

Vic Parliament must fix the planning system

Fixing the States outdated and complex planning system should be the number one priority as State Parliament reconvenes today, according to the Master Builders Association of Victoria.

Executive Director of Victorias peak building industry group, Brian Welch, said managing the States booming population and housing affordability crisis will require an overhaul of the planning system.

Fixing the planning system, expanding the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and reforming the Growth Area Infrastructure Contribution (GAIC) are the top three challenges for this parliamentary session, he said.

Victorias planning system must be made responsive to Melbournes needs. At present, it takes 18 weeks to secure a residential planning permit and five years to secure development ready land on the urban fringe of Melbourne.

Delays in obtaining a planning permit, especially in inner-suburbs, and the shortage of land on the urban fringe are driving-up house prices.

Melbourne has dropped from the twelfth to the eighth most unaffordable city in one year according to Demographias recent International Housing Affordability Survey of the US, Canada, the UK, Ireland and New Zealand.

Without more land, the industry cannot be expected to increase the supply of housing. The expansion of Melbournes Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) has been attached to a \$95,000 per hectare tax called the Growth Area Infrastructure Contribution (GAIC).

This tax should be reformed and legislation to expand the UGB should be passed by Parliament as soon as possible.

Victorias population is growing by 1,200 people per week. If we are to successfully house a larger population at affordable prices, then the planning system must be fixed.

ENDS

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