
Media Release: Parks under pressure.

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 **Kew Cottages Coalition Media Release**www.kew.org.au**Release Date: 26 April 2018****Renewed threat to Kew Cottages Parkland**

Heritage Victoria's second formal Permit refusal to allow a developer's plans to build within the tree lined avenue approach to the former Willsmere Hospital is set to be reviewed by Heritage Council Victoria. (See [Herald Sun / Progress Leader 31 Oct 2017](#))

Sydney billionaire developer, Lang Walker, has lodged an appeal against Heritage Victoria's insistence that the whole of the avenue approach to Willsmere must be properly restored as parkland.

Brian Walsh, President, Kew Cottages Coalition, said today that, "Walker Corporation now appears to have spent over a decade trying to find ways to legally encroach upon this fabulous piece of public parkland."

This is the Sydney developer's fourth attempt to overcome the long standing Heritage permit conditions imposed on the Main Drive Kew housing estate development.

"It's now gone beyond a joke", Mr. Walsh, said. "Nothing surprises me any more.

"It appears to me that if developers have enough money, and access to Government bodies then they can go on appealing against the umpire for ever !

"One problem appears to be that although all of the land in question is still public land Walker has been permitted to use a temporary site office on part of it.

"Now Walker appear to be acting as though that temporary site office gives them 'squatters rights' !

" This is very strange, because I understand both the developer and the Government gave an undertaking to Heritage Victoria over a decade ago that they would remove the site office, and fully restore the parkland by 2012.

" Perhaps Walker are hoping that the Andrews Government has quietly forgotten all about that promise made to the people of Victoria way back in 2005 ?" Mr. Walsh said.

"This application is also frustrating because it directly stops the creation of the new Kew Arboretum that has been proposed by the Kew Cottages Coalition and mirrors the initial vision of Baron Sir Ferdinand von Mueller who designed this area (and the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria)."

The Heritage Council will hold a Public Hearing commencing on the 18th June 2018 to review Heritage Victoria's rejection of Walker's application to build private apartments on the parkland.

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