



**Inquiry into the planning system and the impacts of climate change
on the environment and communities**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

That Portfolio Committee 7 inquire into and report on how the planning system can best ensure that people and the natural and built environment are protected from climate change impacts and changing landscapes, and in particular:

- (a) developments proposed or approved:
 - (i) in flood and fire prone areas or areas that have become more exposed to natural disasters as a result of climate change,
 - (ii) in areas that are vulnerable to rising sea levels, coastal erosion or drought conditions as a result of climate change, and
 - (iii) in areas that are threatened ecological communities or habitat for threatened species
- (b) the adequacy of planning powers and planning bodies, particularly for local councils, to review, amend or revoke development approvals, and consider the costs, that are identified as placing people or the environment at risk as a consequence of:
 - (i) the cumulative impacts of development,
 - (ii) climate change and natural disasters,
 - (iii) biodiversity loss, and
 - (iii) rapidly changing social, economic and environmental circumstances
- (c) short, medium and long term planning reforms that may be necessary to ensure that communities are able to mitigate and adapt to conditions caused by changing environmental and climatic conditions, as well as the community's expectation and need for homes, schools, hospitals and infrastructure
- (d) alternative regulatory options to increase residential dwelling capacity where anticipated growth areas are no longer deemed suitable, or where existing capacity has been diminished due to the effects of climate change
- (e) listening to, and learning from, Aboriginal voices and experiences to better inform planning outcomes¹
- (f) any other related matters.

¹ On 25 January 2024, the committee resolved to amend the terms of reference by omitting paragraph (e) and inserting instead new paragraphs (e) and (f). *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 6 February 2024, p 860.

The terms of reference for the inquiry were self-referred by the committee on 24 August 2023 and updated on 25 January 2024.²

Committee membership

Ms Sue Higginson MLC	The Greens	<i>Chair</i>
Hon John Ruddick MLC	Libertarian Party	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Anthony D'Adam MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Scott Farlow MLC	Liberal Party	
Hon Jacqui Munro MLC	Liberal Party	
Hon Peter Primrose MLC	Australian Labor Party	

² *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 24 August 2023, p 427.