

media alert



MASTERS OF OUR INDUSTRY

Master Builders Association of Victoria
ABN: 38 004 255 654

18/11/10

Coalition Releases Sweet and Sour Planning Policy

The Coalitions' Planning Policy is a mixture of sweet and sour for Victorian families looking for genuine solutions to Victoria's housing affordability crisis.

Master Builders Association of Victoria Executive Director, Brian Welch said today's policy announcement contains several high quality land management reform proposals, but essentially misses the mark on the critical issue of planning reform.

"One of the main causes of Victoria's worsening housing affordability is our dysfunctional planning system," said Mr Welch. "It currently takes an average of 18 weeks to secure a residential planning permit in Victoria adding \$19,500 to a typical housing project.

"Builders and aspiring homebuyers were looking to the Coalition for a genuine shakeup in this critical policy area, but will walk away disappointed.

"Encouragingly, the Coalition has vowed to fix Victoria's acute, long term residential land shortage by committing to provide 20 to 25 years of land supply in the growth areas of Melbourne, Geelong and Victoria's other major cities.

"Victoria currently has less than four years of development ready land in some regions. The Coalitions' land release policies will help ease land prices over the coming decade by increasing supply for future development.

"Master Builders welcomes the Coalitions' promise of an audit of Green Wedge land and tax relief for land owners in the growth areas. These two reforms will help Melbourne grow more affordably.

"Reforms to the planning powers of Catchment Management Authorities will also improve development outcomes for regional Victorians by removing planning authority conflicts within their communities.

"Victorian builders will warmly welcome the Coalition's proposals for a revised Coastal Strategy, a Peri-Urban Council Unit, a Metropolitan Livability Audit and Code Assessment for development.

"The creation of a Peri-Urban Council Unit is a long overdue reform which will assist with the planning, financing and management of community development in Victoria's critical interchange suburbs.

"The Coalition's proposal to shift the responsibilities of the Growth Area Authority (GAA) and Planning Facilitation Unit into a new Urban Planning Unit (UPU) has merit, but only goes partway towards the reform necessary to address Victoria's failing planning system.

"Further centralisation of planning, building and development powers under a new Minister for Building is the only way Victoria can effectively get spiralling regulation and bureaucratic conflicts under control.

"Master Builders opposes the Coalitions' plan to remove Clause 16 within VC71 (State Planning Policy Framework). Clause 16 is a necessary part of Melbourne's long term growth strategy and enjoys the strong support of Victoria's builders.

"Despite strong rhetoric about tackling Victoria's worsening housing affordability crisis, today's announcement leaves a bitter-sweet taste in the mouth of aspiring homebuyers.

Media enquiries: Brian Welch, Executive Director, 0411 501 075
Laura Luvara, Media Adviser, 9411 4534, 0466 777 059, lluvara@mbav.com.au
Asher Judah, Campaign Manager 0413 450 254

“Attention will now turn to the State Government to see if they have been listening to community’s housing affordability concerns in the planning policy area.

“Unless our housing affordability crisis is addressed soon, home ownership will only be a dream for the wealthy. More info about the Master Builders Housing Affordability Campaign ‘Is Anybody Listening?’ is available at www.isanybodylistening.com.au.