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Dear Planning Reform Team

Re: Feedback on the Draft State Planning Policies for South Australia

Thank you for inviting the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board (the Board) to comment on the Draft State Planning Policies (SPPs) for South Australia.

Under the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004* (NRM Act), the Board is responsible for taking an active role in ensuring that policies developed under the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* promote the objects of the NRM Act and complement the region's NRM Plan. The Board therefore has a strong interest in the current reform to the planning framework, including development of the SPPs.

As the highest level policy document in South Australia's new planning system, the SPPs will set the tone for all subsequent statutory instruments, including the Planning and Design Code. The Board considers that the development of well-considered SPPs provides an important opportunity to influence better NRM outcomes across the state.

While the first draft of the SPPs provides a good framework to stimulate discussion, the Board has identified a number of areas that could be enhanced to better reflect the intent and objectives of NRM Act and the Board's regional plan.

The Board considers that the policies in the SPPs will need to be clearly integrated to be effective in improving outcomes for communities and the environment across the landscape. As the draft SPPs currently stand, there is potential for a compartmentalised planning approach which could contribute to gradual decline of all ecosystems.

Importantly, protection and enhancement of our State's environment and sustainability principles need to be given higher priority in the objectives and policies. Notwithstanding the value of these aspects in their own right, environment and sustainability also have an invaluable role in supporting and enhancing development.

The Board considers that improved recognition of the value of privately owned green space in providing cool, liveable spaces is also required. Both public and private green spaces have an important role in promoting wellbeing, supporting biodiversity and managing urban heat. If combined with tighter requirements for inclusion of water sensitive urban design in development, and consideration of cumulative impacts of development on stormwater flow and management, then marine environmental health may also benefit. It is further recommended that the SPPs also acknowledge that urban biodiversity or vacant sites can provide ecosystem services and that modified landscapes also have a part to play.

Further comments on specific elements of the SPPs are provided in the attached table. Should you require further information on any aspects of the submission please contact Eilidh Wilson, Senior NRM Policy Officer on [REDACTED]

The Board looks forward to continuing to work with DPTI on other aspects of this important planning reform.

Yours sincerely



Dr Felicity-ann Lewis
PRESIDING MEMBER

Attachment 1

Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Region comments on Draft State Planning Policies for South Australia

Page	Section	Suggested change (in red italics) / comment
Pg 15	Part 3: Principles of Good Planning	<p>High-quality design principles</p> <p>Suggested change to dot point two:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public realm should be designed to be used, accessible and appropriately landscaped and vegetated <i>for wellbeing, biodiversity and local food production.</i> <p>Activation and liveability principles</p> <p>Suggested changes to dot points one and three:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and design should promote mixed use neighborhoods and building that support diverse, economic, <i>environmental</i> and social activities. Neighborhood and regions should be planned, designed and developed to support active and healthy lifestyles and to cater for a diverse range of cultural, <i>environmental</i> and social activities. <p>Sustainability principles</p> <p>Additional dot point suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Particular effort should be focused on planning for food secure urban environments that consider the implications of climate change.</i>
Pg 16	Part 4: Our targets	<p>Targets</p> <p>Target 1.1 is for 85% of all new housing to be built in established areas. The objectives and statements in the policies (such as policy 1, 14 and 15) should recognize the importance of appropriate stormwater management to support this level of infill.</p>

Page	Section	Suggested change (in red italics) / comment
Pg 22	SPP 1: Integrated Planning	<p>General The Board considers that the Integrated Planning Policies should connect all other SPP's together.</p> <p>Objective The objective should recognise that there needs to be a sustainable base resource/s to work from, to enable sustainable development. The following rewording is proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated planning is an essential approach for liveability, growth, economic development and environmental resilience, maximising...." <p>Policies There is concern that each policy will be taken as an individual statement and not take other policies into consideration when in use.</p> <p>Suggested change to policy 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for urban growth to protect and preserve opportunities for high value <i>urban and peri-urban horticulture and agriculture</i>, tourism and landscape character areas.
Pg 24	SPP 2: Design Quality	<p>Introductory text Suggested change to paragraph three, sentence two:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High quality <i>productive, green and cool</i> public spaces, places and streetscapes are also key ingredients for socially inclusive, <i>food secure</i> and liveable communities
Pg 26	SPP 3: Adaptive Reuse	<p>General Local food production (urban agriculture) should be permitted as an adaptive reuse of buildings and places in residential, commercial and mixed use zones. Local food production contributes to economic, health, social and climate change needs in neighborhoods and regions.</p>

Page	Section	Suggested change (in red italics) / comment
Pg 28	SPP 4: Biodiversity	<p>Introductory text</p> <p>It is important that this section recognises the importance of applying a biodiversity policy at a landscape scale, in line with the objectives of the reform from the <i>Natural Resource Management Act 2004</i> to the Landscape SA Act (currently under development).</p> <p>The introductory text should explicitly recognize that biodiversity can be terrestrial or aquatic and both are equally important to consider in planning and development.</p> <p>It would be useful for the introductory text to recognize that ecosystem services processes and functionality are shaped by the development planning system, and that they contribute to economic and social values.</p> <p>Objective</p> <p>It is suggested that this SPP objective could be amended as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Maintain and improve the state's biodiversity</i>'. <p>Policies</p> <p>The mention of cumulative impact in the introductory text is positive, and it is suggested that this issue also needs to be represented as a policy. The Board considers it important that this policy needs to be compatible with other Acts and not be in conflict. The Board strongly support consideration of the environment as a precursor to development, not as an afterthought.</p> <p>SPP 4.4 may be a better fit in the 'Our Productive Economy' section.</p> <p>Non-statutory guidance notes</p> <p>It would be useful to have a clear distinction between legally protected areas or 'recognised matters' like National Parks and wetlands, complementary developed areas and no-go areas for development. In Complementary Developed Areas the intention should be to protect and improve but not necessarily restrict development. The planning system should be clear about what development is acceptable in these areas.</p>

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Pg 30	SPP 5: Climate Change	<p>Introductory text A reference to the value of blue carbon either in this section or in the coastal environments section would be useful.</p> <p>Objective The Board considers that the objective should reference the need for an enduring ambition/lifetime assessment. The focus generally is current thinking will not create good outcomes for the future.</p> <p>Policies It is suggested that an additional policy is developed which deals with encouraging the incorporation of food production spaces into new and re-used developments to improve urban green cover and carbon sequestration, increase jobs, biodiversity and health outcomes.</p> <p>Green infrastructure will be critical in how built spaces adapt to climate change. It is recommended that the policy specifically addresses the issue of urban heat and how the planning system would like to see it managed. The Board considers that the policies should carefully consider the risks and necessary transition to manage them. The Board felt strongly that the Climate Change policies and objective should not be stand alone and should be embedded across the SPPs.</p>
Pg 34	Our People And Neighbourhoods	<p>Introductory text The text in this section should recognise the value of public and private spaces in supporting local food production, social connection, healthy lifestyles and biodiversity. These green spaces are important for climate change resilience, and of equal or greater importance to the street trees and canopy cover which is frequently referenced.</p> <p>Ideally, policy should enable access to affordable, local food sources in shops, farmers markets and home gardens.</p>
Pg 38	SPP 6: Cultural Heritage	<p>General DPTI may wish to consider whether this SPP should be divided to provide a separate policy for post-colonial and Aboriginal cultural heritage. These issues are managed by different departments, different legislation and require communication and liaison with different community groups.</p> <p>The terminology should be changed from 'Indigenous' to 'Aboriginal' – the former is used more in Federal policies, whereas, the latter is more acceptable in SA and to our Traditional Owners.</p> <p>It is recommend that Aboriginal Cultural Heritage is embedded across other SPPs, recognising that early engagement with Aboriginal people is needed across all aspects of development. The Board would support a statement recognizing the need for respectful engagement and communication as part of the planning process.</p> <p>Related legislation and instruments The SPP should recognise Aboriginal land use agreements and note the <i>Native Title Act 1993</i>.</p>

Page	Section	Suggested change (in red italics) / comment
pg 42	SPP 8: Primary Industry	<p>Objectives</p> <p>It would be helpful to have a clear definition of primary industry in setting the objectives and policies for this SPPs. The Board suggests that the objective should make sustainability and profitability the key goals.</p> <p>Policies</p> <p>There should be stronger recognition of the need for flexibility in the future planning policies to incorporate changes in agricultural land use as a result of climate change and intensification. This will be necessary to enable primary producers to adapt to climate change, and to improve the planning system to protect primary production and nature protection areas.</p> <p>The recognition of interface issues and conflict between primary producers/industry and other more sensitive land uses is important, noting that this may be best addressed through regional plans.</p> <p>The future of primary industries is in new technologies and training (for more productive crops/disease resistance etc), and the policies should reflect this.</p> <p>Related legislation and instruments</p> <p>The <i>Water Resources Act 1997</i> has been repealed – reference to this legislation needs to be removed throughout document (note – this legislation is listed in various different SPPs).</p>
Pg 56	Our Resilient Communities and Environment	<p>Introductory text</p> <p>The reference to a system-wide approach in paragraph one should be replaced with <i>landscape-scale</i> approach – consistent with the terminology of the new government and Minister for Environment and Water.</p>

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Pg 58	SPP 13: Coastal Environment	<p>Policies</p> <p>The Board consider that, in general, these policies should be less about 'protecting', and more about proactive enhancement of coast.</p> <p>With regard to policy 5, the Board considers that the aim of planning should be to avoid environmental impacts, before mitigation/management is needed.</p> <p>The policies should reflect a need to minimise the impacts of upstream development and stormwater on the coastal environment, as part of a landscape approach to ecosystems and ecosystem services.</p> <p>The policies should recognise the need for coastal retreat and buffering. Coast Protection Board (CPB) Policy strongly recommends planning for coastal habitat retreat, considering setbacks and retreat areas, including mangroves, saltmarshes and intact dune systems.</p> <p>For development affecting the coastal zone, environmental considerations should factor more predominantly in the planning hierarchy.</p> <p>It is suggested that an additional policy is developed which recognizes the need to protect high carbon sink areas such as saltmarshes and mangroves. These areas can be identified using spatial data by using relevant habitat type (i.e. seagrass) as a surrogate for the identification of sinks. This spatial data will be valuable in development of referral interests and a potential coastal overlay during code development.</p> <p>For some coastal and inland systems, the value of restored landscapes should also be considered in the planning system, as these habitats can offer high carbon sequestration values, but are often subject to development pressures.</p> <p>The SPP should give regard to marine spatial planning as integral to good coastal zone management.</p> <p>As per the CPB policy, the SPP should include a policy that states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development adjacent to a coastline used by shorebirds, including migratory and resident species, should be sited, designed and managed to minimize disturbance. <p>The SPP is missing legislative links to the <i>Environment Protection Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999</i>, <i>National Pollution Inventory and Aquaculture Act 2001</i>.</p>

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Pg 60	SPP 14: Water Security and Quality	<p>General</p> <p>There is some confusion in this policy between water quality and water security issues - it may benefit from renaming/refocusing to <i>Water Resources</i>.</p> <p>The Board considers that the SPPs should clearly articulate the aim of protecting water resources not water supplies – considering the environment as opposed to people/end use.</p> <p>Introductory text</p> <p>It is recommended that the introductory paragraph acknowledges that access to safe and reliable water resources can also support water for amenity, social, cultural, recreational and environmental purposes. The objective may benefit from a slightly broader scope, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “South Australia’s water <i>resources</i> are protected from the adverse impacts of development.” <p>Policies</p> <p>This SPP should include a policy to capture non-prescribed and non-supply water resources catchments.</p> <p>Policy 4 may benefit from some rewording as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “<i>Ensure water resources and water infrastructure meets the multiple water needs of a growing population.....</i>” <p>There is capacity to better combine stormwater management and large schemes of recycled/imported water.</p> <p>The Board proposes that new policy should be included to promote water sensitive urban design (or strengthen existing WSUD).</p> <p>The references to flooding may be a better fit in SPP 15 under Natural Hazards.</p> <p>Related legislation and instruments</p> <p>This section should include the <i>Local Government (Stormwater Management Agreement) Amendment Act 2016</i> and the Water Sensitive Urban Design Policy for South Australia.</p>

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Pg 62	SPP 15: Natural Hazards	<p>Objective The Board question the use of the word 'protected' instead of 'minimise risk/reduce impacts' - the objective of this policy could be reworded to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Planning and development decisions seek to minimise the adverse impacts of natural hazards on communities and developments.</i> <p>Policies Policy 1 should include drought as a natural hazard.</p> <p>Policy 2 is not just about protection, the Board recommend that it should aim to avoid development in risk areas.</p> <p>Policy 4 should specifically mention water sensitive urban design.</p> <p>There should be a policy in this section which recognises the importance of appropriate stormwater management to support the targeted level of infill development. Future infill development will be a contributor to flooding and large scale structural mitigation measures will be difficult to retrofit into existing developed catchments. Planning and development should be prepared to achieve pre-development flow rates.</p> <p>Related legislation and instruments This section should include reference to the <i>Local Government (Stormwater Management Agreement) Amendment Act 2016</i>.</p>