

sustainable settlement

green infrastructure

## URBAN DESIGN



Australian Institute  
of Landscape Architects

### National Policy Statement

The AILA supports a comprehensive and integrated approach to URBAN DESIGN that acknowledges the value of Green Infrastructure and embraces the Australian Landscape Principles in the planning and design of the public realm.

Urban Design is concerned with the visioning and implementation of urban public spaces in the context of Sustainable Settlements.

Urban Design brings together issues of urban ecosystems, planning, transportation, built form, social equity, development economics and engineering to create a socially and physically sustainable vision for a place. Urban Design enables the delivery of that vision within a collaborative, multi-layered design environment.

#### ***Urban Design in Landscape Architecture***

Urban Design has emerged in recent years as an area of design practice operating at the intersection of the professions of Landscape Architecture, Planning and Architecture.

It involves designing places for people, and how people move between, experience and use those places.

At its heart, Urban Design is concerned with the dynamic connections between human activity and urban form including the natural, social and economic systems which underpin the urban fabric and support our daily lives.

Landscape function and performance is a critical aspect of urban adaptive capacity and resilience.

Urban Design which aims to enhance urban landscape performance, by incorporating green infrastructure strategies, guided by the Australian Landscape Principles, can significantly improve climate adaptation outcomes across a range of landscape scales and make a positive impact on energy, water, human health and well-being.

### **Applying THE AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE PRINCIPLES in the context of urban design**

The Australian Landscape Principles articulate an ethical decision-making framework for landscape planning, design and management within the built environment.

Their purpose is to strategically direct landscape interventions – both in our existing and future built environments - towards more sustainable, holistic outcomes. In the context of urban design, this means we need to:

**Value Our Landscape:** by working with the site's intrinsic resources, the climate, landform, landscape and ecology as well as the social and cultural context; feeding back social and environmental benefits and minimizing energy use via integrated green infrastructure strategies.

**Protect – Enhance - Regenerate:** by promoting urban design solutions which proactively maximise opportunities to enhance and regenerate natural resources, and which measurably improve social, economic and environmental capital; urban design which aims to enrich the qualities of existing urban spaces, and responds to and complements their settings.

**Design with Respect:** by providing places and spaces for people which are respectful of their needs and aspirations. Such places should be safe, comfortable, varied, attractive and distinctive. Where relevant such spaces should meet the social and health needs of a variety of users through opportunities for a range of uses such as recreation, social gatherings, relaxation and reflection.

**Design for the Future:** by providing urban design solutions which incorporate the flexibility to respond to future changes in use, lifestyle and demography, and which respect the rights of future generations.

**Embrace Responsive Design:** by promoting urban design solutions which effectively respond to the inherent values of a place, and incorporating those responses into strategies for ongoing evaluation and development.

### **Key Urban Design Related Actions**

- Develop National Urban Design Protocols that promote integrated urban design solutions to proactively maximize natural resources and leverage urban landscape performance outcomes.
- Shift proportion of infrastructure funding from grey infrastructure to support mapping, design and management of green infrastructure as a critical component of sustainable urban design solutions.
- Support pilot projects which test integrated sustainability assessment and design proposals in 'real-life' situations in order to rapidly improve knowledge uptake for broader sustainable settlement solutions.
- Support urban design research focused on sustainable settlement solutions.
- Co-ordinate and maintain a national database of the physical characteristics of major cities & towns – including 3D mapping co-ordinated with non-spatial data (e.g. census data), available through local government.
- Reform planning guidelines & legislation throughout Australia to ensure focus on development outcomes that support national sustainable settlement policy goals.

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*This Policy statement is part of the AILA's Sustainable Settlement suite of Policy Statements on Australian Landscape Architecture, the profession committed to the creation of meaningful and enjoyable outdoor places and to the sustainable management of our built and natural environment.*

More details on AILA National Policy Statements: [www.aila.org.au/policies](http://www.aila.org.au/policies)

All queries on National Policy should be directed to the AILA's CEO.

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September 2010