

Dorte Ekelund
Executive Director
Major Cities Unit
Department of Infrastructure and Transport
GPO Box 594
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Ms Ekelund

RE: DRAFT URBAN DESIGN PROTOCOL FOR AUSTRALIAN CITIES

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on the draft framework for the Australian Urban Design Protocol. I understand that the objective of the Australian Urban Design Protocol is to encourage world-class urban design and architecture by establishing a framework for the practice and delivery of urban design.

NSW Health has a strong interest in the links between the planning system, urban design the natural and built environments and their impact on human health, both in the prevention of disease and the promotion of good health. For instance, there is growing evidence that well designed quality public spaces can generally improve physical and psychological health, as well as contribute to the social connections that help to make a community. In addition to the link between obesity, physical activity and urban form, air pollution, noise pollution and sun shade provision are three other issues with clear links to health and disease.

As part of our focus on preventive health, the NSW Department of Health is keen to support the planning of built environments that assist people to be healthy in their everyday lives. As part of this commitment we have established the Healthy Built Environments Program at the University of New South Wales. The Program is the first of its kind in Australia and has recently published a literature review on three key built environment interventions that support human health; getting people active; connecting and strengthening communities; and providing healthy food options. This literature review is available for download on the website <http://www.fbe.unsw.edu.au/cf/hbep/publications/>.

In relation to the draft framework, NSW Health welcomes the inclusion of a goal to 'cultivate healthy and cohesive communities' as one of the five goals of the Australian Urban Design Protocol.

NSW Health also supports the underpinning Design Principles For People which recognise the importance of social interaction, places to play and undertake recreational activities, safety both in terms of road safety and personal safety and active transport.

However, while the Urban Design and Architecture components of the world class criteria recognise that urban design can significantly influence the economic, environmental social and cultural performance or impact of a development they do not recognise their impact on health which is considerable.

I understand that as part of finalising the Draft Protocol supportive case studies, best practice and additional links to resources will be developed. It is not clear whether a health representative is on the Editorial Board for the Protocol. However, due to its interest and experience working to create and promote healthy built environments NSW Health would welcome the opportunity to support the creation of these resources and to link the staff of the Major Cities Unit with the staff of the Healthy Built Environments Program to ensure that the health impacts of the environment are incorporated.

If you have any queries relating to the work that NSW Health supports in relation to healthy planning and healthy built environments please do not hesitate to contact [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



Dr Kerry Chant
**Chief Health Officer and
Deputy Director General, Population Health**

17/8/11