



2 November 2023

**Attn: The Hon. Sonya Kilkenny**

Minister for Planning  
Minister for the Suburbs  
Level 20, 1 Spring St, Melbourne 3000  
E: [sonya.kilkenny@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:sonya.kilkenny@parliament.vic.gov.au)

Dear Minister Kilkenny,

**A better Victoria, together.**

On behalf of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects' Victorian Chapter, we welcome you to your new portfolio as Minister for the Suburbs alongside your ongoing role as Minister for Planning. These two portfolios are so vital in the shaping of Victoria's built and natural environments and supporting sustainable future communities.

We write to you in relation to the recently released Housing Statement for Victoria shaping the decade ahead. As landscape architects, we are committed to supporting reforms that encourage higher density housing, protect renters' rights, create more social housing, and focus on delivering housing in the regions.

Given that the drive to design and build more housing, sooner, could come at a cost to healthy precincts, liveable communities and thriving ecosystems, in planning for the future of Victoria, it is critical that we create high quality urban environments that improve wellbeing, social connectedness and generate climate and nature positive outcomes.

It is therefore reassuring that the Housing Statement identifies the importance of providing growing communities with the local infrastructure they need. We know that residential suburbs are most successful when the social infrastructure has been delivered early. This social infrastructure includes well designed and integrated blue and green infrastructure that support healthy, connected communities that reflect and respond to their unique place qualities. Victorian Landscape Architects are active in many of Victoria's state-shaping projects ensuring these projects support local communities by creating spaces for them to connect to nature and each other.

Blue green infrastructure contributes to urban settings that become nature positive, focused on restoring and regenerating rather than declining natural capital. They can help to mitigate the impacts of flooding and stormwater runoff by using natural systems such as wetlands and permeable pavements.

**About the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA)**

***AILA leads a dynamic and respected profession: creating great places to support healthy communities and a sustainable planet.***

AILA is the peak national body for Landscape Architecture, championing quality design for public open spaces, stronger communities, and greater environmental stewardship. The Victorian Chapter of AILA represents Victoria's Registered Landscape Architects (RLAs) - Australia's largest body of registered landscape architectural practitioners.



Our members represent a diverse range of professional services including strategic planning, urban design, open space design, and natural resource management, working across all levels of government and within the private and residential sectors.

### Ensuring liveable cities and country into the future

As the new President of the Victorian Chapter of AILA, I lead a highly energised executive team with deep understanding of delivering projects at various scales across Victoria. Our advocacy focus reflects current challenges and the vital role we believe that landscape architects play in supporting our clients and communities in navigating these challenges to create a sustainable and climate positive future.

The breadth of the Victorian landscape architecture community can provide the Victorian Government with valuable insight in addressing our housing challenge. We would welcome the opportunity to provide our members with a briefing on the Housing Statement and further engage with you to support your ambitious plans for Victoria.

Yours faithfully,

**Naomi Barun**

AILA President Victoria

Australian Institute of Landscape Architects