

17 July 2026

Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning
Regional and Spatial Planning
Queensland Government

Dear Regional and Spatial Planning Team,

South East Queensland Regional Plan Review Submission

We are part of a Queensland Housing Diversity Community of Practice comprising representatives from peak bodies, professional institutes, the community housing sector, local government and the development industry. Since 2023, we have met regularly to collaborate on opportunities to support greater housing diversity and density across South East Queensland (SEQ). Together, participants bring perspectives spanning planning, design, development and housing delivery, contributing to a cross-sector dialogue on the opportunities and constraints shaping housing outcomes across Queensland.

Earlier this year, Mr Ryan Longland, Executive Director, Regional Planning, Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, provided a briefing to the group on the proposed direction and key principles of the South East Queensland Regional Plan Review. We greatly appreciate the open communication and collaborative approach, which has helped inform this submission.

This submission is intentionally provided early in the SEQ Regional Plan Review process to inform initial direction-setting. At this stage, the following participating organisations—Q Shelter, Master Builders Queensland (MBQ), the Australian Institute of Architects (AIA), Urbis, YIMBY Queensland, Civic Shifts, and DegenhartSHEDD—seek to highlight a set of widely supported principles that are broadly recognised as good practice in regional planning.

Context

We acknowledge the Queensland Government's focus on increasing housing supply, sequencing growth, supporting jobs and economic development, and integrating infrastructure planning. These objectives are critical to ensuring new housing is well-located, connected to services and employment, and contributes to sustainable, liveable communities over the long term.

Queensland is currently experiencing significant housing pressures across both ownership and rental markets. As at March 2026, the social housing register comprised 31,188 applicant households, representing 56,680 Queenslanders¹, the statewide rental vacancy rate remains at around 0.9 per cent, and only 0.3 per cent of rental listings are affordable for households relying on income support². At the same time, South East Queensland is projected to require approximately 900,000 additional homes by 2046. Housing affordability is increasingly affecting a broader range of households, including

¹ Queensland Government Department of Housing and Public Works. (2026). *Social housing register* Queensland Open Data Portal.

² Anglicare Australia. (2026). *Rental affordability snapshot 2026*.

working people, families, key workers and older Queenslanders.

These pressures are being driven by a range of interconnected factors, including population growth and demographic change, rising cost-of-living pressures, increasing social and support needs, housing supply and affordability constraints, and challenges associated with housing construction and delivery. In this context, we support the Queensland Government's target of delivering one million new homes over the next 20 years and recognise the scale of this ambition. Achieving this target will require sustained delivery across a range of housing types, tenures and locations and represents a level of housing production not previously achieved in Queensland.

The increasing cost of delivering new housing presents a significant challenge. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the average cost of house construction in Queensland has jumped by 50.6 per cent over the past five years³. Ensuring planning, infrastructure and growth management decisions support housing feasibility and deliverability will therefore be important in order to achieve housing supply objectives.

We also recognise that increasing overall housing supply, while essential, will not by itself meet the full range of housing needs across the community. Planning and policy settings should continue to support housing diversity and facilitate housing outcomes across a range of household incomes, including social, community and affordable housing options for households unable to access suitable housing through the private market alone.

We recognise a shift toward a more responsive approach to the urban footprint and housing, with greater emphasis on overall dwelling supply. Where the review considers more flexible approaches to housing typology objectives or social and affordable housing targets, it will be important that measurable housing diversity, affordability and delivery outcomes continue to be achieved. Any revised approach should be supported by:

- clear monitoring
- performance measures
- planning mechanisms
- infrastructure commitments, and
- reporting arrangements that provide transparency and accountability for diverse, well-located and affordable housing outcomes.

Shared position

There is strong alignment across the Housing Diversity Community of Practice that the SEQ Regional Plan should:

- support housing delivery in well-located, serviced areas
- maintain a disciplined and evidence-based approach to the urban footprint
- align infrastructure, transport and land use planning, and
- provide clarity and certainty for implementation.

These elements reinforce the role of the Regional Plan as a key coordinating framework for growth and investment across the region.

³ ABS. (2026). *Producer price indexes, Australia, December 2025*.

Both infill and greenfield development will be required to meet South East Queensland's future housing needs. There is significant opportunity to maximise infill development and redevelopment in well-located areas, particularly those with strong access to public transport, employment, services and community infrastructure. Increasing housing in these locations can support more efficient use of existing infrastructure⁴, improve access to jobs and services, and contribute to more connected and liveable communities. At the same time, appropriately sequenced greenfield development will continue to play an important role in accommodating population growth and expanding housing supply.

The review presents an opportunity to support a diverse range of housing outcomes while ensuring planning settings facilitate housing delivery across a range of household incomes. While greater flexibility within the regional planning framework may assist in responding to changing circumstances and housing needs, it should be supported by appropriate implementation, monitoring and accountability arrangements to ensure intended housing outcomes continue to be achieved.

Key considerations

1. Unlocking the potential of infill development

There remains significant opportunity to increase housing supply through infill development and urban renewal in well-located areas across South East Queensland. Realising this opportunity will require planning frameworks that support a broader range of housing types, enable appropriate density in locations with good access to transport, employment and services, and reduce barriers to redevelopment.

Infill development can support greater housing choice and contribute to more connected and liveable communities. Continued support for local government infill strategies, infrastructure investment and planning reforms that facilitate housing delivery in established urban areas will be important to maximising these opportunities. This should be supported by clear local implementation pathways and alignment between planned growth and infrastructure capacity.

Consideration should also be given to planning and policy settings that influence the feasibility of infill development, including requirements relating to parking, lot size, built form and other development controls where these may unnecessarily constrain housing delivery and diversity outcomes.

There may also be opportunities to increase the supply of developable infill land through planning approaches that support gentle density and appropriate intensification in suitable locations. Supporting a range of infill development models, including smaller-scale and incremental forms of housing, can help broaden participation in housing delivery and complement larger redevelopment and urban renewal projects.

⁴ A substantial body of Australian infrastructure research demonstrates that infill development is more cost-effective than greenfield growth, as it utilises existing infrastructure and avoids the significant costs associated with network expansion at the urban fringe. This is consistently identified in analysis by Infrastructure SA ([2023](#)) and Infrastructure Victoria ([2018](#)).

This position is consistent with work being undertaken by local governments across South East Queensland to facilitate additional housing within established communities. For example, the City of Moreton Bay's *Infill Housing Expert Panel Recommendations Report* highlighted the role of housing diversity, planning reform and infill development in accommodating population growth while making better use of existing urban areas⁵.

2. Infrastructure alignment must underpin growth

Housing supply should be clearly linked to infrastructure capacity and sequencing, underpinned by transparent modelling assumptions, and directed toward priority growth areas aligned with infrastructure investment. Aligning land use and infrastructure is critical to achieving efficient and coordinated urban outcomes⁶. This integration is essential to ensuring planned housing growth is feasible, deliverable and aligned with long-term regional objectives.

The Regional Plan should clearly identify the infrastructure required to support planned housing growth, including delivery responsibilities, funding arrangements, sequencing considerations and key dependencies. Infrastructure investment programs should support the intended growth pattern of the Plan and prioritise projects that enable well-located housing, improve land-use efficiency, support timely housing delivery and promote financially sustainable infrastructure outcomes across all levels of government.

3. A responsive urban footprint requires clear criteria

A more responsive urban footprint can enhance flexibility, provided it is guided by infrastructure efficiency and funding capacity, access to jobs, services and transport, and long-term cost and sustainability considerations. Consideration should also be given to the capacity of existing urban areas to accommodate growth, infrastructure sequencing and delivery requirements, and the protection of agricultural, environmental and cultural heritage values. Assessment criteria should also explicitly consider climate resilience outcomes, including flood exposure, urban heat, biodiversity corridors, tree canopy, active transport connectivity, and access to green and blue infrastructure.

This is particularly important given the well-established risks associated with low-density expansion⁷, including;

- higher infrastructure and service delivery costs
- increased car dependence and transport disadvantage
- reduced access to employment and essential services, and
- greater environmental and climate impacts over time.

Without clear parameters, expansion at the urban fringe can also contribute to spatial inequality and place additional long-term fiscal pressure on governments.

4. Enable housing diversity through system settings

While prescriptive targets may not form part of the Plan, it remains important to

⁵ City of Moreton Bay. (2023). *Infill housing expert panel recommendations report*.

⁶ OECD. (2017). *The Governance of Land Use*.

⁷ OECD. (2018). *Rethinking urban sprawl: Moving towards sustainable cities*.

enable a broader mix of housing types, support missing-middle and medium-density housing, and ensure planning frameworks facilitate market-feasible outcomes. Evidence consistently demonstrates that housing diversity is essential to a well-functioning housing system⁸, including providing housing that better matches the needs of different household types and life stages. In the absence of such targets, robust planning settings and monitoring mechanisms become critical, including clear zoning and density provisions in well-located areas, streamlined approval pathways for diverse housing typologies, infrastructure alignment to support infill development, and the removal of regulatory barriers that limit medium density and innovative housing forms. Progress should be regularly reviewed to inform timely policy adjustments.

Activation initiatives, including the Residential Activation Fund, demonstrate the State's commitment to accelerating housing delivery through infrastructure investment that unlocks supply. Aligning future activation mechanisms with the Plan's strategic objectives will be critical to support the feasibility and delivery of additional housing in well-located areas, including through the renewal and augmentation of infrastructure within existing urban areas.

Housing diversity should also include consideration of social, community and affordable housing outcomes. While increasing overall housing supply is essential, market housing alone is unlikely to meet the full range of housing needs across the community. Planning and policy settings should continue to support a mix of housing options across a range of household incomes, including pathways to deliver social, community and affordable housing in well-located areas.

5. Strengthen certainty in growth areas

There is an opportunity to retain and strengthen clear and well-defined planning frameworks in key growth areas, recognising their role in guiding outcomes, providing certainty, and supporting coordinated and timely delivery. This includes clear spatial designations, sequencing of land release, and alignment with funded infrastructure to ensure efficient and logical development. Certainty supports infrastructure investment, reduces delivery risk, and helps avoid fragmented or premature development that can increase long-term costs.

Certainty is also important for local governments and communities. Clear infrastructure responsibilities, sequencing arrangements and funding commitments can support coordinated delivery, while providing confidence that growth will be appropriately serviced and supported by local infrastructure, services and amenity.

Planning frameworks should also support timely implementation of Regional Plan outcomes through alignment between regional growth objectives, local planning schemes and infrastructure investment, particularly in major growth areas identified for future housing delivery.

It can also be reinforced through planning system tools that facilitate delivery, including streamlined approval pathways and, where appropriate, standardised or pre-approved housing typologies⁹. Where such approaches are adopted, clear

⁸ Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute. (2020). *Urban regulation and diverse housing supply: An Investigative Panel*.

⁹ Government Architect NSW. (2024). *NSW Housing Pattern Book*.

design quality principles should guide outcomes to ensure housing is climate-responsive, adaptable, liveable and appropriately reflects Queensland's diverse environmental, urban and community contexts.

6. Support place-based responses

SEQ includes diverse local contexts, and the Plan should enable place-based responses, support local governments to accommodate growth in ways that reflect local circumstances, and maintain an appropriate balance between regional consistency and local delivery. This includes supporting local governments to identify suitable locations for additional housing and respond to the specific constraints and opportunities within their areas. A balanced approach is needed to maintain regional consistency in overall direction while allowing flexibility in how outcomes are delivered locally.

Local flexibility should support the implementation of regional housing objectives and should not become a barrier to housing delivery, well-located density or necessary planning scheme changes. This can support more responsive planning, better alignment with local infrastructure and service provision, and stronger community outcomes, while avoiding one-size-fits-all approaches that may limit effective delivery.

7. Focus on delivery and implementation

To ensure outcomes are realised, the Plan should include a clear implementation framework that identifies priority actions, delivery responsibilities, indicative timeframes, infrastructure dependencies and monitoring indicators, while supporting both accountability and the timely delivery of housing outcomes. The Plan should retain a clear regional consolidation objective, supported by local government implementation pathways and transparent reporting on housing delivery outcomes.

Monitoring should focus not only on planned capacity, but also on actual delivery outcomes, including housing completions, dwelling diversity, affordability outcomes and infrastructure delivery where feasible. Monitoring should distinguish between theoretical plan capacity, approved dwellings and completed dwellings to provide a clearer picture of progress towards housing supply objectives.

A strong focus on measurable outcomes and implementation is critical to effective regional planning. Monitoring and reporting should be used to assess progress and inform refinement of the Plan over time.

Conclusion

There is a strong opportunity for the SEQ Regional Plan Review to shape a more efficient, coordinated and responsive housing system. Unlocking infill opportunities, aligning infrastructure and land use planning, maintaining a disciplined and criteria-led urban footprint, supporting housing diversity, and enabling social and affordable housing outcomes will all be important to achieving a more efficient, equitable and resilient growth model for South East Queensland. Effective implementation will be critical to ensuring the Plan delivers intended outcomes over time. Together, these elements reflect a contemporary, integrated and delivery-focused approach to regional planning.

We appreciate the opportunity to contribute at this early stage and would welcome ongoing engagement with the review. We would be pleased to work collaboratively to support the integration of best-practice planning principles through this process.

For more details about the submission, please contact Maya Glassman at Q Shelter at 0492 808 560 or maya.glassman@qshelter.asn.au.

Yours sincerely,

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