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SAVE **WILLIAMSTOWN**



Reach for the sky: housing market rockets

Tuesday, 10 May 2011

The Age

Tim Colebatch May 10, 2011

“MELBOURNE is starting to turn into Manhattan - without the subways - with more than 20,000 high-rise and medium-rise apartments approved in the past two years.

Bureau of Statistics figures show a startling change to the city's growth pattern. Virtually half the new homes approved this financial year are high and medium-density apartments and units. Only half are houses.

Of 123,500 new homes approved in Australia since July, one in 10 is a high or medium-rise apartment in Melbourne - that is, an apartment in a building of four storeys or higher. Most are in or around the CBD.

Advertisement: Story continues below

It is a sharp reversal of Melbourne's age-old pattern of building out. In the past nine months, one in four new homes approved is to be built within five kilometres of the CBD, and one in three within 10 kilometres. More than half of the 37,193 new homes approved in greater Melbourne this financial year are in suburbs less than 20 kilometres from town.

If the buyers buy them, this year Melbourne will grow by building up or bunching up. Building out in new suburbs will be just the support act.

But not all the apartments approved will be built. Sometimes developers cannot obtain the finance they need. Sometimes the approval is speculative, with the owner aiming to resell the land, and permit, to a genuine developer.....”

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/reach-for-the-sky-housing-market-rockets-20110509-1efv9.html>

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AT LAST “THE AGE” COMMENTS “Call to ban homes near risky sites”

Monday, 16 May 2011

Former Minister for Planning Justin Madden often met with developers and developer groups BUT refused to meet with Save Williamstown last year to discuss the dangers of building a 50 metre residential tower too close to a Major Hazard Facilities and Fuel Importation at Williamstown.

The new Liberal Planning Minister Matthew Guy has listened to Save Williamstown’s concerns and we thank him for that. On advice from Mary Drost of Planning Backlash/Marvellous Melbourne

<http://www.marvellousmelbourne.org/drupal/?q=node/6>
the minister met with Save Williamstown in April when we were able to present to the Minister that residential zoning of this Former Port Phillip Woollen Mill site was irrational and DANGEROUS. The Williamstown community needed the

Minister to review this zoning - a mixed use zone with wide consultation about appropriate development as determined in the 2008 Hobsons Bay Industrial Land Management Strategy for this site was all that was needed. Minister Madden had gone against a strategy he had only signed off a year before. Clearly authorities such as Port of Melbourne (landlord to Mobil) had NOT said at the panel hearing for the Hobsons Bay Industrial Land Management Strategy that "residential zoning was uncontested". This was a concoct of public servants in the DPCD (state Department of Planning and Community Development) which "persuaded" the minister to approve a "Residential 1" planning zone over the whole site.

At the hearings of the Port Phillip Woollen Mill Advisory Committee in March submitters/presenters were prevented by the "terms of reference" from referring to the appropriate zoning, with the mantra that "residential zoning will not be revisited" being voiced whenever a presenter raised the site's inappropriate zoning.

Hobsons Bay Council's legal counsel said that council believed in Strategic Planning and taking ALL relevant matters such as MHF into account.. and they were being asked to RETROFIT a good and up to date planning scheme just to enable one development by a private developer at the Port Phillip Woollen Mill Site.

Mobil stated in its presentation that "Mobil takes the management risks associated with its operations very seriously and it is incumbent on Mobil as a responsible member of the community and an MHF facility to bring these risks to the attention of the Advisory Committee. It will be documented for future reference that Mobil have raised the issues of people safety, environmental issues and reverse buffer requirements in a sensible manner so it can be clearly understood by the Advisory Committee and others" They also told the committee that in terms of Storage Tanks a worldwide oil industry guideline is based on 10 times the diameter of the storage tanks which at Point Gellibrand Williamstown means 400m. Mobil regards the ships which bring the fuel to Point Gellibrand as couriers and therefore did not present on the dangers of Fuel Importation which in Western Australia has a 1km buffer zone.

Council, Government Authorities, Mobil, BAE Systems and the Community were all concerned about the impact of MHF safety

and noise issues but NOT ALLOWED to speak about what zoning should apply to the site. This made the hearings, which were paid for by the developer, a farce. BUT the expenses of the community and others were not paid for by the developer, we had to cop the cost in presenting for 3 weeks to a hearing which may NEVER have a publicly released report unless the minister so directs. Such was democracy in this state under former Minister Madden.....

So Save Williamstown commends Jason Dowling on the Page 6 article in The Age (link below) for finally reporting this MHF issue statewide. We also commend local reporter GOYA DMYTRYSHCHAK (recipient of the QUILL AWARD 2010 www.melbournepressclub.com/quills/2010/best-suburban-report-print/goya-dmytryshchak_fairfax-community-network for another report on Safety in Hobsons Bay) of Hobsons Bay Weekly for being a journalist who has tirelessly reported well on these MHF issues.

The Age
Jason Dowling May 16, 2011

“BUILDING homes near the dozens of hazardous sites storing fuel and chemicals across Victoria should stop immediately and consideration should be given to buying back homes built too close to the dangerous areas.
The call by the state opposition comes as the government seeks an urgent review of planning laws covering new housing near significant hazardous facilities.
The booming population has added pressure for increased development in Melbourne's old industrial areas - but many of these areas are close to hazardous sites such as the Mobil storage tanks in Yarraville and Williamstown.
Mobil has opposed a proposal for a massive residential development in Williamstown at the Port Phillip Woollen Mill site, arguing that it would result in too many homes being built on a site close to its Gellibrand Pier crude oil facility.
Concerns about building near hazardous sites have increased since the 1998 Esso Longford gas plant explosion and the 2005 explosion at the Buncefield oil storage depot in the United

Kingdom that caused significant damage to commercial and residential properties.

Planning Minister Matthew Guy has requested that the Department of Planning investigate with the Environment Protection Authority appropriate distances between new residential developments and significant hazardous sites. WorkSafe Victoria is developing 30 planning "advisory maps" specific to hazardous facilities that include gas, chemicals and petroleum.

Opposition planning spokesman Brian Tee said construction near these sites should be stopped "until we better understand the risks that people face living next to a major hazard facility". He said consideration should be given to buying back homes located near such sites.....”

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/call-to-ban-homes-near-risky-sites-20110515-1eoay.html>

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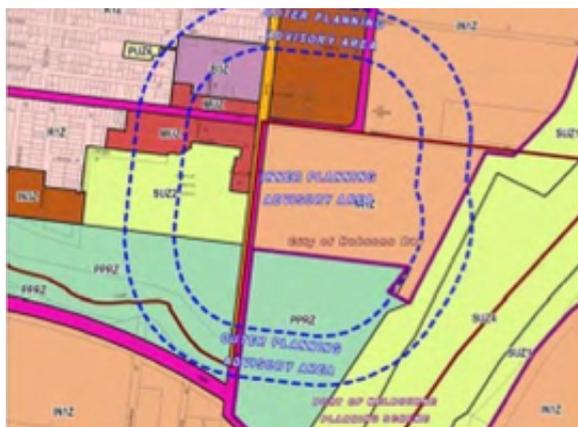
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SAVE WILLIAMSTOWN



Mobil gas odour covers city

Wednesday, 18 May 2011

Hobsons Bay Weekly
BY TARA MURRAY
12 May, 2011 12:24 PM

“Mobil’s Yarraville Terminal may be responsible for a gas odour smelt across the city Wednesday.

Residents as far as Richmond reported the gas, with further complaints from suburbs including Port Melbourne, Burnley, South Yarra, Yarraville, Spotswood, Williamstown and Toorak. The Metropolitan Fire Brigade reported one workplace in

Burnley evacuated 200 staff, fearing a possible 'gas leak.'

Metropolitan Fire Brigade's John Rees said they hadn't experienced a gas smell as far reaching as this before.

"We got calls from as far as Richmond, but believe it was smelt further out.

"I would say this isn't a normal thing for something like this to have such strength and for buildings to be evacuated."

MFB investigations believe the suspected source of the odour to be the Mobil Yarraville Terminal.

Mr Rees said there had been various reports about what caused the smell, with a malfunction in the processing of a tank of oil believed to be the cause.

Firefighters reported they could smell the odour at the plant, but couldn't detect any presence of gas that would be a threat to the community....."

<http://www.hobsonsbayweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/mobil-gas-odour-covers-city/2161428.aspx#>

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SAVE WILLIAMSTOWN



Oil factory inferno sends fireballs over suburb

Friday, 20 May 2011

The Age

Megan Levy, Mex Cooper May 20, 2011 - 10:39AM

“An oil factory blaze described as one of the worst ever seen in Melbourne’s south-east is believed to have begun in the front office of the Dandenong South plant destroyed by the massive fire.

Country Fire Authority (CFA) spokesman Gerard Scholten said firefighters had feared a hydrogen pipe used by a neighbouring glass factory could ignite as 700,000 litres of flammable

lubricants burned at the factory, sending fireballs into the night sky.

Mr Scholten said a larger-scale disaster was averted when firefighters were able to turn off the pipe after the blaze began about 8pm at the Williams Road property, which was completely destroyed.

Advertisement

Twenty CFA crews and six Metropolitan Fire Brigade crews, with 130 firefighters, battled towering flames as 20-metre-high oil tanks exploded during the blaze at the TriTech Lubricants site.

“It’s been one of the biggest in this area ... it’s a substantial fire simply because of the material we are dealing with,” Mr Scholten said.

Large plumes of thick black smoke filled the air, sparking warnings for residents to stay indoors before the fire was brought largely under control by about 5am.

Residents living in Dandenong South, Lynbrook, Hampton Park and Cranbourne North were told to remain in their homes or evacuate if smoke drifted their way but Mr Scholten said the warning would be lifted by about 11am as the smoke, which was not toxic, had dissipated.

He said the fire emergency text message warning system had not been used because there had been no imminent threat to life or residences.....”

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/oil-factory-inferno-sends-fireballs-over-suburb-20110520-1evdm.html>

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SAVE WILLIAMSTOWN



Hobsons Bay Council consider asking Minister to release PEAC and PPWMAC Reports

Friday, 20 May 2011

On Agenda of Hobsons Bay Council Meeting 17th May 2011

9.2NOTICE OF MOTION NO. 865 – PORT AND ENVIRONS COMMITTEE AND FPPWM ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cr Angela Altair has given notice of the following:

“That the Council call on the Minister for Planning to immediately release the Port and Environs Committee report and FPPWM Advisory Committee report on receipt and consideration.”

http://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/Files/OCM_Agenda_17_May_2011.pdf

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Planning concern

Monday, 23 May 2011

The Star

By Vanessa Chircop, 26th April 2011 02:05:16 AM

“THE State Government has responded to a request to conduct a review of the state's planning policies as they relate to major hazard facilities and residential developments.

But how this will impact on current planning applications in Hobsons Bay is still unknown.

As reported by Star in March, Hobsons Bay is home to eight of

the state's 41 major hazard facilities.

Member for Williamstown Wade Noonan, who called on the Minister for Planning Matthew Guy to conduct the review, said this issue was particularly important to his community as five of Hobsons Bay's major hazard facilities were located in the Williamstown electorate.

In raising the matter, Mr Noonan said there were some serious questions being asked about the appropriateness of building new residential developments near major hazard facilities.....

...In a letter to Mr Noonan on 5 April, Mr Guy said he is considering the recommendations of the Ports and Environs Advisory Committee which has made several recommendations relating to 'sensitive uses' at the interface of the port and major hazard facilities associated with port operations.

Star contacted Mr Guy but he failed to respond by deadline....”

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/williamstown-altona-laverton/293/story/132237.html>

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Planning permit for major residential development in Footscray

Tuesday, 24 May 2011

In an area with a 12 storey limit.. the minister announces at 25 storey development. See The Age

MEDIA RELEASE

Minister for Planning, Matthew Guy
Posted on 23 May, 2011

Planning Minister Matthew Guy has approved the construction of a multi-storey residential development at 10 Moreland Street within the Joseph Road precinct at Footscray. The \$90 million development will comprise a 25 storey (80 metres) residential building including 222 apartments with an

active ground floor retail element, and underground car parking for 150 vehicles and bicycle facilities.

Mr Guy said the development's approval was a sign of the Victorian Coalition Government's commitment to increasing housing supply to help Melbourne respond to population growth. "After considering comments from Maribyrnong City Council and the community, I am satisfied the development complements the role and function of the Footscray Activities Area," Mr Guy said. "I believe that this permit may also be a much-needed catalyst to progress development in the Joseph Road precinct and the broader Footscray Activities Area as part of its transitional renewal from a declining industrial precinct to a vibrant mixed use precinct."

"This proposal is a vote of confidence in the Joseph Road precinct and demonstrates the viability of well-located urban infill projects."

"A number of conditions must be complied with as part of the development including contributions to community infrastructure. The proponent and council will work together to ensure the conditions are met," Mr Guy said.

<http://vic.liberal.org.au/News/MediaReleases/tabid/159/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/3134/Planning-permit-for-major-residential-development-in-Footscray.aspx#>

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Battle lines drawn over tower

Tuesday, 24 May 2011

The Age
By REID SEXTON
24 May 2011

“ Mayor, minister in war of words
THE Baillieu government has approved a 25-storey apartment tower in Melbourne’s innerwest, sparking a furious reaction from a mayor who warns it will ruin the local amenity.

The 80-metre, \$90 million tower in Moreland Street, Footscray, will be more than double the height guidelines for the area, says Maribyrnong mayor Sarah Carter.

It will contain 222 apartments and dominate the local skyline. It is believed that building will start this year and be completed by 2013.

It has sparked a war of words between Ms Carter and Planning Minister Matthew Guy.

Ms Carter, an ALP member, said Maribyrnong council's local planning scheme recommended height limits of no more than 12 storeys because of community concern.

She said the tower would be the tallest in Footscray and would create an eyesore.

Footscray would not have the transport services to support the people the tower would bring and council would have to spend about \$25 million on pedestrian bridges, road and footpaths to cope.

The biggest shock was Mr Guy's decision to go public without consulting the council....."

The Age Digital Edition 24th May 2011 news page 5- available at
<https://theage.digitaleditions.com.au/index.php>

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 Environmental Protection Authority

Guidance
for the
Assessment of
Environmental
Factors

(in accordance with the
Environmental Protection
Act 1986)

Gas leak victims win \$23m payout

Tuesday, 24 May 2011

ABC News

Mon May 23, 2011 8:09pm AEST

“ The Victorian Supreme Court has ruled in favour of a multi-million-dollar compensation payout for people affected by a methane gas leak at Cranbourne in Melbourne's south-east. More than 750 homeowners from the Brookland Greens estate sued the City of Casey and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) after they were forced from their houses because of methane coming from a disused tip in 2008. In 2009, the ombudsman found the EPA had failed to do its job. The local council was also blamed for failing to act quickly

enough to stop the gas from escaping.

The court has approved a settlement worth \$23.5 million, with residents sharing more than \$17 million once legal costs are paid.

The payouts will range from about \$6,000 to \$130,000.

One of the plaintiffs, Matthew Wheelahan, says it has been a long and frustrating fight.

"For my wife and myself, the approval of the settlement is the final key to ending the uncertainty that we've lived with for the past two-and-a-half years," he said....."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2011/05/23/3224736.htm>

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The Age: “Minister ignored advice on tower”

Wednesday, 25 May 2011

SW comment: Let’s hope a rational approach is taken on the Former Port Phillip Woollen Mill Site with the minister deciding to make it a MIXED USE zone instead of RESIDENTIAL 1 so that the proximity to the Mobil Major Hazard Facility and the BAE shipyards is taken into account as well as the locational constraints of a peninsula in the heritage suburb of Williamstown with poor transport links to the CBD and limited land for infrastructure improvements.

Footscray is defined as a Principal Activity Centre and with carbon emissions an issue, many would see it as an appropriate location for higher density living AND WORKING. However if independent advice said a 12 storey limit, it is a worry that the advice was not taken by the Minister. It is to be hoped that community infrastructure and transport links in Footscray which

are government responsibilities are provided in a needed and timely way.

AND lets hope that all the developments which are in the developers minds are NOT too close to Major Hazard Facilities such as the Fuel Importation at Point Gellibrand Williamstown and Coode Island Footscray. Residents deserve SAFE environments in which to live!

The Age
By REID SEXTON
May 25, 2011 - 12:08AM

“ PLANNING Minister Matthew Guy ignored the advice of independent consultants commissioned by the Department of Planning when he approved a 25-storey tower in Footscray this week, with the development more than double the recommended height.

The 80-metre, \$90 million development on Moreland Street will dominate the skyline of Melbourne's inner-west when it is completed in 2013.

.....a report written by urban designers SJB Urban in June last year and commissioned by the Department of Planning and Community Development said "the maximum number of storeys, regardless of land use or building configuration" should be 12 storeys on the site.

It based this recommendation on previous reports into the former industrial area, which settled on the 12-storey limit based on transport, landscape and economic considerations, among others.

Opposition planning spokesman Brian Tee said yesterday Mr Guy had ignored the community, council and important advice paid for by the department. "People have to ask: who does this man listen to?" he said.

But Mr Guy said last night that the report was commissioned by the previous government and was intended to provide advice only.

He said the large-scale development was necessary to cope with Melbourne's soaring population and would rejuvenate the former industrial area. "The Planning Minister is the responsible authority for this area and the development fits with the provisions of the vision for the [area]," he said.....”

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/minister-ignored-advice-on-tower-20110524-1f2iq.html>

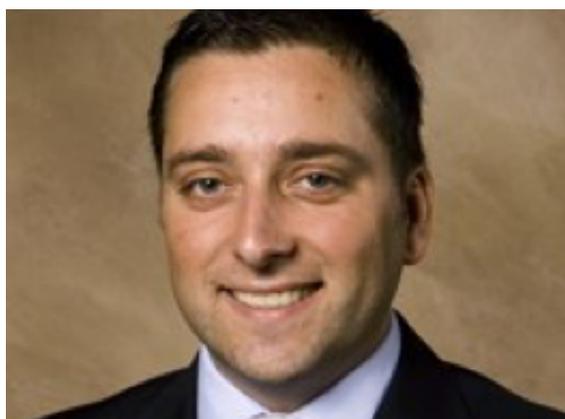
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Minister Guy accused of 'playing games' on high-density

Wednesday, 25 May 2011

Hobsons Bay Weekly
BY GOYA DMYTRYSHCHAK
25 May, 2011 12:00 AM

“ PLANNING Minister Matthew Guy is under increased pressure to release two reports that will determine the future of high-density development near hazardous facilities in Williamstown. The Weekly has lodged freedom of information requests with the minister to obtain the 'Ports and Environs' and 'Port Phillip Woollen Mill' advisory committee reports. Hobsons Bay Council last Tuesday called on Mr Guy to immediately release the reports.

Williamstown ward councillor Angela Altair said it was time to put pressure on the state government to "get serious about considering proposals - major residential development - when they're going to be cheek by jowl with potentially very dangerous facilities such as petrochem developments and tank farms".

Save Williamstown spokesman Godfrey Moase said the community deserved nothing less than full disclosure. "In light of the catastrophic industrial fire in Dandenong on Thursday night, we call on the minister to release the findings and recommendations of both reports." On Monday, Mr Guy's media adviser, Bronwyn Perry, said the minister did not have the reports. "When he has received the reports he will make a decision about whether or not to release them publicly."

But in a letter to Williamstown MP Wade Noonan dated April 4, 2010, Mr Guy indicated he had seen the Ports and Environs report.

"I am currently considering the recommendations of the Ports and Environs advisory committee, which has made several recommendations relating to 'sensitive uses' at the interface of the port and major hazard facilities associated with port operations," Mr Guy states.

Mr Noonan said Mr Guy had been caught out....."

<http://www.hobsonsbayweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/minister-guy-accused-of-playing-games-on-highdensity/2174350.aspx#>

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