

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT LAW JOURNAL

Volume 24, Number 2

2022

## ARTICLES

**Preserving Character Assessment in the Land-Use Planning Toolkit – Willem van Wyk**

Character represents an aspirational confluence of local scale strategic visioning and statutory regulation. The concept lives in the collective imagination as the genius loci of place, yet in practice is at risk of being reduced to legalistic definitions by recent decisions of the New South Wales Land and Environment Court. This has coincided with character reform being taken off the State Government agenda resulting in an uncertain future for character assessment. The ability for councils to protect distinctive elements of existing character or to project an enforceable vision of desired future character is at risk. This article will argue for character to once more form a cornerstone of development assessment in New South Wales. The concept remains useful for its accessibility and holistic nature. It seems much of the hesitation comes down to an unsubstantiated conflation of the qualitative with the subjective. .... 43

**Developments in Planning Law – Glen McLeod, Chelsea White and Emiko Watanabe**

The Western Australian planning and land tenure system has seen several key changes over 2021 and 2022, by way of introducing new legislation, amending existing legislation or releasing new or updated State Planning Policies and guidelines. Specific topics discussed in this article relate to environmental conservation, medium density housing design, heritage protection and developer contributions to the cost of new infrastructure demand generated by subdivisions. While the topics are varied, all the changes are primarily aimed at providing greater clarity to government, developers and landowners in order to achieve development and environmental conservation aims. The article provides an overview of the changes and comments on the intended outcomes. .... 51

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