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East Perth Locals Protest Fraser Suites Public Housing Conversion Plan

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East Perth residents rallied on July 18, 2025, against the state government's plan to convert the former Fraser Suites hotel into public and affordable housing, citing concerns over parking, density, and lack of community consultation. The \$100 million project, aimed at addressing Western Australia's housing crisis, has sparked accusations of top-down governance, with locals demanding their voices be heard before the 236-room complex is repurposed.

The initiative, announced in June 2025, seeks to alleviate pressure on the state's 22,000-person social housing waitlist, as reported by The West Australian. Housing Minister John Carey defended the purchase, stating it would provide urgent relief for vulnerable groups, particularly women over 55 at risk of homelessness (9News). However, East Perth residents argue the sudden decision ignored their concerns about increased traffic and strained amenities in an already dense area. "We support housing solutions, but this was sprung on us without warning," resident Sarah Thompson told 9News, echoing sentiments on X where @PerthResident labeled the move "a planning disaster."

Critics of the plan highlight the government's failure to engage the community, with the East Perth Community Association (EPCA) organizing the rally to demand transparency. Local business owner Mark Reynolds voiced frustration: "We're not against helping people, but parking is already a nightmare, and this will make it worse" (The West Australian). The project's scale, converting a luxury hotel into mixed housing, has fueled perceptions of mismanagement, with @EastPerthVoice on X questioning why alternative sites weren't considered.

The controversy reflects broader tensions between addressing housing shortages and respecting local communities. While the government pushes for rapid solutions, the lack of consultation risks alienating residents who fear declining property values and quality of life. Carey's insistence on proceeding, citing the crisis's urgency, has drawn criticism for dismissing legitimate concerns. "This isn't about NIMBYism; it's about fairness," EPCA chair Jane Carter said (9News). As Western Australia grapples with housing demands, the Fraser Suites saga underscores the need for balanced planning that respects both community input and the urgent needs of the state's most vulnerable.