



3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021

## ***AILA welcomes Registered Landscape Architect requirement by NSW Government.***

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) supports the NSW Government's proposed Design and Place State Environment Planning Policy ([Design and Place SEPP](#)) as an important move towards the more integrated and sustainable design of our urban environments in NSW whilst highlighting the important role and status that Registered Landscape Architects play as qualified and recognised design professionals.

This consolidation and the updating of a number of presently disparate policies of controls (such as the Apartment Design Guidelines (ADG), the development of a new Urban Design Guide (UDG) and BASIX) into a single SEPP creates a considerably more holistic approach that reflects its place-based design intent.

Encouragingly, at a bigger picture level this is not a standalone document, as it provides the structure around which a series of recently developed guidelines (eg. Better Placed, Greener Places, The Public Space Charter etc) which provide the detailed controls and metrics that have historically rested across a series of SEPPS.

In particular the profession is buoyed by the SEPP proposal that "a registered landscape architect will be required for all open space greater than 1000 m<sup>2</sup>."<sup>1</sup>

AILA will be encouraging the NSW Government, through the submission process, to strengthen language in a number of areas to ensure that high quality urban green infrastructure is not just a 'nice to have' but a 'must have'. These areas include, for example:

- ***Walking catchments*** - a 20 minute walk to shops and schools seems excessive and in hotter parts of the State, unlikely to be practical. Cycle catchments would be helpful here, especially with the growing use of e-bikes. The 5-minute walk to local open space is welcome but will beg the question as to what the nature of

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Explanation of Intended Effect for a Design and Place SEPP ; Page 25



that open space is and what it will offer, and relative to user needs is it enough, particularly in apartment precincts.

- **No net loss of public space** – while this goal is essential as a baseline, it suggests that existing public open space is adequate, which in many places it is not. Throughout many of the State and Local Government documents over recent years, there has been a consistent suggestion that shortfalls in public space within existing often dense urban environments cannot be reversed. While space can almost always be found or created for essential grey infrastructure (roads and rail etc), if necessary, through compulsory acquisition, the same approach is rarely if ever applied to essential green infrastructure. It is hard to see how the liveability or sustainability of our urban environments will improve if the approach of 'making the most of what we have' persists.

AILA looks forward to working constructively with the NSW Government and other built environment professionals to progress this document and to support the design of healthy and prosperous places that support the well-being of people, community and country.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee Andrews'.

Lee Andrews

**AILA NSW President**

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