

## **JAAG QUESTIONS TO CANDIDATES Responses from Sam Hibbins MP**

### **1) What action have you taken in the past to deal with the ‘planning vacuum’, and, if elected, what would you do to facilitate Amendment C122 coming into force?**

I have written to the Minister for Planning on behalf of JAAG, urging the government to approve the amendment in full, including mandatory height controls, before the upcoming election.

I have spoken out in Parliament on the lack of planning controls in St Kilda Junction. I made the following comments in September 2016:

The decision of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) to approve a 26-storey development at St Kilda Junction is an example of the state government's failed approach to planning. The state government rejected interim planning controls over the St Kilda Road south precinct, which would have placed a preferred height of 10 storeys over the site. VCAT, in its decision, cited another 26-storey building at 3 St Kilda Road. Guess who approved that building in 2011? It was the then Liberal Minister for Planning, Matthew Guy, who called it in and approved it despite opposition from the Port Phillip council.

This is not planning through proper process with an aim to strike a balance between development and amenity. This is planning through ministerial decree which sets a precedent for years to come.

The process of Port Phillip Council putting in planning controls over the St Kilda Road south precinct has been in development for over two years. The failure of the Labor Minister for Planning to put in place interim planning controls after extensive work by council has meant that a building over twice the size of what was proposed has been approved

### **2) Concerns regarding St Kilda Rd Junction – Need for masterplan/integrated whole-of-government planning. What action have you taken in the past to deal with the above problems and, if elected, what would you do to address JAAG’s various concerns regarding the junction?**

The Greens are committed to a masterplan for St Kilda Junction.

I have strongly supported separated bike lanes for St Kilda Road and am disappointed by the opaque planning process that has been occurred so far.

To ensure a whole of government approach, the Greens are also committed to creating an integrated transport plan for Victoria, merging all transport agencies into Transport for Victoria and creating local transport groups ensuring meaningful local involvement in transport decision making.

### **3) What action have you taken in the past and, if elected, what would you do to counter the apparent increase in anti-social behaviour in the JAAG areas of interest?**

I have worked continuously on concerns raised with me regarding anti-social behaviour related to 25 Redan St, including meeting on several occasions with concerned residents, St Michaels Grammar, the operator of the short-stay accommodation at the premises, local police, and representatives

from Launch Housing and the Salvation Army, the City of Port Phillip and JAAG. I have also visited Redan St apartments with an owner-occupier to see the issues first-hand.

As a result of meetings with St Kilda police, patrols of the area were increased.

I also wrote to the Minister for Housing requesting support in having Redan Apartments managed by a government department or specialist housing organisation, so that appropriate support and staff could be provided to assist crisis accommodation tenants.

I will investigate addressing the regulatory gap in rooming house legislation so that collectively managed apartments, such as those at Redan St, can be regulated accordingly.

The Victorian Greens are committed to building more public housing to reduce homelessness.

We would also reverse the government's cuts to community mental health services, which play a critical role in providing support to people experiencing mental illness in our community. They are an effective early intervention to ensure people do not end up in crisis at hospital, in the justice system or homeless.

**4) What do you think are the other principle issues for JAAG in relation to:**

- **Development**
- **Major advertising sky signs**
- **Traffic**
- **Backpacker lodges**
- **Recreation**

To tackle over-development, the Greens have a plan to fix our urban planning system by providing certainty with mandatory height limits and minimum apartment sizes.

We would require all apartment buildings of 5 storeys and above to provide 50% of their roof space for either solar panels or a green roof.

The Greens would also ensure green spaces and tree cover in activity centres to combat the heat island effect.

The Greens would reform the VCAT appeal process to stop developers gaming the system, mandate that all Ministerial call-ins require a legislated process of exhibition and consultation before decision and ban political donations from developers.

To reduce congestion the Victorian Greens have a long-term plan to transform our ageing, unreliable public transport system into a reliable, frequent, high capacity network. This includes increased services and upgrades to our train, tram and bus routes.