



STATE  
PLANNING  
COMMISSION

# Revitalising Retail

## Policies in the Planning and Design Code



Image credit: Adelaide City Council

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Government of South Australia  
Department for Trade  
and Investment

# REVITALISING RETAIL IN THE PLANNING AND DESIGN CODE

## INTRODUCTION

Shopping centres and main streets are the heart of our vibrant and connected communities and support South Australia's growth and development. For many years, planning policy has supported a centres hierarchy approach, from regional and district level shopping and services through to neighbourhood and local centres providing for smaller scale conveniences.

This has served our state well and seen communities well supported by retail and other services. However, the nature of retailing, and in particular how we shop and receive services, is changing. We have also seen new types of shopping and service industries enter the South Australian market, the revitalisation of main streets and high streets within our communities, greater opportunities for mixed use development as industries evolve and co-locate, as well as the continuing need to accommodate large format outlets such as homemaker centres and new distribution models.

This brochure provides an overview of the policies in the Planning and Design Code (the Code) related to retail development and shops. Through these policies, the Code will ensure the provision of retail services in South Australia that encourage vibrant activity centres, supports employment opportunities, promotes sustainable transport use and builds healthy communities.

## RETAIL POLICY BENEFITS

- Encouraging shops in 'activity centre' and 'main street' zones, but allowing small shops in other areas, facilitates people having convenient access to retail services while preserving the vibrancy of existing centres.
- Reducing red tape by allowing new businesses including shops, offices and consulting rooms to move into existing commercial premises within centres without lengthy planning approvals.
- Promoting above-ground-level apartments in activity centres, where residents benefit from convenient access to shops, services and transport.
- Promoting 'main street' areas with a focus on good design, interesting shopfronts, sheltered pedestrian footpaths and areas for visitors to meet, relax and entertain.
- Enabling shopping centres to expand by allowing shops opposite/adjoining existing centres and improving the range of shopping options in convenient locations.
- Removing barriers to innovation and efficiency by allowing businesses to install things like solar panels without planning approval.
- Enabling bulky goods outlets (such as home furniture stores) to operate in industrial type areas which are suited to large-size warehouse-style buildings.



Image credit: Adelaide City Council

# THE ACTIVITY CENTRE HEIRACHY

Activity Centres have been one of the pillars of South Australia's growth and development, having contributed to the form and pattern of development and enabling more equitable and convenient access to shopping, administrative, cultural, entertainment and other facilities in a single trip.

The Code maintains an activity centre hierarchy, while incorporating distinct zones for main streets (see 'ACTIVITY CENTRE HEIRARCHY IN THE CODE' overleaf).

Retail subzones in 'employment' and 'innovation' zones also acknowledge areas where larger shops are anticipated, promoting business clusters.

# OUT OF CENTRE RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

The Code includes 'Out of Activity Centre Development' General Development Policies, which reflect current State Planning Policies and recognise Activity Centres as the primary locations for shopping, administrative, cultural, entertainment, and community centres.

Often, older established suburbs tend to be characterised by a greater number of smaller centres aiding an outcome of walkable communities and perhaps reflective of their establishment in a less car dependent era.

New suburbs, particularly those at the fringes of the metro region, often exhibit fewer but larger centres which can provide less opportunities for walking to shops and services.

Policy that applies outside of centres, such as in neighbourhood/residential zones, also envisages some level of non-residential development to be established. Typically, this is aimed at serving the local community in a way that doesn't detrimentally impact nearby residents.

The Code sets guidance on maximum floor areas for shops outside activity centres to facilitate small-scale shops in locations with poor access to activity centres and limit non-residential activity to home-based businesses in neighbourhoods that are within walking distance of an existing centre.

Most neighbourhood zones limit the scale of retail development, depending on the distance from an activity centre as follows:

- Up to 100m<sup>2</sup> floor area where more than 500m from an activity centre
- Up to 200m<sup>2</sup> floor area where adjoining an activity centre.
- Up to 200m where fronting a State Maintained Road (unless within 500m of an activity centre).
- All other cases: up to 50m<sup>2</sup> home businesses.

In other non-centre zones (e.g. employment, innovation, rural zones), the Code provides for some small scale retail development as a secondary land use, or complementing other primary envisaged land uses, provided impacts can be addressed.

Note: under the PDI Act, a home activity of 30m<sup>2</sup> or less does not require approval, subject to conditions.

# ACTIVITY CENTRE HEIRARCHY IN THE CODE

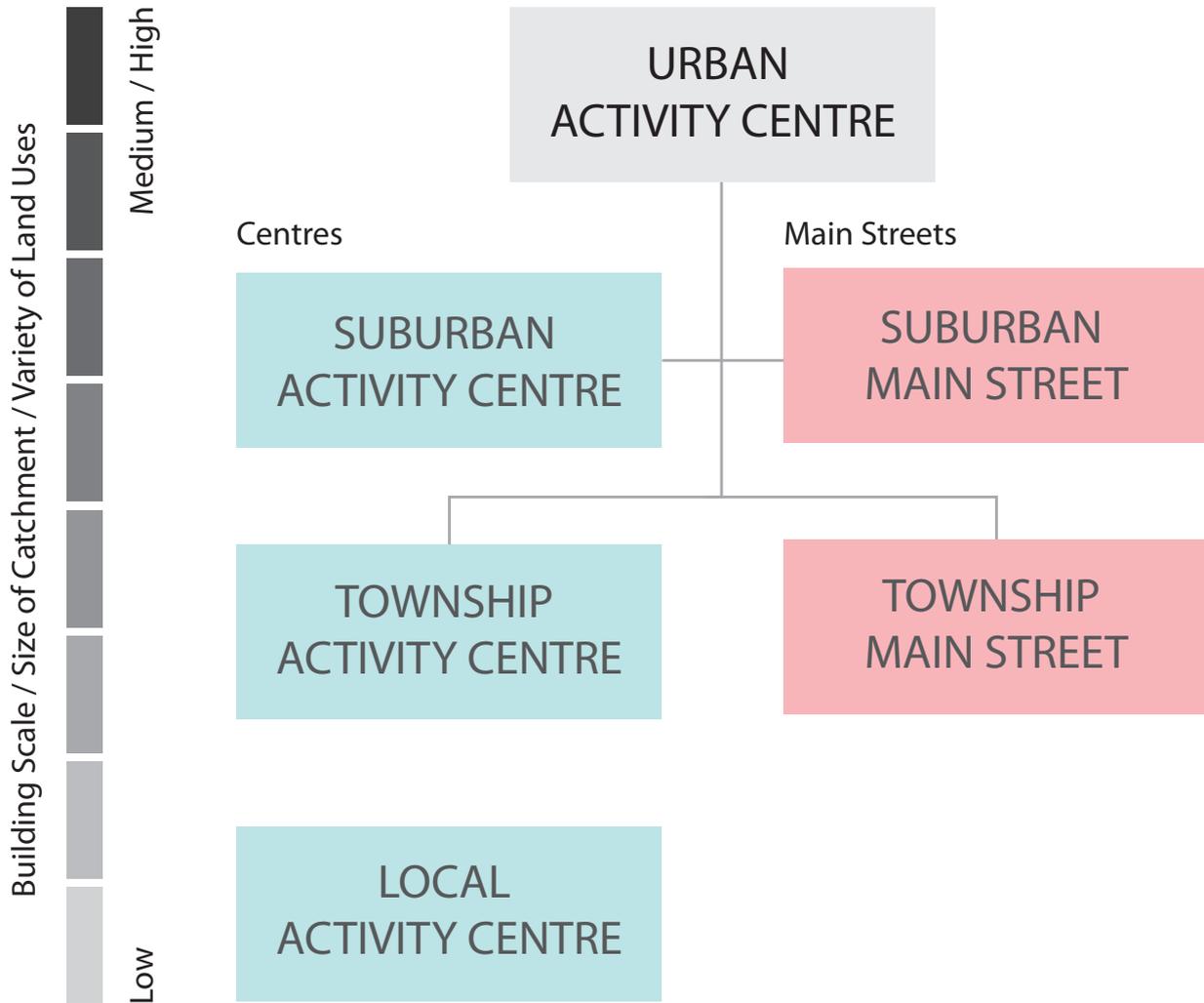


Image credit: Bowden by Brad Griffin

# How does the Code deal with shops in/out of Activity Centres?

The suitability of shops in a zone is dictated by the land uses envisaged in PO/DTS/DPF 1.1, and by any further policy on the scale of shops.

Shops will be restricted development where assessment at the State level is required to consider strategic implications and impacts. The restricted trigger has no relevance in performance assessment on merit, and restricted development is not necessarily inappropriate in the zone.

Notification will occur where a shop is not an envisaged land use in the zone, exceeds the anticipated floor area/height in the zone, or where it is likely to adversely impact adjacent land.

## Activity centres/main streets

- Urban Activity Centre Zone
- Suburban Main Street Zone
- Township Main Street Zone
- Urban Corridor (Main Street) Zone
- Suburban Activity Centre Zone
- Township Activity Centre Zone
- Local Activity Centre Zone
- Activity Centre Subzone
- Shops are envisaged as a primary land use.
- No restriction on shop floor area in zone policy.
- Shops are not subject to notification unless exceeding height/setback criteria.
- Shops are not restricted development.

## Mixed use zones

- Urban Neighbourhood Zone
- Strategic Innovation Zone
- Suburban Business Zone
- Urban Corridor Zones (Boulevard, Living) Zone
- Community Facilities
- Business Neighbourhood Zone
- Limited shops are envisaged as a secondary land use.
- Restriction in shop floor area in zone policy (can be varied by subzones).
- Shops are only subject to notification unless exceeding height/setback criteria.
- Large shops may be restricted development, except in suitable subzones.

## Employment zones

- Urban Corridor (Business) Zone
- Employment Zone
- Strategic Employment Zone
- Tourism Development Zone
- Small shops are envisaged, or larger shops that are ancillary to envisaged uses.
- Restriction in shop floor area in zone policy (can be varied by subzones).
- Shops are not subject to notification unless exceeding height/setback criteria, or where adjacent to a dwelling in a neighbourhood-type zone.
- Large shops are restricted development, except in suitable subzones.

## Rural productive zones

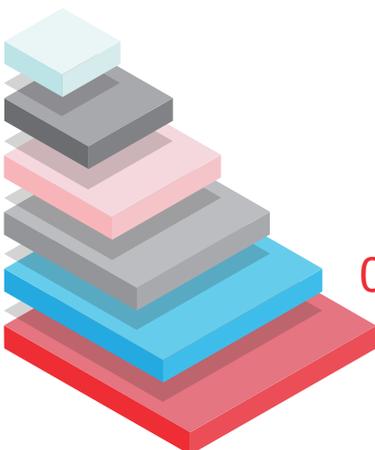
- Adelaide Country Zone
- Rural Horticulture Zone
- Rural Zone
- Small shops are envisaged for value-adding.
- Restriction in shop floor area in zone policy.
- Shops are only subject to notification where floor area, setback or height criteria are not met.
- Large shops are restricted development.

## Residential zones

- Urban Renewal Neighbourhood Zone
- General Neighbourhood Zone
- Established Neighbourhood Zone
- Waterfront Neighbourhood Zone
- Housing Diversity Neighbourhood Zone
- Suburban Neighbourhood Zone
- Hills Neighbourhood Zone
- Home businesses are envisaged, as well as small shops in certain areas to promote walkable neighbourhoods.
- Restriction in shop floor area in zone policy depending on proximity from activity centres and location on State Maintained Roads.
- Shops are only subject to notification where floor area criteria is exceeded.
- Large shops are restricted development.

## Other areas

- Deferred Urban Zone
- Conservation Zone
- Hills Face Zone
- Shops are generally not envisaged.
- Zone policy does not envisage shops.
- Shops are subject to notification.
- Shops are not listed as restricted development (given shops are clearly not envisaged in the zone, a comprehensive impact assessment isn't warranted).



# BUILDING HEIGHT

Building design and appearance is primarily guided by policy in the 'Design in Urban Areas' General Development Policies. Built form parameters (e.g. building height) are contained in zones.

Technical and Numeric Variations allow for a maximum building height to be specified in relevant centres and main streets, depending on the context of the area.

Building envelopes may also apply, which limit building height relevant to nearby houses in a neighbourhood zone.

# DWELLINGS IN CENTRES

Activity centre zones typically envisage housing in conjunction with non-residential development. This generally requires housing to be located above non-residential uses (similar to conventional apartment buildings) or behind non-residential uses in order to encourage active business premises along main roads and key pedestrian thoroughfares.

Additional flexibility is provided in smaller Local Activity Centres to deal with declining patronage and changing consumer behaviour towards local convenience shopping. In such cases, buildings may warrant changes in land use to a residential use in underperforming centres.





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