

28 February 2004

Attn: Productivity Commission First Home Ownership Inquiry team

I am writing to follow-up to my previous submission regarding the need to factor in ecological sustainable housing and the cost savings to both the individual and society this might bring to home ownership in Australia.

In the time since my first submission I have noted two articles in *The Weekend Australian* (24th-25' January 2004) "Inquirer" section (p.26) which I believe support my initial comments and suggestions (please see attached articles:

- 1 . The main article "*Home, green home*" details how a company, SALA Homes (Sustainable Affordable Living Australia Homes), is developing and refining two prototype houses with a view to selling them in kit form to homebuyers in the near future. The house design provides its own water and power — factors which could potentially bring significant cost savings to developers and home-owners due to reduced infrastructure supply costs. The article quotes an estimated saving of \$10 000 per development lot as a consequence of not requiring water or sewerage headworks in subdivisions that utilise these houses. It also estimates savings of \$1500-2000 per house per year in water and power savings.
2. The smaller article "From research to the real thing" details two other ecologically sustainable and affordable housing projects in Victoria which are also advancing housing design ("The EcoHome") and housing developments ("The Aurora Project").

Although the Commission makes no mention of ecologically sustainable housing in its draft document, I believe that it would be prudent for the inquiry team to explore the examples mentioned in *The Weekend Australian* articles, and at least flag the possibility that affordable, ecologically sustainable housing is likely to emerge as a serious, cost-effective option for home buyers in the not-too-distant future. Such housing, if the cost savings can be validated, would provide ongoing benefits to both individual home buyers and the broader community.

I submit this to you for consideration and hope that it is of benefit to this inquiry.

Yours sincerely,

Ben Lawson

Please note: that I have no connection or dealings with any company mentioned in my submission or the newspaper article mentioned. I have made these submissions as a consequence of my belief that society needs to support and encourage the principles of ecological sustainability in everyday living.