

Draft Planning and Design Code Phase 3 (Urban Areas) – General Feedback

I wish to provide some general feedback regarding the Draft Planning and Design Code for phase 3 (Urban areas), that was released for public consultation on 1st Oct 2019.

I have lived in Adelaide all my life, and in the City of Campbelltown for the majority of my life. Most of my family also live in the North-Eastern suburbs of Campbelltown City and enjoy the metropolitan feeling of the community, the proximity to the foothills, abundant green spaces and wildlife. Unfortunately over the past several years there has been an influx of 'medium' density infill development that may be largely driven by the previous state Labor Government's *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide*. Unfortunately this meant in our council area the minimum block size in many zones/areas reduced to as small as 150sqm, and in some cases, smaller. This is not even restricted to 'transit hubs' close to public transport, parks and shops but has spread further out in the suburbs.

What happened as a result however, was infill development that produced the following;

- Minimal regard to the character of many of the suburbs within the City of Campbelltown, drastically changing the aesthetics of many streets,
- A significant loss of tree canopy and green space, (take 1 look in the suburbs of Hectorville and Tranmere for example)
- Increase in traffic congestion due to inadequate off-street parking at many new developments (partly also due to the building code which allows for garages that are too small to properly fit any vehicle except for a small car, so they are used as storage rooms),
- Residential flat buildings, row dwellings and group dwellings of 2 storey height built (in many cases) less than 1 metre to the boundary of a neighbour, affecting their privacy, sunlight, increasing noise, and air pollution as we have less trees to absorb the gases,
- An impact on our biodiversity and ability for water capture since many infill developments do not provide adequate front and rear yards for gardens, trees, & other vegetation,
- Increased climate temperatures, as is well-noted in heat maps of our suburbs, when compared to 5 or more years ago, and
- An increased burden on our ageing infrastructure.

Many of the concerned citizens of the City of Campbelltown, along with our elected members, council staff and the local honourable MP Vincent Tarzia, advocated hard for changes to address a number of these concerns to our previous Residential Development Plan and fortunately the Hon Stephan Knoll and his department approved Limited scope changes to our Plan in late 2019. Now, however, I feel, many of the Campbelltown City residents are worried about what the proposed changes in the Statewide Planning & Design Code will mean to us, and the rest of Adelaide.

My position is not anti-development, and I realise that we need a planning system that can support the population, and the government's aim to reduce the urban sprawl, however the current situation is not supportive of our environment and is way too much in the favour of development, rather than the general wishes of existing residents to *maintain the character of their suburbs*. And yes, we should be encouraging a mixture of housing options to provide more choice for our citizens, (I would argue against the common positive spin that many of these new homes are 'affordable' for the average citizen), however it needs to be managed so that it better supports "all" existing neighbourhoods, not just those that are deemed to have 'character' or be in 'heritage zones'.

We should have *sustainable development policy* that protects our green space as much as possible, to support our biodiversity, water capture, ensures existing trees, (regardless if they have regulated protection or considered 'significant'), are protected until they die of natural causes. It should be a

planning system that ensures if a new development is undertaken amongst established homes that a 'decent' minimum amount of set-back is enforced on the side boundaries and an adequate area of open space is allocated for front and rear yards and contains some form of natural vegetation and at least 1 tree that is nurtured to flourish. Ideally the government could be doing more forward planning and looking at large parcels of land that can be specifically used for infill development projects, and less of the haphazard infill development amongst homes in existing suburbs.

The population targets for the 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide were reached way before schedule and rather than scaling back the infill development, the process is continuing to push forward in this path. In theory a number of the goals of this plan appear good, i.e. increase development close to shops, public transport, parks, and it will reduce the use of cars and improve people's health. However, unfortunately in reality I don't believe this is what is actually occurring. Instead you have similar size households moving into smaller dwellings, with the same amount of cars and *no real significant increase* in pedestrian or cycling travel. In fact, it's often more dangerous, as there are less amenable footpaths & reduced verge spaces, crowded streets and issues with the public transport system itself. And other goals, such as increasing the urban green cover by 20% by 2045, I don't believe can realistically be achieved with the current development trends.

There should be greater levels of protection, notification and *right of appeal* for residents living close to proposed infill developments involving 2 storey residential flat buildings, row dwellings or group dwellings, not less! Our policy-makers should consider how they would feel if they were in the position of the current neighbours, and all of a sudden work commenced on a large infill development, or a new business being built in a previously zoned area just for residential dwellings. I have heard of several stories where people have become so upset about a new development where they had no right of notification or appeal, that they have felt their only option left was to sell and move to another suburb. It would be sad to hear further stories such as this to occur under the new Statewide Planning & Design Code.

I do not wish to end this feedback on a negative note, or be cynical, however I really query why this action towards creating a Statewide Planning & Design Code is being implemented to replace the 72 individual plans of the Urban areas. Surely, the local councils are well equipped to understand and support the needs and wishes of their residents to continue to support the current planning system, which also takes into account the 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide? I would question why is this change really happening and if it really will create better protection for 'character places' and achieve 'safe, functional, accessible and sustainable neighbourhoods'? I really feel that if a developer (individual or company) or a business, does not like the planning rules of a specific council, then don't try to build or trade there – go somewhere else, or abide by their policies.

Finally, I wish to congratulate the State government on its aim of continuous improvement. I am proud to call myself a South Aussie. Our state is recognised as being progressive and transformative, a few examples being our Container Deposit Scheme, Renewable Energy Targets, first state to provide women the right to vote, amongst other things. Let's look at this Draft Planning & Design Code as an opportunity to do something right the 'first time', that will be looked upon by the other states as something extraordinary. And importantly, let's not forget to ensure we balance all the various interested parties to achieve an equitable system and keep SA GREAT!

I thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Kind regards,

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