



1<sup>st</sup> May 2008

The Secretary  
Joint Standing Committee  
on the National Capital and External Territories.

**Supplementary Submission**  
Australian Institute of Landscape Architects –  
Submission to the Inquiry  
into the role of the National Capital Authority

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) wishes to make a supplementary submission to its earlier submission in support of the senate inquiry into the role of the National Capital Authority (NCA) in the planning, development and promotion of the national capital Canberra.

The AILA now adds to the opening statement by the AILA National President, Neil Hobbs, regarding the stewardship and ongoing development of the unique landscape qualities of Canberra.

As previously stated, Canberra is a city within a landscape. For almost 100 years, landscape planning and design have delivered to Australians a capital city international significance.

The specific qualities that make Canberra unique amongst other designed capital cities is the quality of the wider landscape setting, (inner and outer hills) and, at the local scale, the landscape spaces surrounding the buildings and infrastructure.

While much emphasis has been put on the future planning strategies and future cooperation between Canberra's two levels of government, the AILA requests the Joint Committee also make a recommendation that a future National Capital Authority place prime emphasis on the stewardship of the capital's heritage and its landscapes.

The future National Capital Authority needs to adopt a set of landscape principles. These principles should drive strategies to ensure that stewardship values and landscape design principles are of primary concern in all future development decisions.

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## **Landscape Principles**

The AILA requests that a future National Capital Authority in its management of new or redeveloped infrastructure, amenity and buildings needs first address a set of Landscape Principles.

The AILA recommends that the Landscape principles should include the following;

**Diversity:** Protection and enhancement of biological diversity, maintaining essential ecological processes and life-support systems.

**Interdependence** Recognition of and support for the interdependence between the cultural, economic and physical environments, and incorporate design responses that address the pressing realities of climate change and the global impacts of our use of the landscape.

**Equality and Equity:** Respect for the rights of individuals and communities and promote the highest standards of social equity and gender equality.

**Values:** Acceptance of the moral and ethical responsibility in planning and modifying the environment to consider impacts on the future community.

**Quality of Life:** Improvement to the quality of life for all, both now and in the future, through aesthetically, economically, socially and environmentally sustainable solutions.

**Sense of Place:** That the cultural and spiritual vitality of the community who will be affected by a project should be enhanced through the involvement

## **New Design Leadership**

The urban and rural landscapes of Australia are intrinsic to the Australian quality of life. The condition of the landscape influences the economic, social, and environmental health of the nation.

The future of this capital is challenged by the need to engage in continuous adaptation to respond to the implications of climate change and population growth. It has become increasingly evident that continuing to implement present design forms and approaches is no longer appropriate to meeting these challenges.

A future National Capital Authority requires a multitude of innovative approaches and scales of engagement in order to present society with future design solutions. There is an urgent need to seek out new ways of responding to the effects of environmental and social change on Canberra's urban and landscape forms.

As a foundation for the future, it is imperative that Canberra's authorities adopt as its first priority the design and active stewardship of the landscape on behalf of all Australians and future generations.

### **Commonwealth Landscape Architect**

The unique designed landscape qualities of Canberra can be best enhanced and maintained for the benefit of the nation into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century through the establishment of the office of Government Landscape Architect within a future National Capital Authority.

This office should be positioned to be the design leader for the statutory body through the employment of design professionals, headed by a landscape architect.

The office should have the review and oversight role over either a broadened territory government role, or a combination of a national and Territory planning regime.

The aim is for Canberra to enhance its position as a world class capital by placing a high priority on the stewardship of the landscape that is Canberra.

A future National Capital Authority should be charged with establishing national leadership through its stewardship and its innovative landscape developments that address the environmental challenges of this century.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Costigan  
Executive Director



Neil Hobbs  
National President

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#### Definitions

**Stewardship:** In relation to the landscape, stewardship means actively taking responsibility for and management of the landscape through master planning, design, recycling, conservation, regeneration, and restoration.

**Environment:** Includes both the built and the natural environments.

**Landscape:** Includes those landscapes that are: Urban and Regional; Rural and Natural; Modified and Unmodified.

**Design:** In a landscape architecture context, design denotes the creative process of blending of the applied arts, science and other creative and aesthetic endeavours. Landscape architects, as designers, may originate and develop plans for sites or for the management of landscapes, or may design, develop and manage policy for urban and rural landscapes or land developments. The design process requires landscape architects to be involved in and originate a complex range of tasks including consultations, research, collaboration, modelling, interactive adjustment, and re-design.