

## DTI:Planning Review

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**From:** Stephanie Jarrett <campaigns@good.do>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 14 December 2022 4:52 PM  
**To:** DTI:Office of Minister Champion; Michelle Lensink; Peter Malinauskas; DTI:Planning Review  
**Subject:** Submission to Tree Protection Review within the planning and Design Code

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the implementation review of the Planning and Design Code. I am hopeful that the expert panel will meet community expectations by listening attentively and acting on the feedback given.

I am concerned about the impact of both the code and our poor regulations on tree canopy right across Adelaide. You are no doubt familiar with the significant body of work published by the Conservation Council of SA and partner organisations over the last 2 years. Using an evidence-based approach, these reports highlighted how impoverished our laws have become since 2011 when significant exemptions were added to them, despite protests from both the community and experts.

The Conservation Council and partner organisations 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, a Labor election practice. Many of the changes are backed up not only by the CCSA reports but also by the independent report commissioned by the State Planning Commission - I ask you to support these changes.

We cannot underestimate the important role that trees play in our daily lives. We need them more than they need us. By doing so you will 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 for our children and grandchildren.

Further to these points which I endorse, I add my own.

Recent Adelaide housing developments encroach on productive agricultural and horticultural land. Many of these former farming sites have patches of local native flora some rich in biodiversity from groundcovers to large trees. Present law offers no protection to plants that never even reach regulated tree size, despite being rare or of ancient age. Hence, the rare *Acacia retinodes* never reaches regulated tree circumference, so is not protected. About 20 of these trees face being cleared at Springlake's Wistow site. At Springton housing development, ancient Mallee Box are being cleared, despite being from 300 to 1000 years old.

Moreover, from my reading of Native Vegetation Council tree clearance applications, almost all are granted approval to clear, including significant or regulated trees often *E. camaldulensis* or *E. leucoxydon*. So no protection here at all.

My understanding is that DIT is exempt from coverage of tree protection laws. Is this why several beautiful old huge *E. camaldulensis* were destroyed on Springs Rd because the new sportsground entrance had to be just 'so' positioned? Is this why 100s of grand old Eucalypts were chopped down at Golden Grove, despite intense community opposition, destroying Koala habitat, and no road widening anyway?

This heartbreaking and appalling cavalier attitude to local flora must end, and instead, all native flora preserved as top priority.

Also, Adelaide expansion into much of the northern and Hills areas carries a high risk of encroaching on and potentially destroying the last remnants of rare or endangered perennial and seasonal native plants. For example, the beautiful Long Leaf Sun Orchid, critically endangered across most of its SA range, survives in an abandoned brickworks in Lobethal. Hypothetically if this were rezoned for housing, plant surveyors might miss their presence if they surveyed from mid summer to mid winter, as SA orchids are all seasonal and not visible these seasons. Many or most of our native lilies, daisies, Squill, Milkmaids, Candlesticks, and more, are also seasonal. Careful surveying by

botanists is needed in all rural housing sites and laws brought to bear to protect them where development is incompatible with their survival. Also some development sites contain perched lakes or soaks, containing rare waterplants or endangered frogs, turtles or fish such as the Purple Spotted Gudgeon. Many hills fresh water species have already been lost or endangered through agricultural changes to water flows. It is imperative that scientists and environmental engineers ensure the protection of these increasingly scarce wetland habitats on new housing and other developments.

Also, roadside verges through agricultural land are often the last remaining bastion of critically endangered orchids. Utmost law protection-backed priority must be given to guarantee that the last remnants of critically endangered local native plants are not lost forever by road widening or verge 'tidying' along roads adjacent to new housing or other development.

In light of the nation's recent State of the Environment Report, and following the goal of Minister Tanya Plibersek to end all extinctions within 30 years, these measures above are all essential.

Yours sincerely,  
Stephanie Jarrett  
South Australia, 5252, Australia

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