

Samantha Ratnam MLC on behalf of the **Victorian Greens**

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Q. Do you/your party support the ongoing role of the independent position of the Victorian Government Architect, and if so, what do you believe their primary remit should be?

Yes. The independence and authority of the Victorian Government Architect needs to be respected and properly resourced by government. We would like to see a much stronger and expanded role for the OVGA Design Review Panel which, though voluntary at the moment, has proven to be a valuable mechanism to encourage higher quality design for significant proposals. We would also like to see the advisory role of the OVGA embedded across all government departments and agencies involved in delivering major capital works to ensure that government - in whatever guise - is leading by example on good design.

Q. Do you/your party acknowledge that there are systemic issues within the construction industry that are significantly compromising the quality of our built environment and if so what would you define these as being?

Yes. We are particularly concerned about the removal of architects from projects after planning permits are granted. Major developments should be required to have engaged registered architects in submitting plans for planning permission, and retaining those architects across the detailed design and construction phases. Substitution of architects should be more closely regulated so that decisions by developers that have the effect of diminishing quality of design across the development cycle can be clearly identified as a breach of a planning permit and easily enforced by responsible authorities.

Q. Do you/your party support the introduction of legislation requiring all apartment buildings over three storeys to be designed and delivered by registered architects?

Yes. We acknowledge however that any such legislation will need to be carefully crafted to avoid gaming of the system by unscrupulous parties.

Q. What will your party do to strengthen the role of the ARBV, address Victoria's dated Architects Act and strengthen the role of architects in Victorian building works?

The Greens support a review and updating of the *Architects Act 1991* and *Building Act 1993*, noting that there is a particular urgency in reviewing the latter to bring about safer and more sustainable development.

Q. What is your/your party's position on housing choices (diversity of options) and how do you plan to ensure a supply of affordable housing in the future?

Victoria - particularly Melbourne - is in the midst of a housing affordability crisis. The Greens are frustrated that *Homes For Victorians* is not being implemented quickly, and that we are still at the 'trial' stage of inclusionary zoning which, given that it is only being trialled on small parcels of government owned land, is not a useful precursor to a systemic approach to inclusionary zoning across privately owned land. The Greens will introduce inclusionary zoning at a rate of 30% public, community or affordable homes in all new large-scale housing developments across Melbourne. Further, it is our policy to:

- Build 40,000 new public housing dwellings over the next six years and a further 40,000 public, community and other affordable homes in the six years from 2025. This investment is estimated at \$30bn at today's prices. Housing is a right and the government must reclaim its role as a provider, most importantly to reduce the public housing waiting list currently in excess of 80,000.
- Stop the sell-off of public housing estates.
- Support the community housing sector with an investment of \$200m in the next two years.
- Properly analyse the impact of discretionary planning controls on land speculation and the flow-on effect to dwelling affordability, and convert these into clearer controls to mitigate the effect.

The Greens want a planning system that facilitates a variety of housing options in established and renewal areas. Newly planned greenfield and brownfield sites should stipulate a mix of dwelling sizes where the market is failing to deliver such a mix. Throughout the planning system, barriers to providing alternative housing models should be removed, and build-to-rent and baugruppen models explicitly supported and promoted.