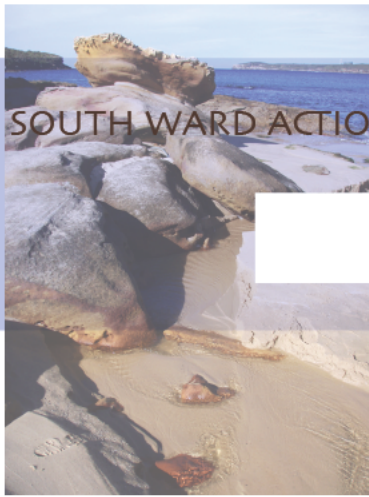


**Submission
No 226**

INQUIRY INTO SOCIAL, PUBLIC AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Organisation: South Ward Action Group

Date received: 10/03/2014



SOUTH WARD ACTION GROUP

27 February 2014

The Director
Select Committee on Social, Public and Affordable Housing
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney NSW 2000

By email: socialhousing@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Director,

Re: Social, public and affordable housing inquiry

South Ward Action Group (SWAG) is a community action group that was formed by and for locals of South Ward of the Randwick Local Government Area. SWAG lobbies politicians, government departments and other key people and organisations to ensure that community concerns are heard and addressed.

For over 20 years SWAG has been uniting the community, including residents of both public and private housing, around issues that affect the whole community. Through this time SWAG has also worked closely with resident, environmental and community groups.

SWAG is currently concerned that residents have been locked out of the South Anzac Parade Urban Activation Precinct (UAP) process, with detrimental planning outcomes likely. SWAG is determined to ensure that local residents have a real opportunity to influence decision-making.

Many residents have said that their biggest fears are around the lack of information and certainty provided about the UAP process. SWAG will work with other groups to fight to have the relevant information made public and will actively distribute the information that we receive to members of the community.

Community members are concerned that public housing may be demolished and not replaced. SWAG members acknowledge the need for Sydney's population growth to be shared across the city; however we believe that this should not come at a cost to safe, affordable and liveable housing.

We are proud of our strong and vibrant community that embraces and celebrates di-

versity. Public housing has been a feature of this area for over 50 years and public housing tenants are a vital part of the culture and life of this wonderful part of Sydney.

If the South Ward is redeveloped and some public housing stock is lost in the UAP process, it will have a profound and detrimental effect not only some of the 2,000 public housing tenants who will need to move, but also on our community.

Residents with deep intergenerational ties to the area fear being moved to areas far from their neighbours, friends and families. Meaningful relationships and support networks will be lost, which will have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of our community members, many of whom are elderly and rely on support services and networks.

The UAP process has created a great deal of anxiety and fear amongst public housing residents. Their concerns must be a part of this discussion and serious community engagement needs to be undertaken to ensure that those people with the most to lose are heard. For public housing tenants, and indeed for many local residents, this is not a case of 'not in my backyard' – rather it is a fight to hold on to their homes, families and communities.

Many of our community members have lived in public housing in the South Ward for over forty years and want to see other people benefit from living in affordable housing. We know there is a huge demand for affordable housing in Sydney and if the UAP goes ahead we believe that our community and others would benefit from more public and affordable housing in our area, as long as we are given a real opportunity to have input into the type and location of any new affordable housing.

At the very least, we would like the current amount of public and affordable housing to be maintained and repaired where necessary to a clean and habitable state.

Please do not hesitate to contact us on [phone number/email address] if you would like to discuss the content of our submission further.

Yours faithfully,
Sandi Chick
On behalf of
South Ward Action Group