

## Inquiry into the protections within the Victorian Planning Framework

Mr Andre Bokos

**Organisation Name:**  
**Your position or role:**

### YOUR SUBMISSION

**Submission:**

To the appointed Committee Members.

Dear Members,

It has become abundantly clear that a review into the Victorian Planning Framework is long overdue given the unsustainable cost of new housing and the access to this new housing by first home buyers. You have quite a list of matters to be examined but I think that the most important issue is how to make critical changes that will deliver a better and fairer outcome for first home buyers.

I have attached for your information a 2006 publication titled Home Truths by Mr Bob Day, at the time a major home builder in a number of Australian states. To say the least it is thought provoking and in my opinion the issues brought to light by Mr Day in 2006 are the same issues that you are being confronted with today. However the problems back then have only compounded and have become more problematic. I think it is important for each of you to read the publication in its entirety so as to support your information gathering and deliberations.

I will now highlight a few personal concerns which underpin the views expressed by Mr Day back in 2006 but since then have become much more toxic. I refer to a recent land subdivision which involved myself and other owners.

Even allowing for Covid the delay in obtaining a town Planning permit was unacceptable. The turnover of staff in the local Planning Department was a contributing factor to the overall delay. (It was the same application but new staff wanted new changes to the Application changes to what former staff had agreed to. So first comes the Planning Permit and then second there is the Works Permit to allow the civil works to commence. But there are inexperienced staff suddenly making new demands that aren't logical thereby causing further delays and increased costs before a start can be made. So I say there is a major problem with Local Government being in charge of land development generally. It is also involved in the release of land for housing and is responsible for preparing a precinct Structure Plan which can take forever to be completed and finally approved by the Minister of the day. The system is bottlenecked at local Government level and in my opinion a new streamlined approach to housing land availability and planning approvals must be developed. In fact I think that Local Government should be removed from the process altogether.

There is the issue of investors being involved in the same market as first home buyers, Why? It's clear to me that investors should not be competing in the same market as they have a serious advantage over first home buyers. Investors have better access to finance, they can leverage against an existing home or homes. Some folk have multiple homes and I don't have a problem with that as long as they are not competing with first home buyers in the new housing market. Some will argue that investors provide stock for the rental market so buy established homes not new housing. Investors are able to invest in other property types - it does not have to be new housing that competes with the first home buyer.

A lot can be said about protecting Green Wedges around our cities. I have noticed that townships caught up in Green Wedges have difficulty in growth due to the draconian rules governing Green Wedges. This is

wrong. Such townships should be allowed to expand so as to provide a place for the children of the current families to live. Once children become adults they leave their communities because there is no provision made for them to live where they have grown up and have become part of that community's fabric. What's left are parents getting older and their kids have gone elsewhere. A real shame. The local community misses out in many ways. Are planning restrictions meant to contribute to such a position ?

Again with Green Wedge provisions there is no review process that I am aware of. For example a title to land covered by two zonings is an anomaly and there is no process to logically resolve the issue other than apply for an amendment to the Planning Scheme which needs to be approved by the Planning Minister. Good luck with that. This is a ridiculous situation and authority needs to be given to a type of review panel that has power to make logical changes to the otherwise draconian provisions of the Green Wedge.

I think I will leave it there and finish by wishing all committee members well in your investigations into the first home buyer market. I hope you will be brave enough to bring changes in a number of areas in the Victorian Planning Framework .

Yours sincerely,

ANDRE MARK BOKOS

**FILE ATTACHMENTS**

**File1:** [61f7b84014a50-Home Truths - Bob Day.pdf](#)

**File2:**

**File3:**

**Signature:**

Andre Mark Bokos