

Housing Supply Regulation

Productivity Commission

GPO Box 1428

Canberra City ACT 2601

Further to your call for submissions to the Housing Supply Regulation I would like to offer a few of my thoughts in this regard with a preface. Over the years I have made various submissions when requested on matters relating to planning and land development and in all honestly feel it has fallen on deaf ears and am disillusioned by any meaningful changes that have occurred as a result. To my mind when there is a call for change and the streamlining of practice, the ensuing result ends up with more red tape to traverse and additional bureaucracy to deal with that ultimately causes undue delays and additional costs.

Furthermore, allowances in legislation must be made that differentiates between city and regional development, as in the old saying one size does not fit all. Such as a SEPP in NSW for instance. A city centric SEPP generally doesn't apply to regional areas and more often than not comes with adverse consequences. Point in mind is the NSW Housing Pattern Book which may be okay for a city with reasonable and effective public transport facilities where the need for a motor vehicle is not paramount and may be offset with public transport. However, in regional areas where there is a reliance on private transportation the model provisions in the aforementioned book does not regulate sufficient minimum off street parking. The result for a regional area is not a good planning outcome with adverse long term social and economic impacts.

That said I would preface the following comments relate more to land development and not the supply of housing.

Which regulatory reforms should governments prioritise to get more homes built more quickly? What evidence (case studies and data) can you provide to support your answer?

Rezoning of land is a very time consuming and costly process. Studies such as but not limited to those relating to flora, fauna, biodiversity, aboriginal archaeological, traffic, contamination, flooding, bush fire, serviceability, all need to be addressed, not to mention the planning pathway that needs to be followed in seeking the required approval. Lets assume the land is rezoned, why then is there a need to duplicate these studies in a development application when the development proposed is permissible within that zone.. Surely once the land is rezoned the matters relating to any issues raised in the studies to rezone the land have been addressed, For instance land identified as containing protected flora or habitats required for vulnerable fauna, flood liable land, asset protection zones etc would have already been removed from land capable of residential development. The DA to subdivide for instance should not require any of these studies and potentially in most instances be limited to the lot layout and servicing strategy. Completing studies that have already been undertaken to rezone land is just an added time constraint and an additional

cost that could and should be avoided. All of which would reduce the cost to develop the land value and ultimately a cheaper consumer price to purchase.

One particular development comes to mind where the land had been continually farmed and cultivated for over 40 years. A DA was lodged for subdivision and approval granted for the entire site. Development has commenced and progressed in stages over the past 19 years with the residue lands left to fallow. A Council driven change to the minimum lot size required the developer to initially modify the original approval and ultimately lodge a new DA over the residue land that had an on going active approval. With each modification and the new DA, Council required the original environmental and traffic studies to be updated or new studies undertaken. The new DA, which I again stress covered land previously approved to subdivide, has been delayed for nearly a year whilst waiting for, inter alia, the results of a flora and fauna report. These unnecessary time delays do nothing to address the housing shortage nor the cost of the land to the end user.

One has only to refer to the NSW planning portal for hundreds of other case studies.

Which recent reforms to approvals (for example, fast-track pathways, coordination bodies, AI-assistance) have been the most and least effective in increasing new housing supply?

In my opinion the lodgement of documents via the NSW Planning portal has not increased the development approval timeframes. This is another level of bureaucracy and additional cost for nil benefit.

The increased number of government departments that have increased their level of involvement in land development have certainly attributed to the delays in gaining approvals. Whilst there may be statutory time frames for such departments to respond or comment, these are more often than not never met and Council's are reluctant to proceed without first obtaining a response, regardless, even if they have the authority to do so.

Which specific zoning and land-use controls most limit the supply of new housing? What are the benefits to consider of specific land-use controls? How does this vary across particular Australian jurisdictions or areas?

In my regional area I don't believe the zoning or land use controls unduly limit new housing. Factors such as DA approval timeframes, statutory fees and charges imposed by Council and state have the greatest impacts. In addition third party approvals from say electrical authorities all attribute to further delays.

How important are land release arrangements (including subdivision and titling) in limiting housing supply in an area, relative to other zoning and land-use controls?

Refer to comments above.

How do development contributions and contributions frameworks affect project feasibility and new housing supply?

Again, with regard to land development, I have been saying for years the biggest beneficiary from land development is Council. Council receives money from headworks charges, s.7.11 contributions, DA fees, inspection fees, rezoning fees plus the on going additional rate revenue. All of which is received without risk. The electrical authorities and State also benefit immensely from development with the fees they are able to charge from the additional electrical infrastructure. Maybe the fees charged should be reduced and possibly the timing payment of these fees!!!! My understanding is that Section 7.11 contributions and headworks fees should be charged when there is an increased demand for the provision of infrastructure and services. Subdivision does not create an increased demand, It is when the occupants moving into a dwelling that initiates the increase on those services. Maybe the timing of charges would allow the increase of land and building development by reducing holding costs and stamp duty.

What other regulations relating to housing-enabling infrastructure should be a priority for reform to increase new housing supply?

Stamp duty costs and timing of development contribution payments.

Regards

David Lord
[Redacted]
Email: [Redacted]
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