STATE PLANNING COMMISSION

Protecting Heritage and Character

Policies in the Planning and Design Code

Image: Classic Country Drive by Andy Rasheed

October 2022

Government of South Australia
Department for Trade and Investment

PRESERVING HERITAGE AND CHARACTER IN THE PLANNING AND DESIGN CODE

INTRODUCTION

Heritage and character plays an important role in the social and cultural fabric of South Australia's metropolitan and regional communities.

This brochure provides an overview of the policy related to heritage and character and highlights how the Planning and Design Code (the Code) will preserve and protect South Australia's unique heritage and character for generations to come.

BENEFITS OF A NEW APPROACH

There are many benefits to the introduction of a new policy approach to protect heritage and character. For the first time, the Code allows us to:

- accurately map all places of significance within the planning system in a way that is more transparent and accessible (State Heritage, Local Heritage and Representative Buildings)
- consistently apply demolition controls to State Heritage Places, Local Heritage Places and Historic Areas (which include Representative Buildings) in a way that is equitable and fair
- consistently apply policy to guide development adjacent to a Heritage Place (these areas are now mapped and easily identified)
- elevate the role of the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation in State Heritage planning decisions
- elevate the role of State Heritage Guidelines and Statements of Significance for State Heritage Areas (such as Hahndorf and Colonel Light Gardens) and State Heritage Places within the planning system
- build in local policy that reflects the character of an area through the use of Historic Area and Character Area Statements (i.e. era, built form, architectural styles, street patterns etc) that underpin the Overlays, and Technical and Numeric Variations (TNV) that address matter such as building heights and site areas within zones
- provide clear and easy to read Historic Area Statements and Character Area Statements, which describe what is significant in an area (i.e. the elements to be protected or complemented).

HOW DOES THE CODE WORK

The Planning and Design Code is fully electronic and can be accessed at https://code.plan.sa.gov.au/. This means you can search on an address, or a suburb, or a particular development type to obtain the specific planning rules that apply. Sitting behind the rules are a number of Heritage and Character policy layers, which include:

- STATE HERITAGE PLACE OVERLAY – protects individual State Heritage Places listed under the *Heritage Places Act 1993* such as Parliament House, Mount Lofty House and St Peter's Cathedral
- STATE HERITAGE AREA OVERLAY – protects State Heritage Areas identified under the *Heritage Places Act 1993* such as Burra, Hahndorf and Colonel Light Gardens
- LOCAL HERITAGE PLACE OVERLAY – protects Local Heritage Places identified by local government – such as the Clock Tower in Elizabeth, the former munitions factories in Hendon and many former council chambers and institute buildings across Council areas
- HERITAGE ADJACENCY OVERLAY – to address the potential impact of development on land adjacent to heritage-listed places
- HISTORIC AREA OVERLAY (see maps) – protects places that contribute to the historic character of the neighbourhood and contains most of the 'Representative Buildings' (these areas were previously known as Historic Conservation Zones or similar) such as Toorak Gardens or Strathalbyn
- CHARACTER AREA OVERLAY (see maps) - protects neighbourhood character streetscapes such as Novar Gardens or Glandore, and includes some Representative Buildings

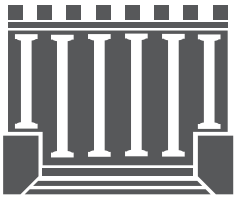
Most development in these areas is Performance Assessed (assessed on their merit) and will therefore be assessed by a Council Assessment Panel (where publicly notified) or Council's Assessment Manager (where not publicly notified). Councils will also have the opportunity to offer Local Design Review in these areas.

Image: Early Inter-War Tudor, photo by DASH Architects 2021

1a STATE HERITAGE AREAS

Policy		Local Content	Demolition Control	Referral to Minister
State Heritage Area Overlay	+	Statement of Significance (Heritage Places Act)	✓	✓
		Heritage Guidelines		
Various Zones		TNVs* (where appropriate)		

1b STATE HERITAGE PLACES



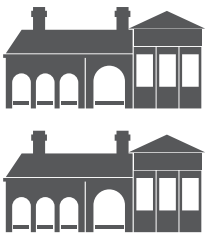
Policy		Local Content	Demolition Control	Referral to Minister
State Heritage Place Overlay	+	Statement of Significance (Heritage Places Act)	✓	✓
		Heritage Guidelines		
Various Zones		TNVs* (where appropriate)		

2 LOCAL HERITAGE PLACES

Policy		Local Content	Demolition Control	Referral to Minister
Local Heritage Overlay	+	Extent of Listing	✓	✗
Various Zones		TNVs* (where appropriate)		

3 HISTORIC AREAS

INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVE BUILDINGS IN SOME LOCATIONS



Policy		Local Content	Demolition Control	Referral to Minister
Historic Area Overlay	+	Historic Area Statements	✓	✗
Most in Established Neighbourhood Zone		TNVs* (where appropriate)		

4 CHARACTER AREAS

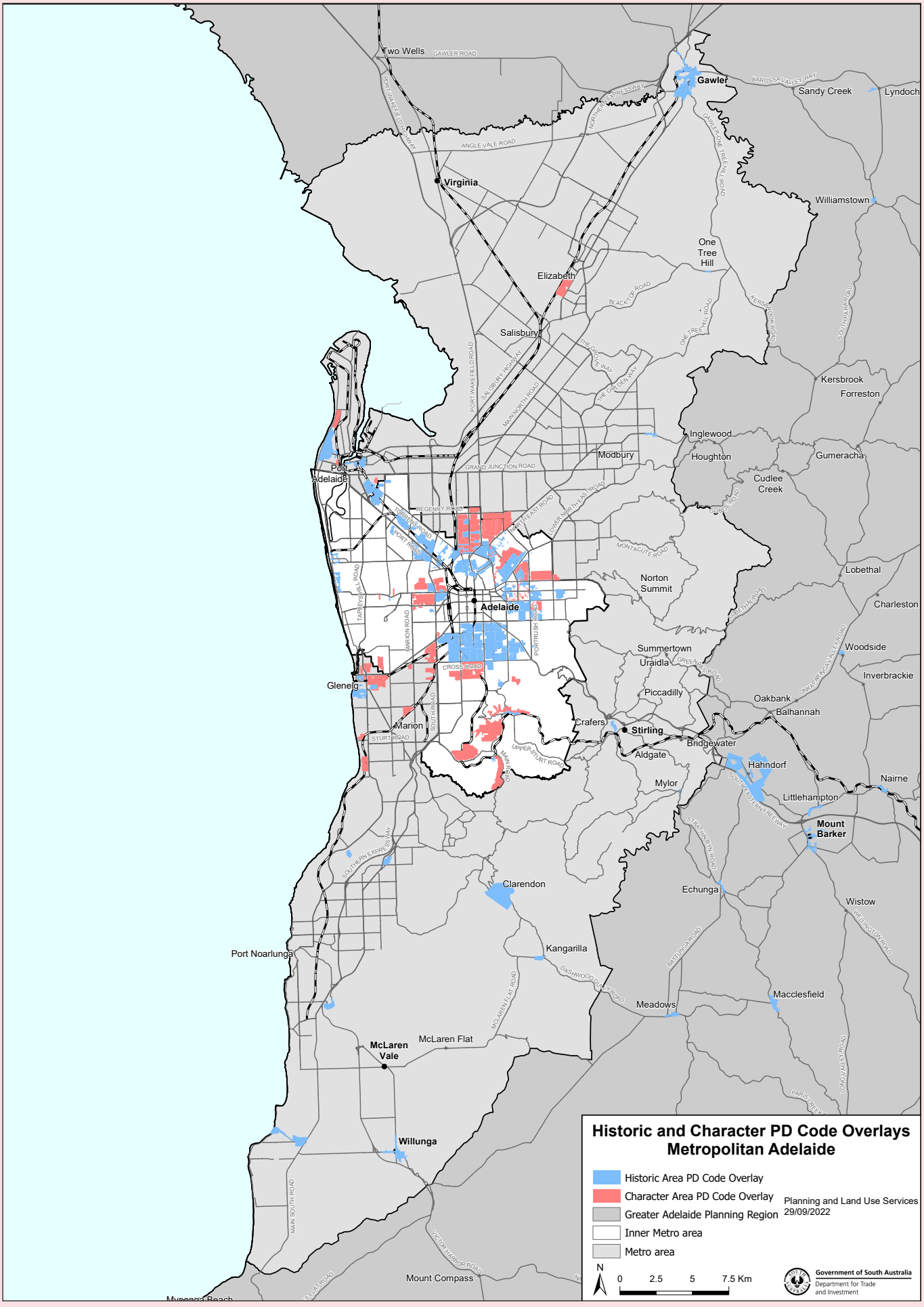
INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVE BUILDINGS IN SOME LOCATIONS

Policy		Local Content	Demolition Control	Referral to Minister
Character Area Overlay	+	Character Area Statements	✗	✗
Most in Established Neighbourhood Zone		TNVs* (where appropriate)		

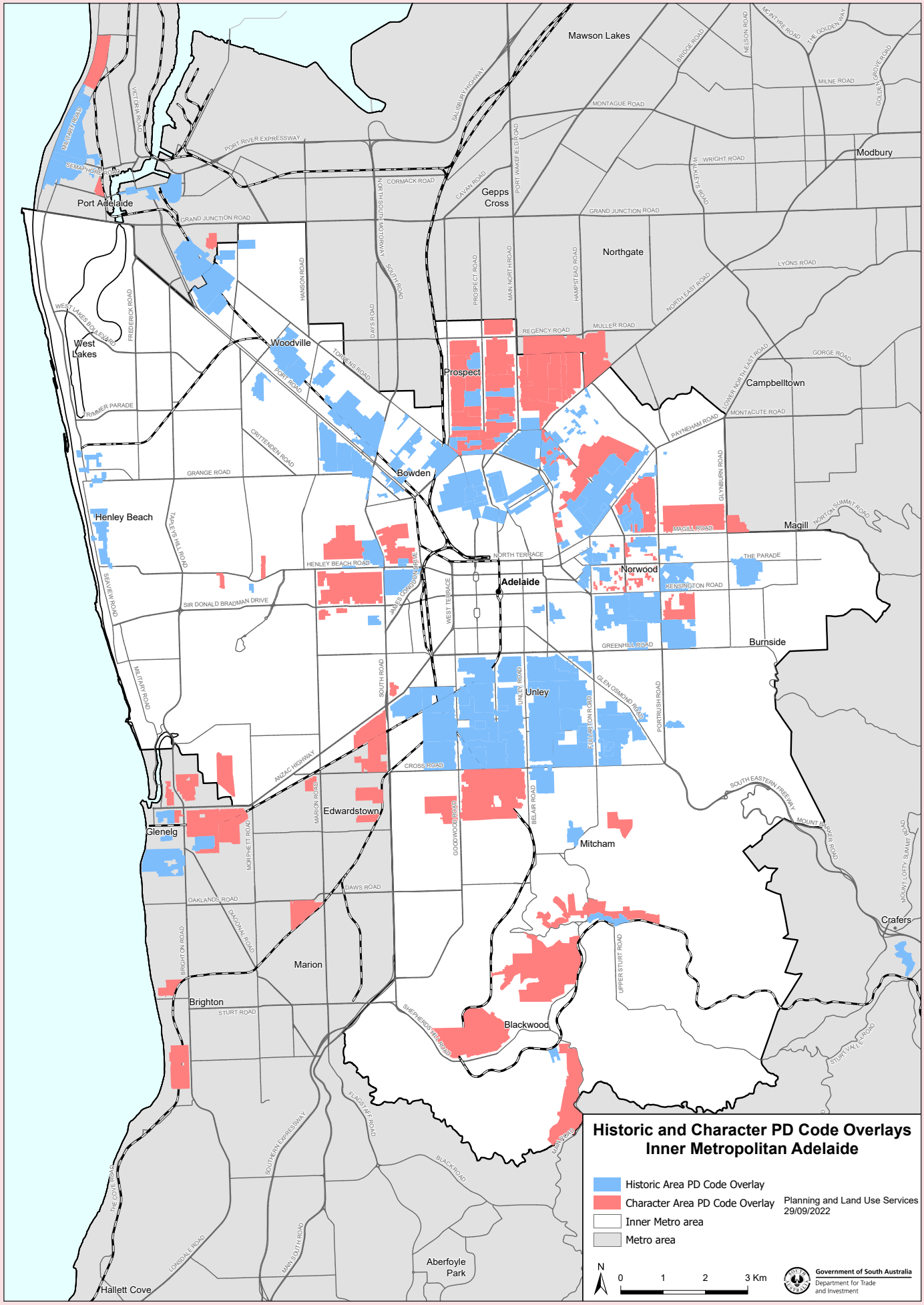
*Technical and Numeric Variations

Image: Darling Building, Williams Burton Leopardi, photo by Christopher Morrison

Adelaide Metropolitan Area - Historic and Character Areas



Adelaide Inner Metropolitan Area - Historic and Character Areas



South Australia - Historic and Character Areas

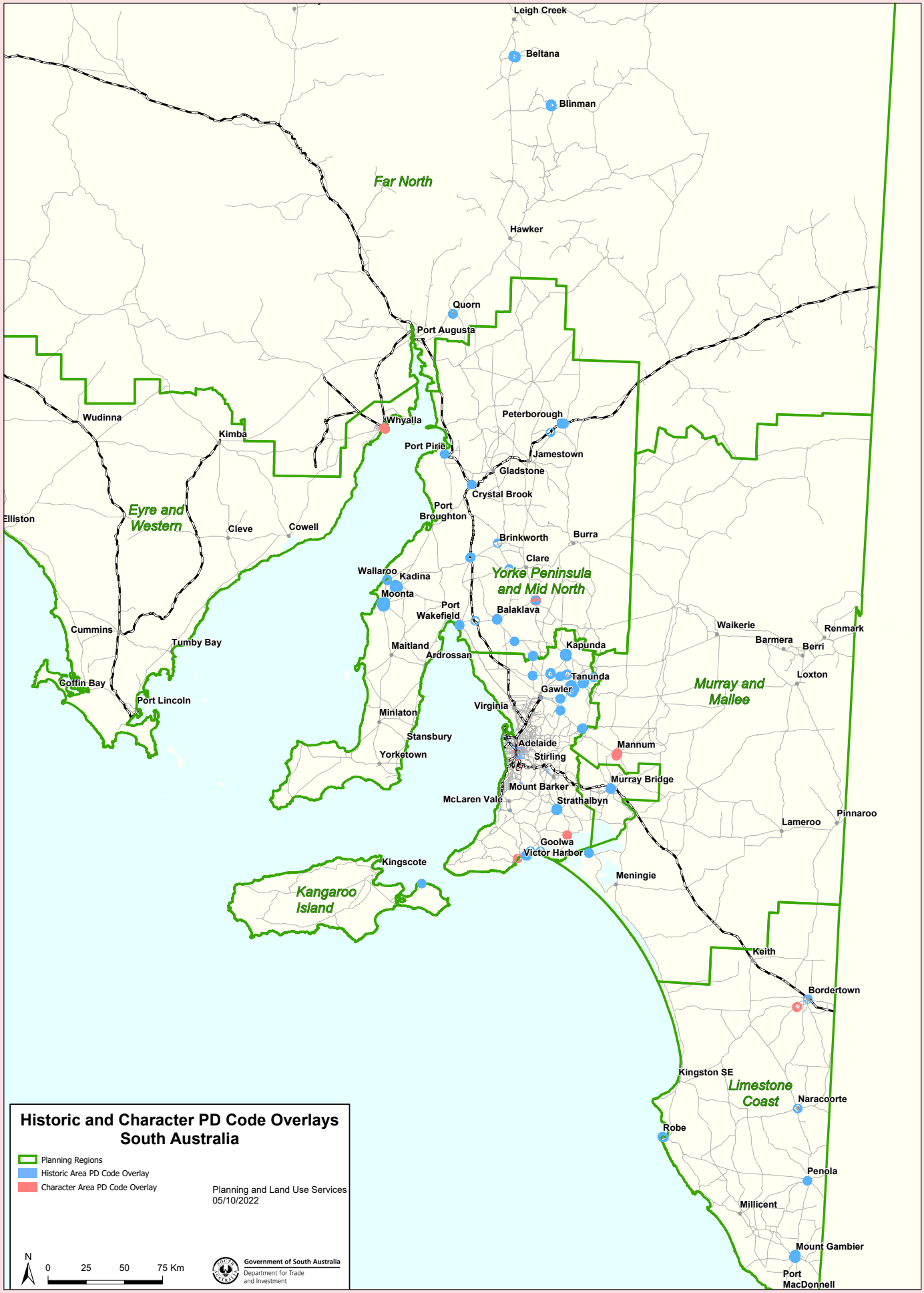


Image: Sparkke at the Whitmore, Troppo Architects, photo by Aaron Citti

REPRESENTATIVE BUILDINGS

Previously known as contributory items, Representative Buildings display characteristics of importance in a particular area.

In 2021, nearly 12,000 contributory items were transitioned into the Code as Representative Buildings.

All Representative Buildings located in the Historic Area Overlay have demolition control.

Those Representative Buildings located in the Character Area Overlay do not have demolition control, however, the Overlay does seek to ensure the ongoing protection of the valued characteristics of the area.

Where buildings had demolition control prior to the Code, they continue to have demolition control under the Code.

Representative Buildings are identified in the South Australian Property and Planning Atlas (SAPPA) and referenced in the Character Area and Historic Area Statements.

DEMOLITION CONTROL

The demolition controls in the Code reflect the hierarchy of heritage protection in South Australia; in particular, demolition controls are stronger for State Heritage Places and Areas and Local Heritage Places.

- The Minister responsible for State Heritage has the power to direct decisions on applications seeking demolition of State Heritage Places or within State Heritage Areas.
- Demolition of State and Local Heritage Places, or within State Heritage Areas, will be assessed against a building's existing heritage values as well as its structural condition and risk to safety.
- Demolition within Historic Areas will be assessed against the building's historic characteristics and whether the proposal is reasonable.

2,300 STATE HERITAGE PLACES

17 STATE HERITAGE AREAS

PROTECTION UNDER THE CODE	
STATE HERITAGE PLACES OVERLAY & STATE HERITAGE AREAS OVERLAY	DEMOLITION CONTROL Heritage Minister - increased power to direct decision making ✓

7,250 LOCAL HERITAGE PLACES

PROTECTION UNDER THE CODE	
LOCAL HERITAGE PLACES OVERLAY	DEMOLITION CONTROL ✓

12,050 REPRESENTATIVE BUILDINGS

PROTECTION UNDER THE CODE	
HISTORIC AREAS OVERLAY	DEMOLITION CONTROL ✓
CHARACTER AREAS OVERLAY	DEMOLITION CONTROL ✗

Image: Early Inter-War duplex, photo by ASH Architects 2021

LOCAL POLICY CONTENT

The Code references the State Heritage Guidelines for Development for each State Heritage Area (where available) and provides location-specific guidance on how development can be undertaken to ensure heritage values are protected. These documents also include a Statement of Significance. These Guidelines and other materials prepared by Heritage SA in the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) have been proclaimed in the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure (General) Regulations 2017*, granting them statutory status.

The Historic Area Overlay and Character Area Overlay are supported by Historic Area Statements and Character Area Statements respectively. These set out what is important and what should be protected or complemented.

In many locations, the two Overlays work in concert with the Established Neighbourhood Zone, which provides local policy around site area, frontage width, site coverage, side setbacks and building height.

The following non-statutory Guidelines will assist applicants and assessment authorities in the interpretation of policy:

- Historic Area Overlay Design Advisory Guideline
- Character Area Overlay Design Advisory Guideline
- Style Identification Advisory Guideline.

ADAPTIVE REUSE

Adaptive reuse of existing buildings has significant value in the retention of heritage places. Heritage buildings can pose challenges due to their age and the way they were constructed; for example they may not meet current building standards for disability access or fire prevention. They may also require significant upgrade and renovation to suit modern lifestyle or business needs, depending on the type of activity they were originally used for.

The new planning system makes it easier for Heritage Places to be adapted for modern uses, with a view to retaining them in the community and giving them new purpose. The Overlays will ensure that adaptive reuse is undertaken in a way that respects and references the original use of the Place. For example – an old barn, shop or warehouse could be converted to a dwelling; however, it would need to be done in a way that retains and references the heritage values of a place. This will help promote the retention of buildings, rather than replacement.

Image: Gawler Civic Centre, MPH Architects, photo by Dan Trimboli

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