

Planning Reform Team

Planning and Land Use Services
Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure

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20 February 2020

Attention Michael Lennon

Dear Michael,

thank you for your letter of 14 February 2020 advising of proposed changes to the Planning and Design Code.

Aldinga Arts Ecovillage (AAEV) is one of the largest Community Corporations in SA (CC21109Inc). It is comprised of 170 residential lots, 10 commercial lots, 2h of shared gardens and infrastructure and a 4h organic farm. Lot sizes range from 160-600m². It is home to upwards of 300 people across all ages.

The Ecovillage is bounded by Willunga Creek catchment area and the urban boundary to its north and Metropolitan Open Space System - Bowering Hill to its west. A proposed super school is intended immediately south of the Ecovillage on Port Rd. The Ecovillage abuts the Onkaparinga 'Aldinga Village' historic character precinct 29 to its east and you have advised that the ecovillage is to be incorporated into an Historic Area Overlay with any new development needing to reference historic features and characteristics.

AAEV was a visionary project conceived in 2001 by a group including well regarded architect and planner: John Maitland. It was planned to be future-proof and successfully achieves performance objectives for stormwater management, recycling and energy use. It has a strong, cohesive multi-generational community. The Ecovillage does not reference the historic character of the adjoining Aldinga Village and we object to its inclusion in an overlay intended to conserve historic structures and characteristics.

AAEV has a strong presence in the locality and demonstrates water sensitive urban development with innovative, colourful, ecologically focussed dwelling design, permaculture gardens, irregularly shaped lots, stormwater swales, roads designed with reference to contours, and significant amounts of open space intended for shared use. We have an edible and native landscape. A striking aspect of the ecovillage character is its unfenced lots which allow private and community gardens and orchards to blend seamlessly together.

The Aldinga Arts Ecovillage comprises dwellings constructed from a range of materials including rammed earth, straw bale, stone, recycled timbers, and reverse brick veneer to achieve high energy efficiency.

Planning approval to establish the Village was provided by Onkaparinga Council in 2001 and our bylaws were submitted at that time because we include specific building requirements. There is no reflection within the ecovillage of the historic character which is evident within 'Aldinga Village' Precinct 29. The Ecovillage is characterised by innovative, ecologically focussed homes with water sensitive permaculture gardens rather than the built character and historic values of early settlement in South Australia.

The current Development Plan states as follows:

"Precinct 29 Aldinga Village: It is envisaged that the precinct will be developed in line with its historic character. The town is to incorporate residential development and small-scale tourist facilities such as hosted and self-contained bed-and-breakfast establishments supported by local level shopping and community facilities, particularly where it involves the adaptive reuse of historic buildings. Its town boundaries will continue to be defined by Willunga Creek to the north, Main South Road to the east, the Recreation Area to the south and west, and the Aldinga Eco-Arts Village. These limits accentuate Aldinga's



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distinct historic country town character by providing an appreciable gap between Aldinga and suburban metropolitan Adelaide."

That is, the creek, Main South Rd, the recreation area and the Aldinga Arts Ecovillage comprise the boundary of current precinct 29.

We've been frustrated by Council requirements since 2008 but have not identified the reason for Council's insistence on heritage consideration until your recent correspondence and our subsequent research into the history of planning controls affecting the AAEV. A copy of the Planning Submission and approvals provided by Council in 2001 is no longer available from Council or internally and corporate memory within Council of the innovative development is understandably long gone.

In 2008, confusion between 'Aldinga Village' and 'Aldinga Arts Eco Village' resulted in an amalgamation, via DPA, of the AAEV within the Aldinga Village precinct 29. Since then we have been frustrated by Council insisting on heritage provisions that are not contemplated by the AAEV scheme description, bylaws or the initial planning. Six commercial lots within the ecovillage remain un-developed mainly due to the conflict between compliance with Council heritage requirements and the future-focussed aims relevant to building within the ecovillage.

We note that Heritage studies conducted in the region in 1985 and 1997 clearly define the extent of historic character within the area: Aldinga Village main street (Old Coach Rd), historic buildings along Old Coach Rd and Little Rd and historic building materials, fencing and vegetation evident at the intersection between Old Coach Rd, Port Rd and South Rd - 300m east of the Ecovillage boundary. Precinct objectives seek to retain the built character and historic value of early settlement. These characteristics are not evident at the ecovillage which was formerly degraded farmland, and which now demonstrates 21stC character.

We would be grateful if your intent to bring equality, fairness and consistency to the planning system can exclude CC21109 – Aldinga Arts Ecovillage in the historic overlay proposed for the Aldinga Village. We have no issue with the proposed residential design code, it is the overlay relating to historic conservation that are at odds with the character of AAEV.

Please don't hesitate to call if you require further clarification or a tour of the Aldinga Arts Eco Village in order to assess the Planning and Design Code appropriate to the AAEV.

Sincerely



Shelley Milbank

Secretary

on behalf of the Management Committee CC21109 inc.

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