



History Council of South Australia (HCSA)
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4 December 2020

The Honourable Vicki Chapman MP
Deputy Premier of South Australia
Attorney-General
Minister for Planning and Local Government

To the Deputy Premier,

On behalf of the History Council of South Australia (HCSA), I would like to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 24 November and to thank you for responding to the HCSA's letter of 1 November in which the HCSA expressed concern regarding the draft Planning and Design Code (the Code) and lack of community consultation regarding the draft Code.

While it is heartening to know that the introduction of the Code has been postponed and that changes have been made to the Code in light of submissions received, we question the extent to which these changes will impact future developments and protect South Australia's built and environmental heritage. We also note that no report from the first consultation has to date been provided.

In response to your letter, with regard to the **'inclusion of Contributory Items such as Representative Buildings'**, we are concerned that the term 'Representative Buildings' is misleading as it does not necessarily apply to a group of buildings (for example a collection of worker's cottages or bungalows that together contribute to the character of the streetscape) but, under the current draft Code, could just mean one building of several that are distinctive and contribute to the character of that street.

We perceive the term 'Contributory Items' to be more appropriate and point out that term phrase is already well-known and widely used in the community. For this reason, we strongly request the retention of this term throughout the Code. While we appreciate that while Contributory Items are included within the Code, in reality there is no guarantee they will be protected. We request convincing evidence that they can and will be retained, protected and not willfully demolished on a pretext (i.e. by a desire of certain developers to cherry pick and affect the amenity of various neighbourhoods). Some of our members have found it difficult to locate 'Representative Buildings' on the Planning Atlas Map, and some properties are incorrectly marked as 'Representative Buildings'. By retaining 'Contributory Items', the government will provide an opportunity for community engagement and the views of the public to be acknowledged and respected.

Regarding **'Improvements to residential infill development policies including incentives for tree planting'**. This is an admirable objective. However from recent media reports we learn that developers can choose to pay \$300 instead of planting a tree. The small size of many blocks leaves little room for vegetation. On this note, we do not feel that climate change has been

adequately recognized or allowed for in the Code – for example, there is no requirement or incentive to retain and plant trees, or to build houses with eaves to cut down on air conditioning.

In your letter, you state that as a result of feedback, changes made to the Code include **‘the introduction of additional local policy to reflect neighbourhood characteristics’** and **‘a range of new zones to better reflect local circumstances including the Established Neighbourhood Zone which acknowledges unique areas of established character and allows for local variations’**. However, the HCSA asserts that Local Council Planners have, for many years, been aware of, sensitive to and have protected the character of various neighbourhoods in their particular Council districts when compiling their development plans.

You also state that, to support the additional six week public consultation period **‘an Addendum to the Planning and Design Code Engagement Plan has been prepared’** and that this is **‘in accordance with the Community Engagement Charter’**. However, the HCSA lack confidence in the process used to elicit community comments. It is crucial in any Community Engagement that the process is transparent and that the public readily understands and can easily engage with the consultation process. The current e-planning portal is not user friendly. Instead, our members have found the system complicated and frustrating to use – even to find one’s own address online can be difficult. We also suggest that the proposal to not include and upload Development Applications goes against Community Engagement principles – surely community members should have the opportunity to view and comment on what is going to affect them and their neighbourhood.

Finally, the HCSA continues to be concerned that three out of the four members of the State Planning Commission have connections to developers. This strongly suggests to our members that the Planning Commission has its own agenda which they are determined, at all costs, to implement. We learn that to date the Draft Code has cost South Australian taxpayers \$43million, and we regret that money from the Open Space Fund (meant to be spent in Council areas) has instead been used to try and improve the e-planning component.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Dr Skye Krichauff". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Dr Skye Krichauff

President, History Council of South Australia