



Claire Cousins
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Via email: policy@architecture.com.au

Dear Ms Cousins,

Thank you for your letter inviting the Australian Labor Party to outline our position on a range of issues that the Institute has identified as being of interest to its members and the wider community.

We will respond along the lines of addressing your broad headings, and through them the individual issues you have identified.

Fostering Thriving Cities and Regions

A Shorten Labor Government will overhaul and replace the Liberal's City Deals with a City Partnerships program that will foster more genuine collaboration between the three levels of government.

Labor will re-establish the Major Cities Unit within the independent Infrastructure Australia and task it with recommending and assessing the progress of City Partnerships. We will also establish an expert panel to update strategic planning guidelines for cities as well as to develop guidelines for City Partnerships, in consultation with the Minister, which include benefits to the economy.

Labor will refresh the National Urban Policy, which Labor released when last in government, to ensure City Partnerships align with its objectives, for example, in areas like sustainability and smart technology. Labor accepts that City Partnerships must be tailored and flexible, but we expect them to set out a strategic vision that aligns with the National Urban Policy and delivers on pre-determined performance indicators.

Labor will work with state, territory and local governments to drive alignment of funding for smart and sustainable urban infrastructure and encourage best practice urban designs outlined in *Creating Places for People: An Urban Design Protocol for Cities*.

Housing a Diverse and Inclusive Community

Labor believes affordable and secure housing is essential to wellbeing, participation and social inclusion, and that all Australians have a right to safe, affordable and appropriate housing throughout their lives.

Housing affordability and increasing homelessness are significant social and economic challenges that must be addressed, requiring national leadership and the Commonwealth has a substantial role to play.

A Shorten Labor Government will reform negative gearing so that deductions can only be claimed on newly built homes, which will increase new housing supply and support jobs. Labor will also reform CGT tax concessions. There will be no retrospective taxation or impost on existing investors.

We will build 250,000 new affordable rental homes over the next decade in partnership with the community housing sector for Australians on low and moderate incomes. We will also provide \$88 million over two years for a new Safe Housing Fund to increase transitional housing options for women and children escaping domestic and family violence, young people exiting out-of-home care and older women on low incomes who are at risk of homelessness.

We will re-establish the National Housing Supply Council and appoint a dedicated Federal Housing and Homelessness Minister and facilitate COAG processes to introduce a uniform vacant property tax across all major cities.

Improving Building Regulation

Flammable cladding has highlighted the failures of privatisation and deregulation in our system of building regulation. The costs of this failure are now being met by apartment owners and the construction sector.

In 2017 Labor said that we will ban the importing of flammable cladding and introduce a national licensing scheme for the building professions. We will also introduce a penalties regime for all building practitioners and companies who knowingly use non-compliant materials; and ensure that the Minister for Industry – not an Assistant Minister, as has often been the case under the Liberals – is Chair of the Building Ministers' Forum, to ensure that public safety concerns have a place at the Cabinet table.

We have highlighted the lack of progress by the Commonwealth and the Building Ministers Forum in implementing the recommendations of the Shergold and Weir report. A Shorten Labor Government will work with the states and territories as a matter of urgency to implement those recommendations and the recommendations of the Senate Inquiry into non-conforming building products and restore confidence in building regulation.

Addressing Climate Change

The Labor Party is the only major party committed to real action on climate change. Labor accepts the science of climate change and endorses the Paris Agreement to keep global warming well below two degrees Celsius.

Each year there are more extreme weather like droughts and floods – natural disasters are already costing the economy \$18 billion a year and could increase to \$39 billion by 2050.

Labor will take strong action on climate change, through a comprehensive sectoral approach that will work with industries to bring down pollution; protect competitiveness and jobs; and build the industries of the future.

A Shorten Labor Government will take real action on climate change by:

- **Making Australia a Renewable Energy Superpower** by ensuring that 50 per cent of the nation's electricity is sourced from renewable energy by 2030, and empowering households and businesses to take advantage of cheap, clean renewable energy and storage.

- **Supporting the Transition to Cleaner and Cheaper Power** by implementing Labor’s National Energy Plan and ensuring an orderly transition for industries, communities and workers.
- **Boosting Clean Transport and Infrastructure** through Australia’s first National Electric Vehicle Policy, building the infrastructure for low pollution cars, and implementing vehicle emission standards.
- **Building Jobs and Industry** by partnering with industry to help businesses find innovative solutions to cut pollution; support trade exposed industries; and build the new jobs and industries of the future.
- **Cutting Pollution by Extending the Safeguard Mechanism** to bring down pollution from Australia’s biggest polluters, in line with our international obligations, while supporting jobs and competitiveness.
- **Reducing Pollution on the Land** by reinvigorating the Carbon Farming Initiative to supply carbon offsets and reduce abatement on the land; and taking decisive action to deal with broad-scale land clearing.
- **Increasing Energy Efficiency** by implementing a comprehensive Energy Productivity and Efficiency Review and through measures like our Manufacturing Energy Efficiency Accelerator program, harmonising state energy efficiency schemes and allowing ARENA to invest in energy efficiency projects.
- **Reviving International Engagement on Climate Change** by reinstating an Australian Climate Ambassador, reengaging constructively in the UNFCCC process and supporting our Pacific neighbours.
- **Restoring Australia’s Climate Change Institutions** by restoring and reforming the Climate Change Authority and implementing triennial Climate Change Assessments.

Regarding the built environment, Labor will establish a tripartite Built Environment Innovation Council to develop an innovation roadmap for the sector that recognises the need to engage with industry to improve building regulation in Australia through a more proactive development and enforcement of the National Construction Code. Developing a roadmap to reducing emissions and improving energy efficiency standards will be a priority for the Council.

Capitalising on Creativity

Labor has recognised the importance of architecture policy by its inclusion in the Urban Design Protocol developed by Labor when last in government and in collaboration with a range of stakeholders including the Australian Institute of Architects.

The purpose of the Urban Design Protocol is to encourage the highest standard of urban design. The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to undertake reforms in capital city strategic planning systems “to ensure Australian cities are globally competitive, productive, sustainable, liveable and socially inclusive and are well placed to meet future challenges and growth”. Of the nine criteria listed in the COAG agreement, one is: “To encourage world-class urban design and architecture”. The Urban Design Protocol responds to this by providing a framework to identify, implement, measure and improve best practice in urban design.

Labor will continue to support the inclusion of national architecture policy in the Urban Design Protocol.

Labor strongly supports the undertaking of urban-related research. In government, Labor commenced the publication of an annual *State of Australian Cities* report to monitor the performance of our 18 biggest cities over time so policy makers could measure and assess progress towards more productive, sustainable and liveable cities. Labor’s initiative sought to draw together existing data and information across a range of economic, social and environmental parameters to provide a national snapshot of the Australian cities with populations over 100,000.

Labor strongly supports the continuation of long-term data collection, which is indispensable to inform a national approach to planning and design. A Shorten Labor Government will reinstate an annual *State of Australian Cities* report, ensure there is a Minister for Cities and will reintroduce the Major Cities Unit.

The Australian Research Council undertakes an independent competitive process for allocation of its research funds. Labor believes this should not be subject to ministerial interference.

Labor strongly supports a fair procurement framework. *Our Local Projects, Local Jobs* plan includes commitments for better access to government contracts for local businesses, ensuring that government departments will work with local firms to ensure they can benefit from government contracts, bidders for projects over \$10 million will have to develop a local jobs plan, and companies will have to undertake local labour-market testing. We will also ensure more public and large private projects will be required to put plans in place to give Australian firms a chance to win work on major projects, these plans for public projects will be required to be considered as part of the project and development, and projects over \$250 million will have to ensure local firms are provided a fair opportunity to win work and not be excluded.

Supporting Australian Skills and Trade

All Australians should have access through their working lives to the education and training they need for decent jobs that allow them to live good lives and be active members of the community. A skilled and educated workforce is a national economic priority, and to that end Labor will establish a once-in-a-generation national inquiry which will examine all aspects of Australia's post-secondary education system. It will make recommendations about how our vocational and higher education systems address the country's economic and societal needs.

A Shorten Labor Government will uncap university places – ensuring around 200,000 more Australians will get access to a university education over the next decade and ensuring that a pipeline of skilled architects will remain unimpeded by government-imposed funding freezes. Labor will also invest \$300 million upgrading university facilities across Australia.

The model process outlined in *Creating Places for People: an urban design protocol for Australian cities*, supports Labor's belief that urban design excellence is achieved by multidisciplinary teams with appropriate skills and experience. Best practice ensures project teams includes competent, skilled design professionals including land use planners, urban designers, landscape architects, architects and engineers as appropriate.

Labor will also invest in TAFE and Apprenticeships, and will:

- Provide 150,000 Additional Apprentice Incentives in areas of skill shortages – reversing the decline that has occurred under this government.
- Waive upfront fees for 100,000 Australians to go to TAFE.
- Invest \$200 million to rebuild and upgrade TAFE campuses across the country.
- Support 10,000 young Australians to do a pre-apprentice program to prepare them for an apprenticeship.
- Provide support for 20,000 older workers to retrain through an Advanced Adult Apprenticeship.

- Guarantee at least two out of three dollars of public funding for vocational training goes to public TAFE.
- Require at least one in 10 jobs on all major infrastructure and defence projects will be filled by an apprentice or trainee.
- Establish an Apprentice Advocate, to improve the quality of Australia's apprenticeship system and develop a long-term plan for skills and training.

Yours sincerely,

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