



**MEDIA RELEASE: 19 June 2009**

## **Homeowners should seek maximum compensation for compulsory acquisitions**

Landowners whose homes may be compulsorily acquired as part of the Victorian Government's recently announced major infrastructure plans have been warned to seek expert advice on their legal rights and entitlements.

Property owners across Metropolitan Melbourne are facing compulsory acquisition of their homes for the building of the new rail links and transport infrastructure.

On Wednesday 17 June 2009 the State Government announced the need for almost 300 suburban properties to be compulsorily acquired.

The acquisition will affect a number of property owners throughout Melbourne's northern and western suburbs including Deer Park, Tarneit, Wyndham Vale and Werribee in the west and Epping, Craigieburn, Beveridge and Mickleham in the north

Lawyer, Ben Hardwick from Slater & Gordon's compulsory acquisition team warns land owners that it is important that they seek independent legal and valuation advice to maximum their compensation entitlements.

"The infrastructure projects are important to the wider community but the individuals most affected should not be short changed," Mr Hardwick said.

"Compensation is typically only payable at the time that the land is formally compulsorily acquired. However, in certain circumstances, the *Planning and Environment Act* provides property owners with the ability to bring forward their compensation entitlements.

"It is critical that property owners seek advice from lawyers with the appropriate expertise and experience in the area to ensure their rights are protected.

"Property owners should not be left in limbo. The Government has stated that in some cases construction may not commence for another 11 years.

"This a long time and some properties may change hands a couple of times before work even starts. If you are thinking of selling your property it is critical that you seek advice immediately," he said.

Compensation entitlements and landowners' rights are set out under the *Land Acquisition and Compensation Act*.

### **For more information**

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