

Our Places

Catalyst Site Policy Review Framework and Principles

**To seek Council Members' feedback to finalise
principles for collaboration with the State
Government on a review of catalyst site policies**

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Catalyst Site Policy Review Framework and Principles

Key Messages



- The City of Adelaide has been seeking a review of catalyst site policy since January 2023
- The State Government indicated support for a State Government led review through their response to the Planning System Implementation Review and the draft Greater Adelaide Regional Plan (GARP) in 2023/24
- The City of Adelaide timed a review of catalyst site policy in the State Government's Planning and Design Code for 2024/25
- The State Government is yet to progress the review and has not provided a timeframe for it to commence
- Administration is seeking Council Member feedback on principles for a review of catalyst site policy to put to the State Government requesting they commence the review

Catalyst Site Policy Review Framework and Principles

Key Questions

KEY QUESTION

What are Council Members' views on the Principles for collaborating with the State Government on a review of catalyst site policy?

KEY QUESTION

What are Council Members' views on a new Overlay as an option to investigate in collaboration with the State Government?

Catalyst Site Policy Review Framework and Principles

Workshop Outline



1. What is Catalyst Site Policy?
2. Where does Catalyst Site Policy Apply?
3. Expert Panel Recommendations
4. Council Decisions on Catalyst Site Policy
5. Timeline of Catalyst Site Policy Review
6. Review Approach
7. Relationship between the Review and City Plan
8. Principles for Policy Review
9. Next Steps
10. Key Questions

1. What is Catalyst Site Policy?



- The State Government's definition of catalyst sites in the Planning and Design Code is: *Sites greater than 1500m², which may include one or more land parcels*
- Criteria to establish a catalyst site is limited only to the size of the site
- The City of Adelaide's position is that the definition as provided in the Code doesn't give clarity to developers or the community about development outcomes and should be improved
- The Expert Panel and City of Adelaide agree that:
 - The size of catalyst sites should be increased
 - The current definition in the Planning and Design Code should be improved
 - Catalyst site policy should encourage the amalgamation of land and only apply to sites that are much larger than 1500m²
- The State Government has agreed to review the purpose and size of catalyst sites but has not provided a timeframe

2. Where does Catalyst Site Policy Apply?

- Catalyst site policies apply in the following areas:
 -  Melbourne Street West Subzone (Business Neighbourhood Zone)
 -  East Terrace Subzone (City Living Zone)
 -  City High Street Subzone (City Main Street Zone)
 -  St Andrew's Hospital Precinct Subzone (Community Facilities Zone)
- Note: Residential Areas
 City Living Zone

Most of the CBD has unrestricted height (other than airport limits)

Catalyst sites have been used in areas where lower height limits apply to encourage development and increased population

The map shows that most of these areas are within or adjacent to residential areas

As catalyst site height limits are generally not capped, heights similar to the CBD are possible in these areas



3. Expert Panel Recommendations

In April 2023 the Expert Panel for the Planning System Implementation Review recommended that:

“The State Planning Commission should review the size and purpose of catalyst sites.”

In addition, the Panel considered there was opportunity to prescribe additional criteria for the creation of catalyst sites. This could include, but is not limited to, considering the merits of:

- Additional incentive policy through both planning and non-planning mechanisms to encourage the creation of catalyst sites
- Additional design parameters and/or expectations to ensure catalyst sites satisfactorily transition into the urban landscape
- Requiring the provision of a structure plan for catalyst sites to bring the community into the conversation at the policy level before approvals are sought and obtained
- Requiring an outline consent to be obtained for catalyst sites to give both the applicant and community certainty
- Preparing additional guidance material pertaining to catalyst sites and what is and is not capable of being deemed catalytic
- Appeal rights

‘the minimum size of catalyst sites needs to be dramatically increased to ensure the policy applies only to those truly catalytic sites and to encourage the amalgamation of land’.

The City of Adelaide agrees with the Expert Panel recommendations, none of which have been actioned by the State Government to date

4. Council Decisions on Catalyst Site Policy

31 January 2023

Submission to the Planning System Implementation - Expert Panel Review

“Catalyst sites should not be permitted within or adjacent to residential areas, including from Main Streets or business zones within the wider residential locality”

8 August 2023

Requests that Administration bring forward a review of catalyst site policy and seek State Government support for a Code Amendment in the 2023/24 financial year to enact Council’s decision on 31 January 2023 that catalyst sites

“should not be permitted within or adjacent to residential areas, including from main streets or business zones within the wider residential locality”

14 May 2024

Notes the update on the State Government’s response to the Expert Panel into the Planning System Implementation Review

Notes that Administration will continue to work, consistent with Council’s submission, with State Government Agency, Planning and Land Use Services, on the implementation of the recommendations of the Planning System Implementation Review

12 November 2024

That Catalyst Site Policy Review Framework and Principles, be deferred to a workshop at the next meeting of the City Planning, Development and Business Affairs Committee

An Undertaking was given to include in the workshop, how the Catalyst Site Policy Review Framework and Principles impact the City Plan, including overlays

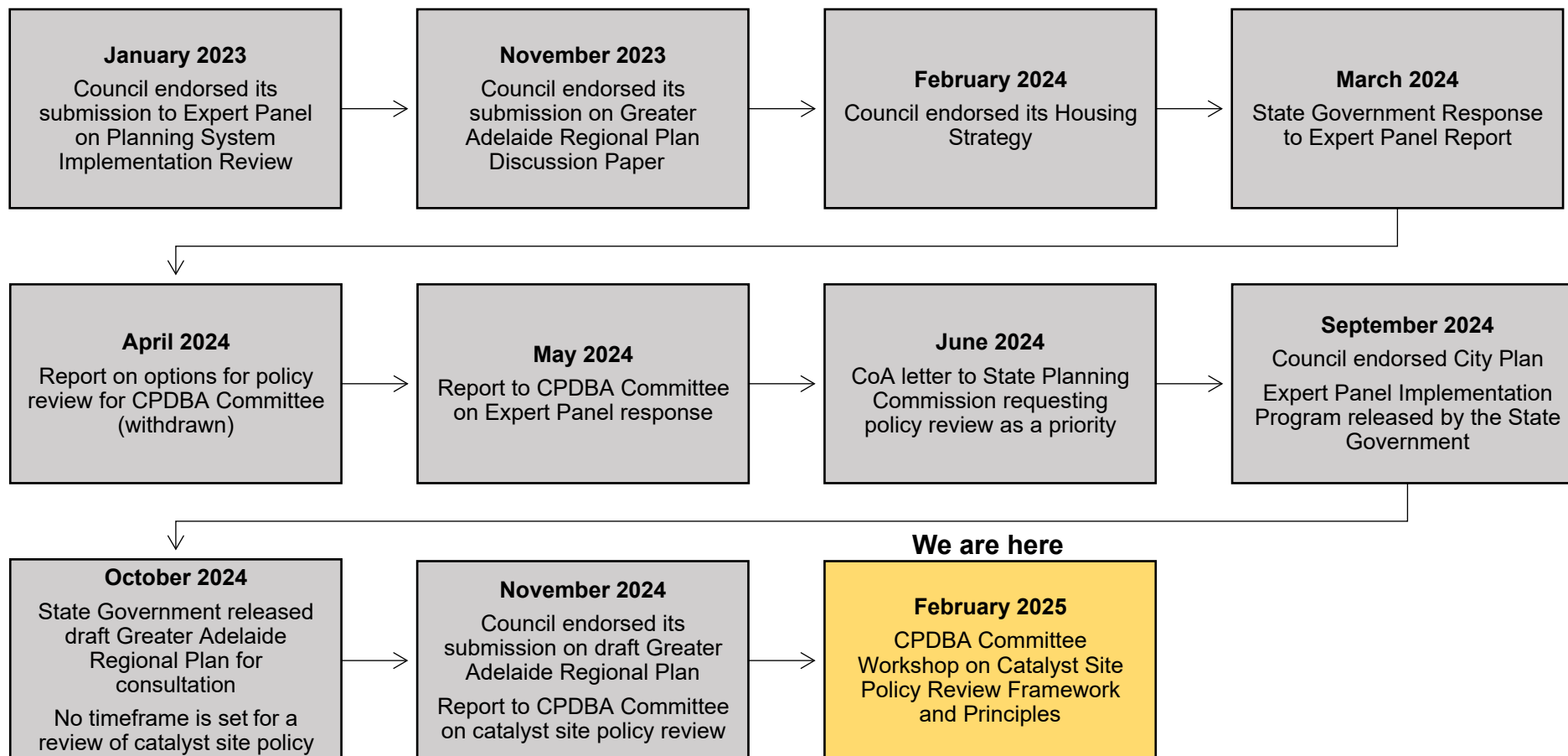
5. Timeline of Catalyst Site Policy Review



- Council's submission to the Planning System Implementation Review in January 2023 identified that policy improvements are needed to address community concerns about catalyst site policy
- Administration has been advocating since January 2023 for a review of catalyst site policy
- Administration completed a review of catalyst site policy for consideration by the Council in April 2024
- The report coincided with the release of the Expert Panel on Planning Reform recommendation that the State Planning Commission should review the size and purpose of catalyst sites and that there is the opportunity to prescribe additional criteria for the creation of catalyst sites
- Council and the State Government agree with the Expert Panel's recommendation that a review of catalyst site policy is required
- The State Government's response to the Planning System Implementation review indicates the review will be led by the State Planning Commission working collaboratively with the City of Adelaide. This has not progressed to date
- The draft Greater Adelaide Regional Plan does not set a timeframe for a review of the catalyst site policy

5. Timeline of Catalyst Site Policy Review

This slide identifies the timeline of key decisions, CoA submissions, CoA strategic work that relate to the review of catalyst site policies



6. Review Approach



- The City of Adelaide and the State Government agree changes are required to catalyst site policy
- The State Government has indicated it intends to lead the review as per the Expert Panel's recommendation, including deciding whether a Code Amendment is necessary
- There is agreement to create a new definition of a catalyst site with a site area that is genuinely catalytic to encourage land amalgamation
- There is an opportunity to develop new or replacement policy, including Overlays with strong design criteria to manage building height and interfaces

7. Relationship between the Review and City Plan

On 2 November 2024, an Undertaking was given to include in the workshop, how the Catalyst Site Policy Review Framework and Principles impact the City Plan, including overlays

- The City Plan provides a framework for the review of catalyst site policy - see previous report to the City Planning, Development and Business Affairs Committee on 5 November 2024 ([Link 2](#)). The review progresses Strategy 7 and Strategy 8 of the City Plan (see below)
- The City Plan includes information about desired building heights in the local area framework
- Council's Housing Strategy also encourages amalgamation and master planning of large and significant development sites in the City of Adelaide

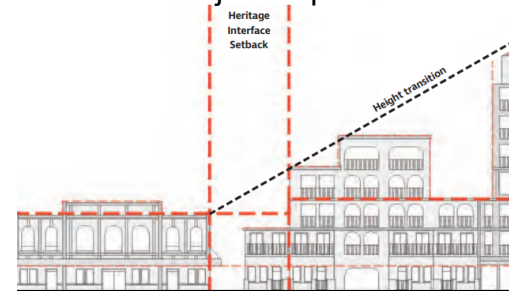
Strategy 7 – New Housing Models

Aims to facilitate the introduction of new housing models and the conversion of underutilised sites and buildings for housing to accommodate residential growth.



Strategy 8 – Designing for Urban Life, Diversity and Density

Aims to guide future development outcomes and protect existing character by managing built form as well as the interface between development and the adjacent public realm and neighbouring sites.



8. Principles for Policy Review

Detailed principles were presented to the City Planning, Development and Business Affairs Committee on 5 November 2024 ([Link 1](#)).

The principles have been refined to the following for discussion with Council Members:

- Catalyst sites should not be permitted within or adjacent to residential areas, including from Main Streets or business zones within the wider residential locality (as per Council decision)
- Policies that encourage amalgamation of sites is supported
- Development of a greater height and scale is supported in appropriate locations informed by the City Plan
- The Expert Panel's additional criteria for the creation of catalyst sites around design and process should be addressed (*see slide title 3. Expert Panel's Recommendations*)
- Developments which exceed the maximum height identified in the Planning and Design Code should attract third-party appeal rights

9. Next Steps



- 4 March 2025 – Report to the City Planning, Development and Business Affairs Committee on catalyst site policy review principles
- 11 March 2025 – Council decision on catalyst site policy review principles
- March 2025 – Council decision communicated to the State Government
- 2025/26 – Pending action by the State Government to commence the review, the City of Adelaide can collaborate with the State Government through its Code Amendment program

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