

Submissions invited on new planning policy for activity centres

10 November 2020

3 min. read

Worthwhile read for: Property Developers, Town Planners

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On 30 October 2020, public consultation opened on the draft *State Planning Policy 4.2 – Activity Centres (Draft SPP 4.2)* and *State Planning Policy 4.2 - Implementation Guidelines (Implementation Guidelines)*, which form part of the State Government's planning reforms to support economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Background

State Planning Policy 4.2 – Activity Centres for Perth and Peel (SPP 4.2) was prepared by the Western Australian Planning Commission pursuant to Part 3 of the *Planning and Development Act 2005* (WA) and replaced the *State Planning Policy 4.2 Metropolitan Centres Policy Statement for the Perth Metropolitan Region*. SPP 4.2 sets out the broad planning requirements for the planning and development of new activity centres, as well as the redevelopment and renewal of existing activity centres in Perth and Peel.

Draft SPP 4.2 and the Implementation Guidelines seek to address concerns about implementation and update the policy to ensure that it remains relevant today. Some of the key changes include:

- expanding the geographic scope;
- aligning with Design WA policy suite;
- simplifying and clarifying the content;
- promoting multi-functional activity centres; and
- streamlining processes and procedures.

Expansion of geographic scope

Draft SPP 4.2 expands the geographic scope of the policy so as to apply not only to activity centres within the Perth and Peel regions but also to the Greater Bunbury Region Scheme areas.

Alignment with Design WA policy suite

To align with Design WA policy suite, the Draft SPP 4.2 and the Implementation Guidelines expressly stipulate that they are to be read in conjunction with *State Planning Policy 7.0 Design of the Built Environment*, *State Planning Policy 7.1 Neighbourhood Design* and their associated guidelines. Additionally, the Model Centre Framework at Appendix 2 of SPP 4.2 is to be replaced with the *State Planning Policy 7.2 Precinct Design* and *State Planning Policy 7.2 Precinct Design Guidelines* which are currently being finalised.

Simplifying and clarifying the content of the policy

Draft SPP 4.2 and the Implementation Guidelines have been drafted with the aim of simplifying the content of SPP 4.2 and providing clarity with respect to the processes and procedures to be followed in relation to the preparation and assessment of the relevant components of the planning instruments that relate to activity centres. The Implementation Guidelines, for example, contain:

- a methodology checklist as to the relevant considerations in the planning of activity centres; and
- detailed scope and methodology of the Needs Assessment and the Impact Test (formerly the Retail Sustainability Assessment).

Streamlining the content of the policy

Draft SPP 4.2 and the Implementation Guidelines attempt to streamline assessment processes by, among other things, limiting the application of the Impact Test to proposals for major developments and out of centre developments.

Multi-functional activity centres

To encourage the development of multi-functional activity centres with a wide range of land uses, the Implementation Guidelines contain a diversity ratio that is to be implemented by decision makers as a guide to plan for an appropriate mix between non-residential land uses and shop/retail land uses within activity centres.

Submissions

Submissions are currently open in respect of the Draft SPP 4.2 and the Implementation Guidelines and are due by 5pm on Friday, 12 February 2021. Written contributions are to be made through an [online form](#). However, contributions by mail will also be accepted.

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