

Catalyst Site Policy Review - Finalisation of Principles

Strategic Alignment - Our Places

Public

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City Planning, Development and Business Affairs Committee

Program Contact:

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Approving Officer:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek the endorsement of principles for collaborating with the State Planning Commission on the review of existing catalyst site policy in the State Government's Planning and Design Code (the Code).

A report on the catalyst site policy review was presented to the City Planning, Development, and Business Affairs (CPDBA) Committee on 5 November 2024 ([Link 1](#)). The report provided a review of the existing catalyst site policy as requested by the Council in August 2023 and proposed principles and a framework for collaborating with the State Government on the catalyst site policy review. The report was deferred to a workshop at the CPDBA Committee on 4 February 2025 ([Link 2](#)) so that the matter could be considered further by Council Members.

On 4 February 2025, the CPDBA Committee also heard a deputation from the North Adelaide Society regarding the catalyst site policy review.

As a result of the workshop and in recognition that the City of Adelaide and the State Government agree changes are required to the criteria and framework for catalyst site policy, the principles for the catalyst site policy review have been refined as below.

The proposed principles are:

- 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 on 31 January 2023).
- Policies that enable amalgamation of sites are supported where it can be demonstrated that site permeability and protection of fine-grained streetscape character and amenity can be achieved.
- Development of a greater height and scale in appropriate locations, informed by the City Plan, is supported, subject to clear policy guidance that provides greater certainty to all stakeholders about the development potential in these locations.
- The Expert Panel's recommendations regarding catalyst site policy be addressed:
 - The size and purpose of catalyst sites should be reviewed.
 - Applying additional incentive policy through both planning and non-planning mechanisms to encourage the creation of catalyst sites.
 - Including 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 (acknowledging the need for a Practice Direction to be prepared in accordance with section 120 of the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act, 2016* (SA)) 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.
- Developments that exceed the maximum height identified in the Planning and Design Code should attract appeal rights.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation will be presented to Council on 11 March 2025 for consideration

THAT THE CITY PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL

THAT COUNCIL

1. Endorses the following principles for the purposes of collaborating with the State Government to progress a review of catalyst site policy:
 - 1.1. Catalyst sites should not be permitted within or adjacent to residential areas, including from main streets or business zones within the wider residential locality.
 - 1.2. Policies that enable amalgamation of sites are supported where it can be demonstrated that site permeability and protection of fine-grained streetscape character and amenity can be achieved.
 - 1.3. Development of a greater height and scale in appropriate locations, informed by the City Plan, is supported, subject to clear policy guidance that provides greater certainty to all stakeholders about the development potential in these locations.
 - 1.4. The Expert Panel's recommendations regarding catalyst site policy be addressed:
 - 1.4.1. The size and purpose of catalyst sites should be reviewed.
 - 1.4.2. Applying additional incentive policy through both planning and non-planning mechanisms to encourage the creation of catalyst sites.
 - 1.4.3. Including additional design parameters and/or expectations to ensure catalyst sites satisfactorily transition into the urban landscape.
 - 1.4.4. 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.
 - 1.4.5. Requiring an outline consent to be obtained for catalyst sites (acknowledging the need for a Practice Direction to be prepared in accordance with section 120 of the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act, 2016* (SA)) to give both the applicant and community certainty.
 - 1.4.6. Preparing additional guidance material pertaining to catalyst sites and what is and is not capable of being deemed catalytic.
 - 1.5. Developments that exceed the maximum height identified in the Planning and Design Code should attract appeal rights.
2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, to write to the State Planning Commission for the purposes of communicating the principles for collaborating with the State Government to progress a review of catalyst site policy in the State Government's Planning and Design Code.

IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Our Places Encourage bold, interesting and purposeful development that supports the changing needs of our community and city
Policy	The review of catalyst site policies has been taken in alignment with the Council's commitments in <i>City Plan – Adelaide 2036</i> , the Housing Strategy – <i>Investing in our Housing Future</i> , as well as Council's submissions to the Expert Panel on the Planning System Implementation Review and the State Planning Commission on the Greater Adelaide Regional Plan Discussion Paper.
Consultation	Any future changes proposed through a Code Amendment will be required to undergo public consultation.
Resource	Not as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	Not as a result of this report
Opportunities	To improve the planning policy contained in the State-wide Planning and Design Code relating to built form and development outcomes in the City of Adelaide, including greater certainty for residents and development proponents regarding development on larger or amalgamated sites.
24/25 Budget Allocation	The City of Adelaide Annual Business Plan and Budget includes \$240,000 for delivering the Code Amendment Program.
Proposed 25/26 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	Changes to planning policy in the Planning and Design Code are through a Code Amendment.
24/25 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Not as a result of this report
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

DISCUSSION

Background

1. As detailed in the report to the City Planning, Development and Business Affairs (CPDBA) Committee in November 2024 ([Link 1](#)), Administration has been advocating since January 2023 for a review of catalyst site policy and had completed a review of catalyst site policy for consideration by Council in April 2024.
2. This 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.
3. Administration is actively seeking to collaborate with the State Government on the review of catalyst site policy.
4. The purpose of this report is to seek the endorsement of principles for collaborating with the State Planning Commission on the review of existing catalyst site policy in the State Government's Planning and Design Code (the Code).
5. The principles for collaboration are informed by:
 - 5.1. The City of Adelaide's Strategic Plan 2024-2028, *City Plan – Adelaide 2036* (City Plan) and Housing Strategy – *Investing in Our Housing Future* (Housing Strategy).
 - 5.2. The City of Adelaide's submission to the State Government's Planning System Implementation Review.
 - 5.3. A workshop with Council Members at the CPDBA Committee on 4 February 2025 ([Link 2](#)).

Catalyst Site Policy Review Principles

6. The principles for collaborating with the State Government are based on the joint recognition of the need to review catalyst site policy. The principles are:
 - 6.1. Catalyst sites should not be permitted within or adjacent to residential areas, including from main streets or business zones within the wider residential locality.
 - 6.2. Policies that enable amalgamation of sites are supported where it can be demonstrated that site permeability and protection of fine-grained streetscape character and amenity can be achieved.
 - 6.3. Development of a greater height and scale in appropriate locations, informed by the City Plan, is supported, subject to clear policy guidance that provides greater certainty to all stakeholders about the development potential in these locations.
 - 6.4. The Expert Panel's recommendations regarding catalyst site policy be addressed:
 - 6.4.1. The size and purpose of catalyst sites should be reviewed.
 - 6.4.2. Applying additional incentive policy through both planning and non-planning mechanisms to encourage the creation of catalyst sites.
 - 6.4.3. Including additional design parameters and/or expectations to ensure catalyst sites satisfactorily transition into the urban landscape.
 - 6.4.4. 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.
 - 6.4.5. Requiring an outline consent to be obtained for catalyst sites (acknowledging the need for a Practice Direction to be prepared in accordance with section 120 of the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act, 2016* (SA)) to give both the applicant and community certainty.
 - 6.4.6. Preparing additional guidance material pertaining to catalyst sites and what is and is not capable of being deemed catalytic.
 - 6.5. Developments which exceed the maximum height identified in the Planning and Design Code should attract appeal rights.
7. The principles support a framework for developing planning policies that aligns with the City Plan:
 - 7.1. Strategy 7 of the City Plan highlights the Council's ambition to facilitate the growth of the city's housing supply through methods including the development of large, underutilised sites suitable for potential amalgamation and master planning and advocating for development in strategic locations.

- 7.1.1. A policy framework guiding development on large sites directly aligns with this strategy and will assist in achieving the objectives of the City Plan.
- 7.2. Strategy 8 of the City Plan articulates the built-form principles for enabling growth outcomes in the city while considering the local context and place.
 - 7.2.1. A replacement policy framework will help strengthen the consideration of built form and interface while achieving desired growth outcomes.

Next Steps

- 8. Pending decision by the Council, the Administration will write to the State Planning Commission requesting they progress the implementation of the Expert Panel's recommendation to review catalyst sites.
- 9. 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 across the 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years.

DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Link 1 – [Report to City Planning, Development and Business Affairs Committee meeting on 5 November 2024.](#)

Link 2 – [Workshop with City Planning, Development and Business Affairs Committee on 4 February 2025](#)

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

- END OF REPORT -