
From: Katharina Nieberler-Walker
Sent: Monday, 22 August 2011 12:39
To: Our Cities
Cc: ceo@aila.org.au; Catherine Neilson; Mandy Rounsefell
Subject: Revised comments on Urban Design Framework

Sarah,

In my email this morning I have by mistake sent an earlier version of my comments. Please disregard this email.

Many thanks and sorry for the inconvenience.

Please find below comments on the draft framework 'Creating Places for People – an urban design protocol for Australian cities'. Comments are made on behalf of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects and also represent the views of a practicing Landscape Architect and member of the Planning Institute of Australia.

The need for a national Urban Design Protocol is supported and a necessary consideration for the planning and development of our cities in the future.

It is difficult to understand why the objective refers to world class urban design and architecture. This elevates architecture above other professional disciplines which is an arguable position and steeped in the past. This reference occurs throughout the document and enforces the lopsided view. The specific reference to architecture separate from urban design should be removed from the Urban Design Protocol.

Reference is made to world-class, excellence and best practice and therefore reference also needs to be made to green infrastructure on a macro-level. Bench marking against international standard demands the recognition of green infrastructure as a major component in the planning and design of our cities on a macro and micro level. Best practice means being inclusive. Commitment to best practice and excellence requires acknowledgement of the natural systems and the importance that these systems play in planning and design of our cities. Design of cities has in the past often focused on the buildings and grey infrastructure. In the future we need to do this better and be more inclusive and recognise urban design as *a team sport that requires the contribution of many players for the team to succeed*.

The exclusive mention of Architecture under the definition of world class urban design (page 5) is misleading. Stating that architecture is creating the urban context is a thing of the past and flies in the face of the current definition and understanding of good urban design. The definition of urban design needs to recognise the contribution of many professions. Leadership in urban design should not be seen as the exclusive domain of architects. The knowledge about landscape, natural systems and how their benefits can be harnessed for the creation of sustainable cities is the way of the future and the creation of truly resilient cities. This needs to be reiterated in the urban design protocol if we want to pay more than lip- service to world-class, best practice and design excellence.

Landscape and green infrastructure must be recognised on a macro level in the urban design protocol and not appear on a micro level only as is the case in the draft protocol. The urban structure of cities should be defined by landscape and green infrastructure, the key ingredients of truly 'green' cities. We are part of the natural world and the natural world is what is sustaining us. The reduction of our ecological footprint goes beyond our cities. Reference should be made to this effect and the consideration of urban agriculture as a means of reducing this ecological footprint should be included.

Prosperity, sustainability, liveability, leadership and design are indisputably linked to the provision of green infrastructure and the connection to nature in our cities. World-class, best practice and excellence in design refers to evidence based design as the key for a proven outcome. The urban design protocol needs to acknowledge this by recognising the importance of natural system based green infrastructure in the planning and design of our cities.

Urban design strategies and solutions need to include green infrastructure with its layered affect on health, resource management and potential for mitigation against climate change.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Regards

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