

Summary of Public Questions

11 April 2017



This record is provided as a summary of the questions asked by members of the public during Public Question Time at a meeting of the Yarra City Council. This summary includes the original question, the response provided at the meeting and, where applicable, the response provided after the meeting to any question taken on notice (which is included in red text).

7.1 Mr Graham Aldridge - re Petition on 375 Bridge Road Development

Question:

In relation to the petition tabled at the council meeting last week with almost 600 signatories objecting to inappropriate developments like the one proposed at 375 Bridge Road. What is the City of Yarra Council going to do to prevent this 10 storey monstrosity from being built when it should not exceed 5 storeys according to current guidelines?

375 Bridge Road is located in a low rise streetscape section between Griffiths & Coppins Streets. Both sides of Bridge Road at this location fall within the Richmond Town Hall Precinct Heritage Overlay with many 2 storey Heritage listed properties.

With the Developer trying to establish a precedent for high risers in this sensitive low rise Precinct Heritage Overlay can you Madam Mayor call upon the Director of Planning and Place Making to apply heritage principles to prevent this inappropriate development?

Response:

The Mayor advised that in relation to individual planning applications once they are lodged they have to be assessed against the current planning scheme, Councillors do not do the assessment, officers make an assessment, but once it comes to Councillors for a final decision Councillors may make a different assessment. The current planning scheme has a guideline of 5 to 6 storeys maximum across the city. In some areas the Design Development Overlay specify different heights, but in Bridge Road the guideline is 5 to 6 storeys, but discretionary.

The Director Planning and Place Making advised that there is no height control in Bridge Road, and there is no Design Development Overlay, there is heritage overlay and planners will need to assess the matter in relation to all aspects of the planning scheme clauses including the heritage overlay. The interface with abutting properties and streetscape aspects will also be considered. The municipal strategic statement of the planning scheme refers to a strategic intent of 5 to 6 storeys generally, but that is not a control that is a guideline and the matter must be considered on its merits with all those aspects and that will occur. Planners will complete a report and that will be presented at the Internal Development Committee (IDAC).

The Mayor also advised in relation to heritage, the heritage streetscape of the eastern part of Bridge Road is important, however I cannot direct the Director Planning and Place Making to do anything, but is aware that his officers are required to observe the heritage clause 22.05 in assessing the planning application. When

the report is presented to Councillors and they also look at it, they may make a slightly different decision or they may make the same one.

7.2 Ms Teresa Konopacki - Development at 130 Gibbs Street Abbotsford (PLN16/0236)

Question:

Does the Planning Department run on commission?

I received an email yesterday in response to my objection, there was an amendment and I did object to the amendment.

I live in Abbotsford and fell in love with the neighbourhood character, I was raised in York Street and consider myself a local.

Since objecting I have had the run-around from the counter, from officers that will not answer any of my questions or not direct me to specifics so that I could object.

What price is my sunlight? I am about to have an almost 3 meter brick wall, 80 centimetres from all my windows which are west facing. How is this possible?

I am now facing VCAT.

Response:

The Mayor advised the resident that the planning department does not receive a commission. The planning application has been approved under delegation by the planner and it is my understanding that your situation hasn't been taken into account. The planners have suggested that you can take your matter to VCAT. I will be happy to help you with the VCAT process and to meet with you tomorrow as well as the other Ward Councillors. Given a decision has been made and there is a process underway that is what we can do.