

Greener Places
Government Architect New South Wales
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Via submissions portal:
[http://planspolicies.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job
&job_id=8933](http://planspolicies.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=8933)

26 February 2018

RE: DRAFT GREENER PLACES POLICY CONSULTATION

The Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the NSW Government's draft Greener Places policy.

The GBCA, established in 2002, is an industry association committed to developing buildings, cities and communities that are productive, liveable, healthy, resilient and sustainable:

We are pleased to see the release of this draft policy which elevates the importance of green infrastructure to deliver these same outcomes through the state's planning frameworks.

A key theme presented throughout the draft policy is the need to purposefully integrate green infrastructure across the spectrum of community planning decisions. This is clearly aligned with the GBCA's focus on delivering sustainable communities through an approach that integrates best practice governance with the delivery of increased economic prosperity, liveability, environmental responsibility and innovation as delivered through all those projects that create our built and natural environment. This draft policy presents a valuable opportunity for the Government Architect New South Wales (GA NSW) to recognise the importance of providing clear frameworks that enable these critical design outcomes to be measured and communicated transparently at the project level. Referencing the use of tools like the GBCA's Green Star rating tool as a pathway for state agencies and local governments to deliver, measure and evaluate project outcomes will help deliver this policy's vision through the myriad of infrastructure and urban renewal projects being delivered across NSW.

The GBCA is committed to continuing our dialogue GA NSW through the consultation process. We would be interested in reviewing future supporting material that provides a more detailed process for embedded the NSW Government's Greener Places policy into local planning policies and with project stakeholders.

If you require further information about this submission, please contact Sandra Qian, Senior Advisor – Policy and Government Relations at sandra.qian@gbca.org.au.

Yours Sincerely,



Jonathan Cartledge
Head of Public Affairs
Green Building Council of Australia



Established in 2002, the GBCA is Australia's leading authority on sustainable buildings and communities. We are an industry association committed to developing a sustainable property industry in Australia. Our vision is to create healthy, resilient and positive places for people and the natural environment.

To achieve this, we

- Rate the sustainability of buildings and communities through Australia's only national, voluntary, holistic rating system – Green Star;
- Educate industry and government practitioners and decision makers and promote green building programs, technologies, design practices and operations; and,
- Advocate for the sustainable transformation of the built environment.

The GBCA represents more than 650 individual companies with a collective annual turnover of more than \$40 billion. Our membership reflects the diversity of Australian business, with over 500 small to medium enterprises through to 75 companies with annual turnover of more than \$100 million and 24 companies now listed in the ASX 200, with a combined market capitalisation of more than \$620 billion. Members include major developers, professional services firms, government departments and local councils, banks, superannuation funds, product manufacturers and suppliers.



Launched by the GBCA in 2003, as Australia's only national, voluntary and holistic rating system for sustainable buildings and communities, Green Star is an internationally recognised built environment rating system. The Green Star rating system has been developed by Australian industry and locally adapted to suit the Australian market. From individual buildings to neighbourhoods, precincts and entire communities, Green Star is transforming the way our built environment is designed, constructed and operated.

There are over 1722 Green Star-rated projects across Australia:

- 37% of Australia's CBD office space is Green Star certified
- 6% of the workforce head to a green office each day
- 42,000 people live in Green Star-rated apartments
- 425,000 people are moving into Green Star communities
- 1.3 million people visit a Green Star-rated shopping centre each day
- Green Star certified buildings, on average: produce 62% fewer greenhouse gas emissions and use 66% less electricity than the average building; 51% less potable water than minimum industry requirements; and recycle 96% of their construction and demolition waste.



Position Summary

The GBCA commends the GA NSW for the draft Greener Places policy. We share the Government's view that green infrastructure is essential to the health and resilience of our cities, and that it should be part of long term planning in order to ensure a high quality of life in urban environments.

We believe that infrastructure and urban renewal projects must be a catalyst for more sustainable communities through green infrastructure investment. We are therefore supportive of the policy's position that green infrastructure projects should complement other urban infrastructure such as built form, transport and water management systems.

The success of any policy is contingent on the existence of effective measurable outcomes. We believe the use of an independent certification scheme, providing a common benchmark, is not only useful, but essential to deliver the Ga NSW vision for a healthier, more resilient and sustainable urban environment.

To support this vision, our Green Star rating tool should be an integral part of the Greener Places policy, providing a mechanism for projects to measure, deliver and communicate those very outcomes sought.

Measuring outcomes

The ability to measure outcomes is a key characteristic of good policy-making, and should be considered at the earliest stages.

This is particularly relevant given the GA NSW's intention to integrate green infrastructure into the strategic planning undertaken by various state and local government agencies, including the Greater Sydney Commission. As noted in [our submission on the Greater Sydney Regional Plan last year](#), independent third party certification through the GBCA's Green Star tool provides governments the ability to assess and verify outcomes throughout the life of the project.

Our submission mapped the requirements to achieve certification under Green Star against those outcomes sought by the Greater Sydney Regional Plan, to demonstrate the benefits of using the Green Star – Communities tool. 32 out of the 38 objectives of the draft Plan are clearly aligned with credits from the Green Star – Communities rating tool, illustrating its suitability to assist the delivery of project outcomes that are consistent with the directions, priorities and objectives of district and region plans. Tools like Green Star also help build the capability of local government to plan and respond to development in their communities with a clear framework that reflects world's best practice.

The value of Green Star in planning for communities

As the draft policy notes, well-designed green infrastructure delivers multiple social, environmental and economic benefits for sustainable communities. Green Star – Communities provides a means for measuring the objectives required to achieve such a community through effective master-planning.

Developed by the Green Building Council of Australia, in consultation with industry and governments, Green Star – Communities is based on five principles that define a sustainable community in Australia. Developers (private and public) register projects for certification under the rating tool and implement various initiatives throughout the planning, design, and construction phases to achieve benchmarks (or 'credits') under each of the five principles - governance, liveability, economic prosperity, environmental sustainability and an additional innovation category.

The rating tool can be applied to many different types of communities, from industrial or commercial zones, residential or mixed-use developments and infill, brownfield and greenfield development projects that include a minimum of four buildings. A summary of the categories in the rating tool is provided below:

Category	Description
Governance	This category recognises the establishment and maintenance of strong governance practices. The category promotes engagement, transparency, and community and industry capacity building. It also seeks to ensure that community developments are resilient to a changing climate.
Liveability	This category encourages and recognises developments that deliver safe, accessible and culturally rich communities. It encourages the development of healthy and active lifestyles, and rewards communities that have a high level of amenity, activity and inclusiveness.
Economic Prosperity	This category recognises developments that promote prosperity and productivity. It encourages affordable living and housing, investment in education and skills development, and the facilitation of community capacity building. The Economic Prosperity category also promotes greater productivity via emerging opportunities in the digital economy.
Environmental Responsibility	This category aims to reduce the impact of urban development on sensitive ecosystems. It encourages resource management and efficiency by promoting infrastructure, transport, and buildings, with reduced ecological footprints. The Environment category seeks to reduce the impacts of developments on land, water, and the atmosphere.
Innovation	This category rewards projects that incorporate an Australian or world 'first' sustainable development technology or processes, and facilitate sustainable development market transformation

The GBCA's 'Green Star – Communities' rating tool has been used extensively across Australia for community and precinct – scale projects to demonstrate how these projects are delivering not just on environmental impacts, but also liveability, economic prosperity, governance and innovation.

Case study: Barangaroo South

Barangaroo South, developed by Lendlease, achieved a 6 Star Green Star – Communities rating representing 'world-leadership' in the design and delivery of sustainable communities. Barangaroo South is targeted to become Australia's first large scale carbon neutral community.

Barangaroo is one of only 17 projects globally to be part of the C40 CitiesClinton Climate Initiative's Climate Positive Development Program. The precinct is capable of being water positive, with an on-site blackwater treatment plant capable of supplying one million litres of recycled water a day to the precinct and surrounding suburbs. Barangaroo is also targeting zero net waste to landfill by 2020. Upon completion, Barangaroo South will become home to around 1,500 residents, there will be next generation office space for 23,000 workers, more than 80 new retail outlets and over 50 per cent of the precinct will be open public spaces for everyone to enjoy

Case study: Parramatta Square

Parramatta Square is one of the largest urban renewal projects in Australia. The three hectare mixed-use urban renewal project will provide the foundation for growth in the city and create a future based on good urban design that is environmentally sustainable, has vibrant, beautiful public spaces and an effective public transport system.

The six-stage development will incorporate a new civic building, community centre and library as well as commercial, residential and retail developments. A 5 Star Green Star ratings target for all buildings across the six stages of the development has also been set. City of Parramatta's objectives for Parramatta Square are:

- To showcase design excellence and environmental sustainability
- To provide opportunities for future employment growth
- To provide a gathering space and ceremonial centre for public use as well as civic events and recurrent cultural and community events
- To contribute to the City's identity and its social and cultural life by becoming a showcase for innovative design in the heart of Parramatta CBD.

Targeting a Green Star – Communities rating for the development provides independent proof to residents, businesses and investors that Parramatta Square delivers economic, social and environmental sustainability.

Case study: Willowdale

Willowdale in Western Sydney provides a prime example having been awarded a 6 Star Green Star – Communities rating.

Willowdale is providing a range of housing options to appeal to a diverse range of buyers, and making a marked impact on affordability in Sydney by providing home sites and new townhouses below the comparable median prices of surrounding suburbs. Willowdale is also providing residents with convenient access to new and existing infrastructure, such as nearby schools, numerous local retail, dining, entertainment and employment precincts outside the community, and the new Leppington Train Station, which is located less than 1.5 kilometres away via a shared walkway and cycleway. Construction will soon commence on Willowdale neighbourhood shopping centre and there is a proposal for a state primary school to be developed within the 350 hectare community.

“Willowdale’s proximity to the new Leppington Train Station scored well in the Green Star – Communities rating tool because it will offer residents an easy commute into Liverpool, Parramatta and the Sydney CBD,” says Gavin Tonnet, Stockland’s General Manager Residential NSW. “It makes it viable and affordable for people to live in a home that offers a more predictable commute, which means residents will spend less time in traffic and more time with their families.

Building capacity through local government

Local governments across Australia will play an integral role in implementing and administering the planning controls, policies and programs that will deliver on the outcomes of the Greener Places policy. The GBCA understands that the GA NSW is currently developing a series of manuals and toolkits to support the policy’s implementation.

The GBCA’s own work with our 43 local government members to help build their capacity to deliver best practice is a great example of how the Australian Government can work collaboratively across levels of government and with industry to deliver better outcomes. Our Green Star Communities Guide for Local Government, released in 2017 at the National General Assembly of Local Government is designed to help local governments of all shapes and sizes across Australia plan and deliver more productive, liveable, sustainable and healthy communities.

The guide helps build knowledge and expertise within local government, provides a reference point for decision making and prioritisation, and assists planning and project management. Working in parallel with the National Urban Design Protocol, Creating Places for People (www.urbandesign.org.au), this guide aims to help ensure we get the most out of our cities at every stage of their development.

The guide explains how councils can use the five principles underpinning the Green Star – Communities rating tool to help tackle their local challenges, deliver and communicate better outcomes for their constituents, and multiply the value of their investments. Additionally, as local governments build their capability and look for opportunities to deliver more for their communities, this guide provides a pathway through which local governments can use Green Star Communities certification to demonstrate best practice, showcase Australian excellence, or even deliver world leadership through their built environments. Green Star Communities is already widely used in regional development projects by governments and developers that want to demonstrate that their communities are going to be the most liveable, sustainable, resilient and desirable places to live and work.

We urge the GA NSW to consider tools like Green Star and the aforementioned guide to help support local government in the delivery of the vision outlined in the draft policy.

Next Steps

The GBCA welcomes the consultative approach to the development of the green infrastructure policy, and would welcome further engagement with GANSW through subsequent opportunities for stakeholder consultation.