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South Australia Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure.

Chairman State Planning Commission

GPO Box 1815

Adelaide 5001.

12th February 2020.

Ref : Phase Three Draft Planning and Design Code Consultation Planning Reform.

Att : Mr Michael Lennon, Chairman State Planning Commission.

Dear Mr Lennon,

A few months ago (2019), my wife and I as residents of McLaren Vale attended a community meeting in Aldinga run by two SA Government Planning Department representatives to introduce the proposed Phase Three Draft Planning and Design Code Reform that was released in October 2019.

After the meeting we were invited to make any comments, and also, to contact your department in writing should we wish to further comment on the proposed planning reform.

In all honesty the meeting itself was not very informative, especially about questions raised by several of the attendees of the meeting 'as to what would change about the existing Local Onkaparinga Council Zoning requirements for the McLaren Vale township'.

We duly contacted by e-mail another of your staff last month (January) and again listed our concerns and reasons for concern behind 'any dilution' of the existing Zoning requirements for McLaren Vale by the proposed Draft Planning and Design Code Reform. Again, the response was inadequate in its detail as to what changes could, or would, apply to the existing McLaren Vale Zoning requirements.

Upon further investigation and reading of the proposed Draft Planning and Design Code Reform we have become increasingly alarmed at the changes in the wording and lack of detail within the reform itself. This lack of specific detail will most definitely lead to exploitation by developers into acquiring planning approval for buildings and structures completely out of keeping with the small country township ideal currently existing for McLaren Vale.

On the following pages we have commented on and listed our concerns with regard to the proposed planning reforms, specifically relating to McLaren Vale, and how these 'new proposals' compare with those of the existing Onkaparinga Planning Policy.

The existing requirements within the Onkaparinga Councils Development Plan were formed over many years by extensive investigation and consultation with many local residents and businesses of all townships in the Onkaparinga Council's jurisdiction, including those of McLaren Vale, Willunga and the other smaller surrounding townships. These existing requirements not only contain relevant parts of general South Australian Planning Policy but those of many local variations made specifically in relation to the 'Small Country Township' status and ambiance of many of the small townships in what is predominantly a grape growing and wine making area of significant beauty and attraction. Any dilution of planning controls within this area has to be considered very carefully in order not to lose that specific and detailed control that already exists.

One of the main attributes of the 'Small Country Townships' in the case of McLaren Vale is the heritage significance of the original old villages of Gloucester and Bellevue. These original small villages were mainly single story in building structure, both for residential housing and businesses, and this has been predominantly retained to the present day in the case of McLaren Vale. Any dilution, or weakening, of this requirement in the township by any future planning reform will most definitely be in detriment to the general character and style of the existing town.

For example, the proposed new planning codes show little to a non-existent, restriction of building height within the McLaren Vale township. A very good example of how important this can be is shown by the recent application by developers to construct a very large 82 bed 3-story hotel on Lower Field Street, McLaren Vale (misleading planning application address given as 130 Main Road McLaren Vale). This planning application was correctly refused by the council based on several non-compliant requirements of the townships specific Zoning legislation (Zone Areas 22, 39, 27 & 51) and specifically that of it being a large 3-story commercial hotel structure overlooking within metres of a single story residential area. It appears however that none of these specific requirements will be retained, or even considered, in the reformed SA Planning Design Code.

Below we have given further examples of how the existing Onkaparinga Planning Policy conflicts in a negative way with the proposed new SA Planning and Design Code:

Control of new development in McLaren Vale Township.

The existing plan and current policy specifically limit's the Centre expansion of under-utilised land to the north side of Main Road McLaren Vale. This is not indicated or mentioned in the new reform and will leave it open for developers to interpret it as a way for large scale commercial development.

Larger scale building and development are more characteristic of large communities in metropolitan Adelaide and are to be avoided.

The new code states 'seeks low to medium rise buildings'. The existing code specifically states that larger buildings or structures are inappropriate in the township locality. The new code does not consider the character of the McLaren Vale township at all and 'medium rise buildings' will most certainly leave it open for developers to propose 2 and 3-story structures.

