



WESTERN AUSTRALIA PARTY

CHARLES SMITH MLC

MEMBER FOR EAST METRO

Putting Western Australians First

MEDIA RELEASE

WA property developers win big from COVID-19

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Western Australia Party MP Charles Smith said Labor's plan to streamline planning approvals to spur property development amidst the COVID-19 lull, aims to stifle public consultation periods making a mockery of democracy.

The McGowan Government will soon introduce new laws set to simplify the application process for projects valued over \$30 million with the WA Planning Commission given power to approve developments for 18 months.

Public consultation periods would not occur under this law.

"The Planning Minister Rita Saffioti has effectively handed Perth to property developers to trash our suburbs and there is nothing anyone can do about it.

"The Western Australia Party believe the people's voices deserve to be heard and should not be silenced at the behest of property developers who are using COVID-19 as a red-herring to bypass regulations at local government level to fill their pockets quicker.

"I will oppose the Bill in the upper house and will look to amend it to include automatic Third Party Appeal for affected neighbours along with compensation for those negatively affected by developments," said Mr Smith.

Mr Smith said he will also include an audit of the WA Planning Commission in the proposed amendments to the Bill.

Regardless of COVID-19, Perth's house price bust has dragged on for over five years, with values down more than 21 percent, easily exceeding prior busts with Perth rents also collapsing by 22 percent since December 2014.

Mr Smith says the drastic fall in property activity has carried on despite WA's population surging by almost 1 million since 1990.

Additionally, the Annual Report on State Finances released last year shows the McGowan Government took almost \$300 million less in stamp duty than had been previously predicted.

Mr Smith said he agreed with Gareth Parker from 6PR who recently noted the self-interest inherent in the property sector given their plea to the State Government to save a flagging industry.

"Gareth Parker highlights perfectly why Australian housing is not really a market, but rather a quango between the property industry and the government.

“All stimulus measures have nothing to do with improving affordability and home ownership; rather they are shameless attempts to stimulate demand to raise dwelling prices to line the pockets of the industry,” Mr Smith said.

Mr Smith stated the Bill is indicative of broader allegations of property developers donating to political parties in order to sway favourable legislation that benefits the property lobby.

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