Submission – Natural Resources and Environment Policy Discussion Paper

Council supports the overall intent of the discussion paper as a means of informing the development of the policy direction in the new Planning and Design Code. Having undertaken some internal workshops with some key Council advisory panels the following observations and comments are made.

- Housing designs need to change to ensure they can be more energy efficient. Need to relook at the energy rating requirements as current standards are easily achieved and are becoming tokenistic rather than creating real energy efficient homes. For example by increasing insulation you can achieve the rating however the dwelling has no eaves and is facing the wrong way. Is there a role for performance measures to ensure a greater proportion of housing are sited correctly etc i.e. within each subdivision X% of housing must be sited to maximise passive solar performance.
- Houses should become water independent with the minimum rainwater tank being 5,000L.
- Is the desalination plant being used? This should play a vital role during periods of drought, rather than continuing to use an already strained resource in the River Murray, desalination water could be used.
- Alternatively there should be more stormwater reuse and the recharging of aquifers.
- Extreme weather events are having a significant impact on the natural environment and downstream catchment areas, therefore need to be looking across catchments when dealing with stormwater in major growth or development areas.
- Vegetation buffers should be on private land rather than relying on roadside vegetation.
- Development sites need to put in the buffers on the interface and not be put on the adjoining farmland.
- Need to balance planning outcomes with what are identified as an attractor, for example, people come to view the coast so don’t build it out with housing make it accessible and visible.
- Need good spatial mapping for extreme events such as sea level rise and bushfire.
- Must ensure that we do not reduce the natural environment for the sake of development.
- Road verges – need to be wide and deep enough to accommodate large canopy trees in urban areas.
- Biodiversity – identifying natural versus non-indigenous environments that are equally important for biodiversity.
- Need to continue to acknowledge the different water catchment areas within policy, for example Mount Compass.
- There is support for mechanisms which encourage developers to go beyond the minimum compliance levels for energy and water efficiency with the Beyond development at Chiton a good example.

Please contact Sally Roberts, Manager Planning and Development on [redacted] should you have any queries in relation to this submission.