

Central Local Government Region of SA Clare Town Hall 12 September 2014 Summary of Workshop Outcomes

Theme 1 - Roles and Responsibilities

State Planning Commission

There was general sense that a Commission might be effective if it was adequately resourced and empowered. However, there was some concern about the extent to which change could be achieved if a Commission could not direct State Agencies.

It was suggested that there is a role for a Coordinator General in getting outcomes across state agencies.

Regional Planning Boards

Queries were raised in relation to how Regional Boards would work in relation to defining boundaries, costs, funding, membership, opportunities for local influence and engagement with communities.

Concerns were expressed regarding establishing large geographic regions, which would be impractical and make communities feel distanced from decision makers. The possibility of overcoming distance through technology was discussed, with the point made that internet access and phone coverage is not yet reliable in many regional areas.

A potential positive aspect of this reform is the potential rationalisation of costs through shared resourcing. It was also pointed out that in a regional model, all development assessment fees could be distributed at a regional level, rather than being split between State and Local Government. In relation to funding, it was also suggested that the system would be more sustainable if regions were subsidised by the fees collected in the metropolitan area.

Comparisons were drawn to the regional NRM model, which was not seen as effective as these Boards and not adequately resourced or empowered. There is a risk that regional planning boards would create another layer of unnecessary bureaucracy

Charter of Citizen Participation

It was pointed out engagement principles have been embedded within the Public Health Act. There may be an opportunity to take the same approach with a new Development Act, rather than a separate charter.

A new engagement regime should better integrate consultation efforts. Councils should be consulted once about related matters (not consulted separately on strategic plan, section 30, DPAs etc).

Consultation Summary

Independent Planning Inquiries

This idea was generally supported, subject to reasonable costs.

Theme 2 - Plans and Plan Making

Framework for State Directions

This idea was generally supported, providing that these directions replace and not add to other state-level plans.

Reshape Planning Documents on a Regional Basis

This reform is consequential to other proposed ideas and should not be considered unless other ideas were implemented.

There was some concern that a regional Development Plan would be too cumbersome. It is also unclear who a regional scheme would 'belong to' and where responsibility and accountability for the scheme would sit.

It was generally agreed that Development Plans need to be more workable and easier to understand. There should be less policy to navigate and this may not be achievable in a regional plan.

Enact a State-Wide Menu of Planning Rules

The idea of automatic updates is supported from an efficiency perspective, but it should be a 'no-surprises' model. Councils could subscribe to updates on a regular (annual) basis and have an opportunity to review the policy updates before adopting them.

This idea should be implemented as an improvement to the BDP/SAPPL model, rather than reinventing the wheel.

Build Design into the Way We Plan

The concept of form-based codes was not supported, however promoting better design through standards is a good idea.

Making Changing Plans Easy, Quick and Transparent

Reform ideas to make the SOI and DPA processes more efficient were strongly supported.

Theme 3 - Development Pathways and Processes

Improve Consultation on Assessment Matters

It was suggested that Councils should not be responsible for resourcing of on-site notification signs and that this reform is not relevant in regional areas.

Consultation Summary

The idea of Councils being involved in mediation was not supported.

Regional Independent Development Assessment Panel

What issue is this reform attempting to resolve? The group was not convinced that DAPs are an issue in the planning system.

There are consequential implications of delegations being set at a regional level- delegations can be linked to officers' salary levels.

If regional panels were introduced, the location of the meeting should rotate to different locations and participation through teleconferencing should be allowed.

Transparency of Major Project Assessment

How is transparency defined?

Further thinking is required about bringing mining approvals into the planning system.

Councils should be recognised as state agencies in Section 49 of the Act- Crown Development and Public Infrastructure.

Make the Appeals Process more Accessible

This idea is generally supported. Councils have found that the Court does not favour use of teleconferencing and written submissions. This issue needs to be addressed.

This group did not support a rehearing process as this would create delays.

More Effective Enforcement Options

This idea is generally supported, including the use of business improvement orders.