

Submission

Response to Infrastructure SA Discussion Paper

Note: This submission was approved by Council at its meeting on 20 August 2019 and replaces the previous draft we submitted.

Our submission has been prepared in response to the issues raised and questions posed by the [discussion paper](#). We have organised the submission around themes, rather than responding to each individual question posed in the discussion paper.

Overview

The City of Onkaparinga is South Australia's most populous council with 171,489 residents. We will continue to experience significant growth over coming years. This will pose significant challenges for infrastructure planning and provision.

We welcome the development of the 20 Year State Infrastructure Strategy and the following stated aims for its development:

- developing and publishing a pipeline of projects that have been rigorously assessed and prioritised
- optimising current assets through better asset management
- better integration of land use and infrastructure planning.

It is highly desirable that assessment and prioritisation processes for projects, including the relevant assumptions, are transparent and open to scrutiny. Transparency in the prioritisation process is likely to foster confidence for industry, all levels of government and the community, resulting in better outcomes.

It is important that the infrastructure strategy does not just focus on 'big ticket' projects. Improving how we plan for, provide and manage smaller local infrastructure also offers significant opportunities. In order to achieve this, the strategy needs to be holistic and consider the broad context of infrastructure needs rather than focused on project delivery.

We are the SA's largest council and continue to experience significant growth.

Transport

More than half our working population leave our city to travel to work. This is one of the key drivers that will shape transport infrastructure needs into the future, along with the region's changing population density.

Integrated land use and transport planning

An increased population will require more diverse forms of housing, and better utilisation of our existing housing areas, centres and remaining large (greenfield) development sites. Planning will need to focus on integrated transport and movement opportunities, which provide equitable access and better choice of transport for our communities. Outer areas of Adelaide such as the City of Onkaparinga are transitioning from a low density form to a more compact one.

Cities require fast, efficient, reliable, clean, safe and accessible public transport networks, integrated with various forms of active travel, in order to be sustainable. Early planning of public transport services, including local bus services, is critical and should be a key element that defines the structure of new neighbourhoods and supports the revitalisation of medium density residential areas.

An integrated planning approach will allow for increased residential densities, a better mix of land uses, more connected communities, and more desirable walking and cycling options.

Better public transport options, particularly at rail stations, will help reduce our reliance on private car use, and reduce demand for car parking in our city. The focus should not just be on inner and middle Adelaide. Outer Adelaide must not be left with a legacy of disadvantage.

Our position

Better integration of infrastructure and land-use planning is essential.

Major transport facilities and strategic transport routes should be shown on key land use planning overlays (such as the Planning and Design Code) and supported by appropriate policy to manage the interface and potential conflicts. Every effort should be made to accommodate strategic infrastructure, while minimising disruption to local residents.

Our land use planning system needs to ensure that proposed large greenfield developments comprehensively model the traffic impacts on the surrounding existing road network, including state and local government owned roads. There needs to be clear trigger points where a new development potentially influences the role and function of an adjacent road sufficiently for it to be substantially upgraded.

Public transport

In addition to investment in road infrastructure, higher quality and more frequent public transport services are required.

There is a need to develop incentives for people to choose to use public transport especially relative to other modes and:

- prioritise public transport with the road space (e.g. priority bus lanes)
- provide more cross-region public transport links
- have public transport planned and established to support new developments from the beginning.

We must also support behavioural change programs to encourage people to use public transport.

An agnostic view of technology when it comes to public transport is desirable (i.e. working out where people want to go before applying the solution). This could include the potential use of autonomous electric vehicles, fixed light rail and trackless trams. Road and transit corridor planning should consider including technological redundancies that would enable these options as they advance.

Our transport infrastructure planning considerations should also include other critical user groups, such as tourism and industry (freight).

Major road projects

Council acknowledges the state government's recent investments in and commitments to such as the Candy Road – Lander Road – Main South Road intersection, and the duplication of Flagstaff Hill Road. These address key local needs that improve intra- and inter-suburban connectivity and better utilise major roadways such as the Southern Expressway.

However major road infrastructure upgrades (such as the duplication of Main South Road and Victor Harbor Road) need to consider the impact on local transport/road networks both during the planning stage and following implementation.

Key southern transport priorities

- Implementing both proposed stages of the Main South Road duplication from Seaford to Sellicks Beach. Council supports the Main South Road Action Group in its preference for removing roundabouts on this fast-moving roadway.
- Development of a southbound access to the Southern Expressway at Old Reynella, including improved access at Majors Road.
- Appropriate management of freight throughout the McLaren Vale Region.
- Duplication of the Victor Harbour Road.
- Future connection between Doctors Road and Panalatinga Road at Hackham (requiring that the proposed sale of this corridor be abandoned).
- Completing the widening of Flagstaff Road to four lanes.
- Address congestion issues along the Dyson Road/Murray Road/Saltfleet Street/Commercial Road corridor in Port Noarlunga.
- Extension of the Seaford Rail line to Aldinga (when viable).
- Improved bus services that more effectively meet the demands of our residents
- Ensuring appropriate connections to Lonsdale for heavy vehicles and freight are maintained.

Sport and recreation

A major investment in sporting infrastructure over the next 20 years will be needed to help meet service level pressures emerging in fast-growing suburbs of council's metropolitan south. In addition to new facilities upgrades to existing facilities will be needed. The upgrades include the provision of female change room facilities.

We recognise that a number of existing state funding programs support investment in local sporting infrastructure. These programs should continue and ideally be expanded into the future.

Our 31 kilometres of coastline is a major asset for both recreation and tourism. The challenges of managing this important natural asset are discussed later in this document.

Key projects need for our region include:

Wilfred Taylor Reserve

Wilfred Taylor Reserve is a 60-hectare regional open space which supports a diverse range of organised sports and informal recreation. Upgrades to the sports facilities and other open space assets are needed. This includes improvements to the existing and ageing sports facilities and playing surfaces that support basketball, soccer, rugby and netball.

The state government made a commitment prior to the election to develop a significant nature play facility on the site. This is in currently in design and accelerated activity at the reserve will act as a catalyst for sports upgrades.

Aldinga Sports Park

The City of Onkaparinga's southern district is the area's fastest-growing, by a significant margin. A new regional facility will be required to support the demand for sport resulting from this growth. Expediting the development of

Our position

Major investment in sporting infrastructure is needed to keep pace with urban growth.

soccer sporting facilities is needed as the first stage of future development of the sporting complex. This project will develop in concert with the adjacent new Aldinga school and Renewal SA's nearby residential developments.

Coast Park

Coast Park is an important recreational and tourism asset for metropolitan Adelaide. Ongoing collaboration with the South Australian Government to develop this asset has been crucial and needs to continue. Witton Bluff remains a problematic section that would require cooperation between governments to resolve.

Waste and recycling

Waste and recycling utilities are often overlooked in land use and infrastructure planning. We welcome the reference to waste and recycling services in the discussion paper.

Interstate, there have been instances of forced relocation of waste and recycling facilities that provide critical infrastructure to the local waste and recycling industry, as result of urban encroachment and poor planning decisions. It is important that relevant infrastructure is protected from such threats in South Australia.

In light of recent local, national and global developments in waste and recycling it is also important to views these utilities as economic opportunities rather than simply essential services.

Recycling processing infrastructure – Southern Adelaide

Kerbside recycling is an essential service. The community expects that the materials collected are meaningfully recycled and their resources recovered.

Over the last 24 months we have seen significant disruptions to kerbside recycling across Australia. International markets for commodities have fallen significantly. In addition, a major national processor in Victoria was recently unable to receive recyclables for an extended period, forcing a number of Victorian councils to send recyclables to landfill. These events have highlighted the need for development of local markets for recyclables, sector-wide contingency planning and additional infrastructure capacity in South Australia.

The Southern Region Waste Resource Authority (SRWRA) is a regional subsidiary of the cities of Holdfast Bay, Marion and Onkaparinga.

Our position

We welcome recognition that waste and recycling is an essential service – and an economic opportunity.

It has developed a business case for the construction and operation of a materials recovery facility (MRF) to sort kerbside recyclables at its Seaford Heights site. This would create up to 37 ongoing jobs and have capacity to process approximately 60,000 tonnes of recyclables per annum.

There is also the opportunity to attract complementary businesses to the site that can use these materials or to establish a circular economy by creating products that councils themselves require.

SRWRA is seeking government support towards the construction of the MRF and for to support the attraction and co-location of compatible circular economy industries to the SRWRA site. More information on this request to government can be provided separately.

Procurement

Government procurement has an important role to play in supporting local markets for recyclables. South Australian councils and the Local Government Association are trialling procurement targets to increase the use of recycled materials in our operations.

If this was also supported by targets in state government infrastructure projects it would encourage further innovation in local industry, including potentially collaboration with university-based research partners working in this area.

Education

Shared facilities

As identified in the discussion paper, community use and access to school grounds and facilities offers an efficient way of sharing costs, increasing utilisation and providing higher quality facilities. These arrangements are relevant to a range of school infrastructure including libraries, halls, indoor recreation facilities and playing fields.

We have long advocated for this option to be explored further, and are actively engaged in facility-sharing discussions with local schools, as mentioned earlier in this submission in relation to the Aldinga Sports Park and Southern Sporting Complex.

This is equally relevant both for the planning of new infrastructure and the management of existing facilities. It is a particularly important discussion in context of the state government's South Australian Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Plan currently in development.

Our position

The shared use of school facilities will provide more efficient asset planning and utilisation.

Building resilience to climate change

We support the need to build resilience to climate change as part of infrastructure provision and planning. However, it is equally important for climate change mitigation.

The Infrastructure Strategy should align with the Climate Change Strategy being developed by the Department for Environment and Water. Ideally, it would include agreed emissions scenarios to enable informed consideration of what this could mean for infrastructure design in light of sea level rise and impacts on rainfall, heat waves and storm events.

Reducing heat load

Providing cool spaces and mitigating heat loads will become increasingly important. This requires a coordinated approach to infrastructure planning and asset management, particularly with investment in roads and other 'hard' infrastructure.

Councils are trialling innovative methods in road building and maintenance to increase the use of recycled materials and to decrease the heat load in urban areas. Trials include the use of granulated rubber mix, toners and plastic waste, and the application of cooler paints. With the carbon emissions from concrete alone said to amount to 8 per cent of global emissions (the same as transport), this is an area that can have both climate mitigation and adaptation outcomes.

Lifecycle considerations

Infrastructure planning should give greater consideration to whole-of-asset-life costs and environmental impacts. Infrastructure design needs to give greater consideration to the end-of-asset life in order to allow for repurposing, recycling and avoiding waste generation.

Our position

Climate change adaptation and mitigation must be considered at all stages of the infrastructure life cycle.

Infrastructure design will need to become more innovative to consider the embodied energy of its materials. Infrastructure SA could provide a link between university research in this area such as the CRC for Low Carbon Living. Industry and government specifications could also be further encouraged. Similarly, the circular economy model mentioned previously would support this ambition.

Coastal management

Our coastline is a complex and dynamic natural asset that includes sandy beaches, cliffs, estuaries and sand dunes. The ongoing management and monitoring of erosion, albeit a natural process, is required to protect infrastructure, preserve the amenity of beaches and ensure public safety. Climate change is exacerbating the impacts of erosion and state government support is vital for ongoing monitoring and coastal protection infrastructure and works.

Sea level monitoring

Accurate long-term measuring of sea levels is essential to understand the actual rise rate. The tide gauge at Port Stanvac was removed in November 2010 to allow Mobil Refining Australia to decommission the oil refinery. According to the National Tidal Centre, its re-establishment near Port Stanvac is still being investigated in 2019. The Bureau of Meteorology has signalled the importance of this monitoring station to our understanding of sea level rise on the southern coastline.

Green infrastructure

Council has undertaken significant work identifying and mitigating the impact of increasing urban heat on our disadvantaged populations. This has led to some innovative approaches to street tree planting, which we hope to expand through access to the 'Greener Neighbourhood Grant Program'. We commend the government for implementing the fund and suggest that urban greenery – whether through street trees, parks or other spaces – be considered critical urban infrastructure alongside roads, stormwater, street lighting, etc.

Water management

Stormwater management

Increased intensity of rainfall events pose significant challenges for our infrastructure. This compounds pressures already being felt through infill development. The ongoing trend to fewer but more intense rain events also presents a challenge for water-dependent businesses in our region.

Flood mitigation

Investment in flood mitigation should be incorporated into all major infrastructure projects where appropriate. For example, SA Water has identified an opportunity to incorporate additional works into required infrastructure upgrades to the Mount Bold Reservoir, which would provide downstream flood protection in the case of extreme rain events. However, funding for the additional flood mitigation component of the works has not been confirmed.

Not all infrastructure investments require expensive engineering solutions. As one example, the management of the culturally and environmentally important Aldinga Washpool presents an opportunity to restore natural water flows that would preserve a cultural asset, ease stormwater pressure and potentially help meet stormwater needs of future development in the surrounding area. Enhancement, restoration or mimicry of natural processes can complement built infrastructure investments for mutual advantages to the natural and built environments.

Waste water

We provide community waste water management systems (CWMS) in Clarendon, Morphett Vale, McLaren Flat, McLaren Vale, Willunga, Maslin Beach and Sellicks Beach. However some areas within our city do not

Our position

Infill development and climate change are challenging our existing stormwater infrastructure.

have access to either SA Water's wastewater network or our CWMS. We have long advocated that access to SA Water's wastewater network will provide best outcomes for these communities and the environment. This should occur via a holistic waste water planning exercise for all of Sellicks Beach and the southern portion of Aldinga Beach.

Water recycling – institutional arrangements

Adelaide has a proud history of innovative water recycling and is considered a leader in this field. In looking to the future, we may be better served by an integration of water management functions to capitalise on our expertise and to increase the resilience of our urban areas and surrounding primary production zones.

The water network in its entirety from supply, drainage and health is currently serviced by SA Water, the Stormwater Authority, the Environment Protection Authority, the Department of Environment and Water, private water recycling companies, Natural Resource Management Boards and local government. The current fragmentation of roles and responsibilities is a potential barrier to an efficient and integrated water network across Adelaide.

The Melbourne Water model is an example of institutional arrangement worthy of investigation. Melbourne Water has been particularly successful in delivering water sensitive design outcomes and water recycling. The urgency of this issue will grow as current rainfall trends continue to intensify.

Infrastructure funding

As identified in the discussion paper, the method for funding retrospective augmentation of infrastructure is critical to the strategy's development. Based on our projected land supply and current consumption rates, there is some 10-15 years' supply of residential zoned land. Moving to 'infill' development creates issues with infrastructure, particularly roads and stormwater, and to some further extent provision of open space.

We note that the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* will provide for a new legislative mechanism and a suite of financial tools to assess infrastructure requirements and delivery options. These need to be reflected in the development of the strategy.

The strategy must not be used as a means of shifting further responsibility for infrastructure onto councils. The local government sector already manages huge volumes of infrastructure assets, many on behalf of other governments. The management arrangements of any new infrastructure proposals should be considered in a cooperative fashion that has community need and value for money at its centre.

Our position

The augmentation of existing infrastructure presents major funding challenges for local government.