

Liberal Nationals Coalition Media Release

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MORE PLANNING PANIC: LABOR GUTS ITS NEW ZONES POLICY

The Brumby Government has caved into Coalition demands to guarantee third-party appeal rights in planning and to stop the mandating of high rise buildings right across country Victoria – for now.

Premier John Brumby has lurched into his second planning policy u-turn this week, releasing his second attempt at a New Residential Zones (NRZ) policy.

The Brumby Government has now dumped plans to abolish third-party planning appeal rights and introduce mandatory minimum height limits.

These were two points that the Planning Minister previously described as the key features of Labor's first attempt at an NRZ policy, released early last year.

Shadow Planning Minister Matthew Guy said without its 'key features' the Brumby Government's NRZ policy draft was little more than a name change for planning zones.

"Labor is in a planning panic. They just can't get planning right in Victoria," Mr Guy said.

Mr Guy cited these recent examples of Labor's planning incompetence:

- First Labor opposed urban sprawl, and then it bragged about another 90,000 lots
- First Labor opposed urban high rise, then it allowed 38-floor towers in the suburbs
- First Labor stated the Urban Growth Boundary was for keeps, and then it expanded it by an area a third of the size of Adelaide
- First Labor supported third-party rights of appeal, then it planned to scrap them – and now Labor claims those rights are safe again.

"The Brumby Government's credibility in planning is in tatters. Labor's Melbourne 2030 document is a proven dud, its NRZ plan is now totally gutted and the government's gone quiet on its once-lauded Development Assessment Committee plan," Mr Guy said.

Mr Guy said the Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition had campaigned hard against mandatory minimum heights in all towns and suburbs, but questions must be asked about whether Labor is committed to dumping the policy for the long term.

"Given its propensity to u-turn on policy we can only take the Labor Government at its word that it will not introduce mandatory three and four-storey building heights in every town and suburb across Victoria, as the first NRZ draft stated," Mr Guy said.

"The Brumby Government just cannot be trusted. It only takes another u-turn for Labor to ram through mandatory minimum building heights in the future, or to remove third-party appeal rights for development."

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