



Department of **Planning,**  
**Lands and Heritage**



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# STATE PLANNING POLICY 7.2 PRECINCT DESIGN

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The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of this land. We pay our respect to Elders past and present, their descendants who are with us today, and those who will follow in their footsteps.

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## 1. CITATION

This is a State Planning Policy made under Part 3 of the *Planning and Development Act 2005*. This policy may be cited as State Planning Policy 7.2 Precinct Design (SPP 7.2).

## 2. POLICY INTENT

To provide guidance on the design, planning, assessment and implementation of precinct structure plans, local development plans, subdivision and development in areas identified as precincts.

## 3. PRECINCT DESIGN IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Effective planning and design of areas of urban activity and optimising available resources is integral to the future of our cities and towns. Western Australia's population is predicted to reach 3.2 million by 2031 and some 85 per cent of people will live in urban areas.

The accommodation of this further growth needs to be orientated towards precincts of activity, transit and places which can accommodate increased intensity of development.

The Western Australian planning system and policy framework has traditionally been weighted towards low density greenfield development. This policy recognises the need to design and plan for a broader range of precinct-based contexts and conditions, including: activity centres, stations, urban corridors, and infill areas. This complements the existing guidance provided for greenfield developments and provides additional information concerning infill development.

Activity centres, stations, urban corridors, and higher density residential and/or mixed use areas inherently have more variables and considerations. It is therefore essential that these areas are carefully planned, designed and developed to achieve good built environment outcomes.

## 4. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

This policy and its guidelines applies to precincts throughout Western Australia and guides the preparation, assessment, determination and implementation of precinct structure plans, local development plans, and subdivision and development applications. For detailed guidance on the application and implementation of this policy, the policy is to be read in conjunction with the SPP 7.2 Precinct Design Guidelines (the Precinct Design Guidelines).

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### 4.1 WHAT IS A PRECINCT?

Precincts are areas that require a higher level of planning and design focus due to their complexity, whether this is due to mixed use components, quality public transport infrastructure, higher levels of density, an activity centre designation or character, heritage and/or ecological value.

The following are general precinct types where this policy may be applied (but are not limited to):

- Activity centres as defined by draft SPP 4.2 Activity Centres (WAPC, 2020)
- Station precincts (land within and around a commuter train station or major bus interchange)
- Urban corridors (land adjacent to and located along transit corridors)
- Residential and/or mixed use areas or
- Areas otherwise identified as a precinct by the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC), in consultation with local government, for purposes of orderly and proper planning.

## 5. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

1. Ensure that precinct planning and design processes accommodate growth in a coordinated manner and deliver good quality built environment outcomes that provide social, economic and environmental benefits.
2. Ensure consistency and rigour of precinct planning across the State.
3. Enable design review to be incorporated in precinct planning processes, with due regard given to the advice received.
3. Built form height and massing (bulk and scale) across the precinct is responsive to existing built form, topography, key views and landmarks, and the intended future character of the area. Buildings are suited to their purpose, contribute positively to the character of the public realm, and provide good amenity at ground level.
4. The precinct design facilitates development that meets the needs and expectations of the community and provides for change over time. Required services infrastructure is integrated in a manner that mitigates amenity impacts. Development considers the intended full lifecycle and is robust, resilient to wear and easy to maintain over time.
5. Planning and development of precincts delivers a sustainable built environment through:

## 6. POLICY OUTCOMES

In the context of State Planning Policy 7.0 *Design of the Built Environment* (WAPC, 2019)(SPP 7.0) Design Principles, the outcomes listed below specify the role of planning and development in contributing to the overall objectives of this policy. The outcomes can be achieved through addressing the policy measures and meeting the objectives in the Precinct Design Guidelines. They can be used to guide discretion in policy application and provide a basis for its evaluation.

1. The precinct design responds to and enhances the distinctive characteristics of a local area, contributing to a sense of place. New development is integrated into its setting and responds positively to the intended future character of an area.
2. Development within precincts integrates landscape design that enhances sustainability outcomes and contributes to community wellbeing. The local environment is enhanced through the:
  - protection of water and soil resources
  - retention and/or enhancement of the green network
  - protection and/or restoration of fauna habitat, where appropriate
  - consideration of microclimate and urban heat island impacts.
6. The precinct design provides for comfortable public spaces that encourage physical activity, enable a range of uses and are accessible to all.
7. The precinct design provides for places that are easy to navigate, with clear connections, good lines of sight to key locations and a logical, intuitive layout.
8. Planning and development optimises safety and security within precincts by:
  - maximising opportunities for passive surveillance
  - integrating safety requirements in manner that does not compromise intended uses
  - following Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) design principles.
9. The precinct design provides for development that responds to local community needs and the wider social context by delivering an appropriate mix of land uses, dwelling types and public spaces.
10. The precinct is attractive and inviting, with a coherent identity and cultural relevance. The scale, arrangement, articulation and material quality of buildings and spaces together create a high level of amenity.

## 7. POLICY MEASURES

### 7.1 STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic planning documents within the State Planning Framework, including region schemes; regional and subregional strategies and frameworks; local planning strategies; and district and local structure plans, should include consideration of this policy when identifying or investigating planning areas for future development.

For activity centres, additional factors such as the identification of the centre's role, distribution, function and broad land use should be considered as part of the strategic planning process in accordance with draft SPP 4.2 Activity Centres (WAPC, 2020).

### 7.2 PLANNING PROPOSALS

This policy is relevant to precinct structure plans, local development plans, subdivision and development. These planning proposals are to be prepared and determined in accordance with this policy and the Precinct Design Guidelines.

**Precinct structure plan:** a document prepared and approved under the provisions of a local planning scheme. Precinct structure plans outline land use, density and development (including built form), access arrangements, infrastructure, environmental assets and community facilities at a precinct scale to facilitate future subdivision and development.

**Local development plan:** a mechanism that may be used in limited situations to facilitate the design and coordination of development where detailed built form, public realm and access guidance is needed, but is not to be used to guide subdivision and zoning or to allocate residential density codes. A local development plan may only apply to specific lots, a group of lots or to a small defined area, such as a local activity centre.

**Subdivision and development:** where an endorsed precinct structure plan or local development plan exists, subdivision and development should be consistent with the applicable plan.

In considering subdivision or development proposals within a precinct where a precinct structure plan or local development plan has not yet been prepared, the responsible authority should also consider the objectives, measures and outcomes of this policy, the objectives and considerations of the Precinct Design Guidelines, and any other relevant requirements.

### 7.3 EXEMPTIONS

The decision-maker will generally not require a precinct structure plan to be prepared over an area where there is already an endorsed structure plan or activity centre plan.

A draft structure plan, activity centre plan, scheme amendment or local development plan (or any amendment to these) that would ordinarily make reference to this policy, may only be finalised without reference to this policy, where:

1. it has been advertised in accordance with the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* prior to the gazettal of this policy or
2. unless otherwise determined by the WAPC.

### 7.4 DESIGN REVIEW

Where available, design review benefits precinct planning by providing informed, independent advice regarding the design quality of a precinct proposal and the interpretation and application of the Precinct Design Guidelines. Design review can be particularly helpful for unique or complex proposals.

Design review is carried out against the Design Principles contained within SPP 7.0 *Design of the Built Environment* (WAPC, 2019). Consideration will also be given to the objectives outlined within the Precinct Design Guidelines, noting that these align with the Design Principles.

Design review shall be scaled according to the complexity or significance of a proposal and shall generally follow the methodology outlined in the *Design Review Guide* (WAPC, 2019) to achieve consistency across jurisdictions. It is expected that decision-makers give due regard to the advice and any recommendations provided.

SPP 7.0 *Design of the Built Environment*, the *Design Review Guide* and the Precinct Design Guidelines provide further information regarding design review.



