

Karel Eringa

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To: Karel Eringa
Subject: [SWA Update] Shelter WA Housing News: 3 February 2005

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1. Shelter WA Submission to *Network City*
2. Port Hedland Regional Housing Analysis
3. Indigenous Housing Issues Paper

1. Shelter WA Submission to *Network City*

Network City is the Western Australian Government's "community planning strategy for Perth and Peel". Network City came out of the Dialogue with the City process, and outlines the key directions for planning in the metropolitan area over the next 30 years.

Shelter WA has been an active participant in the Dialogue with the City process, and has produced a submission to the Network City document. The submission focuses on housing issues as a key underlying factor in attaining many of the goals set in Network City.

In its submission, Shelter WA supports the general direction detailed in the Network City document. However, the submission has also "identified several areas of concern. Many of these concerns stem from the fact that Network City appears to have some difficulty reconciling the relatively narrow scope of planning levers with the broad key objectives of the strategy. The result is a tendency in Network City to recommend non-binding actions such as the development of handbooks, registers, demonstration projects and advice, instead of binding incentives or regulation."

Dropping the urban growth boundary is one instance where Network City's approach is half hearted. A firm limit to urban sprawl was strongly supported by large majority of stakeholders throughout the Dialogue with the City process. Shelter WA continues to support a solid urban growth boundary, and is disappointed that Network City has shied away from establishing such a boundary on the basis of some questionable arguments.

Go to www.shelterwa.org.au/housing_news.htm to download the submission.

2. Port Hedland Regional Housing Analysis

Each year, Shelter WA holds Housing Forums in a particular region or focusing on an issue or community. The aims of these regional forums are to:

- identify and prioritise housing issues for the region
- develop strategies to respond to issues
- establish ongoing links between Shelter WA and local community organisations and their workers, government departments and local government.

This year's forum will be in Port Hedland / South Hedland. Shelter WA will conduct a series of preliminary meetings in the week of Monday 21 February. The purpose of these meetings is to identify key housing issues in the area, which will subsequently be developed into a discussion paper on housing in the area. This discussion paper which will be put up for community consultation at a community forum around June this year.

To discuss your ideas about housing issues in the Hedland area, please contact Karel Eringa by email (karel@shelterwa.org.au) or phone (08 9325 6660).

3. Indigenous Housing Issues Paper

The Department of Housing and Works has released a new paper on Indigenous Housing as part of the Housing Strategy WA. The paper provides a detailed overview of Indigenous housing issues in Western Australia including a rich source of data and estimates of how much funding is needed to resolve the current level of housing need. Of particular concern, it identifies a shortfall in Government funding over the next five years of at least \$150 million.

The Issues Paper begins by recognising that "Aboriginal people are severely disadvantaged in terms of their socio-economic status, health and education. Access to affordable and appropriate housing has been related to cycles of disadvantage, particularly in recent reports to the West Australian government including the Homelessness Report, and the Gordon Inquiry.

Much of the emphasis in government programs since the 1970's has been to improve housing conditions in discrete Aboriginal communities, where housing and environmental health conditions have been extremely poor. There is still much to be done in this respect, however one of the themes running through the Indigenous Housing Issues paper is the need for an examination of policies and programs in relation to urban centres and rural townships.

The Issues Paper discusses:

- background on the policy and funding context for the provision of Indigenous housing;
- socio-demographics, population pressures and the related housing policy implications;
- major housing issues in respect of discrete Aboriginal communities;
- equity issues with respect to home ownership and private rental housing;
- the challenges surrounding public rental and community housing programs; and
- issues relating to Indigenous homelessness.

The Issues Paper on Indigenous Housing as well as papers on a number of other issues are available from www.dhw.wa.gov.au/housingstrategywa/index.cfm

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