



Australian Institute of  
Landscape Architects

## *AILA SA Response to The Stage 2 Draft of the Community Engagement Charter and draft Guide*

**8 December 2017**

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects – South Australian Chapter is again pleased to provide feedback on the Stage 2 Draft of the Community Engagement Charter (the Charter) and the Draft Guide to the Charter (the Guide). AILA SA continues to engage collaboratively with the State Government and its agencies to help shape stronger communities in South Australia.

AILA SA strongly supports transparent and equitable processes of consultation and congratulates the State Planning Commission on this initiative and the commitment to articulate its requirement as provided within the Act. We have members working in areas which the Charter applies to, as well as being committed more generally to ensuring that communities and stakeholders have timely information and input to changes which may affect them.

### **Stage 2 Draft of the Community Engagement Charter**

The Charter itself is a well-designed, compact document that succinctly captures and communicates the aims, requirements and processes for implementation.

We note the alterations and improvements of the present draft and that these address points raised in our previous submission, particularly around the improved positive tone of language. A reduction in the number of Principles has tightened and clarified the intent and logic of the Charter.

### **Draft Guide to the Community Engagement Charter**

Although seemingly long at 46 pages, the provision of a 'Guide' to the Charter is extremely helpful and likely necessary to ensure the early effective use of this unique initiative. Specifying 'actions' for key steps in the process, as well as the provision of Attachment examples and a template Engagement Plan, supports clear use of the Charter.

### **Detailed feedback provided below for consideration:**

Small errors in the Charter p.3:

- The Act establishes *a [or the]* Community Engagement Charter...
- foster better planning outcomes that takes account...

Consideration might be given to whether and when the plural 'communities' might better be used throughout the document to stand for the heterogeneous and sometimes contesting voices of a particular area. It may be that 'stakeholders' is used to denote the smaller groups of interest within a particular community. This might be made explicit.

- improve the community's understanding / improve *communities'* understanding...

The Guide clarifies early (pp.9-10) that various stakeholders and communities should be identified for a particular project and that it will also be necessary to identify the level of engagement for each of them. It recommends using the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum (fig.3) to determine the level of engagement. However, this spectrum represents the link between the participation goal (to inform, consult, involve, etc) and the 'promise to the public' expectation; it does not assist in making the initial determination as to how a group is to be placed along this spectrum. While p.11 notes the uniqueness of 'every community' and p.12 examples the identification of stakeholders and their IAP2 level of engagement, judgements as to the level of engagement or even recognition of particular groups including minorities and marginalised members of communities, might need a further level of guidance as equity is achieved by conscious recognition of biases at this initial stage of the process.

### **Next Steps and Ongoing Refinement**

AILA SA again thanks the State Planning Commission for the opportunity to comment on this revised Charter and comprehensive Guide. AILA SA reiterates our support to assist, test and review this Charter over the next 12 months as detailed in The Charter. We look forward to working with all involved to implement improved communication and consultation to deliver better built environments for our communities.

Please contact me if you have any questions or contact Sally Bolton – AILA SA State Manager by email - [sally.bolton@aila.org.au](mailto:sally.bolton@aila.org.au) if you require any additional information.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Willsmore', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ben Willsmore

**AILA SA State President**

[bwillsmore@live.com.au](mailto:bwillsmore@live.com.au)

0429 570 815