

We were given assurances by our local, State and Federal representatives that this Policy would contain binding mandatory height controls for our village, thus giving certainty to residents and curtailing the type of overdevelopment embodied in matters PP1234 of 2014 (4-storeys plus roof garden Geelong-Portarlington Road) and PP710 of 2019 (3-5 storey at 49 Newcombe Street).

However, this document seems to lift sections directly from the Geelong Council's "Portarlington Structure Plan 2017" which contains vague motherhood statements that permitted these, and other, proposals (which were supported by the City's own Planning Department) that have only been stopped by community action.

Indeed, the Council's own report on its "community consultations" during the development of the Portarlington/St Leonards Structure Plan noted that resident's most common concern was the control of building heights and block size – a concern that they then completely ignored by arbitrarily allowing three-storey constructions in the town centre in the final document. This Statement of Planning Policy should have been an opportunity to reverse that decision.

I cannot see the purpose of having a "Planning Policy" that does not even mention maximum building heights, statements such as "a scale in keeping with the settlement's role, function, hierarchy designation and settlement and landscape character" will do absolutely nothing to restrain inappropriate development applications.

We need mandatory height and bulk restrictions to ensure:

"Moderate infill development within the increased housing diversity area will be designed to respect the historic built-form character: for example, the prominence and heritage character of the Grand Hotel will be sensitively managed. Incremental residential development will respond to Portarlington's informal streetscape character and ensure existing vegetation is retained and there are opportunities to plant new vegetation in the public and private realms."