

To Whom it may Concern

I write in response to the Productivity Commission Housing Supply
Regulation Interim Report

**I offer a recent letter to The Age which sums up my
concerns:**

Susan Mahar [Redacted]
to letters

***Why would any Planning Minister so ruthlessly turn their back on local
planning expertise when we have such an urgent need to adapt to global
warming as well as increase housing? (Yes Minister 7/10)***

***We have an approved 'Fast Track' seven-level proposal near us where
apartments have been advertised from one \$1,650,000 to seven million. Those
most dismayed and outraged, were young workers in the pub opposite. They
had naively believed they were looking at a plan for affordable housing.***

***Fast Track planning decisions have not provided affordable buildings where
young people want and need to live. Locations with ready access to trams,
buses and an abundance of local amenities should be earmarked for those
wishing to go car-free and enjoy the reduced costs of an apartment without a
garage. This is the congested inner-city afterall.***

E in

***How long can we tolerate threats to Melbourne's liveability without questioning
who is benefitting from this planning fiasco?***

Susan Mahar
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

I live in an inner -city f Melbourne so the above letter published last week in The Age
expresses my concern with the directions we are headed with housing supply. I live in an
area with a heritage overlay. It is not grand, but it is vibrant. Fitzroy North, as part of Yarra
City is a densely populated area. We do not have lawns and spacious outdoor areas,
most houses open almost directly onto the streets. So people know and care about
each other – there is a remarkable sense of community. I have estimated the land and
largely single level houses around me could probably house the equivalent of the 26
new apartments to be built in the advertised 7-level building referred to in my letter

above. At best the fast track building above will be a version of a gated community for retirees. It is difficult to see any community benefit.

Of course plans to wipe heritage overlays add insult to injury. Yarra, like the rest of Melbourne is made up of separate villages, each with it's own unique characteristics and valued for different reasons by those residents who know and love the area.

[Redacted]

Melbourne has a unique history. The Victorian era social, cultural and architectural history is reflected in its rows of Victorian worker's cottages and pubs as well as its grander buildings from the Goldrush era. While the grand architecture of courthouses, townhalls, theatres and municipal buildings is magnificent, it is probably the character of neighbourhood cottages and local shopping strips which attract visitors to soak up the ambiance. Our local village strip hosts an eclectic mix of bars, cafes, bakeries and restaurants as well as shops supplying most basic needs. It is an area that attracts a whole lot of visitors, day and night. It is vibrant and clearly contributes hugely to the economy. A recent survey of the community and visitors revealed the love of community and eclectic mix of charming places amongst all ages. Some young people said they liked the 'old buildings' without actually identifying them as heritage buildings. I would add the benefits of health and well being as vital, as anyone in our neighbourhood village can be seen enjoying a heritage skyline which opens up a glimpse of a day as well as a night time sky. – something blocked of course by high-rise buildings.

I am part of a community planning group who had begun the process of identifying what residents, businesses owners, employees and visitors value, and how change could be managed, knowing we need to provide for an increasing density of population. We saw ourselves communicating with council to come up with positive solutions to housing, especially with the need to adapt to climate change in a fragile area prone to flooding. Local knowledge, especially local council knowledge, is critical if we are to adapt to change but maintain Melbourne's liveability. Many of us are grandparents. We care about people and their future. Fast Track planning is a fast track to disaster.

Yours sincerely,

Susan Mahar

[Redacted]