



Planning

Outcome

Tasmania's planning system supports and promotes the social goals of affordable housing, good health, and social inclusion through access to work, learning, services and social hubs

Why is this a priority?

If Tasmania's social and economic situation is to improve, the State's planning system must be an active partner in efforts to eliminate disadvantage. The planning system may seem remote from the daily concerns of Tasmanians, particularly those on a low income or facing disadvantage. But many low-income and disadvantaged Tasmanians already grapple with issues that can be traced to past and current planning decisions and frameworks.

- The State's supply of affordable housing is far short of current demand, and seems unlikely to keep up with future demand—a situation that could be addressed by planning requirements, as in South Australia
- Broadacre public housing projects are isolated from shops, services and employment
- In the absence of a transit-oriented development framework, people are more and more dependent on cars, and
- Many neighbourhoods lack infrastructure that encourages healthy activity, such as safe and well-connected footpaths, cycleways, or adequate public open space.

Proportion of Tasmanian shops carrying an adequate range of fresh fruit and vegetables that are located in low income areas: 5%⁷²

Effective spatial planning for social inclusion has been one of TasCOSS's key interests in recent years. Good planning in relation to land use, transport and services infrastructure, and urban design has the potential to facilitate and encourage the supply of affordable and sustainable housing and transport, to promote healthy and socially connected lifestyles, and to support access to education, employment, basic services, and participation in the community. In the absence of overarching guidance at the State level, however, market forces alone are not guaranteed to deliver adequate results, particularly in the area of housing affordability but also in areas such as access to healthy food and transport.

⁷² Heart Foundation, <http://ausfoodnews.com.au/2014/07/28/fruit-and-vegetables-out-of-reach-for-tasmanians-university-study.html>

Business as usual isn't delivering affordable housing.

- Tasmanian housing supply needs to 2031:
 - Average affordable new dwellings a year: 656 (27%)—a total of 13,112 low-priced homes in 15 years.⁷³
- Proportion of dwellings sold in 2014 affordable to households in the second quintile (bottom 20-40%) of household income with no debts or dependents:
 - One-person household: 20.4%
 - Two-person household: 0.7%⁷⁴
- Proportion of rental properties affordable (<30% of income) to low-income renters
 - Between 0.2% and 15%.⁷⁵
- The decline in housing affordability has been exacerbated by a passive bias in Tasmanian land use planning frameworks towards single-occupancy dwellings, despite the fact that the State already has both a higher than average percentage of sole occupancy households and the highest percentage of separate housing stock in the nation.⁷⁶
- The experience of other Australian states shows that statewide planning mechanisms have the potential to contribute significantly to the development of affordable housing. In its first eight years, for example, South Australia's 15% affordable housing requirement delivered more than 1220 affordable houses, with a further 2800 committed in future developments as of 2013.⁷⁷

Recommendations

1. That the State Government allocate funding to the development of a range of overarching planning policies detailing the planning system's objectives, strategies, and guidelines for planning in relation to social issues including housing, health, transport, and economic development.
2. That the State Government fund comprehensive community consultation to inform the development of the above policy statements.

Costs

Planning Policy Program (Recommendation 1)	\$250,000
Community Consultation Project (Recommendation 2)	\$50,000

⁷³ Housing Tasmania (2015), Affordable Housing Strategy, p. 12.

⁷⁴ Dustin Crayford, Research Officer, Real Estate Institute of Tasmania

⁷⁵ Anglicare Rental Affordability Snapshot 2015

⁷⁶ Office of the State Architect 2011, p. 3.

⁷⁷ Housing Strategy for South Australia 2013-1018, http://www.sa.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/42564/Housing-Strategy-SA-2013-18.pdf

Rationale

Recommendation 1

The creation of a statewide planning scheme is only the first step towards a reorientation of the Resource Management and Planning System towards planning for positive social outcomes. The Government must also deliver an overarching set of high-level statements of principle that lay out the planning system's social, economic and environmental objectives and identify strategies and guidelines for achieving them.

It is time for the Government to begin work on the suite of new and revised State Policies flagged, for instance, by Minister Gutwein in his address to the TCCI in October 2014. We believe that a strong suite of planning policies on social issues such as affordable housing and healthy spaces are necessary to guide State and local government planners in their use of the reformed planning system to deliver effective planning for social inclusion in the State. These will add substance to the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act's* new objective of promoting "the health and wellbeing of all Tasmanians".

Recommendation 2

The reform of the planning system currently underway presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to engage Tasmanians in the discussion about the social objectives of the State's planning system—what the planning system is FOR. Spatial planning in Australia has tended to be top-down and the province of highly specialised bureaucratic cultures and operating systems. This situation runs contrary to the basic object of planning processes, which is to create environments that are pleasant, efficient and safe for all residents—a series of criteria that can only be judged by Tasmanians themselves.⁷⁸ Indeed, one of the objectives of the Tasmanian Resource Management and Planning System is "to encourage public involvement in resource management and planning."⁷⁹

A series of consultations across the State will inform the Government of what stakeholders and residents across the State think the planning system's key social goals and concerns should be. Consultations must include Tasmanians whose voices can be hard to hear, including low-income and disadvantaged Tasmanians, older and younger people, people living with disability, Aboriginal Tasmanians, and people from CALD backgrounds. Consultations should include as a minimum:

- Hobart and the South East
- Launceston and the North East, and
- The North West and West Coast.

⁷⁸ *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993 (LUPAA), Schedule 1 Part 2.*

⁷⁹ *LUPAA, Schedule 1 Part 1.*