



Department of Planning and Environment

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AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS (AILA) COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE CENTRAL STATE SIGNIFICANT PRECINCT OSD

PREFACE

AILA pays respect to, the Gadigal People, traditional owners of the land to which this proposal relates.

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) is the peak national body for Landscape Architecture. AILA leads a dynamic and respected profession: *creating great places to support healthy communities and a sustainable planet.*

AILA champions quality design for public open spaces, stronger communities, and greater environmental stewardship. We provide our members with training, recognition, and a community of practice to share knowledge, ideas, and action. With our members, we anticipate and develop a leading position on issues of concern in landscape architecture. Alongside government and allied professions, we work to improve the design, planning and management of the natural and built environment.

STATEMENT

AILA supports development initiatives that demonstrate best practice in sustainable development with embedded resilient strategies that will deliver a liveable and climate positive outcome. AILA believes this requires tangible delivery of a strong green infrastructure framework so essential for human health, liveability and the success of sustainability initiatives.

As currently exhibited the Central Precinct State Significant Proposal has some significant flaws and cannot be fully supported. These flaws included under: *supply of open space* related to the forecast numbers of inhabitants; *poor amenity quality of public domain* related to microclimate, *competing servicing and services spatial requirements* and *compromise of heritage views and fabric.*

Further, the intention to have separate basement structural slab and over station development applications is not conducive to the resolution of complex urban design projects.



BACKGROUND

AILA notes the Precinct Study Key outcomes in particular:

1. Supports the Mixed Use Precinct in principle
2. Intention for the quality of the public domain with an emphasis on '*easier, safer and comfortable to use*' as highlight the following:
 - Excellent that the Public Domain (PD) is regularly and well distributed in stitching the city together.
 - Regarding the ease and comfort of use: The wind studies indicate a lot of the public realm is only suitable for walking. Further, many of these links are also overshadowed with the quality of shade being often unpleasant for use, particularly coupled with wind impacts.
 - It is noted that much of the Public Domain is on slab and while there is an intention to provide adequate deep soil in a connected network, no indication is given as to how this network is structurally adequate to support all functions, be hydrated or coordinated with services reticulation, drained or managed etc.
3. Open Space provision appears low in view of the projected residential population, other intermittent usage by workers and visitors coupled with the current high usage of the adjacent existing open space areas. Resilience of open space needs to well planned to address usage as well as levels of management.

The Prince Alfred Sub precinct: The development intent needs to balance equitable open space allocation to be suitable for the creation of local biodiversity and to '*improve Prince Alfred Park as a significant open space and important green space for the city*' Questioning if is this being eroded through emergence and maintenance vehicle access to Precinct across southwest edge of Prince Alfred Park.

4. Streets & Laneways and other movement corridors: AILA supports the well distributed connection network in stitching the city together generally and particularly the inclusion of the Belmore Park and Eddy Avenue as a green link and the development of the Mortuary Station precinct.
5. There is insufficient information to assess the resolution of how the cross connections merge with the existing levels and public domain at Devonshire Street and Prince Alfred Park particularly considering the adjacencies of the heritage items in close proximity to these connections.

The Sky view factor of <20% for the majority of the streets and laneways within the Precinct is disappointing and not conducive to public domain amenity and comfort of use for extended periods of time. This makes other amenity factors such as wind impact and the Gehl people focused space 12 quality criteria for protection, comfort, and enjoyment extremely important which are not demonstrated at this time.

6. In recognition of the ambitious Grass Floor Area (GFA) proposed for the site, the built form must be careful considered as to its impact on the both the curtilage of public domain within the precinct particularly in regard to overshadowing and building impacts on wind and also its skyline silhouette impact to surrounding areas.



The built form needs to include amelioration to allow dwelling level criteria in the majority of the PD.

7. Heritage: The proposal stated key outcome for heritage as protecting, embracing and sensitive adaptive reuse heritage. While the intent is supported the proposal causes some concerns such as the absence of the proposals view comparison of impacts with the table of key views in the Conservation Management Plan (CMP), particularly silhouette of clock tower. Other concerns include levels adjacencies between heritage items and proposal components; the level of intervention to heritage fabric that may result in the loss of significance also the encroachment on public open space such as between railway station "Main Terminus" and Central Transport interchange "Central Electric".
8. Transport: no comment.
9. Generally, the sustainability Initiatives are supported however there does not appear to be any integration with Green Infrastructure, Ecology, Urban Forest & Greening as a systems-based approach.
10. Connecting with Country principles, while stated, do not appear deeply embedded with the development.
11. Amenity of the public domain is not adequate as noted in point 2 above.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Precinct initiatives supported by AILA are:

- The PD being regularly and well distributed in stitching the city together.
- The inclusion of the Belmore Park and Eddy Avenue as a green link and the development of the Mortuary Station precinct.
- Mixed Use precinct with benefits for increased education/workplace/affordable and student continued engagement with local First Nations community to demonstrate an integrated designing with Country.
- Positive intentions to open and public domain creation including identifying extensive soil on slab provision.

AILA note that the community is strongly in favour of a Central Precinct that is easier, safer and more comfortable to use, whilst also retaining the Precinct's heritage. For these intentions to be realised the public domain of the Precinct must be founded on system based green infrastructure networks. By establishing and safeguard the fundamentals of this system the delivery of the valuable legacy of living systems and the public domain may be achieved long term.

To achieve this outcome the AILA recommends:

1. The development of an Integrated Green Infrastructure Framework (GIF).

To guarantee success of the "Green" aspect of the development. (Noting that the this is mentioned over 100 times in the Precinct Plan).

Detail of the GIF and sustainability initiatives should have ambitious targets to guide the delivery over the 30 year development framework.

This would include:



- Demonstrated embedding of deep understanding of country into the proposal through a tangible response to the original land and intangible response through interactions with local 1st Nations Knowledge Holders.
- Soil volume and network requirements while basic network is identified its integration and safeguarding from competing requirements are not addressed. Soil network appears to conflict with intended circulation/ autonomous vehicle access etc, further it is unclear how hydration will occur.
- Permeability is not address this is critical for the success of the network in concert with soil zones for hydration.
- Water Cycle initiatives including harvest & reuse as referred to in sustainability initiatives but there is no clear intention related to ensuring soil hydration.
- % Urban Tree Canopy target is listed but is heavily biased to the western half of the Precinct.
- Biodiversity targets- currently target communities poorly suited to much of the microclimate of the public domain, i.e. not shade tolerant, particularly in dense building shade.
- Solar access targets for public domain are very poor and should be substantially increased.
- Public domain should have a much higher target for % area suitable for dwell in relation to for wind impact.

2. A Quality of the Public Domain.

- For Design Excellence to be demonstrated in the public domain and open space an integrated green infrastructure framework should be established and safeguarded to guarantee success of any "green" amenity solutions.
- Importance of clear coordination between public domain, Green Infrastructure, Ecology, Urban Forest & Greening with coordination with servicing reticulation, and water cycle management.
- The built form needs to include amelioration to allow dwelling level criteria for most of the public domain as well as achieving the Gehl people focused space 12 quality criteria for protection, comfort and enjoyment, with particular consideration of high proposition of building edge condition with pd being dimensioning to human scale, having a diversity of functions and providing rich sensory experience including non-privatised activation.

3. Heritage Matters.

- The proposal needs to demonstrate impact on key view as set out in CMP, particularly silhouette of clock tower against sky rather than subsumed by surrounding building mass.
- Levels adjacencies between heritage items (including open space items) and proposal components need detailed resolution to demonstrate the level of intervention to heritage fabric and/or curtilage does not result in the loss of significance.
- The encroachment on heritage public open space such as between railway station "Main Terminus" and Central Transport interchange "Central Electric". Emergency and maintenance vehicles access through western edge of Prince Alfred Park.



Without having the detail of the approval's pathway being followed by Transport an in-depth comment cannot be made in relation to the proposal delivery. However, AILA stresses that Central Precinct should be assessed as a single Development Application (DA) to ensure best possible coordination and integration of all facets of the project. Alternatively, if the structure is a separate DA, there needs to be detailed guidelines for the Green Infrastructure Framework that ensures it is comprehensively coordinated with the structural and other engineering works so that it is delivered with minimised compromise.

The detailed approval process should be undertaken by the City of Sydney under their Public Domain policies, guidelines and codes including for all private landscape works being proposed.

CONCLUSION

As this project has a long timeframe it is an excellent opportunity to establish and safeguard the fundamentals of and foundations for a Green Infrastructure Framework which will be able to support the delivery, of this valuable legacy, being open space and the public domain long term.

Sincerely yours,

Tanya Wood

AILA NSW President

SUBMISSION TEAM

This submission has been prepared by a working group of AILA NSW members.

About the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects



Australian Institute of
Landscape Architects

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) leads a dynamic and respected profession: creating great places to support healthy communities and a sustainable planet.

Who we are and what we do

AILA is the peak national body for Landscape Architecture. AILA champions quality design for public open spaces, stronger communities, and greater environmental stewardship.

We provide our members with training, recognition, and a community of practice to share knowledge, ideas, and action.

With our members, we anticipate and develop a leading position on issues of concern in Landscape Architecture. Alongside government and allied professions, we work to improve the design, planning, and management of the natural and built environment.

In operation since 1966, AILA represents over 2,500 members Australia-wide and promotes excellence in planning and designing for life outdoors. Committed to designing better places, Australian landscape architects have the skills and expertise to improve the nation's liveability through integrated nature-based solutions delivering better environmental, social, and economic outcomes for all Australians.

AILA's national position statements on Green Infrastructure, Climate Positive Design, Child Friendly Cities, Healthy Communities, and Active Travel; examine how an integrated approach can be used to shape the health and wellbeing of communities. Landscape architects play a central role in developing and implementing these strategies.

Our members are distributed across Australia and range from sole traders to large internationally recognised practices and are embedded within local and state government, creating significant and profound community impacts at a variety of scales.

AILA's values focus on the design, delivery, and management of:

1. Quality Public Places

Examples include:

- Southbank Parklands, QLD
- Sydney Park and Darling Quarter, NSW
- Royal Botanical Gardens Victoria – Cranbourne Gardens, VIC
- Pelzer Park/ Pityarilla (Park 19) Activity Hub, SA
- Elizabeth Quay and Scarborough Foreshore, WA
- and many more Australia-wide.

2. Stronger Communities

Through public open space networks, parks, and sporting complexes.

3. Environmental Stewardship

Through ecological restoration (flood, fire, weeds and contaminated waterways).

As landscape architects:

- We resolve to protect and sustain our landscapes.
- We affirm that self-sustaining landscapes are essential to our planet by placing a high value on the protection of living landscapes and taking a thoughtful approach to their change.
- We resolve to restore damaged landscapes to health.
- We recognise each landscape is best cared for by the community as a whole.
- We work to reveal the value of each landscape to all parties so that they can work in its best interests.
- We work collaboratively with the community and with other professionals to ensure the best outcome for each place.