



<http://www.savewilliamstown.net>

SAVE WILLIAMSTOWN

C/O PO Box 141,
WILLIAMSTOWN VIC 3016
Phone +61 3 93912381 Fax +61 3 93991614;
Email: info@savewilliamstown.net

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Save Williamstown is calling for local, state and federal government intervention to undertake a safety review of a Major Hazard Facility under statutory provisions of the Occupational Health and Safety Act as a matter of urgency. The facility although hazardous, is part of a significant and strategically important industry, which is important to the state and the nation and close to the shipyards, existing residences and tourist attractions. "Justin Madden is either naive or has his head in the sand when it comes to public safety after rezoning industrial land for residential development when that land is within the safety buffers needed for crude oil importation, transfer from internationally registered ships to refinery pipelines and tank storage at the Point Gellibrand site." Save Williamstown spokesperson Godfrey Moase, said.

The Save Williamstown Community Group on 10 November requested an adjournment of Justin Madden's Port Phillip Woollen Mill Advisory Committee (PPWMAC) until Council and relevant authorities have had the opportunity to consider the community's request for a comprehensive risk assessment of the Point Gellibrand crude oil importation, discharge, pipeline and tank farm but in a bizarre twist the PPWMAC has declined requests to defer public hearings as the safety issue doesn't need deciding before the planning issues at the public hearings!

Adjacent to the Major Hazard Facility, Nelson Place Village is set to double the local population, if the high-rise, high-density development is given the green light by Justin Madden. The ability of existing residents and workers to safely exit the peninsula in the event of an incident (fire, explosion, loss of containment) is essential. In all the years the petrochemical site has been operating at historic Point Gellibrand, the community has been not only ignorant about risks and dangers of crude oil importation at the facility but also of any public evacuation or safety plans.

"It would seem that developers are given a higher priority than the health and safety of existing residents and workers", Mr Moase said.

"SW in no way wishes to imply that Mobil, the operators of the facility, do not meet their licence requirements and stringent regulations" Mr Moase said. "Accidents do happen such as lightning strikes, which was the cause of the catastrophic Coode Island explosion and fire." "In fact Mobil have been good corporate citizens and employers in the Williamstown, Altona, Newport and Yarraville area for more than 50 years", he said.

Unlike Victoria, Western Australia has imposed a buffer distance of 1000m on fuel importation and discharge facilities and NSW's fuel importation, tank farm and refinery on the historic Kurnell peninsula has a moratorium on the construction of new dwellings within 500m of the Major Hazard Facility.

Save Williamstown has written to the Hobsons Bay City Council CEO, Bill Jaboor, and asked that Council takes the lead on this issue and convenes a round table discussion of all relevant bodies, stakeholders and community representatives as a matter of extreme urgency.

For over a year Save Williamstown has been fighting the development of the site to prevent this historically important piece of the 19th century from being overwhelmed by a giant, modern, generic and un-sympathetic architectural development but it was ironically an expert witness for the Developer who recently met with SW and highlighted the extreme risk referencing the terrible explosion and fire which occurred at Buncefield Major Hazard Facility in the UK in 2005. **Mr Moase quoted the Community Group's submission to the Advisory Committee** "We do not believe residents of highrise towers anywhere in Victoria should have to move in signing statutory declarations that they know and understand a "STAY OR GO" policy and will not sue the government if they are caught in a chemical catastrophe or industrial accident."