

## PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

“You cannot step twice into the same river, for other waters are always flowing in. **Nothing is permanent but change.**”

Heraclitus, *Greek philosopher*

*Balancing the competing demands of government regulation against the immovable forces of nature while dealing with growing community concern for the environment is no easy task. Even so, business leaders must address both current and emerging legal risks accordingly.*

According to Heraclitus, there was no permanent reality except that of change.

It's a philosophy the outstanding Planning and Environment team at Middletons understands only too well.

Greater regulation has resulted from increasing community and government interest in land use, planning and the protection of the environment. Corporations and their directors are now more accountable for environmental impacts than ever before.

This makes it increasingly important that in any business or property transaction, your planning and environment issues are managed carefully from the outset.

Helping you to meet these demands as they emerge is a fully integrated legal service from the Planning and Environment team at Middletons.

Our expertise covers all areas of planning and environment law, including planning scheme amendments, environment works approvals, licences and permits, planning permit applications, contaminated land, pollution and waste control, planning and environment due diligence.

Further capabilities include planning and development, water law, sale, leasing and licensing of municipal owned land, easements, covenants, rights of way and subdivisions, road

discontinuances and compulsory land acquisition and compensation.

A lack of uniformity in planning and environment law across regulatory bodies means that federal, state and local government can impact in varied and significant ways. Even negotiating council zoning permits is a complex task.

With a breadth of skills across all aspects of planning and environmental law, and offices in both Melbourne and Sydney, we offer you real value in the guise of a full suite of legal resources keeping you informed of changes – no matter what the size – as they affect your project.

We stay abreast of industry developments via a continuous improvement of our relevant tertiary and industry level qualifications in town planning and environmental law.

Growth of our business can't happen without the growth of yours, so Middletons found a new way of doing things in legal services. We're dedicated to speaking the language of your business while challenging your thinking.

Changes in the way legal services are provided have been a long time coming.

Like Heraclitus, we know that change is always going to be a part of our environment – that way we can be a part of yours.

## Our Planning Process

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*Think local – act global. It's not just a call to environmental arms but also a critical consideration during the planning process for any commercial project.*

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Whether interpreting local zoning laws in Victoria and New South Wales or analysing the global impact of the Kyoto Agreement, your project needs proper assessment of legal risk no matter what geographical and legal boundaries it may straddle.

The Planning and Environment team at Middletons has the depth of knowledge and expertise necessary to realise your project objectives.

We ensure that planning and environment issues and exposures are identified before a project starts so that risks are minimised throughout the life of the project and optimal commercial results are achieved.

The difference between a project being delivered on time and on budget rather than burdened by delays and cost increases depends on effective management of planning issues and environmental risks.

Our experience in, and understanding of, the property development industry and the town planning process affords us greater insight from the conceptual and planning stages, through to completion.

We bring to you an established track record in property development, planning and environmental issues, subdivisions, joint venture and development agreements as well as commercial property transactions with an emphasis on major residential, retail, industrial and commercial property matters.

Few legal practitioners can offer you the same level of understanding of the key issues facing the public sector land use and management industry.

Our experience with government agencies has developed in unison with their evolution from public to private sector bodies. In fact, our wide knowledge of planning law, particularly at council and industry level, is regularly called upon where legal and planning issues compete.

Occasionally our lawyers also sit as Sessional Planning Panel Members on re-zoning matters.

We also understand environmental law and our team can advise you on environmental due diligence, contaminated sites, environmental works approvals, licences and permits, sale and acquisition of commercial property and native title.

Understanding the nature of both your business and the transaction being considered allows us to challenge your thinking with legally precise, commercially relevant advice.

That's not the only service benefit you will find.

Our smaller, less leveraged team deals with fewer multiple assignments meaning partner accessibility is assured at all times.

We believe that the competitive tension we bring to the marketplace leads to better service and pricing outcomes that directly benefit you.

In a world of change, our commitment to client service and the absolute best in commercially savvy legal advice remains a constant.



# About Middletons

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Middletons is a leading Australian law firm with offices in Melbourne and Sydney with around 65 partners, a further 190 lawyers and a total staff of more than 440.

We have extensive experience in acting for major corporates and industry leaders, and working on ground breaking transactions. Clients have chosen our firm because of our comprehensive skills, industry knowledge and approach to service.

Clients seek firms with industry knowledge and depth of experience to match. As a single service supplier of legal expertise, we offer our clients a broad range of legal services, including:

- » banking and finance
- » biotechnology
- » capital markets
- » commercial and corporate advisory
- » commercial litigation
- » commercial property
- » competition and trade practices
- » construction
- » corporate recovery
- » dispute resolution
- » energy
- » financial services
- » industrial relations
- » information technology
- » intellectual property
- » insurance
- » maritime

- » media and entertainment
- » mergers and acquisitions
- » project finance and infrastructure
- » resources
- » taxation and revenue
- » transport and international trade
- » workplace relations.

Middletons has expertise and knowledge in specific industries we see as integral to the Australian and world economies to ensure we understand our clients' businesses. Industries such as:

- » energy and resources
- » finance and insurance
- » health and leisure
- » manufacturing and retail
- » property and development
- » technology
- » telecommunications
- » transport, distribution and logistics.

Middletons breaks the mould when it comes to big law firms. Size, like expertise and geographical reach, is a given for our clients. Our lawyers talk our clients' language but challenge their thinking. Our approach is different to others – we offer advice and services built on intellect, inspiration, influence, involvement, integrity and individuality.

Middletons is large enough to provide detailed business advice, yet small enough to ensure cost effectiveness and guaranteed partner access.

## Further Information

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