



Submission to Select Committee on Public Land Development

19 September 2007

The Secretary
Legislative Council Select Committee on Public Land Development
Parliament of Victoria
Spring Street
Melbourne VIC 3002

Mr Richard Willis

Dear Sir

I am a landowner in the City of Casey and would like to submit my thoughts towards the retrospective laws that have been imposed on us by the Victorian Labour government to date. I would like to indicate to you that the M2030 has made it impossible for green wedge and rural conservation zones landowners to survive and or benefit in later years of life. While the M2030 favours high-density living, Government departments such as the DSE limit uses on private land ownership using the environment as a smokescreen whilst selling off public land ownership supported by the Victorian Labour Government for quick political financial gain e.g Royal Park.

Therefore turning private land into open space at **landowners expense with no compensation in return**. This in itself is **discriminating** whilst **misleading** the communities into believing that it is their public open space. This should not be tolerated in a country like Australia that promotes **democracy**. **Democracy should be for all not just the few**.

Why does the Victorian government develop on Public land and not Private Land, which is in abundance throughout the metropolitan areas of Melbourne.

Why does government give favour to developers and not landowners when there is such a shortage of land supply?

Below is a description and profile in the time I purchased my land.

1961 Left Melbourne. Occupation – Builder. Moved to Shire of Cranbourne.

On Medical advice to help autistic son. Myself Alan Rowe aged 34 and my wife Jennifer aged 31 with two sons aged 8 and 6 at the time.

Short term aim – immediate to derive living from Dairy Farm.

Long term aim – To subdivide my Manks Road property into 7 to 8 acre blocks – build a home and outbuildings - plant all boundaries and internal paddocks with native trees enclosed in double fencing and generally **improve** this rather flat uninteresting area while providing financial security for my family in later years. I emphasise we had **the legal right** to subdivide at the time of purchase. The **without consultation** we were informed these rights were taken away by government decision and without recompense of any kind.

N.B. this removed all our existing property rights re future aims for our later years.

Then in 1967-1968 we had a very severe drought in this area – we lost over half of our livestock and I was compelled to engage in contract building and fencing while still running the farm i.e working 16hrs per day 7 days a week to make enough money to pay farm purchase instalments and survive. We found it took many years to rebuild and recoup our losses. We continued to reapply for the subdivision and we were told – ‘Despite our personal view that it would be in the best interests of your area as well as you (the owner) we cannot approve your application under these ‘New planning laws’ by planning department ‘City of Casey’.

N.B. this illustrates both the discrimination and loss of rights forced upon us, while urban areas at that time and today still retain this right.

Also as we were forced to cash in our superannuation policies during this drought. Now our only retirement funds (the right to subdivide) have been taken from us by government decree.

During the 1970-1980's we have planted many native trees – eradicated noxious weeds – installed both rainwater and septic system for sewerage, all at huge personal expense.

From 1980's to present time. As we observe the continual disintegration of the green wedge areas granted by both Local and State governments to certain developers and note the huge costs of needed infrastructure involved we can plainly see why **owners are being forced to pay for 'Special Charge Schemes' and 'Urban Rates' (in a green wedge zone)** for even much needed basic infrastructure by City of Casey.

N.B. Illustrating further that the Urban Growth Boundary causes severe discrimination with the act as applied by the City of Casey perpetuates an Urban verses Rural clash.

We the landowners in the green wedge have only 1 councillor to represent us against the mainly urban wards. We have in actuality become disenfranchised with almost non-existent council representation.

As for land management – planting of trees – eradication of noxious weeds and vermin control we state that since the **removal** of many of these once government services that now have been affectively **transferring these responsibility onto the shoulders** of landowners.

**N.B. WE PROVIDE SERVICES FOR OTHERS
I.E. FREE LABOUR AT HIGH COST, WE ARE UNPAID PARK RANGERS AND
CONTINUE TO RECEIVE NO COMPENSATION OR RECOMPENSE.**

My recommendations

- • To reinstate traditional property rights these governments have taken away.
- • Regain power back to Council to justify planning applications to either endorse or throw out for the benefit of their community.
- Compensate landowners for loss of rights.
- Councils to research land capability studies.
- Consultations to be good start to planning.
- Landowners to be represented by non-urban voice at Council elections.
- Consideration on GW landowners being a community of interest.

I urge the panel to consider the restrictions and zoning relating to Green Wedge and Rural Conservation to restore rights to landowners. The quicker these rights are restored the quicker we find the solutions towards the housing crises that many Victorians are facing today.

Thankyou for letting me have this opportunity to submit to the Select Committee on Public land Development. Unfortunately I will not be able to submit in person.

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