

Herby Scan 4-12-08

MPS cue the Ombudsman

Nick Higginbottom

UPPER House MPs last night passed a historic motion to refer the probability of the Kew Cottages and the St Kilda triangle developments to the state Ombudsman.

Liberal MP David Davis moved a motion, which passed unopposed, requiring the Ombudsman to investigate the involvement of former senator and Labor powerbroker Graham Richardson in the Kew development.

It is the first time the Parliament has asked the



Graham Richardson

Ombudsman to investigate matters since the Ombudsman Act was established in 1973.

Mr Richardson refused to give evidence to parlia-

mentary inquiries about his involvement in the Walker Corporation's winning of the contract to develop the Kew site.

He was involved in lobbying the State Government during the initial stages of the redevelopment and worked for developers Mirvac and Walker Corporation.

Mirvac gave \$50,000 to the Victorian ALP in October 2006, four days after Walker Corporation won the contract.

The all-party parliamentary Public Land Development Committee in Sep-

tember reported that the developments of the Kew and St Kilda sites were "flawed in different ways".

Supporters of the motion, including Mr Davis and fellow Liberal MP Matthew Guy, used debate on the motion to stress the need for an independent, broad-based anti-corruption commission to be set up.

"This historic vote means the Ombudsman will have the opportunity to have these serious matters referred to him formally by the Parliament," Mr Davis said.