



20 June 2000

Productivity Commission
PO Box 80
BELCONNEN ACT 2616

Dear Sirs

Review of Legislation Regulating the Architectural Profession

I refer to your draft report *Review of Legislation Regulating the Architectural Profession* which, I am told, recommends the repeal of all architects Acts in Australia.

This is contrary to the views of Save Our Suburbs Inc ('SOS'), which has already made a submission in December 1998 to a similar enquiry conducted in Victoria. I therefore write to apprise you of the policy of SOS, which I enclose. I draw your attention especially to clause M1, as being relevant to the terms of the review. It reads:

Any architectural drawings forming part of an application must be prepared and signed by an architect registered under the *Architect's Act*, and that architect's name, with the date of construction, must appear on the completed project on a plaque of durable material visible and legible from the street alignment.

More recently SOS has made a submission to the Victorian Government in relation to the drafting of a new residential code, in which it has proposed a mechanism whereby local councils would be enabled to put such a provision into effect. We are of course concerned that the policy proposed in your report would render this nugatory.

SOS has resisted pressures to involve itself in attempts to directly control the style of buildings, which it believes to be inappropriate. It does, however, seek an improvement in the quality of architectural design, and believes that this will indirectly have a beneficial effect upon the style.

Whilst it is not necessarily true that a qualified architect always produces a good building, or that an unqualified designer may not do so, this is analogous with the medical profession. A qualified doctor may occasionally kill someone, and a quack may occasionally effect a cure. But this is not a basis upon which to overturn the whole system of quality control in the profession.

We believe that there is a reasonable presumption that designers with about six years of accredited training tend to produce much better results. We also believe that, if their buildings are signed, they have a great incentive to do so. We do not believe that the public is indifferent to the quality of architectural design, because our members tell us otherwise. The relatively low employment of registered architects for ordinary housing is a reflection of the cost or perceived cost of their services.

We regard it as essential that regulated profession remains available to design projects which the public at large, or the specific client concerned, regards as especially important. Most medium density housing developments fall into the former category.

Yours faithfully



Jack Hammond
President