

Leigh Creek Future Town Plan

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Version 1.0 17 December 2020

1. What has the government decided about the future for Leigh Creek?

- The state government has decided to transform Leigh Creek into a smaller township as a sustainable, open regional service centre and ensure it can thrive for decades to come
- The town will support current and future residents, government workers, the people and communities comprising the wider northern Flinders Ranges district and will service tourists, freight and other travellers
- The transformation will provide the greatest certainty to those who already call Leigh Creek home.

2. What does the Leigh Creek transformation involve?

- The demolition of surplus residential and other properties to meet the new Town Plan including those that are in disrepair
- New, purpose-built health and ambulance facilities will be built as a priority
- The upgrade of critical town infrastructure including the aerodrome
- Residential housing and commercial properties in the Town Plan will be offered for sale to existing leaseholders in the first instance
- Government agencies will retain and/or acquire sufficient housing for employees and contractors
- Housing will be available for private purchase by community housing providers as rental stock for those that cannot or do not want to purchase their home
- Private people and organisations will also be able to purchase remaining houses in the Town Plan.

3. How will the Aboriginal communities be more involved in the future of Leigh Creek?

- Aboriginal people and organisations will have key community and commercial opportunities through additional property ownership in Leigh Creek
- Aboriginal participation will be a consideration for Outback Communities Authority's (OCA) future governance arrangements, which will be the subject of further community consultation in due time.

4. What does the demolition program involve?

- To achieve a smaller right-sized Leigh Creek Township, selected housing and community properties will be demolished to meet the new Town Plan
- Demolition and upgrade works are expected to commence as soon as possible following the tender processes which are anticipated to be completed in the first half of 2021

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- The demolition program once commenced is anticipated to take around 2 years
- Many of the buildings in Leigh Creek contain asbestos containing material, therefore, the demolition will include all appropriate safety obligations including fencing, appropriate signage, atmospheric monitoring and more
- All efforts will be taken to minimise the impacts of the demolition works on the community
- All efforts will be taken to include appropriately skilled local people in the demolition and other work.

5. Which houses and community properties will be demolished?

- A map of the new Town Plan with retained housing and properties is attached
- There are some housing and community properties that are shown on the map that will be subject to a sales process and will determine whether they are to be retained.

6. I live in one of the dwellings to be demolished, what does that mean for me?

- People leasing homes in the demolition areas will be provided an alternate dwelling to rent or buy
- Your Property Manager will write to you shortly about the process and timeframes for your relocation requirement, including about the selection of an alternative vacant dwelling and support services available to you.

7. Will there be local opportunities from the transformation works?

- To increase local and Aboriginal participation in the delivery of works contracts, a Tailored Industry Participation Plan will be included in the tender process
- The transformation demolition and upgrade programs will provide a regional economic stimulus aiding local and regional businesses and COVID recovery.

8. How will I be advised about the transformation progress?

- The Leigh Creek Township FAQs will be regularly updated as information becomes available
- The OCA, in discussion with the Leigh Creek Progress Association and other nearby communities, will schedule regular community engagement meetings to update progress on the transformation and understand community issues
- A dedicated [webpage](http://www.oca.sa.gov.au/LeighCreekTransformation) (<http://www.oca.sa.gov.au/LeighCreekTransformation>) is available on the OCA website, and regular newsletters will keep people updated

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- Contact details will be provided on the OCA webpage, in the newsletters and at the regular community meetings to enable individuals to ask questions and to raise any concerns.
- A dedicated [email](mailto:leighcreektransformation@sa.gov.au) address is available to provide feedback to the Leigh Creek Task Force leighcreektransformation@sa.gov.au.

9. How many houses will be for sale, and will we be able to buy our house?

- There will be at least 59 houses, 36 flats and 29 vacant blocks of land retained in the Town Plan
- There will be an opportunity to purchase your current home if it is not in the demolition area. More detail will be provided once a registered land agent will be engaged to manage the sales process
- Your Property Manager will contact you soon for the opportunity to register your interest in purchasing your home
- Property values will be determined by independent valuers who will undertake the necessary assessment within the next three months.

10. How did the government decide on how which houses to keep?

- The new Town Plan reflects a pragmatic and appropriate assessment of Leigh Creek's current situation and the realistic future options for the township over the coming decades
- The Town Plan is a result of community, government and professional consultation over the last 2-3 years
- The Town Plan largely reflects the properties that have been managed and occupied in the last 3 years.

11. We operate a business and our lease will expire on 30 June 2021. Can we buy our commercial property?

- There will be an opportunity to purchase your commercial property
- More detail will be provided once a registered land agent has been engaged to manage the sales process
- Commercial properties within the central hub will require surveying and the establishment of community title arrangements
- Commercial property values will be determined by independent valuers
- Your Property Manager will contact you soon for the opportunity to register your interest in purchasing your commercial property.

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12. I won't be able/do not want to buy my house. Can I keep renting?

- Housing that is not purchased by existing households will be made available for private purchase by community housing providers as rental stock
- If you are not willing or able to purchase the property you currently rent, you will need to negotiate with a new housing provider for ongoing rental arrangements
- How many and which houses that may be available for sale to a housing provider will not be known until sales negotiations with current residents are complete
- A registered land agent will be engaged to manage the sales process
- Your Property Manager will have initial discussions with you to identify your circumstances early in this process.

13. I have a rental agreement until 30 June 2021. Will there be any changes to the rental terms? Can I extend my rental agreement?

- Your Property Manager will be in contact with all households soon to discuss your residential arrangements
- Households in the area marked for demolition will be required to move to an alternative dwelling prior to 30 June 2021
- Current rental arrangements for households in the new Town Plan will continue until 30 June 2021. Your Property Manager will discuss with you any options to extend the rental term should the need arise.

14. Will there be any restrictions on access to residential properties in Leigh Creek?

- There will be no government restrictions on the purchase or rental of properties at Leigh Creek in accord with arrangements in other open towns, subject to availability.

15. Will private investors be able to buy houses and commercial properties?

- A registered land agent will be engaged to oversee the sales process of all properties and in a way which will provide the greatest certainty to those who already call Leigh Creek home
- Private investors will have the opportunity to purchase housing stock, vacant land parcels and commercial businesses, subject to the outcomes of the initial offers to existing tenants and to residential community housing providers.

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16. What will happen with the community assets?

- The netball and tennis facilities will be upgraded and co-located. The clubrooms will also be upgraded
- The visitor centre shop, the town oval, church building, Memorial (Cannon) Park, refurbished netball/ tennis courts and clubhouse will remain with the government
- The swimming pool complex, recreation centre and squash courts will be offered for sale
- The aerodrome is a vital resource in the region, including for the Royal Flying Doctor Service in its support for Outback South Australia. The aerodrome will have a significant upgrade, including the resealing of its runways, kangaroo proof perimeter fencing and an upgrade of the lighting and navigation system
- The clubhouses on the perimeter of the town will be included in the demolition program, with the exception of the pistol club, the future of which is still being considered
- The Department for Infrastructure and Transport will advise leaseholders, where applicable, of the process and timelines.

17. How will Leigh Creek be governed in the future?

- Over the last three months, the OCA has been engaging with the outback communities through its 'Outback Futures Review' around the services outback people and communities need, and how they will be delivered
- The OCA will continue with its current town management functions and will commence consultation towards a more inclusive and ongoing governance structure
- The OCA, through the Community Development Officer, will continue to work closely with the Leigh Creek Progress Association in determining the priorities and directions for the management of the community assets
- The OCA will appoint additional temporary staff at Leigh Creek, including a Town Manager and an Assets and Works Officer, to ensure that impacts on the local community from the transformation are managed efficiently and appropriately, and that the community is kept informed and engaged
- The recommendations of the Outback Futures Review will be considered by the government in the first half of 2021.

18. Will the current government services change?

- All the agencies providing services at Leigh Creek will continue
- There will be a new purpose-built health clinic and ambulance service facility, as the current hospital site will be demolished
- Demolition waste will be removed from the town
- The state government has included \$43.6 million over the next four years (in addition to service agencies' operational expenditure) for the transformation of Leigh Creek so it will be an important outback community and service centre for decades to come.