

Melbourne Planning Scheme Amendment C163

Clause 22.24 - Student Housing Policy

Currently planning applications for Student Housing are assessed City of Melbourne using the reference document (Student Housing – Development and Management Controls – 1999) contained in the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS). It is more difficult to enforce this form of control in the planning arena, VCAT etc, than similar controls incorporated into the Local Planning Policy Framework of the Local Planning Scheme.

Amendment C163 is the City of Melbourne's process of removing these guidelines from the MSS and including alternative guidelines, as a new clause, within the Planning Scheme. This has to be a positive in terms of enforcing guidelines.

The guidelines propose reasonable standards, when compared with some of the developments constructed in the past, however the premise that accommodation of a standard less than that applied to conventional "dwellings" is appropriate for students, is contentious.

Issues of continuing demand and ultimate reuse of this type of purpose - built accommodation still remain unanswered.

Please see below CRA's submission to Amendment C163.



The Carlton Residents Association Inc.

A0034345G ABN 87 716 923 898 P.O.

PO Box 1140, Carlton, Victoria, 3053

secretarycra@gmail.com

\

28 August 2010

Robyn Hellman
Coordinator - Local Policy
Strategic Planning Department
City of Melbourne
GPO Box 1603
Melbourne, Vic. 3001

Dear Ms Hellman,

Re: Amendment C163 – Student Housing

Carlton Residents Association has always had difficulty accepting the premise that a standard of amenity in accommodation less than that required for the general population (refer dwellings), is acceptable for students.

If we cast that concern aside and accept that “Student Housing” is a reality, then the Carlton Residents Association supports the Council replacing the current Management Controls with appropriate guide-lines within the Policy Framework of the Planning Scheme. The offer of greater certainty with the possibility of increased ability to enforce the guide lines, has to be a positive.

The remaining concern to CRA is that there does not appear to be any mechanism to address inappropriate use as defined by

**“Accommodation that is purpose built to accommodate
bona fide students while studying at tertiary institutions or”**

(refer para 3 of the Explanatory Report)

There have been examples of student housing developments approved in the past, some with and some without Section 173 Agreements relating to use. There have been instances of both categories having been occupied by non students and even the sale of individual units into the general dwelling market, all of which indicates potential abuses of the Planning Scheme.

CRA believes that future approvals processed within this section of the Planning Scheme will, by default, become “Communal Living” for students and others regardless of the approved use, unless some enforcement mechanism is implemented.

If there is no serious intent to enforce bona fide use, why not acknowledge and define it as “Communal Living” and ensure that the standards of amenity imposed are appropriate for general communal living, thus creating an affordable alternative to the conventional “Dwelling”, without lowering the standards for amenity to levels generally considered unacceptable.

Warren Green
for CRA Committee