

CORRECTED VERSION

RURAL AND REGIONAL COMMITTEE

Inquiry into rural and regional tourism

Bright — 29 August 2007

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Mr I. Jack.

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The CHAIR — Thanks, Ian. You are to make comments from the floor? You heard the previous introduction?

Mr JACK — Yes.

The CHAIR — If you are right to go, just provide the committee with your full name and address. If you can keep your comments to a couple of minutes, that would be great.

Mr JACK — My name is Ian Jack, [detail removed]. I want to make a comment about what I see as an impediment to the development of tourism in rural Victoria. The recent changes to the farming zone brought about by the broad-brush approach from the planning requirement to go from rural to farming zone and rural activities and rural living has meant that you have to apply for a planning permit for some instances of development. I do not oppose planning permits, but it is the length of time that that process takes. In my own situation it has caused some heartache — so much so that it places the project in jeopardy, just from the length of time it has taken to resolve the issue.

There are no objections to what I am proposing. It is an eco-agriculture development. I think what has happened is that because the shire has been required to go through the municipal planning strategy, it is unsure as to whether our area should fit into the rural activities or the farming zone. It has caused some concern. It is not so much directly from the shire itself, it is from the referral authorities that are raising some issues that I feel have been addressed but continue to go on. I think they could have been resolved with a condition on the planning permit, but they want details, which is extra cost and extra time to resolve.

The CHAIR — We understand the issues you are talking about are real. They are not confined just to Bright or to the tourism areas. There are some frustrations that we feel right across this area. I sympathise with you. I think it is simply a balancing issue. I understand that the planning minister, who is a pretty good fellow, is copping a fair bit at the moment because of some of these issues.

Mr VOGELS — What is your development?

Mr JACK — Seven years ago I established an olive grove and a vineyard. Now I want to develop a winery and an olive processing facility with some host farm-stays adjoining the national park, so it is an eco-agricultural tourism operation.

The CHAIR — Ian, thank you. If you have specific issues, that is what your politicians are for — specific issues in relation to being held up; areas over and above normal delays. Local members are there to help you, and that is our job. We, as local members, will help you through that. Hopefully you can get about doing what you do best. We appreciate you taking the time to share that with us.

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Anyone else who wishes to leave their details in our visitor book, we will gladly take down your details so that we can keep in touch with you. We will keep you on our contact list as we make progress throughout this inquiry. Again, thank you all for your attendance today. I hope those who have been able to present their evidence have been given a good hearing.

Committee adjourned.