
From: Ameer Yardley [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 21 September 2018 10:26 AM
To: DPTI:Planning Engagement
Subject: Submission by City of Mitcham for the Draft State Planning Policies for South Australia
Attachments: Council submission to SPPs - Final.pdf

Dear Ms Elding,

On behalf of the City of Mitcham please find attached a submission for the Draft State Planning Policies for South Australia.

Mayor Spear would like to thank you for providing an opportunity for the City of Mitcham to comment on the strategic framework that will assist in guiding the preparation of the other planning instruments required by the PDI Act and the planning reform agenda.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Council if there is any problem in reading the attached document.

Kind Regards

Ameer Yardley | Executive Officer | Office of the Chief Executive Officer and Mayor | The City of Mitcham
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21 September 2018



Attention: Sarah Elding,
Project Lead State Planning Policies
Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure
Level 5, 50 Flinders Street
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Sent via email to: DPTI.PlanningEngagement@sa.gov.au

Dear Ms Sarah Elding,

RE: CITY OF MITCHAM RESPONSE TO DRAFT STATE PLANNING POLICIES FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA

I would like to thank the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI) for providing Council the opportunity to provide feedback in relation to the draft State Planning Policies for South Australia (SPPs).

Our City would like to acknowledge the significance of the Council area as part of the traditional lands of the Kaurna people. In addition to this, our City also has connected and cherished residential areas, important areas of open space, educational facilities, historic buildings/areas, and thriving commercial and business hubs. Council is focussed on the appropriate protection of these areas that are important to our economy and community whilst also supporting, where possible, the State Government in achieving its long-term vision for South Australia.

Reflecting on the SPPs and their role in the legislative framework of the planning reforms, it is considered that they are sound and go some way to also facilitating the strategic planning outcomes sought by the City of Mitcham. However, it must be reinforced that it is difficult to have a holistic conversation about these strategies without clarity as to how these will ultimately manifest on the ground.

Council is concerned that the community will fail to be aware of the significance of the SPPs as an instrument that will guide the direction of the planning reforms. It is Council's view that the public will always be interested in planning issues at the stage where more certainty as to how development might affect their enjoyment and properties. As a result whilst consultation on the strategic policies is important in progressing the reform agenda,

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there is a concern that the engagement will fail to capture the true sentiment of the community.

Given the above, whilst the City of Mitcham is broadly supportive of the policies within the Draft State Planning Policies for South Australia, DPTI is encouraged to continually seek ways of providing clarity and assurances to the community in implementing the planning reforms.

Please refer to the following comments attached to this letter for further consideration regarding the structure and content of the SPPs.

Should you have any enquiries or require any clarification in relation to any point in this correspondence, please do not hesitate to contact Council's General Manager Development Services and Community Safety, Mr Craig Harrison on [REDACTED].

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glenn Spear', with a horizontal line underneath.

Glenn Spear
MAYOR

City of Mitcham

City of Mitcham submission in relation to the draft State Planning Policies (SPPs) for South Australia

General Comments on Structure and Content

Council has considered the intent and content of the draft SPP's and is supportive of the State Government in developing the strategic framework to guide the outcomes sought by the planning reforms.

In reviewing the SPPs it is recognised that not all these policies will have implications for the City of Mitcham and as such this response focusses on those policies that could better support our City achieve its long-term strategic goals. This response also identifies opportunities where further clarification on the structure and content could be explored to further improve its clarity and messaging.

Targets

The SPPs include a number of targets that have been primarily sourced from the *30-year Plan for Greater Adelaide*. Whilst it is important to have targets against which to measure progress in achieving the new urban form, it is unclear from the document how the targets will be used to measure its success and generally what purpose they serve. Clarification is required as to whether these targets will be measured at a Council, Region or State level and whether these targets will be used to guide the specific policies within the Code.

Metropolitan Focus

The intent of the SPPs is to provide higher level strategic direction for the whole of South Australia, yet the policies are focussed heavily on metropolitan areas. Many of these policies are difficult to apply to townships and areas that could be considered semi-rural such as Belair and the Blackwood Centre. Whilst these areas may have a geographical separation and character that is distinguished from areas on the Adelaide Plains, they provide opportunities in which to expand existing employment and housing diversity that may not be appropriately supported by the SPPs.

Relationship with the Regional Plans

It is recognised that the Regional Plans will be another level of strategic document that is guided in its development by the SPPs and will provide the long-term vision for regions and areas in relation to land use, transport, infrastructure and public space.

Whilst it is understood that the *30-year Plan for Greater Adelaide* will initially serve as the Regional Plan for Metropolitan Adelaide, greater clarity is required within the SPPs to explain the difference between these two strategic documents and how the spatial application of the SPPs will be mapped within the Regional Plans.

Planning and Design Code

Broadly speaking it is difficult to determine the suitability of many of the policies outlined in the SPP's without a practical understanding of how they will be given effect through the Planning and

Design Code. For example: State Planning Policy 4.2 states: *Minimise the loss of biodiversity, where possible, in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy:*

- a. *Avoidance – avoid impacts on biodiversity*
- b. *Minimisation – reduce the duration, intensity and/or extent of impacts*
- c. *Rehabilitation/restoration – improve degraded or removed eco-systems following exposure or impacts.*

Using the example above, the policy places an emphasis on avoiding all impacts to biodiversity however it is unknown how the Code will quantify this. The use of the term “where possible” effectively undermines the intent of the policy and there is a perceived concern that the Code will be structured to facilitate development oriented interests.

Policy Themes

Whilst it stated in the preamble that no one policy takes preference over another, there appears to be common themes and priorities in relation to urban in-fill and adaptive re-use that is echoed through a number of the different policies. Conversely it appears that other SPPs such as Cultural Heritage are not afforded the same weight and support by way of policies and therefore appears to have less basis of influence than others.

The draft SPPs clearly identifies those policies which are legislated and those that have been identified by the Minister for Planning as being priorities for the State Government. There is a lack of clarity as to how the selected Ministerial policies were prioritised over others and if they have to be consistent with a State Strategic Plan.

Definitions

There is an opportunity for the glossary to be expanded to provide better definition of key words and phrases within the SPP. This will better assist the community and professionals in the interpretation and intent of the Policies.

State Planning Policies

State Planning Policy 2 – Design Quality

Policies should encourage incentives for the amalgamation of properties to create larger sites as a trade-off for density and open space. This has the effect of facilitating integrated development that will assist in creating better design outcomes with fewer impacts upon neighbouring properties.

The policies in relation to Design Quality seek to embed the Principles of Good Design within the Planning System. Whilst the intent and framework is supported, it is unclear how these Policies will manifest within other planning instruments. For example Policy 2.5, seeks to “promote a culture of good design”. It is difficult to understand how a policy on culture will be given effect through either the Planning and Design Code or Regional Plan.

It is understood that the Planning and Design Code will provide the detail as to how design quality will be achieved, however it is difficult to comment and interrogate the suitability of these Policies in the absence of the specific detail that will be contained within the Code.

State Planning Policy 4 – Biodiversity

There are potential gaps in this Policy in recognising the amenity benefits of biodiversity that can be gained within urban areas. Whilst it is important to identify and protect large-scale areas of environmental significance, biodiversity needs to be considered and protected at a neighbourhood level, particularly in areas where urban infill may be suitable. There is opportunity for the guidance notes to encourage policies within the Code that protect and establish green canopy areas/corridors and significant trees/vegetation within urban areas.

The *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide* seeks to protect and maintain modified farming landscapes where it is considered the existing land use and environmental values are worthy of protection. The Biodiversity SPPs picks up on these themes, however it lacks an adequate definition as to what a 'modified landscape' is, and what environmental values the State is seeking to preserve. It is suggested that an appropriate definition is included to ensure that these principles are correctly applied.

State Planning Policy 5 – Climate Change

The State Planning Policies should seek to reduce the replication of policies where possible. For example SPP 5.4 references hazard-prone areas which are then repeated under the Natural Hazards Policies (15.2). There is an opportunity for different interpretations to arise from the different policies.

Similarly to Adaptive Reuse policies, the Climate Change SPP should recognise incentives and bonus schemes for developments that display a high regard towards mitigating climate change.

State Planning Policy 6 – Housing Supply and Diversity

It is recognised that infill development is an important aspect of achieving the strategic outcomes prioritised by the State. Increasing housing diversity is important in providing for the ageing population of Adelaide as well as supporting younger generations entering the housing market. It is important that the provision of housing diversity and Affordable Housing is not undertaken at the expense of design quality and impacts to amenity, streetscape and established character.

State Planning Policy 7 – Cultural Heritage

The City of Mitcham has important areas of historical significance which are recognised by way of State Heritage areas, Historic Conservation zones and individual property listings. The Planning Policies related to Cultural Heritage focus on use rather than the desired built form outcomes of the heritage places and the context in which they sit.

Given that the SPPs will be given effect through the Planning and Design Code, there should be specific policies to support the protection of built and natural heritage. Similar policies already exist within the *30-year Plan for Greater Adelaide* and strong consideration should be given into also incorporating within the SPPs.

(Example: P.33 Recognise the value that communities place on heritage and ensure that new development is implemented sensitively and respectfully. – The 30 year Plan for Greater Adelaide)

State Planning Policy 9 – Employment Lands

Council is currently working with the community on a Local Area Planning project and Structure Plan project to identify how the City should look in the long-term future. An outcome identified in the St Marys and Flinders area is for the precinct to be a driver of the State's economy with health, education and innovation facilities that are competitive in a global market. The objectives and policies of State Planning Policy 9 could be strengthened in relation to attracting businesses, rather than just supporting existing.

Additionally, whilst it is important to retain the Adelaide City Centre as a focus of Greater Adelaide, it is important to emphasise within the SPPs that other precincts outside of the CBD play a vital role in supporting the State's economy.

State Planning Policy 11 – Strategic Transport Infrastructure

Council has committed funds to studies on the viability of a freight bypass line. Council would support stronger policies within the Strategic Transport Infrastructure section that supports and encourages the relocation of existing transport infrastructure that is located in inappropriate locations.

State Planning Policy 15 – Natural Hazards

The use of the risk hierarchy of avoidance, adaptation and protection identified in SPP 15.2 is supported for areas subjected to Natural Hazards and is considered to send a strong message about prioritising the safety of existing communities. In-fill development should be targeted in appropriate areas, and directed away from those areas which are recognised as posing a high level of risk in terms of bushfire and flooding to minimise the threat on life and property.