

Are City Centre Apartment Towers The “Slums Of The Future”?



Is this proposed building destined to be a slum? Victoria One – recently approved apartment building in Melbourne. 629 apartments, 75 storeys. Architect: Elenberg Fraser

theurbanist. July 2014. One of the most persistent and widespread criticisms of city centre apartment towers is they’ll inevitably be “the slums of tomorrow”. But does the claim hold up on closer examination?

Melbourne’s hot apartment market means the city is the focus of claims that all those high-rise apartment towers in the CBD will be the slums of the future.

These sorts of dire predictions are made on social media, or sometimes by journalists like Fairfax associate editor Shane Green in this oped on the weekend.

But here’s the Lord Mayor of the City of Melbourne, Robert Doyle, two weeks ago:

...you don’t want to be left with housing stock in 10 years that no one wants ... You don’t want to be building the slums of tomorrow.

The idea of “slums in the sky” is highly charged and emotive. I haven’t seen anyone question the proposition before but it’s the sort of “end of all discussion” statement that really warrants close scrutiny.

Slums can be described in a number of ways, but two key attributes are the low economic capacity of residents and run-down buildings and infrastructure.

Read more: <http://theurbanist/towers-the-slums-of-the-future/>