

Slower, more confusing

READER Jim Morris got it right by pointing out that minister Gutwein's Statewide Planning Scheme is all about the development lobby, with the public taking a back seat (Letters, November 21). It is unfortunate planning laws are usually of interest

to residents only when they are directly affected by a proposed development, and not when the laws are being prepared. This situation allows one-line slogans like faster, cheaper and more consistent, when the new laws will lead to a more expensive and confused process for the public.

Mr Morris is spot on referring to the vagaries of performance criteria, a component of planning schemes primarily assisting developers. Ensuring performance criteria remain open to discretion results in the public having to endure a protracted decision-making process and to argue their case at expensive planning appeals. It is certainly an irony the vagaries of performance criteria and discretionary provisions will lead to protracted decision-making which is at odds with the mantra of faster, cheaper, etc. It seems this irony is a position the development lobby is prepared to wear to get their development applications to the starting post, or is it that they simply do not understand what is being dished up? While it is fortunate the public has put the Government on notice with the campaign against high-rise and its major project legislation, the complexities of the planning scheme enables continuing confusion of the public. I, too, am looking for a party whose mantra is planning for the people. Any takers?

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