

Caravan park's war on wheelchair veteran

The Woronora caravan park is trying to evict a wheelchair war veteran, to clear the site for redevelopment.

Ken Blakely has one of 67 modest movable homes, whose tenants are convinced that their landlord plans a secret new development by double-stacking cabins on the high-value waterside property. This is "prohibited" development under State law.

Meals on Wheels and supermarket deliveries are no longer allowed past the new boom gate to Mr Blakely's home at the Woronora Village Tourist Park, a local newspaper reported. He has to collect them in his motorised wheelchair.

Tenants claim that the company is provoking and harassing residents to make them leave, with video cameras aimed at cabins of tenants who complain loudest. Some have refused as "insulting" offers for their indefinite leases, which must fund their relocation. They range from \$2,000 and \$5,000, according to a tenant of three decades, Millie Bellamy.

The indefinite residents, mostly pensioners, own ten vans and a cabin but lease their sites in the Woronora caravan park, according to The Leader newspaper, 14 February 2018 :

<http://specialpubs.fairfaxregional.com.au/fcn/lsu/3dissue/> (page 6)

A company director Christian Martin has declined to comment on the ultimate plan for the caravan park. Since mid-2016 when the site was bought for \$6.75million by Wattle Residential Parks Pty, a series of skirmishes has been fought to force tenants out, they say.

Sutherland Council has refused to reveal details of plans for after the tenants leave, claiming that it is "commercial in confidence". Two-storey cabins would double the housing density.

One application before Council was rushed past the public-comment phase in barely two weeks at the end to the school holidays (DA18/0049). It seems to be Phase One only.

It proposes a two-storey movable dwelling, the size of two cargo containers, as a "temporary" display unit under a planning loophole. The development is "prohibited" under the sensitive RE2 zoning of the land, but was written around exemptions in Council's notorious code, LEP2015.

Residents fear that the company may provoke an incident, to give grounds for an AVO (apprehended violence order) to force people out another way.

Local councillors have been contacted for further information including [John Riad](#) (Liberal), [Deputy Mayor Peter Scaysbrook](#) (ALP) and [Steve Simpson](#) (Ind.).

NEWS

Caravan residents' anger

BY MURRAY TREMBATH

LONG-TERM residents of Woronora caravan park say termination notices they received last year are concrete evidence the operator wants them out.

"How can anyone say otherwise?" asked Millie Bellamy, who with her husband Max, has lived in the park for 32 years.

The long-term residents, most of whom are pensioners, own 10 vans and a cabin, but lease their sites in the park.

Ms Bellamy represents the group in the Affiliated Residential Park Residents Association (ARPRO).

The operator of Woronora Village Tourist Park, Christian Martin, told the *Leader* earlier this month he was not "trying to kick anyone out".

Mr Martin said the facility, which was purchased in 2016



INSULTED: Long-term residents of Woronora caravan park say they will leave but only if they receive a fair price. **Picture:** Chris Lane



NEED TO MODERNISE: The caravan park, which opened in 1957, has 67 van and cabin sites, of which 31 are covered by long-term leases. **Picture:** John Veage

being wholly within an allocated site.

The residents took the matters to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT), which decided in their favour in five cases because approval had been given by previous owners of the park.

Resident Allan Graham said the residents were in a "Catch-22" situation. If they

who uses a wheelchair.

They said Meals on Wheels and a supermarket home delivery service were no longer allowed to drive past the boom gate to Mr Blakely's van.

The residents said the operator was "making life difficult" for them in the hope they would leave. They were prepared to give up their sites, but only for a fair price.