



Friday 10 June, 2016

The Secretary
Legal & Social Issues Committee
Parliament House, Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Sir/Madam

Re; Impact of Local Govt. Rating on Retirement Housing.

In April 2013, Minister Jeanette Powell issued *Guidelines for Differential Rating 2013* and apparently instructed Councils to apply the system in an attempt to address the inequity of council rates for retirement village residents. Unfortunately for us, being residents of [REDACTED] Village here in Greensborough under the Nillumbik Council, the matter was not mandated and Nillumbik was not one of the five councils that elected to do the right thing for this growing sector of their community.

After downsizing from our lovely acre in Research 4 years ago to be one of 42 units here at [REDACTED] we are now appalled as pensioners to be paying the same rates here for our postage stamp plot as we did at Research. The council has taken some \$75,700 from this Village in rates for the current year whereas they would have only taken **a bit over half that amount** from say 12 homes at approximately \$3,500 each if the property had been subdivided to the equivalent 1,000 sq. metre size of the adjacent [REDACTED] Court properties.

The **ONLY** Council service we get here on site is the three weekly Library bus.

Drainage, street maintenance, rubbish collection, street lighting and Community Centre are all paid for through the monthly Maintenance Fees we pay to the property owner/manager.

It is totally unfair that we are rated on our quite high **Ingoing Price** as this includes a premium to cover the various services and retirement facilities of the Village. In addition to this, our equity in the property is **reduced by 3% each year** yet we continue to be rated and pay out on this top amount. There is a clear case for Councils to be instructed to apply the Differential Rating process.

While quite content here at [REDACTED] we do have a few issues with management that are fairly minor when compared to what we hear from others in larger villages when attending RRVV functions. I do believe the establishment of a Retirees Ombudsman would be a very worthwhile outcome from your Inquiry.

Yours faithfully

Barbara & Bernard Murray