



Speech by  
**Simon Finn**

**MEMBER FOR YEERONGPILLY**

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## **SOCIAL HOUSING, COMMENTS BY MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN**

**Mr FINN** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (9.30 pm): Yesterday in this chamber the member for Burdekin alleged that the government was building ‘ghetto style public housing’. In stooping to this language, the member not only resorts to scaremongering but also harnesses the language derived from the holocaust now in common usage as a derogatory term for where minority groups live.

Today a common dictionary definition includes a thickly populated slum area inhabited predominantly by members of an ethnic or other minority group, or any mode of living, working et cetera that results from stereotyping or biased treatment. The client base of the government’s social housing program is a varied group of people who need government support to access suitable housing because the private market does not provide for them. This is mainly due to affordability but also where the market does not provide what is needed—for example, access to disability suitable housing.

In fact, 42 per cent of people living in social housing are people with a disability and 44 per cent of the client base are seniors. Additionally, there are people with special needs like those who are unable to find work, single-parent families struggling to make ends meet, people with health problems affecting their ability to earn a suitable income, people escaping violent relationships and many people in need of short-term assistance to get through a temporary hard time. One group in my electorate who access social housing are the war widows who settled in Moorooka and are now seniors. These women do not think they are living in slums. They are happy with the housing that is provided and they are very house proud.

Social housing proposals are submitted to local councils for advice and feedback. Council suggestions are incorporated into development plans, and developments are designed in accordance with local planning schemes and building codes. Where there may be proposals that substantially differ from local planning schemes, these are subjected to local consultation through an advertised public objections process. The most common variation from council schemes is the number of allocated parking places in unit developments. This comes about for three main reasons.

Firstly, the client base for social housing has a lower car ownership rate than the wider community, reflecting their demographic of a lower income base and a higher proportion of people with disabilities and seniors. Secondly, social housing is built in close proximity to public transport options, again reflecting the needs of the cohort. Thirdly, lower demand for parking enables the state to maximise the number of dwellings provided in unit developments, thus ensuring maximum service delivery for the taxpayer dollar. Social housing provides an essential service to Queenslanders in need and is a core responsibility of government. Liberal National Party scaremongering does nothing more than create community division between those who have and those who have not.