

DIT:Planning Reform Submissions

From: Luisa Dorman [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 16 December 2020 11:46 PM
To: DIT:Planning Reform Submissions; DIT:Plan SA
Subject: Planning and design cod in the city of Marion

To the State Planning Commission and the Minister,

I am writing in relation to the proposed changes to planning and design policies and rules. I understand the new policies ensure the state has authority to set rules and council customise a bit, but essentially the rules are the same and apply to everyone in metro Adelaide. My concern is how are the residents of our community voices meant to be heard at state level, if our own Marion council submission to maintain our individualistic needs goes unheard. This is quite concerning.

Marion council by no means are unquestionable in their management of subdivision and the development destruction of current trees in households or the reduction of street parking for these divided houses, but their aim for an increase in 20% tree coverage and working towards the 2040 vision of a 'livable', 'valuing nature' and 'engaged' community is still at the centre for what our community stands for and requests. I have recently written to council in regards to this issue and the response was that although Marion had increased tree planting four times in the last 6 years, development had led to reduction of trees in private property. I do not see how the residential infill under the new code will improve our current over development. How does the new code mitigate the reduction of our tree canopy and coverage? Is it true that developers can opt out of their tree planting obligation under the new code?

Even though Marion is not one of the councils that has voted for climate emergency declaration, it is 'considering' a proposal towards a carbon neutral 2030. What is the state planning stance on climate change? What are their proposed actions in the face of the coming challenges that weather will have in our community? Does the planning and design code take its policies from current and available research where ecoservices are taken into account, the positive benefits nature provides its residents. Is the state government then held into account for this? Where politics does not provide leadership and our agency as a community is removed, is the code designed utilises up-to-date scientific research and not political rhetoric to set rules?

Research proves time and time again how important green spaces are for the mental health of the community and in turn it creates a working, participating and collaborative community (refer to namica.org - nature benefits). In addition, the economic value of mental health has been seen in the UK to be worth 7% of total economy, that can be attributed to the parks of London (Bratman, G. N., 2019). The opportunity to access nature experiences affects cognitive functioning, emotional well-being and other dimensions of mental health (namica.org; Bratma G. N., et al., 2019). How does the code ensure our community maintains positive mental health by valuing nature in the face of intense urbanisation and house density? Is the ratio of green space to house density sufficient or even evaluated to ensure access to nature and to address the health inequities from the most vulnerable in our community. Does the code take into account how to better use what we currently have, such as vacant industrial blocks or empty retail spaces, rather than reducing further nature in our community? Who decides which suburban nature has more worth or character and which are destined for intense urban infill? Do the suburbs that hold less economical value doomed for further degradation of their limited nature accessibility and hence furthering their inequities. Rather than ensuring an increase of nature in each design, a given priority, where trees design are included to mitigate harsh early or late sun, or where landscape is part of the design and not an option. In addition if the infill reduces the tree canopy below a certain amount in a suburb a real consequential penalty would not be an economical one but more significant open green space MUST be provided as part of an ecoservice of planning better living for residents.

Thankyou in advance for reading my feedback. I would really appreciate your response and I understand the need to centralise and make planning run smoother, but climate change, urbanisation and nature are all interlinked and need to be something at the forefront in planning for the future our next generation.

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Best regards,

Luisa Dorman

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REFERENCES:

[Bratman, R., et al. \(2019\) *Nature and mental health: ecosystem services perspective*. Science Advance, 24 Jul 2019 vol 5 no7.](#)

(URL: <https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/5/7/eaax0903>)

[namixa.org - mental health and benefits of nature](#)

(URL: <https://namixa.org/blog/mental-health-benefits-of-nature/>)