



Australian Institute of Landscape Architects

6 November 2015

Hon. Richard Wynne
Minister for Planning
Level 20, 1 Spring Street
Melbourne, VIC 3000

Dear Minister Wynne,

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) is the peak body for the landscape architecture profession in Australia. Representing over 2000 members, we champion a landscape of liveability and quality design for our streetscapes, public open spaces, stronger communities and greater environmental stewardship. Our members include both Landscape Architects and Urban Designers, who are experienced designers of apartment developments from small to large scale.

We write in regard to VCAT's decision on 14 October 2015 to overturn Moreland City Council's planning permit approval of 'The Nightingale' at 6 Florence Street Brunswick, on the basis of no provision of on-site car parking. The project is led by Breathe Architecture and supported by a number of other consultants including Mark Jacques, a Landscape Architect and director of local design practice Oculus.

As outlined in our submission to the *Better Apartments – A Discussion Paper*, AILA supports cleverly planned medium to high density developments that are sustainable in the long term. The Nightingale proposed to exclude private car parking in light of excellent nearby public transport, cycling links, and on-street car sharing schemes. AILA believes such provision, and the delivery of design excellence and innovation in terms of apartment design, justified Council's waiver of car parking requirements.

The benefits of excluding car parking include:

- No carbon emissions generated from private motor vehicles
- No congestion added to local roads from private motor vehicles
- Less carbon emissions generated by the construction of the building due to the reduced material input required
- That it may be possible to preserve uncompacted areas of natural ground for improved subsurface hydrology and deep root planting for canopy trees – essential to combating the urban heat island in dense neighbourhoods

The Nightingale proposes numerous other features that collectively form a benchmark for sustainable apartment developments that will endure into the 21st Century. These include a generous rooftop garden designed for communal gatherings, clothes drying, and food production. AILA applauds The Nightingale for demonstrating leadership in supporting sustainable modes of transport, reduced environmental impacts, and promotion of health and well-being.

In keeping with the aspirations of the *Plan Melbourne Refresh Discussion Paper* to create a more resilient and environmentally sustainable Melbourne, we strongly encourage the Minister's Advisory Committee undertake legislative reform to protect the responsible authority's power to waive parking requirements in appropriate, well-serviced contexts. Developments such as The Nightingale must be supported by planning policy if we are to move toward a more sustainable future for Melbourne.

Yours sincerely,

Felicity McGahan
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Australian Institute of Landscape Architects

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