



Developers cash-in on public housing thanks to Ministers Foley and Wynne

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A State Government program which will sell public housing sites to developers, breaches its own planning controls and will barely make a dent in the public housing waiting list has been slammed by an alliance of Melbourne councils.

The Cities of Bayside, Boroondara and Stonnington have formed an Alliance challenging the Public Housing Renewal Program (PHRP) and urging the Minister for Housing, Martin Foley and Minister for Planning, Richard Wynne, to put people before profits.

Alliance spokesperson and City of Bayside Mayor, Cr Alex del Porto, said the Victorian Parliament shared these concerns, with the Legislative Council's Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues holding a Public Inquiry into the program.

"The Alliance unequivocally supports public housing; Victoria needs better – and much, much more – public housing," Cr del Porto said.

"But the PHRP will deliver very little new public housing, breaches the Government's own recently-introduced planning rules, and sidelines councils and communities from the planning process."

"That's why we are calling on the Government to put people before profits and delay the program until the Inquiry has been completed and ensure redeveloped sites are at least 50% public housing and do not breach current planning controls."

Research conducted by NERA Economic Consulting/Sensing Value found that the 10% increase in public housing stock envisaged by the State Government will still leave a massive shortfall in public housing required in Alliance member areas.

"Ministers Foley and Wynne are selling public housing sites to developers who will build a handful of new public housing dwellings while at the same time developing hundreds of apartments to sell on the private market to reap massive profits," Cr del Porto said.

"On sites where the Government has introduced a three-storey height limit, it now plans to build huge nine-storey apartments towering over playgrounds and robbing residents of open space."

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“The PHRP is fatally flawed. It is irresponsible for Minister Foley to proceed before the Parliamentary Inquiry has finished. This is a vital program and it’s vital that we get it right,” Cr del Porto added.

Visit www.peoplebeforeprofits.org.au to make a public submission to the Inquiry and learn more about the Alliance’s *People before Profits* campaign. Submissions must be made by 3 November 2017.

For enquiries about People Before Profiles contact Andrew Birks, City of Boroondara, 0439 035 829 or andrew.birks@boroondara.vic.gov.au

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