

Mr Mark McGowan; Acting Speaker; Mr David Templeman; Ms Rita Saffioti; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Adele Carles; Mr Andrew Waddell; Mr Paul Miles; Mr Mick Murray; Ms Andrea Mitchell; Mr John McGrath; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Troy Buswell

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people you put in it.” We must work with them. This is a housing issue. I urge the Minister for Housing to work with those ministers I identified at the beginning of my speech and make this a priority of government. The minister will be applauded not only by these people here in the gallery, but also by their families, children and grandchildren, who want to make sure their grandparents or their mums and dads are looked after. Please do it. The minister can do it; he should do it. Do it now!

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan)** [4.59 pm]: One of the problems with following the member for Mandurah is that he is very, very good; I hope my contribution does not disappoint when compared with his.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Never.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I thank the Minister for Transport.

This issue was raised with me both during the election campaign and after I had been elected. There are a number of caravan parks with long-stay residents in my electorate, and one of the first issues raised with me after my election was what was going to happen to these caravan parks. As the member for Mandurah outlined, this is an emerging issue that is a combination of a number of elements, including the increasing land value in metropolitan and regional areas. Caravan park owners are sitting on land that is increasing in value daily. Housing affordability is another issue; there are not many options available to people and they are decreasing all the time. Housing affordability is a huge issue across the metropolitan area and across the state; the options that existed 20 or 30 years ago just do not now exist. People do not have the option of finding alternative accommodation in a short time frame.

I agree with the member for Mandurah that the legislation was well intended, but the outcome has not matched the intention. An issue raised with me all the time is the eviction of people without being given grounds; these people have purchased their own homes, yet they can be evicted without any grounds. Another key issue that has been raised with me by homeowners in long-stay caravan parks is that of not being able to sell their own homes, and having to have approval from the caravan park owner to do so, or having to allow the caravan park owner to sell the home for them. They are two of the key issues I want to raise today.

I also want to talk about the nature of agreements that have been struck around the place. I have been shown agreements that are quite intrusive and that impose a lot of obligations on residents. The legislation provides for these agreements, but I do not think it was ever intended that the detail and the restrictions they place on the homeowners would be that great. Again, these people own these homes; they are renting the land but they own the home. The incredible number of restrictions placed on these people limit their ability to have an enjoyable lifestyle.

Rent control is another issue I want to raise. I note that this is an issue that the association and a number of residents are pushing, and I think it needs to be looked at. These people own their own homes—they are just renting the land—so there is no justification for massive annual increases in rent. Minister, this needs to be looked at because imposing massive rent increases is another way of forcing people out of their homes.

The members for Mandurah and Rockingham outlined two possible solutions, one of which was to purchase some of the existing sites; the other was for the government to find alternative sites that it would own, and then contract them out, or lease them out, to managers. I want to talk about available sites and the fact that the government should be acting on this straightaway.

Recommendation 41 of the 2009 Economics and Industry Standing Committee report stated that the government should identify land suitable for the development of long-stay caravan parks and vest it in local government authorities, either for the longer term or on 50-year leases. I therefore contacted the former Minister for Housing—the member for Nedlands—about the action the government had taken to identify possible long-stay caravan park sites. He referred me to the Minister for Planning, and I did not get an answer from the member for Nedlands. This must be acted on urgently. Some sites have been identified, as the current Minister for Housing stated in 2009. In 2009, in response to a grievance from the member for Forrestfield, the minister said that four sites had been identified around the metropolitan area—which included my electorate—as possible sites for new long-stay caravan parks. As I understand it, those sites were in Kenwick and Huntingdale, and there were two in the Whiteman area in my electorate.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Where we were this morning.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Yes, just opposite that site.

In 2010 I contacted the previous Minister for Housing—the member for Nedlands—about what action had been taken in relation to those four sites, but there was, again, no response; only a referral to the Minister for Planning. This needs to be acted on urgently. As the member for Mandurah said, we need to identify sites to

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provide people with options if their caravan parks close suddenly; they need options in a short time frame. There are just not enough options in the private housing market nowadays for people to find alternative accommodation.

The Minister for Housing is not in this place at the moment, but I hope his response today will include a commitment to develop those four sites into appropriate caravan parks and have them remain as caravan parks so that people can have some certainty when they live there. As the member for Mandurah said, these are real people living real lives in caravan parks, and they want certainty. I think the legislation tried to create that certainty, but the outcome did not meet the intention. I have been lobbied strongly on this issue by residents of my local caravan parks. After seeing firsthand what happened at Kingsway, which is just down the road, the residents know what happens when these parks close without sufficient notice being provided. I hope the minister's response to our contributions will inform us about the action that has been taken in relation to the four sites in the metropolitan area that were mentioned by him back in 2009—namely, the sites in Huntingdale and Kenwick, and the two Whiteman proposals.

This is an issue that will not go away because of the combination of increasing land prices, the increasing cost of housing across the metropolitan and regional areas of WA, and the number of people on the Homeswest waiting list. This is a serious issue that the government needs to work on to ensure that people are not left homeless time and time again.

**DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton)** [5.07 pm]: I would like to make a few statements in support of the motion. As chairman of the committee that the member for Mandurah referred to, I would like to make a couple of comments.

When we set up the committee, the member for Mandurah was not on it; he was a co-opted member. The reason he asked for, and we accepted, his co-option was because we knew it was a particular problem in his area. For many, many years—decades—it has been a major centre for caravanning, and most of us would have gone there with our kids or otherwise. It had become clear to us that a large number of the caravan parks were being closed down and turned into other things, and that a large number of parks were under threat. Also, a large number of parks had been converted from recreational caravan parks to long stays. What the member for Mandurah said today did nothing more than update the issue that we found a year or so ago when we undertook the inquiry.

This is an extremely serious issue for not only the metropolitan area, but also the regions, as he mentioned. The problem stems, as the member for West Swan said, from a combination of rising land prices, a lack of rental accommodation in the private market, huge queues for Homeswest properties, and the fact that generally the people who live in these caravan parks are not wealthy. They have spent their money on a caravan, and they are being evicted with very little alternative value to, or use for, their caravan, and very little tenure. There were also some structural legislation problems that the act, which has been criticised in this place, tried to deal with, but has probably not dealt with adequately.

My personal view is that, overwhelmingly, the issue comes down to finding alternative land for caravanning and to change the zoning arrangements for those new places so that they cannot subsequently be rezoned for alternative use. We do that for industrial land and for other purposes. We need to find additional land and to lock in the zoning for caravanning. Some of that land should be for temporary recreational caravanning, some for long stays and some should be a mix. That is the priority.

One of the things that people have to realise, and one of the major problems here, is that the land that was set aside for caravan parks was often set aside in pristine areas by the seaside, river or lakes. If members look around the metropolitan area, they will see that in any area that has a view of water, the price of land has risen sharply. It is a problem of proximity. I argue that many of the new sites cannot be in those same pristine areas—at least those for long-stay caravanning. We have to find alternative sites, maybe close by, but not sites that are as highly valued close by the ocean or otherwise.

It also comes down to tenure arrangements and educating people so that they know what they are getting into when they buy into these parks. To a large extent, that is a problem of the past because the decision has already been made. They might not have been well informed in the past, and we have to fix the problem they are in. But there is an education aspect.

Finally, one of the issues I would like the ministers to consider is what the committee found with what are styled "lifestyle villages". There is a commercial outfit that operates as National Lifestyle Villages. I am not advocating that we use them, or otherwise. This organisation uses temporary homes. It buys land and puts temporary homes on the land in quite large numbers of 200 to 300 homes, which are very densely built on small blocks. The residents have a commonality of interest, with many of them being 55 years and over. The key aspect is that they