



Strathalbyn Town Plan Consultation Report

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Introduction

In April 2014 the Alexandrina Council engaged a consultant team lead by URPS, urban and regional planners and community engagement specialists to review and update the Strathalbyn Town Plan. Our objective for the Town Plan 2014 – 2024 is “to achieve an agreed vision with the community and Council that builds on the outstanding qualities of Strathalbyn while addressing the needs of a growing and a vibrant community”.

The commitment made by Council and the consultant team was “to provide opportunities for our community to propose creative ideas building on our strengths”.

To support this process a Discussion Paper was prepared by the consultant team. This paper canvassed a wider range of issues and opportunities for the future development of Strathalbyn.

The Discussion Paper was placed on Council's website and available in hard copy from Council offices. A response sheet was provided with the Discussion Paper to assist people to comment on the issues.

A media release and flyers were prepared to promote a number of community engagement events.

Business representatives were invited to attend a breakfast workshop held on 3 June 2014.

Those groups and individuals wishing to discuss specific proposals or issues were invited to book a time for a one-on-one meeting with the consultants and Council staff.

A drop-in Open House session was held at the Strathalbyn Community Centre between 3:00pm and 8:00pm on 3 June to enable people to have a say on the issues that interested them. A facilitated speak-out model allowed people to spend time with specialist members of the consultant team on any of 8 topic areas.

An interactive session was held with Year 8 students from the Eastern Fleurieu 7 – 12 School.

This report summarises the findings of each of these community engagement processes.

Over 80 people completed the online response sheet and a further 36 people provided written submissions.

There were 47 people at the business breakfast workshop and 55 people participated in the Open House Session.

Ten groups and individuals attended one-on-one meetings with the consultants.

A petition containing 1005 signatures was presented to Council indicating opposition to the proposed retail development located on Adelaide Road.

This report provides a summary of the feedback provided by the community on the Discussion Paper.

Residential Development

Most people support modest levels of population growth provided that all new housing can be accommodated within the current town boundaries.

Some people suggest that limits should be placed on population growth.

There was support for using the land within the existing residential zones for appropriate development.

Once this land has been used a preference was expressed for rezoning of the Deferred Urban Land to the west and south-west of the town.

Most people wanted to see a mix of allotment sizes while maintaining a sense of space. This is considered to reflect the traditional pattern of early settlement.

Housing for Older People

Large scale retirement villages are not considered appropriate for Strathalbyn. In general smaller clusters of units on allotments of up to 450m² close to shops and medical facilities were seen as more appropriate for older people in Strathalbyn. Affordability and access to in-home support were noted as important features of housing for older people.

Retail Development

The majority of responses supported new development within the existing town centre using land that is currently vacant or undeveloped.

There was significant concern expressed about the proposed retail development on Adelaide Road and Hampden Way.

Respondents were concerned about the potential negative impacts on businesses in Dawson Street and High Street.

It was also noted that the existing restrictions on the floor area for new shops on High Street of 250m² could limit the redevelopment of some larger land parcels.

Industrial Development

Respondents noted that there is sufficient zoned land to meet future industrial and large scale commercial requirements.

It was also suggested that it can be difficult to gauge the kinds of industrial developments that might occur in the next ten years. Strathalbyn is considered to have a local role to play in the regional context where Mount Barker, Monarto and Murray Bridge are likely to be significant locations.

Community Services and Facilities

A number of respondents described the need for better medical centre facilities for general practitioners and specialist services. While people value the quality of the services they have, better premises would improve access.

CLASS presented a proposal to develop a community learning environment based around a community farm and social enterprise model. The facilities will provide support to CLASS's clients with disabilities as well as offer vocational education, training and mentoring opportunities.

Several responses indicated the need for new facilities for the ambulance service.

Traffic and Parking

There are divided views about the adequacy of car parking in the town. While some people consider that additional spaces are required, others pointed to a number of locations which could be used for longer term parking.

Concern was expressed about business owners and employees who park all day in the main streets. Suggestions included timed parking and designated staff parking a short walk from the main street.

Parking for buses and larger tourist vehicles was also noted as a need in the town.

The most significant issues raised regarding traffic movement related to the lack of clear directions at the northern entry to the town and confusion at the Sunter Street, Albyn Terrace intersection. Congestion was also noted turning from Albyn Terrace to Dawson Street.

Pedestrian access is considered to be particularly dangerous across the Sunter Street Bridge. Footpaths are narrow in some locations and poorly maintained in others.

People identified the need for pedestrian paths to connect High Street and Dawson Street. Better links between the Angas River and new development to the north of the town are needed for pedestrians and cyclists.

It was proposed that some car parks could be removed from the south side of Albyn Terrace to allow for pavement dining.

Recreation and Sport Provision

Existing recreation facilities are highly valued and have received significant investment.

The managers of the recreation grounds on Callington Road would like to see these recognised as a public reserve with multiple uses.

A proposal has been received from Equestrian SA to develop a State Equestrian Centre on Council-owned land on Michelmore Road.

A proposal has also been received for motor sport and shooting activities on Council-owned land on Langhorne Creek Road.

Additional sports facilities for soccer, netball, football and cricket could be required as Strathalbyn grows. Possible locations include land north of the skate park, Council-owned land on Langhorne Creek Road or on Callington Road.

Several respondents suggested that indoor recreation facilities need to be upgraded, especially for basketball.

Streetscape and Urban Design

People commented on the need for improved gateways into the town providing clear directions, a vibrant and appealing welcome and relating to Strathalbyn's character.

Better pedestrian links and more engaging places for people to gather and celebrate were suggested.

People wanted to see the creative use of colour in plantings, murals and other art forms to help bring the town to life.

A range of suggestions were made about how to enhance the streets and public spaces in Strathalbyn.

Natural, Cultural and Built Environment

The river corridors are seen as a valued but somewhat neglected asset for the town. Many people commented on the need to enhance the natural environment to achieve better biodiversity habitats.

They identified the need to protect remnant vegetation and rehabilitate degraded areas.

It is acknowledged that the buildings from the 19th and early 20th century contribute to Strathalbyn's character. Significant buildings should be retained, maintained and re-used where possible. Several respondents identified specific proposals to achieve this.

Strathalbyn is the meeting place for two Aboriginal Nations – the Peramangk and Ngarrindjeri. As such, it has ongoing significance that could be acknowledged and celebrated.

Strathalbyn's strong Scottish heritage is also an important cultural asset to be recognised and celebrated.

Tourism Development

A very strong part of Strathalbyn's attraction to tourists is considered to be its historic country town feel and the heritage buildings and their natural river setting.

Some respondents suggested the need for parking for caravans and larger RVs at an accessible location such as the land near the Railway Station.

There were divided views about the need for either the relocation of the existing caravan park or the establishment of a second facility, either primarily for RVs or as a full holiday park.

Greater promotion of Strathalbyn's strong arts community by showcasing their work was considered to be an important tourist drawcard.