

OUTER SUBURBAN/INTERFACE SERVICES AND
DEVELOPEMENT COMMITTEE

SUBMISSION FOR GREG HEFFERNAN
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I am Greg Heffernan ,I own and farm, lots 1,2,and11a, a 217ha farm at Donovans lane Beveridge,35km north of Melbourne in the UGB investigation area.

I have lived on this farm since 1973 with my family. It is a beef and sheep property.

Public consultation:-

Such a massive plan for Melbourne should not be rushed. The impacts on so many are great and to have a 28day consultation period is absolutely ridiculous and insulting. The amount of information to be digested in such a small time is designed to confuse and deter any ordinary working people from making a submission.

To add to the difficulty of getting information, not one of my questions I had for the information line 1800 090 789 were answered. Questions as simple as "What is significantly constrained mean"?

On the simple plan sent to me most of my land was significantly constrained (see reports), so I asked for those reports, six times finally ringing the GAA on 6.7.09 11 days before submissions closed only to be told I would not be getting them. I finally obtained copies from a friend.

I had a meeting on the 11/6/09 and asked many questions to which the GAA could not answer. They replied they would get back to me the next week. I am still waiting for their response. When I was at the meeting, I was given a guarantee that someone from the GAA would come out and go through my property situation with me. I had a meeting with Peter Seemer, CEO of the GAA he guaranteed me the same thing. I rang to force a date and I am still waiting.

I canvassed people coming out the of the information sessions held between 24 June/4th July most had not learned anymore about their property situation at all. Some said they were more confused and the information session created more questions and few were satisfied.

I believe the release of the UGB ,OMR, RAIL LINK. GRASSLANDS PROPOSAL and the E6 in conjunction is a plan to send people into information overload!

Information sent out prior to the information sessions and after the December 2nd announcements was disgraceful. I asked 4 of the post offices in my area about the mail out by the GAA, they commented that all of the letters were addressed to the landowner/occupier (aka junk mail) a lot of which are just vacant blocks. They told me between 30-50% of these letters were "return to sender". If the GAA were serious about notification why weren't names and address of rate payers of the affected land sought from Shire councils. These letters were sent out one week after the closure of submissions. I asked the GAA why did this

happen? They said it was because of the bushfires, I find this response the most insulting of them all. When WERE the GAA going to send out the notices, the 7th February was just before the closing date of the submissions and why would bushfires interrupt their business in the middle of Melbourne. I was fighting the fires on a CFA tanker in Kinglake but when I asked the GAA on the 18th February for an extension of time for my submission, the answer was, they close on the 20th and no submission will be accepted after.

When the whole proposal is rejected in the upper house Justin Madden will have to re draw the UGB & discard the GAIC and start the whole process again. I believe proper consultation be sought by the planning bodies and a fairer information and response period implemented.

GAIC:-

As I have criticized before in public consultation, the GAIC has been constantly changing its information making it difficult to exactly know **who has to pay what**, contributing to the confusion in the community. I can see only two reasons for the constant changes, one is to confuse people so they have the wrong opinion therefore discounting their grievances and two the GAA really don't know what they are doing and making policy on the run. Both of which make a farce of the GAA's sustainable planning.

The GAA in its current form should not be implemented because

- Its is a flat rate and is not linked to the price achieved (some properties and more valuable than others.

- It affects inheritances. It applies if a will directs that a property be sold and divided by beneficiaries.

- Floor analysis of land values. The study done by CKC is not open for public scrutiny.

- Leads to a massive reduction in equity and borrowing capacity. I know of a few families on 2+ Hectares that with their loan for their property and the GAIC they now owe more money than their property is worth.

- The GAIC at this stage is going up at least twice the rate of CPI. \$80,000 in 2005 to \$95,000 in 2008.

- Expecting me to pay for infrastructure that I will never use and have gone without.

- Properties can be sold many times for larger profits than the first vendor received but they pay no GAIC and is simply not fair.

- We already have to pay CGT which is somewhat fair, and we have owned our property since 1973.

- Outside the boundary doesn't have to pay the GAIC. In my area I know of four developments just outside the boundary.

- In Melbourne there is no infrastructure tax for the hundreds if not

thousands of units stretching existing infrastructure to the maximum. Of course upgrading existing infrastructure is many times more expensive than in a new development on the city edge, but they pay no tax.

The only fair way to implement an infrastructure tax is to level it at the developer were ever the development is.. A developer would adjust the price for land bought and sold to cover the GAIC thus giving a shared approach to the tax and also makes the user of the infrastructure pay for their usage.

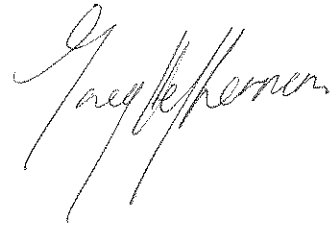
I understand that NSW has a developer infrastructure tax that supplies 75% of the cost of infrastructure. Were as the VIC gaic only supplies 15-20% of the infrastucture needed and is leveled at landholders that have worked so hard to own their property. I also note that NSW does not have a hardship committee to justify its infrastructure tax. **Alarm bells should be ringing when a government imposes a tax that it intends to cause hardship!** No doubt that this committee will be funded with the gaic, thus reducing payments to infrastructure ;as is the GAA .It would be interesting to know just how much funding the GAA would require to fix all the problems created by poor government planning? I suspect a great deal more than was first budgeted for, and once again reducing monies available for infrastructure.

The governments insinuates that landholders in the growth areas are greedy, and are contributing to a reduction in houseing affordability.This is simply not true.Take the gaa's unsubstanciated land values \$225000 to \$450000 average of \$365000. .As a rule of thumb there are 15 blocks of land per hectre. \$365000 divided by 15 = \$24300 per block of land.(In reality it is less than \$20000.)The cheapest house and land package is around \$300000 . So the landholder who supplies the main tangible asset in the package gets less than 10% of the \$300000.WHO IS GREEDY? Its a bit like the dairy farmer who supplies milk for 18cents a litre but consumers pay over\$2.00 for it.The majority of the costs involved in housing affordability are generated by the developer, builders and governments. Its simply not fair to level a infrastucture tax on the sale of farm land. Houseing affordability is driven by melbourne's house prices,now averaging over \$500000, not by some farmer who only gets given what his/her land is worth.

The impact on me and my family has been huge, all of our future plans are now up in the air .We have just finished building our family home 30metres from the OMR which also impacts on the value of the farm.Living here has become a constant struggle.There is always some problem I have to deal with, not of my own making.The problems are only going to get worse the closer Melbourne comes. The impact can be sumed up.My yongest daughter aged 9 was looking through our photo album the other day and said

"look mum that was when daddy used to smile".

Yours sincerely Greg Heffernan

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Greg Heffernan". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.