

**Submission
No 86**

**INQUIRY INTO ACQUISITION OF LAND IN RELATION TO
MAJOR TRANSPORT PROJECTS**

Name: Mr Sam Grima

Date Received: 13 July 2021

This submission is being forwarded to you from Sam and Theresa Grima a resident of Orchard Hills which is being acquired for the Orchard Hills train station.

We were firstly told of this Compulsory acquisition on September 11th 2020. You could imagine that feeling once told of this. From that day our lives have been turned upside down. Our ability to focus has caused enormous anxiety and depression for us and our family. This would have to be one of the hardest things weve had to deal with. It has caused a strain on our family and marriage.

We cannot understand that our Government can just call you over the phone and say that we are compulsory acquiring your land for the purpose of a train station.

The Government does not care for any residents affected. If they did they would pay us the correct valuations to replace what we have (like for like) and be able to relocate in the same area.

Because the Rail has been announced there is an automatic uplift in the whole area and we the residents are at a disadvantage because we cannot buy within our area for the money that Metro Rail have offered us. According to latest figures and news reports they have indicated that property values have risen by 13%.

Our neighbour has recently sold her property of approximately 10 acres. It sold for \$250 a square metre. This property has no house and is a bush block. Metro rail said that we cannot use this sale as part of our valuation because it was sold after the announcement of the station. How can this be right.

We the residents are made to feel as we've done something wrong when in fact Metro Rail are the ones who have caused this. We do not stand in the way of infrastructure and progress but we want fair compensation for what they are taking from us. When it affects so many households thats wrong and unAustralian.

In our situation we have been in Orchard Hills for 20 years. Weve raised 4 children here and were hoping to have all our grandchildren enjoy our home also but Metro Rail have taken that away from us.

We have a market garden business we operate from my mothers property which is located at Horsley Park only 10 minutes away. I am a 3rd generation farmer which is very time consuming and hard work. Many hours go into this. I sell my produce at Flemington Market 3 days a week leaving from Orchard Hills at 11pm at night to sell our local produce to feed the local people. Green grocers, restaurants etc.

We cannot except that they are acquiring 65 acres to build 1 station. In Westmead they built the station on 4 acres so why is 65 acres being acquired. They have shown us photos on what it will look like once completed but why is our property required they really havent explained it to us. Why couldnt they lease our property from us?

We thank people like Jim Wilson from 2GB who has continued to help the residents of Orchard Hills and try and help us to get a fair deal. We as a community are hard working people who only want a fair price for our properties.

This was our forever home. We have a beautifully built home with high end fixtures, custom made furniture and manicured gardens. We are very proud to call this our home. Our location at Orchard Hills is so central to everything.

We have been looking to find a comparable property and it is proving to be very difficult. It is impossible to find a property in Orchard Hills. It is a very tight held suburb. We would need to relocate 30 to 45 minutes out to find a property similiar and this is very concerning. It will cause additional pressure in travel time and will become a health issue due to earlier start times, (less sleep time) to sell my produce at Flemington Markets.

The Just Terms Act 1991 is so outdated and needs to be changed. This law is 30 years old and does work or relate to this day in age. It does not work with acreage properties.

There is no justice in this law, we do not know why it was called the Just Terms Act because it is simply not just.

The hard working person works towards building a home for their family. An achievment in Australia is working towards a home. This is so unfair and unAustralian.

Regards

Sam and Theresa Grima