

What happened to the Great (Western) Australian Dream?

For more than 50 years housing in (Western) Australia was plentiful and affordable to more than three quarters of the population.

Virtually overnight however, things changed dramatically.

Over the space of a few short years (2001 – 2006), house prices more than doubled, thus destroying the home ownership prospects of many tens of thousands of young (Western) Australians.

Such is the seriousness of this problem that a Royal Commission should be held into what caused this massive economic and social dislocation.

Invoking the old adage, “*Never set up a Royal Commission unless you know what the findings will be,*” the Commission will find that the cause of the housing affordability crisis was the massive rise in the cost of residential land on which new housing stock is built.

The Commission will further discover that the cause of this massive increase in land costs was a convergence of two powerful political forces – planning policies restricting urban growth and ‘rent-seeking’ land management bureaucracies in cahoots with large land developers. This consortium of urban planners, land developers and State Government land management bureaucracies has wielded enormous influence over politicians who, despite the obviously harmful effects of this massive dislocation, have failed to break open this anti-social coalition.

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