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By email to: Martin.Blake@stategrowth.tas.gov.au; Jaime.Bridle@stategrowth.tas.gov.au;
Ilise.Bourke@stategrowth.tas.gov.au

Dear Martin,

RE: BUILDING TASMANIA'S FUTURE – DISCUSSION PAPER

On behalf of the Tasmanian Chapter of the Australian Institute of Architects (the Institute), we thank you for taking the time to incorporate our feedback on the *Building Tasmania's Future Discussion Paper*. The Institute are supportive of the direction of this paper and are committed to assisting Government to provide the best possible investment outcomes for our state.

The Institute recognises the need for strategic coordination, and the importance of investment in good design is also critical in ensuring that money is spent in the best way possible to ensure a high-quality outcome. There is a clear need for the Government to provide overarching, strategic planning for the whole state to enable the best outcomes for all Tasmanians in an effective and efficient way. This is pivotal to respond to our changing environment, and to plan the way we live and work in this fast-paced, changing environment we find ourselves in.

Strategic planning, along with master planning, are both critical for high-quality outcomes that are well-thought out and provide long-term solutions. Design proportionally represents the smallest investment in the total lifetime cost of a project, yet it can provide the greatest cost-saving benefit over time. It is therefore critical to acknowledge the time that is required to properly design buildings and infrastructure, as it is at the initial stage of projects that most can be done to optimise value. We would like to highlight that it is critical to have thorough client briefing, realistic budgeting, and appropriate time invested in the design phase to assist in achieving this.

While we acknowledge that time is often a factor in procuring building and infrastructure work, it is critical to acknowledge that while design work can be fast-tracked to a degree,

it still takes time to design a building or infrastructure properly to ensure the best quality outcome and value for money. The time invested in the design phase will vary based on the complexity and size of the project, and we urge Government to ensure that adequate investment of both time and money is allocated to ensure a high-quality, innovative, and long-term outcome.

Appropriate design can provide cost effective solutions, from the layout of the building through to detailing and material selection, and quality for budget that considers not only the built cost, but the usage and maintenance costs of the building (whole-of-life cost) after it has been built. It is important that design is undertaken prior to any construction commencing to ensure that delays don't occur further down the track, and to ensure that the outcome is properly considered and fit-for-purpose.

As well investing in the 'Hi Vis Army', it is also critical that Tasmania is able to support the design of this infrastructure, which requires the skills of professionals, including architects, engineers and other consultants. These professionals are typically involved in the early design and planning stages and currently we are hearing reports from our members that they are struggling to find appropriately experienced and skilled staff to assist with their current workload, and are also reporting that consultants, such as engineers, are extremely busy and there is often a long wait time for their crucial services. It is critical there is investment into the training of these professionals, along with their continuing professional learning and development to ensure that the profession is able to be innovative and are able to produce the best possible outcomes that are current with the latest technology. This will help to ensure that the pipeline of work is able to flow through to the construction industry.

To date, the architectural profession and other professional consultants who are integral to the process of creating buildings and infrastructure, are not supported through funding for continuing professional development. We support the funding that has been provided to date to various building and construction industry associations, however, are cognisant that funding and investment also needs to be provided to the professionals who are an integral part of the building and construction process. While we support having the highest quality of trades, we need them to have innovative designs to build.

We note that the discussion paper refers to the Tasmanian Planning Policies that are currently under review. The Institute has provided a response to these policies, that can be found [here](#). It is also important to note that the Institute acknowledges the crises of climate breakdown and biodiversity loss and recognise the need to create a sustainable built environment that fosters connectivity and integrates essential resources and functions to mitigate against adverse impacts from climate change when investing in infrastructure.

The Institute applauds the Government's commitment to collaborating with industry to discuss and listen, along with the commitment to provide real change and outcomes that will assist in creating a positive way forward for all Tasmanians.

The Institute looks forward to viewing the final version of the paper and the agreement surrounding this in the New Year and look forward to continuing to work together to enable the best outcomes for our state during 2022.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Nichols". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned below the text "Kind regards,".

Jennifer Nichols

Executive Director, Tasmanian Chapter
Australian Institute of Architects