

Summary of Public Questions

18 September 2018



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 names of questioners, the subject matter of questions, the person providing a response and whether or not an answer was provided. An audio recording of the Council Meeting (including Public Question Time) is available on Council's website for twelve months following the meeting. **If a question is taken on notice, any response provided after the meeting is included here in red text.**

7.1 Ms Teresa Konopacki - Zoning

Question:

I am unable to attend tonight's meeting, but would like the following matter raised, as I feel this is my last hope – both for my quality of life and for local Heritage, which once it's gone, it's gone for ever!

I am the owner and resident of 132 Gipps Street, Abbotsford Vic 3067, where I have lived for decades. I have raised the zoning for the block of 6 cottages at previous Council Meetings. I again ask that Council review the Commercial 2 Zoning on this small block, with a Heritage Overlay. The block totals less than 40 metres street frontage on Gipps Street, and 22 metres in length/depth. These are tiny blocks and will not be suitable for any commercial ventures or developments, unless the entire block is purchased.

To the north are individually heritage listed Collingwood Town Hall and Collingwood Library, and to the south are individually heritage listed Masonic Hall and The Laird. These cottages are central to, and surrounded by, these buildings. The openness and layout of the neighbourhood has been maintained and added to by the Collingwood Station (Heritage listed) and the Yarra Council Car Park, and the network of lanes running between them.

How is the heritage overlay being applied and respect being shown to the neighbourhood by demolishing all but the front facade on this tiny block? (at 130 Gipps Street) These cottages have private living spaces at the rear (approx. 5m x 6m), and a side walkway along the living/habitable rooms to the East or West of the houses. These are modest worker's cottages, which have only ever been residences since they were built, over 100 yrs ago. They are single storey, have shared walls and light wells

The buildings at either end of these cottages ceased being part of the rag-trade decades ago, and one of them has been used as a residence for several years.

I again ask Council how this modest block can be zoned as Commercial 2, when mere metres away on Hoddle Street, there are shops/shop fronts with a lesser zoning, and ask for Council to apply a more appropriate zoning to these modest residences.

I am not against renovations, per se, but with a location so rich in history I do ask that respect be shown to the surrounds and locale – I am unable to see any of the recently built apartment block on the corner of Gipps and Hoddle Streets, due to the already altered building at 130 Gipps St, Abbotsford. This further alteration will be a 3 m brick wall, less than 1 m away from all my habitable windows, for a length of over

9 m (along the boundary). Then there is the 2m first floor extension across the back yard – this will mean that as of approx. 12:30 p.m. every day , all my habitable living areas and private open spaces will be in shadow, for the remainder of the day! Most of these will have not seen any sunlight at all for the day! (every day) My habitable living areas have limited northerly aspects, and rely on the sunlight from the East. Such a construction will dominate the neighbourhood's openness, will not be in keeping with the surrounds or established environment, and will very much dominate the surrounds, neighbours and neighbourhood. How is keeping the front wall/facade in keeping with the Heritage Overlay? None of the original materials are being recycled. The proposal will very much dominate the neighbours and neighbourhood. The small (tiny) lot will be well over-developed, according to the VCAT report and ResCode Standards.

Some of the cottages have been renovated, but they have been respectful of the their neighbours, the neighbourhood and of Heritage. They have not set out to dominate the locale and environs.

I again must point out the uniqueness of the surrounds of the Collingwood Town Hall - this was a "Precinct", but was cut right back by Council. Unlike the Richmond and Fitzroy Town Halls, the surrounds of the Collingwood Town Hall are different! They complement and respect each other. These cottages in Gipps Street are a unique link between Heritage buildings, an extension which unifies by being in direct line between them:- the Masonic Hall, the Laird, the Collingwood Library, the Collingwood Railway Station and the Collingwood Town Hall.

I respectfully ask that Council see fit to retain some reasonable quality of life for any residents by applying/maintaining the ResCode, which was established for just that – and if my tomatoes and lemon trees can't grow on my property, what does that tell you about the physical, mental and emotional health and living standards of the human beings trying to live there? Having to return to the slum-like conditions is unacceptable! I have a living memory of what "slum-like" living conditions are - these were replaced by the Housing Commission 20 or 22 storey blocks, bounded by Highett-Lennox-Elizabeth-Church Streets. Surely living conditions which do not pass or satisfy ResCode make for unacceptable/unsuitable living conditions or standards? After all, isn't that what they were established for?

I thank you for your time, and apologise for not being able to make more sense of the Planning Proposals being presented at Council last meeting.

I await a response and advice from Council, Richard Wynne (Planning Minister) and Heritage Victoria.

Response:

The Mayor advised that Council is undertaking a Planning Scheme Rewrite and the submitter will have the opportunity to make a submission as part of that and that will be taken into consideration.