

Stay different

THOSE groups that favour the proposed changes to planning laws seem to be those with much to gain financially from such changes. One aspect relating to the proposed changes is the issue of conflict of interest: councils will benefit from the ability to increase revenue in the form of rates. Councils' ability to approve subdivisions and rezoning have rarely been examined from this perspective.

Many people make what in most cases is their largest lifetime financial commitment when they buy their family home in a location that suits their social and environmental preferences. They now face the possibility of their amenity being changed radically if they lose their right to object to neighbourhood proposals which significantly change the composition of the area in which they live. One thing that has made the urban centres in Tasmania desirable places to live is the fact that they are different from mainland cities.

The political mantra of "jobs and growth" seems to ignore many things that contribute to the quality of life in our state. We have too much to lose if we decide to march in lock-step with our mainland counterparts. Many people choose to come and live in Tasmania because it is different. Let's keep it that way.

Merc 2 Nov '16

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