

Opening Statement – Planning Bill LA Committee Inquiry

7 December 2022

The Property Council of Australia welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Committee on the current Planning Bill.

We have appreciated the opportunity extended by both the ACT Government throughout the Planning System Review and Reform project, including the consultation draft Planning Bill 2022 released in March 2022.

We also have appreciated the opportunity to participate in briefing sessions with the ACT Chief Planner's team and have contributed to the development of the reform package through other forums and engagement opportunities.

We have consulted widely with our membership and Property Council members are supportive of reforms to the Territory's planning system to provide for greater certainty, opportunities for flexibility, reduced timeframes and an elevated role for strategic planning. It is acknowledged that the existing legislation currently does not allow for these goals to be achieved and is not fit-for-purpose.

The Planning Bill 2022 provides the framework for the first step towards a shift to an outcomes-focused system. The Bill, which does not make any radical changes to the existing system, will enable the transition from one that is rules-based to one focused on delivering better planning outcomes. Central to the new outcomes-focused approach will be the development of a new Territory Plan.

The new plan will provide the more substantial elements of the reform package to manage the shift away from traditional planning rules. At this stage our members are still digesting the contents of the new Territory Plan and we look forward to working with the Chief Planner on its refinement and practical implementation in the year ahead.