

SUBMISSION TO STANDING COMMITTEE OF ENVIRONMENT AND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS RE: Petition No 034 – Aged Care Facility Wilkins Rd.
Kalamunda

I have lived in Kalamunda all my life, my parents and my wife's parents also lived and worked in Kalamunda and in their latter years we found it very difficult to provide aged care for them. Eventually a place was found for my wife's mother in Maylands and her father in Leederville. This entailed separating them after 60 years of marriage – this broke their hearts.

Shortly afterwards both my parents were approaching their 80's and accommodation could only be found in Dianella and Bayswater, they also had to be separated which was, I believe disgraceful. It was also very difficult for family members to visit.

In view of the fact we had such a difficult time in placing our parents in care, my wife and I chose to act before our children had to go through the same difficulties that we had experienced.

When Wilkins Rd first came to our attention in 2011 (Hills Gazette Oct 2011) we thought our prayers had been answered. Here a partnership between the Kalamunda Shire and the "Bethanie Group" had been given final approval to build a new Integrated Aged Care Facility.

An I.A.C.F. is not a Lifestyle Village for it has Independent living units, low care, and high care, all on the one block. People do not have to move to an unknown locality in their latter years.

All this was in 2011 and yet today "Bethanie" still say they are committed to the project.

When the amendment was first initiated by the then Shire of Kalamunda its purpose was to transfer 10 hectares of land from the Parks and Recreation to the Urban zone in the Metropolitan Region Scheme. It was understood that the request for the rezoning change was to allow for accommodation for aged persons and that a local scheme amendment, detailed structure planning and ultimately, subdivision approval, would follow.

Of the millions of hectares of land East of Kalamunda we only want to shave 10 hectares off the side. It must be noted that residential housing is already built on the opposite side of Wilkins Rd.

On the twenty third of January of this year the then Minister for Planning Donna Faragher – after 6 long years - gave approval for the rezoning of Wilkins Rd. The approval was given on the recommendation of the Western Australian planning Commission. Then subsequent to the State Election the Member for Kalamunda Mr Matthew Hughes would not support the Wilkins Rd project nor would the Minister for Planning Rita Saffioti, who on the 9th of October revoked the original approval.

Minister Saffioti continually refuses to give a reason for the rejection of this amendment. The only ones ever received are that it is not suitable and that it has bushfire and native title issues – both of which have already been satisfactorily addressed.

The Department of Emergency Services has already approved a Fire Management Plan for Wilkins Rd. The Environmental Protection Authority considered the amendment and decided it did not require assessment, and from the Commissions perspective, the advice provided from the DAA did not indicate there was any substantive Aboriginal Heritage issues with the site.

Wilkins Rd is an excellent site for older people, as it is on level ground, it has Power, Water, Sewerage close by, Public transport passes its door, and is close to a large Shopping Centre. Ideal for the elderly.

There is NO other site currently available for an IACF in Kalamunda.

The FULL Council of the Kalamunda Shire now City of Kalamunda support this project as do 1124 local people whose signatures I obtained in a little over 10 days. All agree that this project MUST go ahead. We do NOT yet have any Integrated Aged Care Facility in Kalamunda, and there is no alternative site available. Other sites mentioned are only marks on a map and all will have to either be rezoned or at least have many surveys done on them, which I believe to be years away. All the above has been done on Wilkins Rd.

Kalamunda residents have waited over 6 years to get to this stage, to not approve Wilkins Rd now means we will have to wait another 6 years, time that many of us do not have.

I have not at this point in time referred the matter to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations. (Ombudsman) . I do however reserve the right to do so should the need arise.

NEIL PEMBER