

CHURCH STATES POLICY

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"Wentworth Courier"
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re St James' Glebe
Edgecliff

Wentworth Courier

Church of England authorities made a statement this week about its land at Edgecliff and say there will be no handing over to developers for commercial exploitation.

They say it will be a long-term scheme, carefully planned.

The church will now take over the area, adjusting rents to weekly amounts, and the church will also become liable for rates, taxes and repairs.

LONG AREA STUDY

The need for long-term development and modernisation is foreseen but until a complete study of the area and its needs has been completed there will be no decisions, the statement says.

[It was announced recently that the church would not renew 99-year leases expiring at December next.

Two hotels and a liquor store were affected. The hotels will close, the liquor store has arranged for other premises.

Some fears were expressed by tenants that they could be forced out of cheap-rent properties and a meeting was held recently to discuss their position.

The Church's statement is designed to reassure tenants that there will be no hasty decisions.]

The statement issued by the Church of England, Sydney Diocese, Glebe Administration Board, reads:

Much uninformed speculation has arisen in the past two weeks regarding the Church's possible future intentions for the modernisation of the St. James' Glebe at Edgecliff.

The Church now wishes to explain fully its policies and current actions in this matter, so as to put an end to doubt and speculation.

This Glebe is a 28.6 acre area which at present carries about 350 small, old, dwelling units, some of which are derelict, but nearly all of which badly need replacement.

There are also a number of commercial premises and small shops on the New South Head Road frontage, which are affected by possible road and railways proposals.

The land was originally leased to various ground lessees by the Church many years ago.

Some of these ground leases have already expired and the remainder will expire on December 31 this year.

● Direct tenants

As the leases expire, the present occupants of the properties will continue in occupation, becoming direct tenants of the Church, rather than of a sub-lessee.

Where occupying lessees are paying only ground rents, these will be adjusted to weekly rents.

The Church will take over the liability for rates, taxes and repairs. This situation will continue for the foreseeable future.

The Church has foreseen the long-term need for the modernisation and re-development of this area.

It has therefore taken steps to ensure that this process will ultimately bring about a long-term revitalisation of the area according to the highest international standards of urban design.

It wishes to gradually transform this decayed sector into a socially diverse precinct, predominantly residential in character.

In January this year, the Church engaged the professional firm of Messrs. Clarke, Gazzard and Partners, town planners and architects, as its development consultants for this Glebe.

● No early decision

This firm has since been carrying out an intensive series of feasibility studies of the social, economic, physical and aesthetic problems which require solution during the period of renewal.

These studies, including a home-interview survey of many households, are still in progress.

No decisions will be made by the Church until these studies are complete.