government had the courtesy to respond. We asked for someone to view the impact of Markham on us (We back on to Markham) but not one person from government has responded. This has stressed us markedly, it has been callous and we feel worthless as people.

10. public housing estates where similar models are envisaged or underway, including —

- a. Markham Avenue, Ashburton;
- b. Koolkuna Lane, Hampton; and
- c. the corner of Stokes Street and Penola Street, Preston;

Response: As mentioned previously, the government is using the issue as a political agenda. Financing labour held developments and prejudice against others. This is appalling – public housing demand is similar throughout Melbourne.

11. previous Victorian public housing renewal projects, including but not limited to the Kensington, Carlton and Prahran public housing estates;

Response: Can't comment

12. best practice models for the provision of public housing from within Australia and overseas; and any other matters the Committee considers relevant.

Please can we address the committee!

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File1:

File2:

File3: