

Victoria Media release

The Place To Be From the Minister for Community Services

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BRACKS GOVT RELEASES NEW PLAN FOR KEW RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Community Services Minister, Sherryl Garbutt, today released a new Bracks Government planning framework for the redevelopment of Kew Residential Services.

Releasing the new Urban Design Framework (UDF), Ms Garbutt said the new plan would provide high quality housing for people with disabilities and preserve the character of the local Kew neighbourhood.

The new plan builds on an earlier Urban Design Framework developed by a working group involving representatives from Boroondara Council, the Department of Human Services, Kew Parents and the local community.

While accepting the need for the Kew Residential Services (KRS) redevelopment, Boroondara Council passed the framework in August with significant changes.

"After considering the views of the council and the community, the Bracks Government has now developed a framework that recognises their concerns and goes most of the way towards meeting their requirements," Ms Garbutt said.

"Under this new plan, the housing density on the site will be significantly reduced and there is a maximum building height limit of five storeys – down from seven storeys proposed by Boroondara Council's working group.

"The redevelopment of Kew Residential Services will ensure people with disabilities will have better housing, better support services and a better life in the community."

Ms Garbutt said the majority of housing on site would be low-rise in keeping with the character of the local neighbourhood.

"Currently, the grounds of the institution are not available for public use, but the new framework will provide significant public open space to be enjoyed by local people and retains heritage trees," she said.

"The new redevelopment of Kew Residential Services is a project of statewide significance and we want the planning process to move in a timely fashion to give certainty to residents, their families and the local community."

Key features of the new Bracks Government Urban Design Framework include:

- The number of dwellings will be significantly reduced. The original UDF allowed for 1600 dwellings – the new plan allows for between 450 and 800 dwellings.

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- A three storey maximum height across the majority of the site with most allotments being developed as individual one and two storey dwellings rather than apartment blocks;
- Restricts maximum building heights to 5 storeys – down from seven storeys proposed by the Boroondara Council's working group;
- Provides a significant amount of open space (about 27 per cent of the site) and provides links to neighbouring open space along the Yarra;
- Retention of heritage trees including the two major avenues of trees;
- Protects the character of the neighbourhood including managing traffic and preventing vehicle access to Wills Street.

"The Bracks Government has made a commitment to provide sport and recreation facilities on site, which the local community will be able to access," Ms Garbutt said.

"We have also committed to building 20 houses for the 100 residents with disabilities who will live on site in the new development.

"The new plan provides for three groups of houses located close together depending on the individual needs of KRS residents."

The new Urban Design Framework will form the basis of the planning scheme amendment, Ms Garbutt said.

"The Bracks Government will work collaboratively with the City of Boroondara in progressing the new Urban Design Framework," she said.

The Kew redevelopment was announced in May 2001 and would move 380 residents into local community housing with intensive, 24-hour support over the next four to eight years. Another 100 residents will remain on site in new purpose-built housing.

All proceeds from the sale of the 27-hectare site will pay for the redevelopment.

The KRS planning process is expected to be completed in late 2004. Construction on the KRS site is expected to begin in early 2005 and will take place progressively over the following two or three years.

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