

“Clifton Hill Renewal”

I attended a recent (June 2017) consultation drop in session in the Scout Hall Walker St, Clifton Hill at the invitation of the Department of Health and Human Services.

I attended both as a concerned neighbour and because of my longstanding professional interest in housing and social policy.

I have a number of questions and comments I would like to share

At the widest level

Why sell the land?

It is outrageous that the State Government is considering selling off important public housing assets, in particular the valuable inner suburban land that this estate and others are on.

The optimal outcome would be to retain the land in public ownership and to increase public housing on the site.

Why decrease the number of people to be housed?

If the land is to be sold and there is to be a private –public partnership then at least 50% of any new dwellings should remain as public housing.

For the very reason that the land is attractive to private buyers (close to jobs, transport and services) it is also well placed for public tenants.

The proposal presented would actually decrease the number of public tenants being housed, by increasing the public homes by 10 per cent (in this case 4 homes) but decreasing the number of rooms from 3 bedroom to one or two bedrooms.

Why evict public tenants (including families with children and pets) from convenient houses?

The Clifton Hill estate in Noone St/Alexandra Pde provides families with relatively pleasant homes, 36 two storey 3 bedroom terrace houses each with a small private front and back garden. There is also large communal area. The tenants reported that there had been a major renovation in recent years. The front yards are often full of scooters and bikes.

A family who attended the consultation had three children with special needs who attended local schools and services. They also had pets. They were told yes they could return to this estate after redevelopment ‘if suitable accommodation were available’. It seemed that this is most unlikely.

Why this estate?

There was considerable media publicity about the ‘Clifton Hill renewal’. Strangely most of the photos in the media were of the public housing estate on the corner of Noone St , Rutland St and Alexandra Pde East, in east Clifton Hill.

This estate with walk up flats seems in greater need of redevelopment than the other Noone St/Alexandra Parade estate.

Why such as unsuitable venue for the consultation?

The consultation was held in the scout hall in Walker St, east Clifton Hill. Not many people attended. The scout hall is almost 2 kilometres from the Clifton Hill estate, a 25 minute walk with no public transport alternative. This seems a lesson in how **not** to consult with public tenants.

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