

From: Dr Rebecca Bilton

Via email: [REDACTED]

To the Expert Review Panel,

Via email: DTI.PlanningReview@sa.gov.au

Dear Panel Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the implementation review of the Planning and Design Code.

I am concerned about the impact of both the code and our poor regulations on protection of existing, and promotion of future tree canopy right across Adelaide. My key concerns are:

1. the continuing poor performance of a large proportion of SA Councils with respect to other Australian Councils for tree canopy cover.

https://www.greenspacesbetterplaces.com.au/media/162993/wsattg_sa.pdf

2. the lack of state-wide strategic reforms and protections that allow at a Council level the erosion of what little tree current canopy we have.

Using an evidence-based approach, the Conservation Council SA and partner organisations have generated reports to highlight how impoverished our laws have become since 2011 in respect to tree protection. Significant exemptions have been added to them, despite protests from both the community and experts. This leads to local Councils and developments being able to make major decisions that are poorly informed or self-serving yet have lasting impacts on large amounts of tree canopy and affect us all. For example, in my area the Council have recently voted to approve a development which would see removal of 150 Mature trees within a nature reserve to be replaced by an oval.

The Conservation Council SA have compiled a list of their top ten priorities for reform. Support of these improvements will help make our state's tree regulations best practice and help our state be a leader not a lagger.

https://assets.nationbuilder.com/conservationsa/pages/24040/attachments/original/1668574595/Expanded_Top_10_List_-_Planning_Review.pdf?1668574595

We cannot underestimate the important role that trees play in our daily lives. They improve our mental & physical health, clean the air that we breathe, remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, help cool our homes and streets, make our city more livable and mitigate the impacts of climate change. There is plenty of scientific evidence to show that given the climate crisis we are currently facing, additional tree canopy is one of the best ways to mitigate against urban heat effects.

We need to move swiftly to ensure that we leave the best possible outcomes.

Your sincerely,

Dr Rebecca Bilton