



Hon. Robert Swarten MP
Member for Rockhampton



**Queensland
Government**

**Minister for Public Works,
Housing and Racing**

Ref: H02418/06

31 MAY 2006

Mr N Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to your letter of 11 May 2006 regarding the petition received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly No 652-06 claiming that the Department of Housing plans to build high-density housing units in Carina Heights.

My response follows:

The Department of Housing is facing increasing pressure to house more people in need. It is important, therefore, that the department continues to review its properties to ensure that it provides accommodation that meets the needs of existing and future clients and utilises land to its highest and best use.

Where appropriate, it is planned to replace older stock with more flexible contemporary accommodation which will better meet social housing need and will reduce growing maintenance costs. As part of these redevelopment initiatives, improved integration with the private sector, and the community in general, is a key objective.

In the Carina Heights area, a substantial number of the department's houses were built approximately 50 years ago and require ongoing maintenance. Further, many of these houses have become under-utilised and do not meet the needs of persons presently seeking accommodation. The Department strives for the most cost effective methods for housing delivery.

The department never planned to develop high-density units in Carina Heights and it does not propose any major redevelopment and awaits the Brisbane City Council finalising its planning in regard to this area under CityPlan. The department will then review the property portfolio to assess the most suitable options. In the meantime any construction will meet current planning schemes.

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The Member for Chatsworth Mr Caltabiano and the local councillor Cr Schrinner have played a very divisive role in this issue and have deliberately misused their positions to misinform their constituents. It is entirely shameful that the information given to both elected members has been deliberately and dishonestly misused for political purposes. On the other hand, the Lord Mayor Campbell Newman and Deputy Mayor David Hinchliffe have cooperated and want to work in partnership to deliver quality affordable housing to those who need it.

I attach a copy of a statement I made in Parliament on 25 May 2006.

The department is cognisant of the need to balance all of the factors involved in city planning. It is not the intention of the department to develop high-density housing or to increase the overall density of the department's accommodation in areas such as Carina Heights, but to encourage a greater input of private development and thus greater integration of public and private housing.

If you require further information, please telephone Mr Darryl Gomersall, Senior Project Development Manager, Property Portfolio Management, on 3235 9596, who will be happy to assist.

Yours sincerely

Robert Swarten MP
**Minister for Public Works,
Housing and Racing**

This program is about encouraging more doctors and other health professionals to take up positions in regional and rural Queensland. Doctors, nurses and allied health professionals who make the commitment to live and work in regional areas for the care of patients should not be disadvantaged. Providing quality housing helps attract and retain doctors and nurses to regional Queensland. In turn, this assists the government to deliver the services that Queenslanders expect and deserve no matter where they live. It also contributes to our recruitment success, with more doctors, nurses and allied health professionals choosing to make Queensland their home.

It is anticipated there will be some difficulty in sourcing suitable properties in more rural and remote areas of the state. In these cases, we will build new properties to ensure that these districts can access quality and sustainable housing for their staff. This successful program is about lifting the standard and availability of accommodation in regional and rural Queensland and providing a bricks-and-mortar incentive for health professionals to take up positions in rural and regional Queensland.

Tabled paper: Copy of ministerial statement by Hon. Stephen Robertson titled *Regional Accommodation Program update*.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Carina Heights, Public Housing

Hon. RE SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works, Housing and Racing) (9.58 am): The Brisbane suburbs improvement scheme aims to rebuild public housing communities throughout Brisbane. It has enjoyed particular success in Stafford where the state member Terry Sullivan has championed this community reconstruction.

The newly elected and divisive member for Chatsworth has gone out of his way to undermine the very sensible and responsible plan by this government and the Brisbane City Council to achieve good community outcomes. While the member for Chatsworth and Councillor Schrinner have chosen to frighten local residents about property values and standards of living, the reality is that we are trying to provide a decent standard of housing for those who need it while offering long-term residents in Carina Heights an opportunity to move on, in their local area, into more appropriate housing.

Carina Heights is a public housing area where there are a significant number of older homes with underoccupancy. Older citizens who have lost spouses and who have lived in this area all their lives are commonplace and the BSIS strategy aims to keep them in the area where they have lived, shopped, gone to church and so on.

The member for Chatsworth has undermined the role of the shadow minister for housing, who has not said a word on this issue. The Liberals criticise me because I am forced to house single people in three-bedroom houses, but when I try to create options to keep the elderly in these suburbs the member for Chatsworth opposes it. Therefore, I take it that the Liberal Party policy is to evict elderly residents, throw them out of Carina Heights and out of public housing.

There will be no redevelopment of Department of Housing land in Carina or Carina Heights until such time as the Brisbane City Council finalises its planning in regard to this area. I thank Lord Mayor Campbell Newman and Deputy Mayor David Hinchliffe for their support of the redevelopment of Carina, which is in sharp contrast to the grubby, underhanded, dishonest behaviour of the member for Chatsworth. We have agreed that this redevelopment will meet with council's planning scheme and over the forthcoming months we will work closely with council to achieve a good planning and housing outcome. In the meantime, any construction will be according to current planning schemes.

Tabled paper: Copy of ministerial statement by Hon. Robert Schwarten relating to BSIS.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Child Abuse, Database

Hon. JC SPENCE (Mount Gravatt—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services) (10.00 am): I wish to update the House on the progress we have made towards establishing a new national database in Australia to help police in their fight against child abuse. Last year, Australia's police commissioners agreed on the need to set up an Australia-first library of child abuse images. Queensland police have been a driving force behind this initiative. Next month I will be putting the concept of an Australian national victim image library on the agenda at the Australasian Police Ministers' Council.

The crime of paedophilia knows no state boundary. All states and territories need to work together to protect our children. Queensland police are playing an integral role in establishing this new library, largely due to the work and reputation of Task Force Argos, which is a national leader in the investigation of online child exploitation.