



Australian Institute of  
Landscape Architects

6th May 2022

**AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS (AILA) SUBMISSION DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT  
PANELS REFORMS (2022)**

To whom it may concern,

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) would like to thank you and your teams for the invitation to comment on the Development Assessment Panel Reform and for your presentation April 13, 2022.

AILA is the peak national body for landscape architecture, leading a dynamic and respected profession: creating great places to support healthy communities and a sustainable planet. We provide our members with training, recognition, and a community of practice to share knowledge, ideas, and action. 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.

Landscape Architects conceive, reimagine and transform the outside world from streetscapes to parks and playgrounds, transport solutions to tourism strategies, new suburbs and even cities. Landscape architects shape project outcomes in a variety of ways. We bring a critical eye to the potential opportunities and constraints of a place, site, or landscape.

In operation since 1966, AILA represents over 3,600 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

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## Development Assessment Panel Reform (2022)

### **Observations**

AILA would like to advocate for Landscape Architectural representation, specifically as an identified nominated profession of Special Matters DAP – Membership. In provided feedback to DPLH we have strongly advocated for the role of Landscape Architects in Planning processes and saw the reform as an opportunity for this to take place. We highlight the following, from our 2021 submission to the Action Plan for Planning Reform, which is still relevant to this submission;

### **Expertise in the WAPC with regard to Landscape**

*AILA sees the proposed Legislative Changes to the Planning and Development Act 2005 as a great opportunity to contribute, applauding the initiative, and welcoming further consultation through our state membership. We would also be more than willing to share 'lessons-learnt' from our national membership in other states with regard to planning reform and green infrastructure. We believe that the best approach to achieving sustainable planning solutions is to accommodate local community needs and aspirations, ideally with convenient access to professional expertise at all levels and facets of the planning system as applicable to the context in which it is to be applied. Of note: AILA acknowledges there are identified gaps in the composition of the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) and that there is potential to fill these with the Planning Reform Stage 2. AILA is of the opinion that the most significant gap sits within the legislation. The WAPC Act 1985 defines 12 roles on the WAPC, including 1 expert for coastal planning and 2 experts in urban and regional planning, engineering, property development and the like. **However, the specific expertise of people-focused places, landscape analysis, biodiversity, green infrastructure, and cultural values - expertise provided by landscape architect - is currently under-represented in the legislation.** AILA considers that such Reform is extremely timely and advocates for a change to the legislation to include one person with Landscape expertise on the WAPC, with potential for that individual to grow this advisory role to help advance planning process at state, local and regional government levels in WA. AILA are willing to assist WAPC in any way we can, to reduce further gaps within the ranks of state planning and infrastructure agencies. We propose an approach that is goal-directed and results-oriented to reduce referrals timeframes and to garner an overarching and interagency, collaborative synergy between DPLH/OGA, WAPC, MRWA, LGA's and professional bodies. In this regard AILA is willing to extend our continuing professional development program, offering CPD points for educational sessions, casting the message widely across the multiple sectors to ensure proposed planning reforms are implemented swiftly and consistently across the landscape discipline. We believe setting simple institutional milestones will achieve tangible outcomes within a specific timeframe. **We applaud the moves that have been made in recent times with the incorporation of landscape architects into the OGA and the role out of landscape professionals as members of design review panels at both state and local government for developments primarily in and around Perth.** We note that the DRP model is starting to take shape in*



*Regional WA with further work needed to respond to local conditions and adapt policy to better accommodate planning governance capabilities from shire to shire. We are finding from the DRP interactions on both sides of the table that the AILA's long-held values and vision for a society, where our communities expect more of their urban areas and are looking for viable solutions to adapt places to become more resilient to climate change and provide innovative ways to protect and enhance culture, green infrastructure, biodiversity and natural amenity. We are confident our members will continue to provide highly professional and unbiased advice in their appointments by WAPC that is aligned with our professional values as defined by AILA's code of conduct, the Australian Landscape Charter, and our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan. AILA recognise that some great steps forward have been made in recent years to better address landscape issues in the planning process and our members are proving their value on the State Design Review Panel and on the Capital City Planning Committee. Further to these appointments we seek to encourage the Commissioner to appoint landscape architects into various sub-committees like the Statutory Planning Committee, the Infrastructure Coordinating Committee, the Infrastructure Steering Group, the Future of Fremantle Committee and the Bunbury Development Committee. This would further help incorporate the knowledge, expertise and experience of landscape architects into multiple facets of the state planning framework.*

Our members continue to advocate for Landscape Architecture representation during all levels of planning policy, assessment and implementation, and yet we are not seeing a tangible outcome to this. We hope to see the Department of Planning and Land Heritage genuinely engage with this feedback and advocacy work to ingrain the valuable role of Landscape Architecture within the Planning Framework of Western Australia.

Kind regards,

Shea Hatch

AILA WA President, Registered Landscape Architect