

Protecting our valuable food bowl and environment from urban sprawl: Australia's first urban growth boundary

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In 2013, the State Government began an extensive and comprehensive review of the South Australian planning system with the appointment of an Expert Panel on Planning Reform. The review underpinned the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* passed in April 2016.

The Act introduces South Australia's (and indeed Australia's) first legislated urban growth boundary, the Environment and Food Production Areas (EFPA). The EFPA is intended to protect our limited food bowl, valuable rural areas, landscape values and environmental resources, from unnecessary and unwarranted urban sprawl. In this way it will also significantly shape Adelaide's future urban form.

The introduction of the EFPA is supplemented by State policies encouraging quality infill development. For example to support the EFPA, the State Government has released a draft update to its 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide. The Plan includes six new targets that promote quality urban development, one of which is a target of 85% of growth being within existing suburbs. The Plan also has a strong emphasis on quality design outcomes for suburbs that may be transitioning towards a new urban form. These policy directions also unlock more jobs and result in costing less to service into the future.

The EFPA is also an important step towards increasing public integrity in South Australia's planning system.

The EFPA is an example of a State planning policy that is a significant bulwark against future food security concerns that is an increasing concern now in Victoria and New South Wales due to urban encroachment.