



KEW COTTAGES COALITION Inc.

Reg # A0044698H

NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2010



KEW PUBLIC MEETING

7pm Tuesday 2nd February 2010

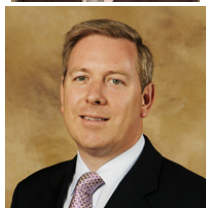
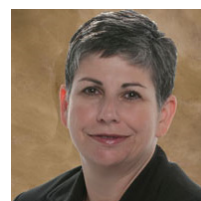
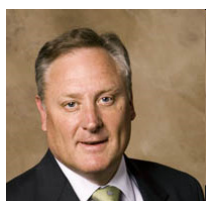
Phyllis Hore Room, Kew Civic Centre

Cnr Cotham Road and Civic Drive, KEW - Melways Map 45 D6

KEW COTTAGES COALITION INC. presents

Kew Cottages and the State Election

**A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S
PUBLIC MEETING
MC Rod Quantock**



All Local Members of State Parliament have been invited inc:

Andrew McIntosh (Liberal) , John Lenders (ALP), Jennifer Huppert (ALP)

Andrea Coote (Liberal), David Davis (Liberal, Chair. Public Land Inquiry) , Sue Pennicuik (Greens)

The next instalment in one of Melbourne's most contentious Major Projects.

Topics for discussion:

- ◆ How has the State of Victoria managed to loose \$17 million building and selling 55 houses in Kew ?
- ◆ What will each of our local MP's do about protecting all of the remaining Kew Cottages Public Land if re-elected ?
- ◆ Do our MP's support the Kew Coalition's Alternative Plan ?
- ◆ How can the community help ?
- ◆

ALL WELCOME !



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Kew Cottages and the State Election

The Victorian Ombudsman, Mr. George Brouwer, is currently investigating the probity of the Victorian Government's Kew Cottages profit-sharing agreement with NSW Developer Walker Corporation. Mr. Brouwer is expected to deliver his report to the Parliament before the State Election that is due to be held on 27 November 2010.

During 2008/9 there were reports of continuing delays, political donations, and huge financial losses associated with the first stage of the Government's Main Drive Housing Estate at Kew Cottages.

In January 2010 there are still more questions than answers about the Government's dual role as both the vendor and the planning authority for the houses on the Main Drive Estate. For example, the Government has still not explained how it apparently made a very substantial loss on each one of the 55 houses that it sold during the first stage of the Main Drive Development, despite achieving a very respectable average sale price for each house of \$1.4 million.

Informed sources quoted by The Age in December 2008 estimated the total loss on the first stage of the Main Drive Kew Development was a staggering \$17 million. How anyone, let alone the State of Victoria, could have managed to lose so much money on land that they already owned in Kew, by simply building and selling houses on it remains a mystery that perhaps only the Ombudsman will be able to help resolve.

As a consequence, what has become one of the Brumby Government's most contentious Major Projects will remain an ongoing problem for the Government in the run up to the State Election.

Kew Cottages - Alternative Plan Update: Family Support and Respite Care

The Kew Coalition's original Public Land Plan for Kew Cottages was endorsed by the all party Parliamentary Inquiry into Public Land Development. Our plan was based in part on the adaption and re-use of some existing high quality disability facilities. The Plan aimed to establish:

- ◆ A Centre of Excellence for Intellectual Disability;
- ◆ A Family Support and Respite Centre;
- ◆ A Heritage and Environment Gateway to Yarra Bend Park, together with shared community use of Recreational and Sporting facilities.

The Committee of Inquiry referred our Plan to Premier Brumby in July 2008 and requested an urgent meeting to discuss the plan with the Premier.

However, instead of taking action, Brumby passed the buck to Community Services Minister, Lisa Neville. Neville procrastinated. Meanwhile, Minister for Planning, Justin Madden, then apparently secretly gave approval for the remaining purpose built disability facilities located at the Cottages to be demolished.

Finally, in February 2009, despite the fact that the urgent window of opportunity to adapt and re-use these high quality DHS buildings had already been formally referred to the Premier, and despite strong support for our plan from Boroondara Council

and the Kew Community, the Government simply went ahead and bulldozed all of the still un-used DHS buildings, including 60 Respite Beds, a Medical Centre, and a much needed Community Swimming Pool.

Re-use of the DHS buildings formed a core component of our original plan, so we have had to revise our plan to take account of their loss. The focus of our Alternative Plan was to rapidly deploy much needed Respite Care for intellectually disabled Victorians, together with shared community use of Heritage, Environmental, and Recreational facilities.

In practice, it still appears feasible for our proposed "Family Support and Respite Centre to be established, at an additional cost, by simply building new facilities to replace those demolished in 2009.

More than half of the 27 hectares of land surrounding the historic Cottages between Main Drive, Hutchinson Drive, Yarra Bend Park, Willsmere, and Princess Street, Kew is still Public Land that has not yet been sold by the Government. So sufficient land is still available.

Similarly, the establishment of the Coalition's Proposed Heritage and Environment Gateway to Yarra Bend Park, is also still technically feasible, together with integrated Recreation and Sporting facilities.

However, the Government's demolition of the un-used disability facilities, plus their 2009 approval of a second stage of the Main Drive Housing Estate has now effectively sabotaged our proposal to also establish a Centre of Excellence for the Intellectually Disabled.

Parliamentary Inquiry into Disability Housing Report January 2010

The Government's untimely demolition of 60 Respite Care beds and facilities at Kew Cottages in February 2009 is particularly disappointing and disturbing given the latest findings of a Parliamentary Inquiry into Supported Accommodation for Victorians with a disability that has just been tabled in Parliament (12 January 2010). The Report by the Family and Community Development Committee describes at length a Supported Accommodation system that has been in crisis for over a decade. The Report includes over 100 recommendations on problems that still need to be fixed, high among them being the need for more Respite Care beds, and Family Support Services for Victorians with a disability.

It is clear, given the timing of the Parliamentary Inquiry, and the flood of evidence it received from distraught families caring for their disabled relatives, that the Victorian Government would have been well aware of the lack of Respite Care beds it had available to help Victorian families in February 2009 when it sent in its Kew Cottages bulldozers.

According to data published by the Inquiry there were only 430 Respite beds left available in Victoria by June 2009.

So it would appear that by bulldozing the unused DHS buildings at Kew Cottages shortly after the Black Saturday Fires in February 2009 the Government had in less than two weeks effectively destroyed the equivalent of over 10% of the State's entire stock of Respite beds.

Link: <http://www.kew.org.au/whatsnew>

Kew Cottages Coalition

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If you would like to receive KCC information via email please email admin@kew.org.au with the word "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line..