

Legislative Council
Parliament House
Spring St
Melbourne VIC., 3002
Telephone: 9651 8911



Tenancy 1- 011B,
670 Chapel St
South Yarra VIC. 3141
Telephone: 9827 - 6655
david.davis@parliament.vic.gov.au

David M. Davis, M.P.
Member for Southern Metropolitan Region
Shadow Minister for Public Transport
Shadow Minister for Planning
Shadow Minister for Equality

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Ruth White
Executive Director – Vic Chapter
Australian Institute of Architects
Level 1/ 41 Exhibition Street
Melbourne, VIC 3000

e: ruth.white@architecture.com.au

Dear Ruth

On behalf of the Liberal Nationals, I offer the following responses to the Institute of Architects' Victorian Pre-election Platform.

Role of the Victorian Government Architect

The Liberal Nationals support the ongoing role of the Victorian Government Architect, but believe this position's independence needs to be restored and enhanced.

If elected to government, we will locate the Office of the Victorian Government Architect in the Department of Planning, rather than the Department of Premier and Cabinet, which is where it was moved by the Andrews Labor Government.

The Liberal Nationals have been deeply concerned at evidence, revealed through Freedom of Information, of inappropriate interventions by Department of Premier and Cabinet officials and Level Crossing Removal Authority Communication and Stakeholder Relations personnel in advice provided to government by the OVGA, including on the relative merits of rail-under-road level crossing removals.

Government communications advisers are no substitute for the advice of a qualified architect.

The primary remit of the OVGA should be the provision of frank and fearless expert advice to government, something sadly that is not currently the case.

Better Design Standards and Practices

A Liberal Nationals Government will deliver Australia's first ever minister for the building industry.

This new minister will oversee a new and co-ordinated approach to ensuring that this important industry, one of Victoria's largest employers, gets the recognition it deserves, and complies with appropriate design, industrial relations, occupational health and safety and other standards.

Role of the ARBV and Architects

In government, the Liberal Nationals would open a dialogue with the Institute of Architects about a range of issues that relate to the important place architects occupy in the design, building and construction sector.

Housing Diversity and Supply

A Liberal Nationals Government will fast-track the release of up to an additional 290,000 residential housing lots to help make more houses more affordable.

It's never been harder for Victorians to own a home and there is no silver bullet to fix Victoria's housing affordability crisis. But one of the biggest ways to address housing affordability is to increase land supply. Greater land supply will drive price competition in the growth area land market.

For this reason, we will fast-track the completion of the planning of all metropolitan Precinct Structure Plans by 30 June 2020. This land was rezoned for urban growth in 2010 but most of it still has not been released for homebuyers to build on.

Areas to be fast-tracked are in the western, northern and south eastern growth corridors of Melbourne. In the west, it includes parts of the Local Government areas of Melton and Wyndham. In the north, it includes parts of Hume, Whittlesea and Mitchell. In the south east growth corridor this land includes parts of Casey and Cardinia. Along with residential suburbs, also included are areas allocated for employment. This will not require any change to the current urban growth boundary and all approvals are within the current growth boundary.

To help fast-track this land release and the issuing of land titles to homebuyers a Liberal Nationals Government will introduce streamlined processes to slash unnecessary and unreasonable delays. Labor, in government for 15 of the last 19 years, including the last 4, has done virtually nothing to accelerate the development of a build-to-rent residential accommodation asset class.

Indeed, Labor's stifling of development opportunities in Southbank through its deliberate inaction, and the CBD through its excessively rigid C270 planning restrictions, have acted as a disincentive to the development of higher density build-to-rent residential accommodation.

The Liberal Nationals will, in government, examine planning reforms that remove disincentives to the development of build to rent residential accommodation.

Yours sincerely,



The Hon David Davis MP
Member for Southern Metropolitan Region
Shadow Minister for Public Transport, Planning and Equality