

## Planning and Housing

There are only two directions a city grows in: outwards or upwards. Upwards is a direction that costs neighbouring properties sunlight, possibly privacy, and other smaller concerns— although our nearby natural skyscraper variously called Mt Wellington and other things, seems to be exempt from such charges. Growing outwards is a peculiarity of Australian and American cities, and very clearly impacts negatively on traffic, public transport use, planning and more. Given a choice between upwards or outwards, upwards is the choice with less negative impacts. Housing density is primarily in the hands of the property owner, but I will support developments increasing population density, whether through ancillary dwellings or redevelopment and renovations.

One particular concern I have is for unused private land. I have no love for land speculators when housing is such a critical issue for many long-term residents, in particular young people desperate to get onto the property ladder. As such, I propose that rates get a little adjustment, and be based on land value rather than Assessed Annual Value (AAV). Firstly this adjustment by itself would not increase or decrease the total rates gathered by council - although it would decrease the cost and bureaucracy involved with re-assessing property values with every improvement made. Most significantly it would change the proportions paid by ratepayers: generally speaking land further away from the center is less valuable, and therefore would have a rates reduction, while land closer to the center is more valuable, and therefore would pay more in rates. Land which is unoccupied would currently pay extremely little in rates, and with my proposed change, would pay as much as their neighbour. But it can't be that simple, because many heritage buildings are in the inner-city and don't have the legal capacity to develop further in order to pay higher rates. Such heritage buildings should be exempt from land value tax, and be calculated by the prior AAV due to their historic limitations and in recognition of their social and tourism value in preserving heritage.

Many voters and also in the media voice concerns over AirBnb affecting housing supply – and it has, but is only a minor factor in comparison to much larger factors such as the restriction of state government's public housing supply, the tax structure encouraging property speculation, and the lack of tradespeople driving up the cost and duration of construction projects. Some other small factors include rezonings and subdivisions – small factors for HCC because most of the rezoning and subdivisions are in neighbouring council areas that have more space to grow. Two exceptions are the brickworks site in Newtown, soon to come online – and the several hundred additional new dwellings in Lenah Valley – for which that suburb's transport infrastructure is woefully inadequate. I expect that area to develop significantly as a result, putting even more pressure on roads such as the Kalang Avenue ratrun.