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Sent: Tuesday, 29 October 2019 4:22 PM
To: DPTI:Planning Reform
Subject: Planning reforms feedback

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Commission,

Thank you for giving Council and staff the opportunity to respond to the proposed Planning changes for the State and in particular the Naracoorte Lucindale Council (NLC).

Whilst the Naracoorte Lucindale Council are supportive of the proposed changes and the improvement to the efficiency of the States Planning system. We felt it is imperative that we provide some feedback as to how the new changes will have a direct impact on the rates payers and Council staff at the Naracoorte Lucindale Council. We hope you take into consideration some of the impacts that may be felt here at the Naracoorte Lucindale Council and most probably across other regional Councils in the State.

Accreditation

Council supports the need to be accredited for the assessment of both Planning and Building applications. However, the need for an Assessment Manager (Level 1 accreditation) at the NLC in particular is something that we do not feel is justified. NLC generally only approve an average around 200 applications a year. Many of these applications are low level commercial developments, detached dwellings, farm buildings and domestic sheds. Many of our applications can be assessed in house by a level two, three or four planner. Whilst there are options for shared services for an Assessment Manager within the region there still appears to be very few. Therefore, requiring Council to source a consultant to oversee the assessment manager's role if current staff do not meet the accreditation requirement.

To engage a consultant to undertake this role will create an additional cost to Council which hasn't previously been required or been an issue to date. Why the need for such change now?

Suggestion- Council staff (Department Manager or CEO) determine how the application should be assessed. If in house Council planners aren't suitably qualified to undertake the assessment. Then engaging a consultant (Level 1) on a "as needs basis". This would assist and help to reduce costs to Council. This has been NLC current practice which has been work well for many years.

Zoning terminology

The zoning terminology appears to be metro based. In a rural setting such as Lucindale (population of 200 people) the public don't see themselves living in a "Suburban neighbourhood" whilst this is just terminology the general public won't relate to this form of zoning when dealing with Council. Also suggest that there is very little need for an additional zoning of "General Neighbourhood". As it appears the usage is somewhat very similar. Could possibly be streamlined to one as per the past with residential zoning.

Notification

The new requirements for public notification is to install a suitable sign on the proposed allotment is supported. As per the Act this can be installed by the applicant or Council. It was unknown what fee would be charged. Is it a set fee or something Council can charge? Or If it's a legislated fee?

NLC ask that consideration be taken due to travel distances for rural Councils (i.e. NLC travel up to 60km to Council boundaries) plus staff time etc. Therefore we are asking that this be considered as part of the fees and charges proposal.

Development Plan Amendment/ Rezoning

NLC are very keen to amend a proposed zoning of Lucindale. NLC has undertaken extensive consultation with the community and a strong desire to have this changed was identified. NLC have been holding off for the proposed changes to the code as we were initially told this new reform would be the best time to seek a zoning change and avoid going through the whole DPA process and cost. Unfortunately we have been advised by the transition manager that this isn't the case and to lodge a DPA come April as per normal process.

This appears to be taking a backward step in addressing the issues under a new rollout of the planning system as it appears to be an opportune time to act. DPA are historically know to be arduous & costly creating angst for the community and Council staff.

Is there a simplified process that rezoning's can be implemented and endorsed? Prior or after April deadline for a 12 month transition period?

Carparking requirements.

The carparking requirements in the new code appear to be ambiguous for development i.e. restaurants 0.4 spaces per seat? Suggest a different simplified method can be achieved for such requirement especially if we are going to make the system user friendly for the general public.

Training

We suggest that training is supplied to Council staff using the system, applicants and IT staff to ensure that transition is as smooth as possible. Would be good if DPTI could supply a list of IT requirements- equipment, operating speeds ect. prior to April so Councils can be prepared for the commencement.

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