

Thursday, 14 May 2026

High Court agrees to hear public housing demolition class action

Inner Melbourne Community Legal welcomes the decision by the High Court of Australia to accept an application for special leave to appeal in the class action against the demolition of Victoria's public housing towers.

IMCL, representing local residents, had sought special leave to appeal to the High Court to overturn the decision of Victorian courts to allow the demolition and redevelopment of public housing towers in North Melbourne and Kensington.

The High Court has today agreed to hear an appeal later this year. IMCL argues that the state government failed to afford procedural fairness to those living in the first three towers slated for demolition under its program. It argues that Homes Victoria ought to have consulted with those set to lose their homes prior to the demolitions being announced, and before any decision to rebuild no public housing back on the estates.

In the meantime, those residents who remain living in the towers can continue to do so without threat of eviction, as an injunction was granted by the Victorian Court of Appeal restraining Homes Victoria from issuing any notices to vacate until the legal matters have been finalised.

In light of the upcoming High Court appeal and the ongoing legal uncertainty about the demolitions, IMCL is calling on Homes Victoria to pause its plans to relocate hundreds more residents ahead of the demolition of seven more towers scattered around Melbourne. These include mostly elderly residents who were previously told they would be some of the last to be forced to relocate.

Comments attributable to Louisa Bassini, Managing Lawyer – Housing and Tenancy, Inner Melbourne Community Legal:

"We are very pleased that the High Court has agreed to hear an appeal against the Victorian Supreme Court decision finding the demolition program proposed for the North Melbourne and Flemington public housing towers to be lawful.

"We look forward to the opportunity to present this case to the High Court to argue that public housing residents should have been consulted with before a decision of this kind that has so deeply affected them and their communities.

"The communities that have been built on these public housing estates over many decades are being torn apart by these demolitions and the refusal to rebuild public housing.

"Many who have been moved already tell us that they want to come back.

“This should never have happened in the way that it has, and it is concerning that Homes Victoria continues to proceed with announcements about the demolition of another seven towers around Melbourne that are home to older residents prior to the conclusion of the court process and without any consultation.

“This has created fear and uncertainty for hundreds of residents who face having to move out of their homes and communities at a stage in their lives when they should have stability about their accommodation.

“Until this matter is resolved by the High Court, Homes Victoria must stop its demolition plans and put the needs of public housing residents at the centre of its decision-making.”

For more information, contact Mark Phillips – media@imcl.org.au or 0455 203 258