

ENDORSEMENT – SHIRE OF PLANTAGENET  
BECOMING A PROPOSER FOR LOCAL HAZARA  
SAFE HAVEN VISA HOLDERS

Western Australian Migration Services Request for the  
Shire of Plantagenet to act as a proposer for Mount  
Barker Hazara SHEV holders

Meeting Date: 23 November 2021

Number of Pages : 5



**Western Australian Migration Services**  
**64 Blanche Street**  
**Gosnells WA 6110**  
**Australia**



**Barry Pike (RMA)**  
**MARN 1280137**  
**wa.migration@gmail.com**  
**+61 416661441**

---

25 October 2021

President Chris Pavlovich  
Shire of Plantagenet  
PO Box 48  
MOUNT BARKER, WA 6324

RE: PROPOSAL OF HAZARA AFGHAN REFUGEES

Dear Pres Pavlovich

I wish to express sincere thanks and congratulations to all those who have put in so much effort and shown such fantastic support for the local Hazara community in their quest to assist their family members facing such terrible danger at the hands of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Following on from the events in Mt Barker on 18 September 2021 and the fundraiser in Albany run by the WA Southern Afghan Appeal on 19 September 2021, we held registration days in Mt Barker on 2 & 3 October 2021. We identified a number of Hazara refugees in the area who are unable to propose their families because they are SHEV holders. However they can support their family members if they have a suitable organization to propose in their stead.

Therefore we would like to invite the Shire of Plantagenet to extend its support for this cause by being the organization to propose the families of these SHEV holders in the Shire. We see this as an opportunity not only to secure more potential workers to live in the area but to also greatly assist those already living and working in the area by helping them to reunify their families. This would be a fantastic humanitarian gesture on the part of the Shire.

## **Background**

When processing an application for a Humanitarian visa, the Immigration Department will initially consider the degree of persecution the applicant suffers in his or her own country based upon being a member of a particular group. In the case of Hazara people living in Afghanistan; also Pakistan and Iran are ALL subject to persecution by the Taliban. It is important to recognize Taliban are also in Pakistan and actively persecute Hazara people there.

The next major areas to consider are:

1. The extent of the applicant's connection with Australia; and
2. Whether or not there is any suitable country available, other than Australia, that can provide for the applicant's settlement and protection from persecution; and
3. The capacity of the Australian community to provide for the permanent settlement of persons such as the applicant in Australia.

In a case where the applicant's visa has been proposed by an Australian Citizen, Permanent Resident or Organization, N<sup>o</sup> 2 above is no longer considered; also the application is given a much higher priority that if it were not proposed. Unfortunately for some visa holders there is an exclusion in the above, namely that refugees who have arrived into Australia by boat (Unauthorized Maritime Arrivals) after 13 August 2012 and the holders of SHEV (Safe Haven Enterprise Visa) or TPV (Temporary Protection Visa) who are prohibited from proposing. SHEV and TPV holders all arrived into Australia after 13 August 2012.

Despite this prohibition on them proposing, the families of SHEV and TPV holders are still entitled to apply for a Humanitarian visa; and to cite their family member in Australia as their Australian contact. Indeed by this means their applications are elevated from a quite low priority to high priority.

As is self-evident, having family settled and working in Australia certainly satisfies point 1 above; and being proposed by either a family member or indeed an organisation such as the Plantagenet Shire clearly demonstrates the capacity of the locals to settle these families of people already living and working in the area.

## **Responsibilities of Proposers**

The role as a proposer is to assist in the settlement of the entrants you have proposed. This includes:

- meeting the entrants at the airport
- providing accommodation for the entrants on arrival
- assisting the entrants to find permanent accommodation; and
- introducing the entrants to relevant services.

Clearly an organisation proposing a refugee for a humanitarian visa is not making a financial commitment, rather assisting the new arrivals. In this instance where an organisation proposes the families of SHEV or TPV holders, this assistance will be provided by the SHEV or TPV holders themselves. This is not only legal but also the way it is envisaged under Migration Policy.

## **Assistance Sought**

In our recent work in Mt Barker, we identified 7 Hazara SHEV holders wanting to bring their families out of harms way; some in Afghanistan, some as refugees in Pakistan and some as refugees in Iran. The total number of people this represents is 33 including 16 potential workers for the local industries.

We are respectfully requesting the Plantagenet Shire to propose these people in the stead of their SHEV – holding family members currently living and working in the Shire. We do not envisage the Shire subjecting itself to risk by this action, rather passing on its obligations to assist these people to their families here. It is noteworthy that these family members here all have sufficient funds to meet all financial requirements of their family members who we are asking the Shire to propose, likewise they will be the ones to see to accommodation and to help them find work.

When the Federal Government first introduced SHEV and TPV, it was an interim measure to try to stop UMA's. Although this was more of a "band aid" solution which was followed by a total prohibition of anyone arriving as a UMA from ever reaching Australian soil, its efficacy has been seriously questioned by those learned in the area. It is also noteworthy than many of these people arrived into Australia and

applied for Permanent Protection Visas (PPV) as per international norms and by and large should have been granted PPV's; yet retrospectively it was deemed that they had now were taken to have applied for Temporary visas with all the penalties they entail.

It is also recognised that having an organisation propose the families of these people caught in this terrible situation is one way to, in part, mitigate at least some of the damage done to these people by offering a pathway for them to be reunited with their families. Indeed there has been recent talk privately reported of this strategy being recognised and fostered by the Government,; along with a substantial number of additional visas being considered for Hazara refugees, both from inside and outside Afghanistan.

Not only would the Shire be potentially bolstering the local workforce by proposing these people, but it would also be doing a very decent and generous deed by showing support for some of its local residents and demonstrating the true Aussie spirit of giving a person a fair go, as enshrined in our Australian Values Statement.

Thank you for your kind consideration in this very important matter

Warmest regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Pike', written in a cursive style.

Barry Pike (Registered Migration Agent)