

10 November 2026

Dear Jane,

RE: Liveable Victoria Election Questionnaire

Thank you for writing on behalf of Liveable Victoria and for sharing your questionnaire outlining the planning and housing priorities of your supporting community organisations.

I appreciate the important contribution your member groups make to planning discussions across Victoria, particularly in advocating for community consultation, neighbourhood character, heritage protection and responsible development.

The Liberals and Nationals recognise the need to deliver more housing while ensuring local communities have a meaningful say in how their neighbourhoods develop.

That is why we have committed to repealing Labor's activity centre program, including the housing choice and transport zone and built form overlay introduced under Amendment VC257, and restoring locally led planning.

We will end Labor's Development Facilitation Program in its current form. The DFP has expanded well beyond its original purpose, become overly broad in scope and increasingly used to bypass local councils and strip communities of their say in developments that directly affect them.

We will scrap Labor's activity centres and restore local voices to planning decisions whilst maintaining a pathway for genuinely significant, complex projects of state and economic importance.

We will keep clear, measurable design standards for townhouses and apartments, but restore local decision-making on where those standards apply. Labor has let its “deemed to comply” rules run rampant through our suburbs, with no local say on where they apply. These rules force councils to approve developments that tick the boxes, regardless of local planning policy.

In practice, our changes will mean councils will no longer be required to approve proposed developments on the basis of the existing Low Rise / Townhouse and Mid Rise Codes alone. They will be able to take into account other considerations as part of their Structure Plan process, such as neighbourhood character, visual amenity, and patterns of local urban structure.

Furthermore, we will review the Codes and seek to improve design outcomes while protecting neighbourhood character, and residents will have their VCAT appeal rights restored.

Central to our approach is working collaboratively with councils and communities to develop and endorse local structure plans. Councils will be given an opportunity to submit existing, revised or new plans, supported by broad community consultation. These plans will then be considered by the Department of Transport and Planning and the Minister, ensuring a shared vision for housing growth, infrastructure and local amenity.

Victoria's planning system also needs broader reform. We will consider opportunities to address the issues currently facing the existing planning processes, including fast-track assessment pathways, to address inconsistent decisions and uncertainty for communities and applicants.



Housing growth must be supported by appropriate infrastructure. We have committed to ensuring growth areas infrastructure contribution revenue is invested in the communities where it is collected, supporting the earlier delivery of roads, schools, utilities and community facilities.

Protecting Victoria's agricultural land and maintaining appropriate environmental and heritage safeguards is also important as our state grows.

Thank you again for your correspondence and for Liveable Victoria's ongoing contribution to planning discussions across the state.

You can read our full plan for Victoria here: https://www.ourplan.au

Yours sincerely,

David Southwick MP
Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party
Shadow Minister for Planning