



# SHIRE OF BODDINGTON

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All communications to be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer

*"The Council and Staff of the Shire of Boddington, in partnership with the community, are committed to operating effectively and efficiently to provide quality lifestyle opportunities that encourage population growth and development"*

Your Ref:

Our Ref: 8.2.1.3

Enquiries: Peter Bradbrook

The Secretary  
Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Inquiry into Residential and Community Aged Care in Australia**

In response to the invitation for written submissions relating to the above inquiry the Shire of Boddington Western Australia provides the following information:

Boddington is a small rural and mining locality some 120 kilometres south-east of Perth. It has a current population around 1600, which is predicted to double within the next 3-5 years as a result of the re-opening of the Boddington Gold Mine, and the planned expansion of the Boddington Bauxite operation by Worsley Alumina.

The Boddington Gold Mine, owned by Newmont Boddington and AngloGold Ashanti, is a \$2 billion project which, when production commences early in 2009, will employ 650 full time employees.

The Boddington Bauxite Mine provides the bauxite for Worsley's refinery at Worsley, near Collie. Worsley is spending \$500 million in Boddington to extend the overland conveyor belt that transports the bauxite and to construct a new Crushing Plant in the shire. It is expected that this will result in a further 20-30 permanent jobs being created in Boddington.

Whilst the town is prospering as a consequence of this activity our aged care facilities are totally inadequate and beyond Council's financial resources to provide. The only accommodation currently available locally for the aged are five permanent care beds at the Boddington District Hospital and four Independent Care Units donated to Council by ALCOA when it closed the Hedges Gold Mine in the early 1990s.

A report prepared by Economics Consulting Services for the Department of Industry and Resources in June 2008 indicates that Boddington will have some 500 residents aged 60 plus by the year 2010. We are unable to determine exactly how many of these may be over 75 as the Australian Bureau of Statistics show 65+ as one group, however we believe between at least 10 and 15% of the 500 (50-75) would be in this age bracket.

It is important that additional residential and community aged care accommodation is made available within Boddington, to cater for existing and anticipated needs. Elderly patients are already being transferred from Boddington to aged care facilities at Narrogin, some 85 kilometres away, thus removing these elderly people from their family and friends. Council has received representations from family members of some of these aged patients seeking assistance for them to remain in Boddington. We have not been able to help.

Council believes that appropriate residential and community aged care accommodation needs to be provided immediately adjacent to, or attached to, the Boddington District Hospital so that local elderly citizens can remain in Boddington.

Council proposes that the Committee considers recommending, in its final report to the Senate, that the Federal Government endorses a program that can deliver the accommodation required to small rural and remote communities, unable to provide the necessary residential and community aged care accommodation because of insufficient financial resources.

In conclusion, it is emphasised that it has been most distressing for family members of the elderly, and the elderly themselves, who have had to be relocated because of inadequate aged care accommodation being available in Boddington. The Federal Government would receive many plaudits if it addressed the situation promptly.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

Yours faithfully



**Gary Sherry**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

December 3 2008