

FLYING MINUTE: WALGA Submission to the Select Committee into Land Development and Planning in Western Australia

By Coralie Claudio, Senior Policy Advisor, Planning

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council endorse the submission to the Select Committee into Land Development and Planning in Western Australia.

RESOLUTION 255.FM/2025

CARRIED

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- A Select Committee into WA Land Development and Planning has been established to inquire into matters relating to land planning, transactions and development in Western Australia.
- WALGA has developed a Submission informed by relevant planning advocacy positions, <u>data collection projects</u> and sector feedback.
- The Submission emphasises the critical role Local Government plays in the planning system, and highlights concerns over the erosion of Local Government decision making powers by bodies such as Development Assessment Panels (DAPs) and the state significant development pathways (SDPs).
- The Submission calls for a recalibration of the planning system that restores the essential role of Local Government, ensures transparency and accountability in State decision-making, and prioritises reforms that are evidence-based and developed in genuine partnership with the Local Government sector.
- The Submission was endorsed by the Environment Policy Team at its meeting on 5 November.
- WALGA was granted an extension for the Submission to 14 November.

ATTACHMENT

• WALGA's submission to the Select Committee into Land Development and Planning in Western Australia.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

WALGA's submission is consistent with WALGA <u>Advocacy Positions</u>: 6.1 Planning Principles and Reform and 6.4 State Development Applications and Decision Making.

BACKGROUND

On 13 August 2025, the <u>Select Committee into Land Development and Planning in Western Australia</u> was established. The Committee has established a 12-month inquiry into matters relating to land planning, transactions and development in Western Australia. On 2 October, WALGA received a letter from the Committee Chair, Hon Neil Thomson MLC, inviting WALGA to make a submission.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Committee states:

That the Select Committee inquire into and report on matters relating to land use planning, land transactions, and development in Western Australia, with particular



regard to the optimality, efficiency, integrity, and probity of decisions made by the State and state agencies.

The full Terms of Reference can be viewed <u>here</u>. WALGA's Submission primarily focused on element (a) of the ToR, that states:

a) in relation to land use planning decisions, the extent to which such decisions align with established local planning schemes, strategies, policies, and frameworks, particularly where made by the Western Australian Planning Commission or Development Assessment Panels, including but not limited to decisions made under the so-called Significant Development Pathway;

WALGA requested, and was granted, an extension for its submission to 14 November.

COMMENT

The Select Committee Inquiry provides an important opportunity to highlight current issues with State Government development approval pathways and provide information and commentary on the optimality, efficiency, integrity, and probity of planning decisions made by the State Government and agencies.

WALGA's Submission predominantly focuses on element (a) of the Inquiry's ToR, outlining WALGA's concerns regarding the increasing centralisation of planning powers by the State Government, particularly through the expansion of the SDPs and reforms to the DAP system. These changes have progressively eroded the role of Local Government in development assessment, despite the sector's demonstrated capacity to deliver efficient, transparent and community-responsive planning outcomes.

The Submission advocates that planning decisions should be made by the level of government closest to and most impacted by a proposal. It calls for the recalibration of the planning system to restore the role of Local Government, increase transparency and accountability in State decision-making, and prioritises reforms that are evidence-based and developed in genuine partnership with the Local Government sector.

The Submission draws from WALGA's extensive research and data analysis of state and local development assessment pathways over the past 14 years, direct engagement with the Local Government sector and WALGA's advocacy positions, specifically 6.1 Planning Principles and Reform and 6.4 State Development Applications and Decision Making.

The submission was endorsed by the Environment Policy Team at its meeting on 5 November.



FLYING MINUTE OUTCOME

Poll created: 06/11/2025 at 12:00 Poll closed: 13/11/2025 at 17:00

First Name	Last Name	Completed Date
Chris	Antonio	7/11/2025 13:07
Phillip	Blight	11/11/2025 7:17
Laurene	Bonza	13/11/2025 6:29
Scott	Crosby	9/11/2025 6:44
Tony	Dean	6/11/2025 21:05
Michael	Dudek	No response.
Patrick	Hall	10/11/2025 17:26
Logan	Howlett JP	No response.
Lewis	Hutton	No response.
Paul	Kelly	12/11/2025 22:03
Caroline	Knight	No response.
Terresa	Lynes	10/11/2025 15:28
Paige	McNeil	8/11/2025 7:35
Wendy	McWhirter-Brooks	8/11/2025 23:35
Haeden	Miles	No response.
Chris	Mitchell JP	No response.
Les	Price	7/11/2025 14:53
Helen	Sadler	11/11/2025 10:42
Eddie	Smith	No response.
Bronwyn	Smith	9/11/2025 10:12
Stephen	Strange	10/11/2025 9:28
Liz	Sudlow	No response.
Karen	Wheatland	6/11/2025 15:11
Barry	Winmar	6/11/2025 12:06

The submission was endorsed.

Following feedback from State Councillors through the Flying Agenda process, the following changes were made:

- Updates to 'Other State Government Decision Maker' section that addressed the following:
 - o Coordination of State Government agencies and infrastructure; and
 - o Concerns with the recent State Development Bill 2025.

Additional commentary has also been included in the Local Government Performance Monitoring section regarding the processing timeframes for Local planning instruments, including strategies and schemes, and the State's role in these processes.