

28 February 2020

Mr Michael Lennon  
Chair – State Planning Commission  
GPO Box 1815  
ADELAIDE SA 5001  
Via email: [saplanningcommission@sa.gov.au](mailto:saplanningcommission@sa.gov.au)

Cc: Andrew Aitken, Adelaide Hills Council

Dear Mr Lennon

**STIRLING BUSINESS ASSOCIATION SUBMISSION ON THE  
DRAFT PLANNING AND DESIGN CODE**

The Stirling Business Association (SBA) represents the interests of 150+ businesses located in the Stirling District Centre. The aim of the SBA is to support a strong and sustainable business community in Stirling through events, marketing, advocacy, networking and projects to improve business trading conditions.

The Stirling District Centre is commonly referred to as a ‘village’, with a streetscape and blend of small-scale commercial properties that are unique and, when presented as a whole, provide exceptional charm. A bedrock of all SBA’s activities is to enhance and promote the individual character that sets the Stirling village apart from any other place in South Australia. Stirling is truly unique as a garden village, providing country charm with city sophistication, and this allows the SBA to promote Stirling as a destination.

Given our mutual interests the SBA often partners and collaborates with Adelaide Hills Council, and in recent years the SBA has worked in close collaboration with Council on the development of a set of desired character elements for the Stirling District Centre. Quite apart from the community amenity that character provides, the SBA considers Stirling’s individual character to be one of Stirling’s greatest *economic* assets. It is this unique character that we use to promote destination tourism that in turn supports our business community and drives new investment in the village. To this end, SBA is supportive of investment from commercial interests that recognise and align with the desired character statement for the village, and in recent years we have seen development within the Stirling

District Centre that has delivered successful outcomes. Of note, the Foodland development and the AM/PM service station, by complying with the desired character statements for Stirling, now sit harmoniously within the Stirling village landscape adding social and economic value.

Having spent considerable time nurturing and refining character guidelines for Stirling, the SBA is extremely concerned that there are currently no provisions in the draft Planning and Design Code to protect character. We are not able to identify the mechanisms within the draft Code that will prevent bad development outcomes that are not consistent with established and supported character guidelines.

A Planning Code that allows homogeneous development to occur that undermines Stirling's character is not in the long-term economic best interests of our Members, nor the local community. The SBA believes that the draft Code as it currently stands places in jeopardy the universally admired character of Stirling, and in turn the long-term economic prosperity of the village.

We do not believe it is the intention of the State Planning Commission to implement a Code that has the potential to undermine economic prosperity. We seek assurances that further time will be spent to consult on the introduction of customised character statements into the Planning and Design Code for locations, such as Stirling, where character is regarded by their community as a key economic and social asset that must be protected from erosion over time.

Specifically, SBA requests the inclusion of Stirling Village Guidelines as a design standard within the Code.

Finally, SBA would like to note that Stirling has enjoyed much recent success, having been voted by the South Australian community as the Community Choice Award Winner in the Mainstreet SA Awards in 2017 and 2018. Stirling was inducted into the Mainstreet SA Hall of Fame in 2019. To provide an insight into the considerable community support for Stirling, below is a snapshot of the 437 testimonials provided by the community to Mainstreet SA in October 2018. Whilst the comments demonstrate the multi-faceted appeal of Stirling, it is undeniable that character plays a central role in Stirling's charm.

- *The changing colours, the lovely cafes and shops, the Sunday Market. What an amazing place to live, I am so lucky!!* Alison

- *A beautiful combination of eateries, shop and boutiques and an extremely pretty environment to shop and eat in. All shops and services are catered for and there is plenty of parking and convenience. Anita*
- *I love the Hills, the main strip of Stirling is just fabulous & very pretty (particularly Spring & Autumn). It has a great feel to it & it's wonderful to stroll through, looking in the shops, has a family friendly feel as well. Well done Stirling. Anne-Marie*
- *A Magnificent streetscape of trees, shrubs & many other plants providing beautiful colour & tranquility in all seasons. A lovely village vista and ambiance. Australia's best. Arthur*
- *It is very old quaint and full of character with the beautiful gardens flowering with bursts of colour. Barbara*
- *Stirling is so beautiful, undulating paths and roads. All gardens are wonderful, street-scape is inviting, shops and cafes have creatives outlook, the trees are all winners. Barbara*
- *I love the village character, the lovely tree lined street during spring and summer, the fantastic red and gold colours of the leaves in autumn. Bill*
- *The main street of Stirling is a pleasure to visit. It's a visual treat with magnificent trees and gardens and the community is very welcoming. Carly*
- *This stunning tree lined street has a beautiful mix of shops, nature, cafes, and community space to enjoy it all. Favourites are the Christmas buskers who can be heard singing carols from anywhere in the street, the library lawns and market precinct seating. Carole*
- *I love Stirling, Adelaide Hills for its country feel with a city's sophistication. I particularly love Stirling Laneways Market with its diverse products, exquisite handicrafts and magical entertainment. Cynthia*
- *The village atmosphere remains within the township which is a stunning setting & the convenient location only 10 minutes to the Tollgate. Deborah*
- *Stirling is the prettiest & well maintained street with beautiful shops & a great selection of cafes. Spending a day wandering in Stirling is a pleasure for all senses. Desiree*
- *Love the vibe, Cafes, Pubs and general shopping. So many delightful shops to explore and the beautiful trees and ambience of the main street. Wonderful! Dini*
- *Any time of year but especially in autumn, Stirling is sublime! The gracious architecture compliments the tree lined streets and there's an olde worlde charm pervading throughout. Dorothy*
- *I love the colour, the cleanliness, the atmosphere and overall beauty which calms the soul and enriches the spirit! Elizabeth*
- *It doesn't matter what the season is, the main road in Stirling is stunning. It is one of those places where I can take tourists and they all comment about how wonderful it looks. There are activities all year round and all of the shops along the main strip are friendly and promote local small business. Fiona*
- *The Stirling main street just makes me feel happy whatever the season. It is so well cared for and loved by the whole community. Freya*
- *Calm, tranquil, merry and welcoming. Stirling main street is full of nature, cute little shops, bright smiling faces and lovely artwork. One of my favourite places in all of Adelaide. Izabel*
- *Stirling is beautiful in every season; from spectacular autumn colours to joyful spring blossoms. We can celebrate, play, eat and shop in the village heart. Jane*

- *As a local it is always a pleasure to pop into beautiful Stirling. I never tire or take our pretty little village for granted!* Jean
- *A tree lined main street beautiful in all seasons. A friendly, village atmosphere combined with character from the hustle and bustle of the pub, local cafes and park.* Julie
- *As soon as you hit the roundabout from the freeway, the calming beauty of Stirling main street always gives me a sense of serenity and a feeling of 'coming home'.* Kylie
- *It is unique. Old and new bright together. Nowhere else in Adelaide has captured this uniqueness yet.* Lea
- *Stirling Main Street is where you meet friends, you make friends, you participate in community events, you marvel at the colour of the flowers, the smell of the artisan bakers, baristas, local produce and the sounds of the children playing at Steamroller Park.* Melanie
- *It's authentic, beautiful and like a world full of charm. It's by far the best Main Street as a destination or as part of your daily journey.* Nant
- *The character of the buildings, diversity of the shops and the beautiful leafy street, especially in autumn.* Natalie
- *I love the quaintness of the village type street and the trees along the main streets in Stirling.* Patricia
- *Beautiful tree lined Street with a mixture of quality shops and cafes. Vibrant village community feeling and friendly atmosphere.* Phil
- *Stirling has a real country town feel with a selection of boutique shops and cafes. In autumn the tree lined streets change colour to reds and orange and in the summer there are lots of activities outside including eating al fresco at the Stirling Hotel.* Rachel
- *The country atmosphere and a beautiful ambience combines with the friendly people all within 12 minutes of the city. What more could you want?* Raelene
- *The trees, the light, the amazing shops and general streetscape makes this one of the most beautiful streets in Australia.* Russell
- *It has wonderful character and excellent shopping.* Steve
- *The most gorgeous Main Street in every season from the shop fronts to the gardens...* Tonya
- *A village atmosphere in a beautiful hills' setting makes this a Main Street to feel welcoming, warm and vibrant.* Vicki
- *The moment one enters the Main Street of Stirling all the senses are engaged. Great village atmosphere, especially I love the trees in Autumn!* Vincenza

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Planning and Design Code. SBA remains keen to consult on the inclusion of Stirling Village Guidelines as a design standard within the Code, and we look forward to your advice on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Simon Jones  
Chair