

PLANNING BACKLASH

Protecting our liveability today for tomorrow

Environment & Natural Resources Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
Melbourne 3000

SUBMISSION FROM PLANNING BACKLASH coalition of resident groups from city country and coast on
MELBOURNE'S FUTURE WATER SUPPLY

PLANNING BACKLASH is a network of more than 140 Resident Action Groups right across Melbourne Metropolitan area, along the coast and into the country, all very concerned about the effect the Government's flawed Planning Policy known as Melbourne 2030 is having on the liveability of their areas.

It is clearly understood that the Government is intent on increasing the population without increasing the infrastructure. They have an erroneous belief that they can keep overloading the infrastructure with yet more people. It is also understood that the Government see increase of population as the way to keep the economy strong as most manufacturing has gone offshore and all we make now is buildings.

We find that all infrastructure is stretched to breaking point. The worst example is water as it has been made worse by a long drought, which may be permanent. Instead of building more dams as the population increased the Government just kept telling people to cut down water use.

The Government seem to have been ignoring the warnings of scientists for some years about climate change and still keep pushing our population up and now in desperation they are grasping at ways of getting more water without proper long term planning. It is desperation to take water from the Goulburn river system for Melbourne and put food production at risk. It might win city votes but it is bad for our future.

PLANNING BACKLASH urges a 20 year water strategy and we would support measures such as the following;

- * build more dams
- * harvest storm water for recycling
- * sewage recycling for parks and gardens
- * tanks to be compulsory in all new dwellings
- * substantial government assistance for tanks in existing dwellings
- * commerce and industry to have strict water usage controls
- * industry to use their own recycled water
- * government to fund covering of water irrigation canals to control loss due to evaporation
- * banning of tree logging and building in or near water catchment areas

PLANNING BACKLASH is opposed to the following;

- * The desalination plant as proposed at Wonthaggi. This is extremely expensive both to build and to run. It is also very damaging to a beautiful part of the Victorian coast, a tragedy for future generations.
- * The pipeline from the north-east of Victoria that is in the process of being built. This pipeline threatens our food producing areas and it is uncertain about the future flows of the rivers in question. Does seem absurd to be making a big gesture declaring national parks for the River Red Gums and then steal their water so that they will die.
- * Use of drinking water by commerce and industry
- * Encouraging the high population growth of Melbourne which this Government is doing, instead it should be curtailed to be in line with existing infrastructure to keep Melbourne liveable.

PLANNING BACKLASH does not believe the current plans to solve the water crisis by this government are in the best interests of the people of Victoria and are more like a drowning man clutching at straws. The Government is culpable doing nothing about the situation until this late stage, and we urge that better plans be produced. We also urge the Government to alter its policy about encouraging migration at least until all infrastructure is in place to accommodate them

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