

Position Description

Gawler

SENIOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNER

Division:	COMMUNITY AND GROWTH	Classification:	SA Municipal Salaried Officers Award – General Officer Level 7
Department:	Development Services	Date Reviewed:	October 2026
Reports to:	Development Services and Assessment		

About the Role

The Development Assessment Planner contributes to Council's development assessment and planning functions by assessing and managing development applications and providing professional planning advice and customer service.

The position undertakes development assessment in accordance with the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*, associated Regulations, the Planning and Design Code, relevant Practice Directions and other applicable legislation. This includes exercising functions and powers delegated by the Assessment Manager under section 100 of the Act, within the conditions and limitations of the applicable instrument of delegation and the position's level of authority.

The Planner manages development applications from lodgement through to decision, including assessment, requests for further information, referrals, public notification, site inspections, reports and recommendations, and determining applications under delegated authority where authorised.

The position provides clear and practical planning advice to applicants, landowners, developers, consultants, community members and other stakeholders, including duty planning enquiries and pre-lodgement advice.

The role works with Council officers, government agencies, referral bodies and specialists to resolve planning and development matters and achieve appropriate outcomes.

The position also contributes to planning compliance activities, including investigating unauthorised or non-compliant development, undertaking inspections and assisting with enforcement action.

Depending on the classification, experience and delegated authority of the position, the Planner may manage more complex or sensitive applications, coordinate multidisciplinary assessments, exercise significant professional judgement and assist other planners with complex matters.

From time to time, the position may be required to act in the Team Leader Planning role and perform the duties of that position.

The position may also contribute to planning projects, policy and strategic planning activities, and

continuous improvement initiatives as required.

Special Conditions:

Occasional out-of-hours work may be required during periods of peak workload or to attend Council Assessment Panel meetings. Any additional hours will be managed in accordance with Council's prevailing Enterprise Agreement and/or the applicable industrial award.

The position involves some physical demands, including walking, standing, bending, climbing and driving to undertake site inspections and attend meetings. Appropriate equipment, training and controls will be provided in accordance with relevant job safety analyses and Council work health and safety requirements.

Reporting and Accountability

The Development Planner position reports to the Team Leader Planning in accordance with delegations and has no direct reports.

The position liaises internally with staff across all areas of the organisation and externally with the landowners, builders, developers utilities, government agencies, other local government authorities, service providers, suppliers and the public.

The position is accountable for the delivery of all matters listed under responsibilities together with specific outcomes listed in agreed annual people development work plans.

Key Outcomes and Responsibilities

1. Operational (Development Assessment)

- Independently assess and manage Council's more complex, significant, sensitive or contentious development applications.
- Apply advanced professional judgement to matters involving complex policy interpretation, competing development considerations, significant site constraints or multiple technical disciplines.
- Assess complex land divisions and development proposals involving significant site constraints, policy interpretation or coordination of specialist advice.
- Independently manage a varied caseload of development applications of moderate complexity.
- Assess a broader range of residential, commercial, industrial, rural, change of use and land division applications appropriate to the position.
- Identify planning and development issues and use professional judgement to determine appropriate assessment pathways and potential solutions.
- Negotiate reasonable amendments to development proposals where these may resolve planning issues or achieve improved development outcomes.
- Assess development applications in accordance with the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*, associated Regulations, *the Planning and Design Code*, relevant Practice Directions, Council delegations and other applicable legislation and requirements.
- Manage development applications from lodgement through to decision, including requests for information, referrals, public notification and other statutory processes.
- Undertake site inspections and consider the site, surrounding locality and relevant development characteristics when assessing proposals.
- Identify planning and development issues and work with applicants, Council officers and relevant specialists to resolve matters and progress applications.
- Exercise delegated authority appropriate to the classification, experience and accreditation of

the position.

- Prepare assessment reports, recommendations, conditions, correspondence and documentation required through the relevant planning system or Council processes.
- Case manage significant and complex development proposals from pre-lodgement through to determination, coordinating multidisciplinary input and maintaining oversight of the assessment process.
- Establish an appropriate assessment pathway for complex matters and coordinate the information, referrals and specialist advice required to progress the application.
- Use initiative and professional judgement to identify practical solutions to complex planning and development issues.
- Analyse competing planning, infrastructure, environmental, heritage and development considerations and provide clear, reasoned recommendations.
- Lead discussions and negotiations with applicants, consultants, referral agencies and other stakeholders on complex development matters.
- Manage sensitive, contentious or competing stakeholder issues professionally and escalate matters where appropriate.
- Develop assessment strategies for complex matters, identify critical planning and development issues and coordinate appropriate specialist input to progress matters towards resolution.
- Exercise a high degree of professional judgement and initiative in analysing and resolving complex, unusual or sensitive planning matters.
- Identify potential risks, competing considerations and alternative approaches and provide clear, defensible professional recommendations.

2. Planning Advice and Customer Service

- Lead pre-lodgement discussions for complex or significant development proposals and provide senior planning advice on assessment pathways, planning issues and information requirements.
- Provide clear, practical and professional planning advice to applicants, landowners, developers, consultants, community members and other stakeholders.
- Provide pre-lodgement advice and identify potential planning and development issues before applications are lodged.
- Explain planning requirements, assessment processes and decisions in a clear and professional manner.
- Work constructively with customers and stakeholders to resolve issues and facilitate appropriate planning outcomes.
- Provide technical advice and assistance to less experienced planners on development assessment and procedural matters.

3. Compliance and Enforcement

- Undertake and assist with routine planning compliance investigations, inspections and enforcement activities appropriate to the experience and capability of the position.
- Undertake complex planning compliance investigations and contribute to enforcement action and legal proceedings where required.
- Provide senior planning input into complex or sensitive compliance and enforcement matters, including investigations and legal proceedings where required.
- Investigate planning compliance matters and assist with appropriate compliance and enforcement action.
- Prepare correspondence, reports, evidence and other documentation associated with compliance matters and legal proceedings where required.

4. Reporting and Decision-Making

- Develop professional knowledge, judgement and assessment capability through practical experience, professional development and exposure to a broader range of development matters.
- Seek guidance from experienced or senior planning staff where matters are complex, unusual, sensitive or beyond the experience or delegated authority of the position.
- Prepare and present complex or significant assessment matters to the Assessment Manager, Council Assessment Panel, Council or other Relevant Authorities as required.
- Provide professional advice and respond to questions arising from complex development assessment matters.
- Record assessments and decisions accurately within Council systems and South Australian planning portal.
- Exercise professional judgement and delegated authority within the responsibilities and limitations applying to the position.
- Attend meetings and provide professional planning advice where required.

5. Collaboration and Broader Planning Duties

- Coordinate relevant internal and external technical advice and consider engineering, infrastructure, building, heritage, environmental and servicing matters when assessing development proposals.
- Work collaboratively with Council officers across planning, building, engineering, infrastructure, environmental health, heritage and other relevant disciplines.
- Liaise with State Government agencies, referral bodies, infrastructure authorities and other external organisations as required.
- Contribute to planning projects, process improvements and broader Council initiatives.
- Undertake strategic, policy or other planning-related work where appropriate to the position.
- Undertake other duties within the employee's skills, competence, qualifications and experience as reasonably required.
- Contribute to the review and improvement of development assessment procedures, practices and customer service.
- Provide experienced development assessment input into Council projects and strategic or policy planning matters.
- Provide senior technical advice and guidance to Development Services staff on complex development assessment, planning policy and procedural matters.
- Assist other planners with complex or unusual development applications and provide guidance on potential assessment approaches and solutions.
- Mentor and support less experienced planning staff to build professional knowledge, judgement and development assessment capability.
- Provide technical leadership and professional support without direct staff supervisory responsibilities.
- Identify and lead improvements to development assessment practices, procedures, templates and customer service.
- Contribute senior development assessment expertise to Council planning projects, policy reviews and strategic planning initiatives.

6. Financial and Asset Management

- Comply with Councils purchasing policy and procedures
- Comply with Fees and Charges under the Planning Development and Infrastructure Act and Associate Regulations and legislation

Selection Criteria: Qualifications/Experience

In undertaking the duties of your position with the Council, you acknowledge that, at a minimum, you meet all essential attributes listed below.

Qualifications & Experience

- Recognised tertiary qualification in urban and regional planning or a closely related discipline (Minimum Bachelor qualifications).
- Current Class C driver license.
- Demonstrated development assessment experience, preferably in local government.
- Experience assessing residential applications and some commercial, industrial or land division matters.
- Experience preparing assessment reports and communicating decisions to applicants and the community.
- Significant development assessment experience, preferably within a South Australian local government environment
- Demonstrated experience managing complex, significant or sensitive development applications
- Advanced knowledge and application of the PDI Act, Regulations and Planning and Design Code
- Demonstrated complex case management and negotiation capability
- Demonstrated ability to provide senior technical advice
- Experience mentoring or supporting the professional development of planners

Skills & Knowledge

- Ability to interpret and apply planning legislation, policy and technical information to the facts of a matter.
- Sound written communication, including assessment reports, recommendations, conditions and customer correspondence.
- Effective verbal communication, negotiation and conflict-resolution skills.
- Ability to organise competing work, meet deadlines and keep customers and stakeholders appropriately informed.
- Confidence using electronic development assessment tools, document management, mapping and standard office systems.
- Practical judgement, attention to detail and awareness of when to seek specialist or senior advice.
- Ability to interpret and apply planning legislation, policy and technical information to the facts of a matter.
- Sound written communication, including assessment reports, recommendations, conditions and customer correspondence.
- Effective verbal communication, negotiation and conflict-resolution skills.
- Ability to organise competing work, meet deadlines and keep customers and stakeholders appropriately informed.
- Confidence using electronic development assessment, document management, mapping and standard office systems.
- Practical judgement, attention to detail and awareness of when to seek specialist or senior advice.

Personal Skills & Behaviours

- Proficient in organising and prioritising day-to-day activities and specific projects.
- Effective time management skills to meet deadlines efficiently.
- Strong commitment to high-level customer service and building community relationships.

- High level of interpersonal skills and a strong work ethic.
- Open to receiving and responding to constructive feedback.

Collaboration and Communication

- Skilled in liaison, negotiation, conflict resolution, and information sharing with staff, team members and customers.
- Proven ability to build positive relationships, consult with others, shares relevant information and seeks information as needed.
- Ability to communicate clearly and respectfully with confidence, actively seeks to understand others' viewpoints, asks clarifying questions, and effectively conveys ideas both in writing and verbally.
- Demonstrates the ability to communicate effectively, both in writing and verbally, with a diverse range of customers, suppliers, staff, management levels, and individuals from various cultural and social backgrounds.
- Proven ability to maintain calm and efficient manner during sensitive and demanding situations.

Working Together

- Understands team outcomes and deliverables, demonstrates commitment to team goals, and actively seeks to develop and maintain effective working relationships.
- Proven ability to build and maintain positive and effective team relationships, contributing to team success.

Excellence

- A willingness to adopt different approaches to achieve results and accepts changes in job role positively.
- Highly developed skills in solving complex problems and identifying innovative alternate courses of action.
- A commitment to providing timely, reliable, and expert advice to internal and external customers within the area of responsibility.
- Ability to exercise initiative and judgement within established parameters, particularly in handling confidential and sensitive matters appropriately.

Our Culture

The Town of Gawler is committed to developing a positive, constructive organisational culture through effective leadership, collaboration and continuous improvement. Employees are expected to contribute to a workplace that reflects our constructive culture and supports the achievement of Council's strategic objectives.

Our Values in Action

Our values guide how we work together, make decisions and deliver services to our community. Every employee is expected to demonstrate the following behaviours.

Value	What this looks like
Teamwork	• We understand our roles, responsibilities and how we contribute to the team. • We seek feedback and participate in learning and development to strengthen our contribution to the team. • We work together to achieve shared goals. • We value different perspectives and recognise and celebrate the contributions of others.
Integrity	• We act honestly, ethically and professionally in all interactions. • We maintain confidentiality regarding organisational, customer and colleague information. • We take responsibility for our actions and support a professional image of the Town of Gawler. • We are accountable for our decisions and follow through on our commitments.
Collaboration	• We build respectful relationships with colleagues, customers and our community. • We identify customer needs and respond in a respectful, courteous and professional manner. • We communicate openly and contribute constructively to decision making. • We work across teams and with our community to achieve positive outcomes.
Creativity	• We embrace new ways of working and continuous improvement. • We seek opportunities to improve services, processes and outcomes. • We work with colleagues and managers to implement innovative solutions that improve outcomes.
Positivity	• We treat everyone with respect and kindness. • We encourage and support one another through change and challenges. • We create an inclusive, supportive and welcoming workplace. • We contribute to a culture where people feel valued and success is recognised.

Corporate Obligations

Work Health and Safety

As a member of the Town of Gawler's team, you have the responsibility to take reasonable care to protect your health and safety, and the health and safety of others within your work environment (including your colleagues and, where appropriate, members of the public) whilst you are at work and/or working. More specifically, you are required to comply with your obligations under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* (SA) (WHS Act) and Council's Policies and Processes in relation to Work Health, Safety, Injury Management and Rehabilitation.

In accordance with *Section 28* of the *Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2012*, while at work you must:

- take reasonable care of your own health and safety; and
- take reasonable care that your acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons; and
- comply, so far as the worker is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by the Council; and
- cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the Council.

As part of the Council's safety management system, all workers are required to:

- report any hazards, near misses, incidents, accidents, injury or ill health which arise during, or as a result of, their work.
- correctly use, and maintain, any clothing and equipment provided for the purposes of WHS.
- maintain their workplace in a tidy and safe condition.
- ensure that their safety, and that of others, is not affected by the consumption of alcohol or other drugs.
- not interfere with, remove or displace any safety devices, guards or protective equipment unless it is part of an approved maintenance or repair procedure; and
- actively participate in consultation and consideration of all WHS issues that are pertinent to their workplace.

It is expected that all Council employees are fit for the inherent job requirements and physical demands of their appointed position and will remain so during the course of their employment, in line with reasonable work, health and safety expectations.

Records Management

Ensure compliance and adequately manage corporate records created and received according to relevant policies, processes, and legislation.

Policies and Legislative Compliance

Maintain awareness and compliance with Part 4-Employee integrity and behaviour of the *Local Government Act 1999* and all Council policies, procedures, processes and codes. Where applicable, ensure all work is undertaken within properly delegated authority, and is compliant with relevant legislation.

Variation and Review

The Council will review your Position Description as required for business or operational reasons. The Council may vary your Position Description following consultation with you. If your Position Description is varied, you and the Council will sign the amended Position Description to acknowledge its variation.

The incumbent will perform other duties as required.

Disclaimer

This Position Description has been designed to indicate the general nature and level of work performed by employees within this classification. It is not designed to contain or be interpreted as a comprehensive inventory of all duties, responsibilities and qualifications required of employees assigned to the job.

Acknowledgement of Incumbent

I have read the Position Description and acknowledge, understand, and accept the requirements and responsibilities of the position.			
Employee name:		(Signature)	(Date)
Supervisor name:		(Signature)	(Date)