

13 August 2020



ODASA Consultation
28 Leigh Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Sent via email DPTI.ODASAconsultation@sa.gov.au

Dear ODASA

Re: Local Design Review Scheme for South Australia

I refer to the abovenamed discussion paper that was released for consultation in June 2020. At its meeting held on 11 August, the City of Port Adelaide Enfield endorsed the enclosed submission on the discussion paper.

As a general comment, Council supports the concept of Local Design Review Panels (as envisaged by the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*). The need to consider design matters in the new planning system is important, and to that end the discussion paper plays an important role in stimulating further discussion.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission. If you require further information or would like to discuss this matter, please contact me on telephone [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Karen Cummings".

Karen Cummings
Director Corporate Services (Acting)

Encl. Comments on the Discussion Paper



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COMMENTS ON THE DISCUSSION PAPER

The Council offers the following comments for consideration and/or clarification:

1. **Eligibility criteria for design advice.** It is noted that the State Government will determine the relevant criteria/thresholds for developments that will be eligible for advice from a design panel. To that end, it is requested that the following criteria be considered:
 - Located in the vicinity of heritage places or areas within a Historic Conservation Area overlay;
 - Located adjacent to a residential area, where the construction cost is least \$3 million (not just the Port Adelaide Centre);
 - Located in the current Urban Renewal Zone of Blair Athol and Kilburn;
 - Located along main roads (with a building height of 2 storeys or more);
 - Infill residential development on small or narrow blocks (e.g. less than 250m² in area);
 - Building height of at least three storeys or 9 metres (regardless of location);
 - Certain types of development typically located on Council road reserves that affect the public realm (e.g. outdoor dining areas or balconies above footpaths).

On first glance, the list may seem excessive when considered against the current developments eligible for design advice under the Development Act. With regard to infill development, single storey houses on small allotments – while of a smaller scale than other developments – can nonetheless cause direct impacts upon the amenity and character of established residential areas. Past media reports have quoted Council mayors describing contemporary infill development styles as contributing to “urban deserts” in metropolitan areas.¹ Commentary of this nature suggests that empirically speaking, minor developments are also relevant to the matter of good design (but have not necessarily been addressed by the planning system).

2. **Relationship of new design panels with existing Council bodies.** As many Councils already offer a heritage advice service (often through contracted specialists), the design review panel scheme may wish to provide further advice on the interaction or overlap between such bodies/services. It is also unclear whether Council Assessment Panels should make any kind of adjustments in their processes (relative to design panels).
3. **The likelihood of developers voluntarily seeking advice from panels.** In some respects, there is a balancing act between setting the advice fees low enough to incentivise developers, yet high enough to recover costs that will be borne by local government. This matter does not appear to have been comprehensively explored in the discussion paper. It is understood that a majority of eligible developments (under the current planning system) make use of the current State Design Review Panel (SDRP), which is understood to be a free service to developers. From a local government perspective, more consideration may be required in terms of cost recovery. While improved design is important, it is considered equally important to avoid the imposition of further financial burdens upon Councils.

¹ AdelaideNow (2018). *High-density housing turning streets into ‘urban deserts’*. Available <https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/adelaide-property-subdivision-interactive-map-shows-urban-infill-across-our-suburbs/news-story/5ac4953ff08a8550005721f6e0f8252c>



4. **Anticipated costs to local government.** At present, Council would not have a feel for an appropriate level of remuneration for panel members, along with the anticipated costs borne by Council in administering the scheme overall. The discussion paper does not appear to have quantified or estimated such costs (but could possibly use the SDRP's experiences as an empirical guide).
5. **The role of the State Design Review Panel.** While the existing services of the SDRP are acknowledged, it is understood that local government is not necessarily consulted in cases where the SDRP is responsible for providing advice. While the SDRP's technical abilities are not questioned, there may be further value in allowing Councils to provide design input on such developments (from a local perspective), given that a development's effects often felt at a local rather than statewide scale.
6. **Record keeping requirements.** The paper's references to record keeping, data storage, and confidentiality are noted. That said, the references are not overly detailed. For example, it is unclear if the new ePlanning system will incorporate the local design review panel process, or whether Councils will be expected to manage this through their own document management systems (which may not necessarily be compatible with ePlanning). It is understood that the Local Government Information Technology South Australia is working with the State Government on this overall issue.

