

SOUTHERN MIDLANDS COUNCIL

SUBMISSION - TASMANIAN HOUSING STRATEGY – EXPOSURE DRAFT

17 July 2023

LINK TO THE (DRAFT) TASMANIAN PLANNING POLICIES:

Certain strategies need to link to, and be reflected in, the Tasmanian Planning Policies, (TPPs). These are currently being drafted. This will ensure that the necessary actions within Tasmania’s Land Use Planning System are undertaken. There is no mention of the TPPs in the Exposure Draft.

The TPPs determine key aspects of the Regional Land Use Strategies (soon to be reviewed) and will direct the shape of relevant provisions in the State Planning Provisions. Ultimately they will influence the spatial allocation of zones within the various Local Provisions Schedules of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme.

It is crucial that the Tasmanian Housing Strategy specifies necessary land use planning outcomes in order for these to be appropriately reflected in the TPPs.

Opportunities to link to the TPPs are set out below.

The Tasmanian Planning Policies should be included in the list of ‘related initiatives’ on page 40 or in the ‘coordinated strategies’ on page 42.

Relevant TPPs are:

- 1.0 Settlement.
 - 1.1 Growth.
 - 1.2 Liveability.
 - 1.3 Social Infrastructure.
 - 1.4 Settlement Types.
 - 1.5 Housing.
 - 1.6 Design.

COMMENTS ON SOCIAL & ECONOMIC OVERVIEW:

Council strongly supports the following statements:

On page 13:

Our housing response will also be sensitive to the priorities and challenges in rural and regional areas and will provide appropriate and quality housing outcomes for all people living in Tasmania.

On Page 16:

Attracting and retaining permanent workers injects money into local businesses, increases the availability of local services, and creates other social benefits, particularly in regional and rural communities.

COMMENTS ON THEME ONE: MORE HOMES BUILT FASTER

Homes Tasmania's general emphasis appears to be on 'facilitation'. It should be prepared to take a more proactive '**Land Development Authority**' guise, in which it has the powers of compulsory acquisition and developer status.

These powers should be used in strategic in-fill medium density housing locations, such as the brown-field belt between Moonah and Glenorchy arising from vacating light industries and warehouses moving to the cheaper locations for such uses at Brighton and Cambridge.

There are also sites within many country townships that present similar opportunities. Council stands ready to work with Homes Tasmania to assist in identifying such sites and to facilitate the development of social and affordable housing in our communities.

It is also recommended that Homes Tasmania provide guidelines and standard model(s) for Local Government, especially in rural and regional locations, to take a leading role, when appropriate. Such guidelines would include advice regarding engaging with other public sector entities and the private sector to build more social and affordable housing.

COMMENTS ON THEME TWO: AFFORDABILITY IN THE PRIVATE MARKET

The most significant price pressures arise from the lack of supply.

Essentially, Tasmania's Planning System has delivered too little zoned land over the last two decades. This is not the fault of Local Government, as individual Councils have regularly submitted rezoning applications to the Tasmanian Planning Commission only to have them refused, usually as result of undue weight being given to small numbers of objectors.

This situation can be addressed by:

- Amending the Draft Tasmanian Planning Policies to aim for a 20 year supply of zoned land, rather than the current 15 year aim. Planning systems suffer from inertia. Once zoning is in place, it is challenging to expand, and it is better to over-estimate the supply of required land than to underestimate it. This can be done by an amendment to the Draft Tasmanian Planning Policies, calling for a target of a 20-year supply.
- Amending the Draft Tasmanian Planning Policies to set a 30 year supply of land within urban and settlement growth boundaries. As per above comments, this is to overcome 'planning system inertia'. This can be done by an addition to the Draft Tasmanian Planning Policies.
- Encouraging Local Government and, more importantly, the Tasmanian Planning Commission, to proactively assess existing Rural Living Zone areas with a view to decreasing minimum lot size or rezoning to Low Density Residential, in order to allow a degree of infill subdivision. This can be done by an amendment to the Draft Tasmanian Planning Policies.
- Encouraging Local Government and, more importantly, the Tasmanian Planning Commission, to proactively assess existing 'de facto' rural living areas with a view to changing their zone from Rural to Rural Living, in order to allow a degree of infill subdivision. This can be done by an amendment to the Draft Tasmanian Planning Policies.

COMMENTS ON THEME FOUR: LOCAL PROSPERITY:

Council strongly supports the following statement:

On page 36:

Good quality and affordable worker's accommodation is particularly needed in regional, island, rural and remote areas, where there is also a lack of skilled builders, essential utilities, and the cost of transporting building materials is also prohibitive.

Tasmania has distinct regions, each with key strengths and advantages and the potential to attract new investment, expand business and drive the state's economy forward. The provision of diverse and affordable housing, increased pace of rezoning and joined up planning and policy prioritisation in our rural and regional communities will support these social and economic endeavours.

Social and affordable housing is a necessary component of the suite of housing options that need to be available in rural and regional centres. This enables local people to remain 'in community', which leads to better mental health outcomes for all concerned, allowing extended families to remain together within the one home town.

As per comments on Theme One, Homes Tasmania could provide guidelines and standard models for Local Government, especially in rural and regional locations, to facilitate their engagement with other public sector entities and the private sector to build more social and affordable housing in their municipalities