



MEDIA RELEASE
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Federation Square decision cause for concern

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) is concerned about the Victorian Government's decision to approve the demolition of the Yarra Building in Federation Square to replace it with an Apple store.

Victorian Chapter President Adrian Gray says "that the decision has raised many responses from AILA members, particularly regarding the process, lack of public consultation and the impact on the functionality of the public realm."

Members are concerned that the plan is not aligned with the Cultural and Civic objectives in Federation Square's Charter.

"Such a significant alteration to the fabric of Melbourne's premier public space deserves more public involvement", he said. AILA also understands that the City of Melbourne was not consulted, despite being a key stakeholder in the design of the CBD.

"While commercial tenancies form part of the original design intent of Federation Square, a large format store for a global retailer is inconsistent with that of the other businesses and cultural institutions and deserves a broader debate with the community", Mr Gray said. "What opportunities have been explored for the Apple Store to be located in Bourke Street Mall?"

"AILA fears the inclusion of the Apple Store will irrevocably alter Federation Square's vital role as the city's central community gathering space, whether for peace or protest. We advocate for free, democratic and accessible public space."

"We have concerns regarding the environmental and financial sustainability of replacing a 15 year old building that was constructed with public funds.

AILA is encouraged by initial consultation with Ms. Jill Garner, State Government Architect, and Mr. Donald Bates of LAB, but is seeking more information and discussion with the design community and public at-large to ensure Federation Square's on-going positive contribution to civic life.

Please contact AILA Victoria for more information

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About the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA)

AILA is the growing national advocacy body representing over 3,000 active and engaged landscape architects, promoting the importance of the profession today and for the future. Committed to designing and creating a better Australia, landscape architects shape the world around us. aila.org.au