

Inquiry into the protections within the Victorian Planning Framework

Alison Pridham

Organisation Name:
Your position or role:

YOUR SUBMISSION

Submission:

Cost of Housing:

The increasing cost of housing in Victoria marginalises all with low income. Provision of social housing is inadequate rendering many temporarily homeless. Several factors could be considered to reduce these consequences of unaffordable housing.

Provide enough social housing for low income people. It should not be necessary for example for a hospital cleaner to have to commute 2-3 hours a day because there is no affordable housing near work.

Grandfather negative gearing. Existing landlords would not be affected and removal of landlords from the buyers market should go some way to easing the property bubble.

Outlaw short stay whole house or apartment accommodation such as airbnb unless the host lives in the same property. Such accommodation places upward pressure on rents and hollows out the community leaving only tourist accommodation which is often empty during the week and occupied on weekends. Barcelona experienced such loss of community due to tourism so they banned airbnb accommodation. Sounds like a great solution. Purpose built hotels and apartments are a better option.

Population policies of the Federal government have impacted Victoria and placed upward pressure on the price of housing. Parts of Melbourne have seen rapid increases in population. The Federal government could be pressured to bring immigration back to a sustainable level. This would assist in helping large cities such as Melbourne absorb the influx without negatively impacting housing price, commute times, and overburdening existing infrastructure.

Environmental Sustainability and vegetation protection:

Provision for this should be obvious. The urban heat island effect this summer in my neighbourhood has been severe. 3 houses in my short street have been demolished to make way for multiple occupancy dwellings. Along with the houses, the vegetation also disappeared. Large rear gardens with mature bushes and trees protect us from the worst of the heat. Unfortunately, gardens are disappearing at such a rate, we will all be needing to run our air conditioners for much longer periods to achieve a comfortable temperature to exist. Planning and building codes allow for tiny amounts of private open space. If these were increased and a requirement to plant some vegetation, it would help. Reducing hard surfaces and allowing the rainfall we do get to be absorbed rather than run into overflowing drainage and would help reduce flooding.

It should also go without saying that buildings should be made of suitable material to last a very long time. Some poorly built structures from the last 30 years are already only suitable for demolition. Instead of demolition, we could first consider retrofitting existing buildings and housing stock. Newly built housing should be of an energy efficient standard.

Communities:

Our suburban communities have evolved primarily as single storey dwellings on large blocks. The push to

raise height limits in suburban hubs is at odds with the surroundings. Some people living in single storey dwellings have had 8-10 storeys foisted upon their very doorsteps. A more measured approach could be to encourage more 2 storey dwellings so that the impact of the large towers is not felt so keenly by the surrounding community.

I have been shocked at the number of inappropriate developments rejected by various councils throughout Melbourne only for those developments to be fast tracked through VCAT. There is a push for the councils to be shut out of the planning process. It seems that VCAT is no longer willing or able to consider the objections of surrounding community. Bring back planning decisions to local communities. They know how their suburbs should look and feel.

Heritage:

Loss of important heritage buildings is always shocking. There is real need for independent heritage advisors. In my area, Port Phillip Council has recently conducted a heritage review and flagged some very important buildings. I have welcomed the council involvement and commitment to Port Phillip's rich heritage. I would like to know that these buildings are afforded real protection.

Developers who demolish protected buildings should not ever be allowed to build on the land. We need much stronger laws here. A fine will not negatively impact them in a way that will prevent such losses. The same should go for significant tree removal. They should be made to replace said trees with mature trees of the same species and be held back from developing until they are compliant with the law.

FILE ATTACHMENTS

File1:

File2:

File3:

Signature:

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