This fact sheet provides advice to practitioners, proponents and local government about the role and purpose of a precinct master plan under the Urban Renewal Act 1995.

Why prepare a precinct master plan?

The Urban Renewal Act 1995 (the Act) requires a precinct authority to prepare and maintain a precinct master plan and a precinct implementation plan(s) for an established precinct.

The precinct master plan is important in setting out the overarching principles and objectives, spatial structure and targets for a precinct. It also assists in gaining a consistent understanding between the precinct authority, government, council(s) and the community about what may happen in a precinct.

It is considered to be of primary importance in the process as evidenced by the requirement for the Governor’s approval and review by the Environment Resources and Development Committee of Parliament. The precinct master plan is the document against which a precinct authority can assess and certify development proposals.

What is a precinct master plan?

The precinct master plan is intended to be a high-level plan that defines a vision, strategic directions and guidelines to ensure the effective and ongoing management of development within a precinct. It should be strategically aligned with and seek to promote the provisions of the Planning Strategy for South Australia and have regard to other relevant state policy documents.

While the precinct authority should have regard to the relevant council’s Strategic Directions Report and Development Plan, it is not bound by the directions of these documents. The precinct framework will replace the strategic investigations and policy positions contained in these documents.

A precinct master plan should be:

- **Flexible**
  
  A precinct master plan should be clear in its objectives and principles, while allowing for changes in circumstances, such as the market, economy or any other unforeseen circumstance.

- **Clear and certain**
  
  There should be certainty for the community and investors about how the precinct will be broadly developed and what it is set out to deliver. In doing so, a precinct master plan should identify complying development in the precinct.
• **Contextual**  
Planning for a precinct should respond to the surrounding context, including the relationship to areas outside the precinct, and the views and aspirations of existing communities.

• **Participatory**  
A precinct master plan should be the result of a participatory process, providing stakeholders with the means to express their needs and priorities for a precinct.

• **A catalyst for change**  
Identification and resolution of issues through a precinct master plan should unlock the potential of the precinct and allow for growth and change.

**What should be included in a precinct master plan?**

A precinct master plan should include the following elements:

• **Vision**  
A clear vision about what should be achieved in the precinct.

• **Strategic framework**  
Aims and objectives sought for the precinct that functions as the basis of the spatial plan.

• **Spatial structure**  
A three-dimensional spatial proposal illustrating how the precinct will be structured, taking into account key opportunities and constraints. It should be based upon an appraisal of the site and its surrounding context, including technical documentation.

• **Design principles**  
A set of high-level design principles and outcomes for the precinct addressing matters such as grain and character, form and scale, connectivity and legibility, and public realm.

• **Land use guidelines**  
Description of the classes of development that are envisaged (complying development) within the precinct and how they will be arranged, including general location, type and density of activities that takes into account the spatial context of the broader area and the design principles.

• **Framework for infrastructure delivery**  
Should be specific about what infrastructure is required, thresholds for delivery and how it may be delivered.

The precinct master plan must be supported by a precinct implementation plan(s), which may be prepared for the whole precinct or parts of the precinct. The precinct implementation plan(s) can be prepared at the same time as the master plan or after.

*For more details on precinct implementation plans please see Fact Sheet 5 | How to prepare a precinct implementation plan*

**Definitions and information about the preparation and development of master plans, strategic frameworks, spatial plans, implementation plans and design guidelines can be found in Design Guidance Note 1.1.3 Master Plans (March 2014) from the Office of Design and Architecture SA***
What is the process for preparing the precinct master plan?

There are some minimum statutory steps that must be followed by a precinct authority in preparing a precinct master plan:

- Prepare a draft precinct master plan.
- Consult with any design review panel, community reference panel or other panel that has been established for the precinct.
- Consult with any government department or agency that has a direct interest in the matter.
- Consult with any council that has a direct interest in the matter.
- The precinct master plan must be released for public consultation by public advertisement. Copies must be made available for review and written submissions accepted from interested parties.
- Hold a public meeting if the Minister for Housing and Urban Development (the Minister) considers one necessary.
- Provide the Minister and the Minister for Planning a report on the matters raised during public consultation. The Minister may then seek the advice of the independent Development Assessment Commission.

Templates are provided on the website for a precinct master plan and a consultation report

How is a precinct master plan approved?

The Governor adopts a precinct master plan on the recommendation of the Minister and the Minister for Planning. An adopted precinct master plan must be published in the Government Gazette.

Approved precinct master plans must also be referred to the Environment Resources and Development Committee of Parliament (ERDC) for review. The ERDC can recommend changes or object to a precinct master plan. If the ERDC objects to a precinct master plan it must be reviewed by both Houses of Parliament and may be disallowed by either House.

Questions for the precinct authority

In preparing a precinct master plan, useful questions to be considered by the precinct authority may include:

- Will the precinct master plan deliver the vision?
- Does the precinct master plan set out strategies/principles that will create a precinct that will function in terms of its urban design, streets, spaces, movement and infrastructure?
- Does it provide the basis to create great places within the precinct?
- Are the strategies/principles viable in economic and market terms?
- How does the precinct interface or integrate with surrounding communities?
- Can the precinct master plan be delivered?
- Does the precinct master plan sufficiently describe the desired form and character of the precinct while being flexible enough to allow for negotiated change to meet changing circumstances and demands?

How is a precinct master plan implemented?

The precinct master plan will be implemented by one or more precinct implementation plans. These are prepared over time to represent various stages of development in accordance with the direction provided in the precinct master plan.

The Minister for Planning may also amend the relevant Development Plan(s) by notice in the Gazette following the approval of a precinct master plan.
Further information

For further information on precinct planning and the Act please contact the Growth Areas Team at the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure or visit the website:

Phone: (08) 8303 0760

Email: DPTI.PDgrowthareas@sa.gov.au

Mail: Growth Areas Team  
Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure  
GPO Box 1533  
Adelaide SA 5001

Website: www.sa.gov.au/precinctplanning

The website includes a full suite of fact sheets prepared about the precinct planning process and includes information on declared precincts, including key documents required to be published under the Act.

Fact sheet 1 | Overview of the precinct planning process

Fact sheet 2 | What does precinct planning mean for councils?

Fact sheet 3 | What are panels and how are they established?

Fact sheet 4 | How to prepare a precinct master plan

Fact sheet 5 | How to prepare a precinct implementation plan

Fact sheet 6 | Consultation and engagement

Also refer to Design Guidance Note 1.1.3 Master Plans (March 2014) from the Office of Design and Architecture SA, which is also available on the website.