



STATE
PLANNING
COMMISSION



THE BLUEPRINT FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S PLANNING AND DESIGN CODE

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY DISCUSSION PAPER SUMMARY

The Planning and Design Code is the foundation of South Australia's new planning and development system. Our new system is being progressively introduced to support and enhance the state's liveability and prosperity in ways that meet the needs and expectations of our communities. This discussion paper is part of the conversation that will help shape the policies in our new Code.

OUR NEW PLANNING AND DESIGN CODE

The Planning and Design Code (the Code) will be a single set of planning policies for assessing all development applications across the state, replacing the complex and at times inconsistent planning rules found within the 72 Development Plans currently in use. The Code will be a fully electronic system that enables you to quickly identify the planning policies that affect your land, or that will be considered in assessing your development application.

In establishing the first generation of the Code, the State Planning Commission—an independent body

providing advice and leadership on the roll-out of the state's new planning system—is releasing four discussion papers, which cover the topics of Natural Resources and Environment, Integrated Movement Systems, People and Neighbourhoods and Productive Economies. These papers are intended to be read as a 'family', and detail the current and proposed future policy environment for the first and subsequent generations of the Planning and Design Code.

For more information on how the Code will work go to the [SA Planning Portal](#).

The Natural Resources and Environment Policy Discussion Paper

The discussion papers describe what policies are working well, while acknowledging that there is always room for improvement. The Code presents us with the opportunity to improve policies by updating them and removing conflict, duplication or deficiencies. In this respect, the State Planning Commission seeks to engage with governments, industry and the South Australian community.

The Natural Resources and Environment Policy Discussion Paper recognises the importance of natural resources in underpinning South Australia's economic prosperity and social wellbeing. Our waterways, land, biodiversity and coastal and marine environments provide us with water, food, fuel and

fibre, and support industries and communities as well as our quality of life. Our natural resources and environment define South Australia – they are the basis of our culture, society and economy. Their stewardship through how we use our land is vital to our future prosperity and wellbeing.

Based on extensive investigations, the following policy themes have been identified as critical to the protection and enhancement of our natural assets in the new planning system and are explored in detail in the discussion paper:

- Sustainable and Liveable Urban Environments
- Water Security and Quality
- Biodiversity
- Coastal Environments
- Natural Hazards
- Environment Protection and Public Health.

Benefits of a Planning and Design Code?

- A single reference point for state planning and design rules
- Consistent planning rules to improve certainty in decision making
- Standardised interpretation of legislation will improve assessment and reduce delays
- Online delivery of the Code will provide assessment authorities with only the rules they need
- Flexibility to deal with local issues while ensuring consistency for other issues
- Significant reduction in paperwork
- Reduces costs and delays in updating development plans.



Trees and plants make a good city great!



Cooler urban areas



Healthier, happier and more productive people



Improved air quality



Boosted economy



Water management

Recommendations for the Code

The discussion paper provides a set of recommendations for the Code in relation to our natural resources and environmental policies, namely:

Transitioning what we do well

A lot of good and contemporary policy currently exists which is proposed to be transitioned to the Planning and Design Code. For example, we have good policy to guide development in sensitive areas such as conservation parks, along our coast, and in areas of high environmental value. We also have effective policy for energy efficiency, waste management and biodiversity.

Improvements we would like to make straight away

There are a number of areas for improvement where we have identified opportunities to consolidate, rationalise and enhance a range of policies to ensure they perform at their best. Some important policy areas for general improvement include:

- More consistency and certainty in relation to state level planning issues such as bushfire, biodiversity, coast protection and water security.
- A more consistent approach to managing the Mount Lofty Ranges Watershed Protection Area to allow appropriate development yet ensure the long-term health of our water supply.

- Clear policy solutions to facilitate water sensitive urban design and green infrastructure, and to encourage innovation in the planning system.
- Improve current policies for assessing and encouraging the uptake of energy efficiency, the use of renewables, and other sustainability technologies.

More significant reform

There are some important areas of reform that will require more comprehensive investigation and engagement to deliver. Some key policy areas identified for more detailed reform include:

- Improved flood mapping and clearer policies to assess flooding risk to life and property based on contemporary best practice.
- Policies to provide greater certainty regarding site contamination assessment and land reuse.
- Improved policy for water resources, supply and security particularly in relation to the River Murray.

Green infrastructure is a network of green spaces and environmental or water management features that deliver a wide range of environmental, economic and social benefits (e.g. living walls, roof gardens, watercourses, reserves, wetlands.)

Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) brings components of the water cycle together, including supply and demand, mains water, wastewater, rainfall, runoff and groundwater, and contributes to the local character, environment and community.

It is important to protect and secure water resources in the **Mount Lofty Ranges Watershed**. Unlike other states of Australia where water catchment areas are almost entirely publicly owned, the Mount Lofty Ranges Watershed Protection Area has a high level of private ownership.



HAVE YOUR SAY

In recognition of the importance of collaboration in building a successful new planning system, the Commission is seeking feedback from the community on the *Natural Resources and Environment Policy Discussion Paper*, which is on consultation until **3 December 2018**.

The feedback received will help inform the preparation and subsequent generations of the Code. Following the close of consultation a 'What We Have Heard' report will be released in early 2019.

We invite you to participate and share your feedback on this policy discussion paper via

- SA Planning Portal: www.saplanningportal.sa.gov.au/have_your_say
- YourSAy Website: www.yoursay.sa.gov.au
- Email: DPTI.PlanningEngagement@sa.gov.au
- Post: PO Box 1815, Adelaide SA 5001



Government of South Australia
Department of Planning,
Transport and Infrastructure

saplanningcommission.sa.gov.au