



MEDIA RELEASE

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Council calls to protect block sizes, trees, streets

Marion Council is calling on the State Government to rethink controversial new planning laws which threaten to squeeze more houses on to smaller blocks, reduce space for trees, and clog streets with cars.

The draft Planning and Design Code includes sweeping changes which loosen reins on developers and downgrade design standards.

In a submission to the State Planning Commission, the Council is calling on the government to further delay the introduction of the Code to 1 January next year.

The Government is being urged to release the next version of the Code for public consultation prior to implementation.

The submission also seeks to tackle the impacts of urban infill, encourage development in appropriate areas, introduce more rigorous design standards for houses, and protect the environment.

Council is letterboxing 43,000 households and businesses asking them to voice their support to Marion's submission.

Mayor Kris Hanna said Council wanted the right balance between developers and existing residents.

"The proposed new planning laws could affect people's homes, neighbourhoods, and the environment," Mayor Hanna said.

"Design standards would be reduced. You could see essentially the same 'box type' house in each street.

"Many residents north of Seacombe Road have told us that urban infill, which causes cars to clog streets, was their number one issue. The draft Code doesn't reflect the views of most Marion residents.

"We consulted extensively with our community on planning guidelines in 2017. Council developed a solution that meets State Government objectives, restrains urban infill north of Seacombe Road, and allows appropriate development further south."

Most of Council's plan was actually approved by the State Government last August, when Council asked for:

- Bigger blocks and wider frontages for subdivisions between Seacombe Road and the tramline
- Appropriate development on hilly areas south of Seacombe Road, reducing issues associated with overlooking properties, and improving amenity

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- Better quality local housing design standards

Mayor Hanna said the latest State Government plan reversed these improvements.

“We really need to see a second draft of the Code with a further consultation opportunity, to make sure they have listened to the community,” Mayor Hanna said.

“Marion Council is not anti-development. We are concerned about infill north of Seacombe Road. We are comfortable with further development in suitable areas south of Seacombe Road.

“We are proposing a new timetable that would see the code implemented in January 2021. This would allow time for further consultation, and the process to be refined.”

Mayor Hanna said Council was now inviting residents to back its submission to the State Government.

“We ask our residents join us in calling on the State Government to guarantee the changes it has already approved,” he said.

“People can complete a short Statement of Support on our website. This will be added to our submission to the State Government, asking them to rethink the Code.”

Householders will be sent a flyer explaining the potential impacts of the Code, and information will be placed on the City of Marion website.

The Statement of Support must be completed by 24 February at marion.sa.gov.au/notinourstreets

Mayor Hanna said Council staff had been painstakingly deciphering the Code since it was released in October.

“The Code is technical document of more than 3000 pages,” he said.

“In our formal submission to the Government, Council will provide positive solutions to the evident shortfalls of the first draft of the Code.

“Council supports the modernisation of planning laws, but the Code as drafted will result in a lot of unhappy residents.”

The Draft Planning and Design Code brings in radical planning changes to planning rules and makes it easier for developers by applying a “one size fits all” approach across all South Australian Councils.

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