

27.02.2020

State Planning Commission,
Dept. of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure,
Government of South Australia.
Email: DPTI.PlanningReformSubmissions@sa.gov.au

Dear Sir / Madam,

SA Planning Code - Community Driven not Builder and Profit Driven Development

As a resident in the Port Noarlunga area, Onkaparinga Council, my submission to the planning code is based on sound observation over 10 years, past reports made to council **outlining detrimental outcomes** of current profit-driven development and my personal experience of the negative outcomes of unbridled profiteering by builders.

The points I list below reflect daily conversations, anger and frustration of many local residents in the Port Noarlunga area.

History of Profit Driven Over-Development in Port Noarlunga.

Port Noarlunga was a small, characterful township with access to the Great Southern Reef Marine Sanctuary. Uncontrolled levels of profit-driven building has created a chaotic influx of poor quality, overly dense buildings; traffic jams; destruction of characterful historical houses and buildings; destruction of established gardens; forced closure of small businesses such as Cody's Café, a business which employed over 6 staff and was a significant nexus of community gathering; spill-over street parking limiting access to emergency services and pedestrians; unsafe footpath use by tradesmen working on houses forcing residents to walk on roads plus increased littering and run-off into the Marine Park and Estuary. Similar problems are plaguing Aldinga, Christies Beach, Moana etc.

I have tackled the council on these issues, including consulting Katrine Hildyard, Member for Reynell, with no measurable improvement.

This situation cannot be called: 'development' but **profiteering** without check or leadership from Council or State Government. Most of the builders profiting from their building activity in this area do not live here and they make no investment in our community.

My submission covers eight key areas.

- 1.) **Community Driven not a Builders' Bulldozer Bonanza:** development must be driven by the community and benefit the community not only the pocket of the builder, as is the current unbalanced situation in our suburbs.

Action Required: The Planning Code must have tight community benefit laws and policies which balance the Building Businesses' hunger for profit with community and environmental benefit. These laws should allow time for Community Consultation and approval of building plans and right of reply for council or State Government plans.

State Govt. versus Local Council Approvals: Ping Pong Planning Approval Practice'

Builders and individuals must not be allowed to by-pass council to get an approval from State Government where a local council has objected to the plan on reasonable grounds.

This is the current practice in our suburb and the result is multi-story buildings the community does not want and which destroy character and amenity in Port Noarlunga.

- 2.) **Transparency of Building Plans and Time for Community Consultation:** proposed residential and commercial building plans must be easily accessible on government Internet sites and published in local newspapers, well ahead of start of build, allowing opportunity for community consultation.

Action Required: the code must mandate accessible, timely advice to residents on proposed residential and commercial buildings and embed residents' right of reply in policies.

- 3.) **Quarantine Green Space in Urban Areas – Mandated to Benefit Community Mental Health:**

- a. **Scientific evidence** shows a clear relationship between urban green space and community mental health. There are multiple references, one is provided below:
 - i. Reference: Associate Professor Marco Amati RMIT,
<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/lifematters/how-to-increase-the-green-in-our-urban-spaces/11157184>
- b. No green space allocation has been made by Onkaparinga council for the Port Noarlunga area in the last 10 years, bar the Anderson Avenue Park which was forced on the council by the South Coast Forum: a community action group. (To the best of my knowledge.)

Action Required: Quarantine large areas of quality land for green space, parks etc. This must be mandatory in council and state planning.

There should be a **scientifically based ratio of quarantined natural space and green space** built into all urban development and policed through planning departments.

- 4.) **Environmentally Sustainable Development Supporting Pollinating Birds and Bees and Permeable Surfaces in residential and commercial building sites.**

I observe that virtually all non-owner builder houses and commercial buildings have torn down established gardens and cemented entire blocks. This is environmentally damaging.

Damage caused includes:

1. Increased run-off into the Marine Sanctuary because rain cannot soak into the ground.
2. Decreased pollination by birds and bees due to fewer flowering shrubs and trees.

Action Required: Retention of Established Gardens: Builders must be obliged to retain established trees and gardens and not cover an entire block in cement as is the current practice. A good architect and building plan can accommodate this.

Mandating and Increasing the area of Permeable Surfaces on Housing and Building Sites to improve run off and greening of urban areas.

Rejecting subsequent applications by homeowners and builders to cement over gardens and land, as this is a *'cement by stealth'* approach which worsens the permeable surface situation.

Budgeting by councils and State Government for staff to monitor and audit builders for permeable surface and garden retention.

Rejection of building plans where established garden and permeable surface coverage is environmentally damaging.

Quarantine large areas of quality land for green space, parks etc.

- 5.) **Parking in streets: spill over parking due to Poor Garaging Design:** Inadequate garaging in housing plans pushes cars onto streets. Buildings and planners must be obliged to plan and build appropriate garaging, not the current tiny toy sized garages.

Action Required: Councils and State Government must reject Housing plans which deliberately minimise garaging in order to create the illusion of a larger house and therefore more marketable and greater profit the builder.

6.) Retention of Historical Character of a Suburb

Places such as Port Noarlunga and Willunga are historically significant townships. Many heritage style houses and buildings have been summarily demolished without consultation of the community.

Other buildings, multi-story commercial and residential buildings which are clearly out of character of the area have been approved by the State Government. This dilutes the character and community cohesion of a township. Many people voice their disappointment and dismay at the speed and destruction occurring in our locality.

Currently in Port Noarlunga, historical buildings will be destroyed to make way for multi-story commercial enterprises. The plans are not easily accessible and the community was is not consulted.

Action Required: Councils, State Government, Builders and individuals must make plans known to the community, particularly where the proposed new building conflicts with historical character of a township.

Community consultation prior to destruction of older, historical buildings and houses.

Housing and building plans to be carefully assessed for architectural and design sympathy for existing houses and other buildings, with rejections of poorly designed or ubiquitous, cheaply designed projects.

Time and right of reply from the community must be part of this process.

- 7.) **Over Densification and Over Population in Marine Park and Outlying Suburbs which border Natural Assets.** – e.g. Port Noarlunga, Aldinga etc. Urban density is not appropriate for nature sanctuaries in this area which is part of the Fleurieu Peninsula. It should be limited to suburbs closer to the city.

The current over-densification of residential building, 3 or 4 x 250m Square blocks close to a Marine Sanctuary, including the proliferation of inappropriate business activity has resulted in overpopulation of this area.

Current damaging issues are:

1. Unpoliced and Unsafe use of a proliferation of Jet Ski's and Boats within the sanctuary – posing a threat to human and marine life

2. Littering of broken glass and plastics and plastic straws from new businesses such as Copenhagen Icecream and Horta's Beach Bar.
3. Increased Commuting of Residents and CO2 Emissions into Estuary and Marine Park and degraded air quality.

Action Required: rezoning these and other outlying suburban areas bordering natural parks, estuaries and Marine parks as inappropriate for urban infill development.

Increasing block size allocation to 500 square per building to encourage owner builders and families not business and profit-driven builders.

9. Uncontrolled Abuse of Public Footpaths by Builders and Contractors Plus Neglect of Safety Signage and Protocols.

Builders and their contractors routinely use public footpaths as their work benches, park on both sides of the street where they are working and neglect to put up safety signs advising motorists of work in progress and speed limits.

As a result pedestrians, older residents using 'gofers', mothers with prams and children are forced to walk in the middle of the road and dodge oncoming traffic.

Council will not respond to call outs by residents complaining about these practices as they do not have delegated staff for this task. They routinely pass on the query to rangers who rarely attend to complaints due to the rangers' workload.

Builders rarely put Site Supervisor's contact details on building site fencing, so it is impossible to contact them directly.

Action Required: These issues should be attended to at contract point and embedded into each builder's and contractor's contract.

Additional budget for staff should be appointed to council to monitor and audit site safety practices, in real time as they occur.

Site Supervisor's and Builders' contact details must be visibly displayed on building sites, and this needs to be embedded in Planning Code and each individual building contract.

The current explosion of building and demolition in Port Noarlunga and surrounding beach side suburbs in the Onkaparinga Council Area is less progress than it is a profit party and bulldozer orgy.

Tighter controls on building practices and abuses, reflecting community benefit, environmental care long-term, respect of historical character, urban sustainability and amenity must be entrenched into the code. A protocol of spot check audits and appropriate fines could then be enacted.

Please show some leadership.

I would also like a detailed, non-bureaucratic response to the points I have made as the time investment was considerable.

If you have any queries regarding any of the points above, please email me on the address below.

Submission for South Australia's Draft Planning Code Phase III – Policy – Maria Vouis – [REDACTED] -
Resident Port Noarlunga, S.A. Contact Details: [REDACTED]

Yours Faithfully,

Ms Maria Vouis *BA Psych/Eng;;BEd Secondary;Grad Dip Creative Writing;Cert IV Music*

CC: Katrine Hildyard – Member for Reynell
Planning and Development – Onkaparinga City Council