



Pilot

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Dear Sir/Madam

## **Re: Draft National Urban Policy**

I've recently reviewed the National Urban Policy draft with a sense of excitement and relief; the big challenges of Australian cities have been well articulated and recognised at a national level in this document. While I understand it's specific purpose in a governance sense, as a national public it frames the big national challenges we all need to work together on in cities. In this context of general strong support, there three key points of feedback I would like to offer, hoping that these will be useful to the team:

### **1. The role of urban design**

Urban design is the crucial connective tissue between policy and delivery in cities. In my 35+ years career I've seen repeatedly that when design doesn't get included at the very 'top' of policy, it's not supported 'down the line' in delivery.

Design integrates. It makes a whole from parts. Design is the difference between a road and a street, a plan and a place, a leftover space and a place people love. Urban design is instrumental in offering more people better access to transport, jobs, urban culture, participation in city life. In supporting health and wellbeing in cities. In helping meet our emissions reductions targets. If we want our cities to be more equitable, sustainable, healthy, productive and resilient, we have to recruit design as a key tool, and elevate it in our national thinking.

To establish the *national* principle that urban design is a core part of every major urban project, the word 'design' needs to sit next to 'planning' in the document principles.

### **2. Planning and Design for Climate Change**

The challenges of designing places in the face of climate change are something we feel very keenly in South East Queensland, as our summers warm, our incidents of flood increase, and for the first time in living memory, our rainforests burn. The challenge of adapting to and being resilient in the face of climate change is highly relevant to the future of our cities, and this is very underplayed in the document. There are emerging trends and research in city planning and design to lessen heat stress on urban populations (a significant health issue), and to ameliorate flooding and fire. As a future focussed document, this recognition needs to be built in more explicitly into the 'sustainability' section; we need to design and plan our cities to be resilient in the face of climate change.

### **3. Hierarchy of Ideas and Content for Communication**

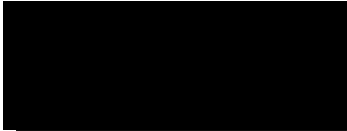
As a public document, this will have to do a lot of heavy lifting in a communications sense; currently the document is not sufficiently clear in the organisation of ideas and content. It can be a challenge to assemble a range of complex ideas into a clear lineage of goals, objectives, principles and actions; however this content in the document needs that mapped out in a more logical and clear way. In the final draft, a deep edit on how the ideas are structured through the tiering of the four categories so there is a might clearer line of sight between them would assist significantly in the communication to industry and the community.

All the best with your important endeavour



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Yours sincerely



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