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# Frankston Times

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ALIX Pollock, pictured with Badger the cat, is one of the relatives of former RSPCA Victoria president the late Dr Hugh Wirth whose generosity has enabled the organisation to open a centre for cats and other small animals. "A place to stay for cats and other small animals" Page 8. Picture: Gary Sissons

## Groups united to stop 'Great Wall of Frankston'

PLANNING experts and community and environmental groups across Victoria are uniting to demand mandatory height controls to stop a future wall of high-rise developments in Frankston's City Centre adjacent to the Kananook Creek and within 200 metres of the coastline.

Community groups – Long Island Residents Group Inc., Frankston Beach Association Inc. and Mornington Environment Association Inc. – are off to VCAT to appeal a 5-to-4 vote by Frankston City Council (FCC) to grant a permit for a 14-storey/50-metre-high mixed-use building, at Frankston's Waterfront Precinct.

Hot on its heels, an application for an even higher 16 storey / 60-metre-high apartment tower's fate has been left in the hands of VCAT after Frankston Council failed to consider it within a prescribed timeframe.

Unlike neighbouring coastal councils that strictly limit building height to two storeys near the coast, Frankston has no mandatory heights for its coastal areas.

Appalled by the potential loss of coastal charm and amenity for Frankston, and realising the precedent this might set, community groups across the state, including Protectors of Public Lands (Vic) Inc., Planning Democracy and Beaumaris Conservation Society Inc. have pledged support for the local Frankston campaign.

Port Phillip Conservation Council Inc. (PPCC), a bay wide coalition of 14 coastal groups, and Kananook Creek Association Inc. have also joined the campaign, noting that without mandatory height limits in place, Frankston locals rightfully fear a great wall of towers separating the city centre from the foreshore, creating a Victorian version of Surfers Paradise.

"If 50 – 60-metre-tall buildings can get the nod in Frankston, that's a big

worry for other coastal towns around the Bay and indeed for the rest of Victoria's magnificent coastline," said PPCC secretary, Jenny Warfe.

"Developers might decide to challenge local council planning provisions and their commitment to protecting irreplaceable coastal assets."

"This dystopian vision for the future threatens coastal residents and tourists alike who currently can enjoy access to stunning coastal views, access to beaches and bays and shared amenity."

"All this could be lost if plans a few developers have in mind for our beautiful coastline came to pass."

"Local groups everywhere must be vigilant that a threat like the Great Wall of Frankston is not allowed to dominate our beloved coastal towns," said Ms Warfe.

"Claims that high rise towers help environmental sustainability and housing affordability are both utterly false," adds The Hon Kelvin Thomson, former Federal Member for Wills and Convenor of Planning Democracy.

"These towers will generate massive greenhouse gas emissions, both in their construction and in their operation. They will also increase the price of land in the area and make it even harder for would be first home buyers to compete with developers and afford a home in Frankston."

Community groups are asking Frankston City Council, the Member for Frankston Paul Edbrooke MP, and the Minister for Planning the Hon Sonya Kilkenny to assist in achieving mandatory height limits, setbacks and open spaces between all coastal developments to protect Frankston's greatest assets – its picturesque foreshore, beaches, sensitive waterways and public spaces – from inappropriate development.



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