

SUBMISSION: **DRAFT MAGILL** **CAMPUS** **STRUCTURE PLAN**



RAIA SA CHAPTER

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ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

The Australian Institute of Architects (Institute) is the peak body for the architectural profession in Australia. It is an independent, national member organisation with around 14,000 members across Australia and overseas.

The Institute exists to advance the interests of members, their professional standards and contemporary practice, and expand and advocate the value of architects and architecture to the sustainable growth of our communities, economy and culture.

The Institute actively works to maintain and improve the quality of our built environment by promoting better, responsible and environmental design.

PURPOSE

- This submission is made by the Australian Institute of Architects (the Institute) to provide input on the [Draft Magill Campus Structure Plan](#)
- At the time of this submission the SA Chapter President is Kirstie Coultas, and the Chief Executive Officer is Cameron Bruhn.

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DRAFT MAGILL CAMPUS STRUCTURE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The Australian Institute of Architects (the Institute) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft Magill Campus Structure Plan.

The redevelopment of the former Adelaide University Magill Campus represents one of South Australia's most significant urban renewal opportunities. As a large, strategically located infill site within Adelaide's established metropolitan area, it presents the opportunity to demonstrate how housing growth, environmental stewardship, heritage conservation and high-quality urban design can be successfully integrated.

The Institute broadly supports the vision presented in the Draft Structure Plan and welcomes its commitment to increased housing supply, protection of Third Creek and its biodiversity corridor, retention of community assets, preservation of significant trees and the adaptive reuse of existing buildings where appropriate. These principles establish a strong foundation for creating a resilient, liveable and sustainable neighbourhood.

The Institute considers that the project should aspire to become a benchmark for designed urban renewal in South Australia. The following recommendations are offered to strengthen the Structure Plan and guide future master planning and implementation.

PRINCIPLES FOR BEST PRACTICE URBAN RENEWAL

The Institute believes the redevelopment should be guided by five overarching principles:

- Design quality embedded from the outset through robust urban design, architecture and landscape architecture.
- A diverse and adaptable housing mix that responds to changing community needs throughout life.
- Protection and enhancement of natural systems, recognising landscape as essential infrastructure.
- Walkable, connected neighbourhoods that prioritise active transport, public realm and community wellbeing.
- Adaptive reuse and low-carbon development that maximises existing assets and reduces embodied carbon.

These principles are consistent with the Institute's long-standing advocacy for sustainable, resilient and well-designed communities.

1. DELIVERING EXEMPLARY DESIGN QUALITY

The Institute strongly supports Renewal SA's vision for a "thoughtfully planned, green neighbourhood".

To realise this vision, design quality should be recognised as a primary objective throughout all stages of planning, procurement and delivery.

High-quality neighbourhoods are created through the integration of architecture, landscape architecture, urban design and public realm planning rather than through compliance with minimum development standards alone.

The institute recommends that the detailed master planning phase include:

- Preparation of comprehensive urban design guidelines;
- Independent design review at key project milestones;
- Clear expectations regarding architectural excellence and public realm quality;
- Passive environmental design and climate-responsive built form; and
- Consideration of long-term adaptability of buildings and public spaces.

Given the strategic importance of the site, design excellence should be viewed as an investment that delivers enduring social, environmental and economic value.

2. LANDSCAPE AS ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The Institute commends the draft structure plan's commitment to protecting the Third Creek biodiversity corridor, retaining significant trees and achieving substantial open space and tree canopy outcomes.

These landscape assets should be regarded as essential infrastructure that underpins neighbourhood resilience.

The Institute encourages future planning to strengthen commitments to:

- Integrated water sensitive urban design;
- Blue-green infrastructure;
- Urban heat mitigation;
- Biodiversity enhancement beyond minimum compliance;
- Permeable landscapes and stormwater management; and
- Long-term ecological restoration of the Third Creek corridor.

Well-designed landscapes contribute not only to environmental performance but also to community health, recreation and neighbourhood identity.

3. ADAPTIVE REUSE AND HERITAGE

The retention of Murray House and the acknowledgement that existing buildings will be considered for reuse are strongly supported.

Adaptive reuse should be treated as a central design objective rather than a secondary consideration.

Reusing suitable buildings:

- Preserves embodied carbon;
- Retains cultural and historical significance;
- Supports circular economy principles; and
- Contributes to distinctive neighbourhood character.

The Institute recommends that existing buildings be systematically assessed for adaptive reuse before demolition is contemplated, with heritage significance, environmental performance and long-term community benefit considered together.

4. HOUSING DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY

The Institute supports the provision of affordable housing and accommodation that enables ageing in place.

As detailed planning progresses, opportunities should also be explored to broaden housing diversity through:

- Adaptable and universally designed housing;
- A range of dwelling sizes suitable for different household types;
- Family-oriented housing;
- Opportunities for intergenerational living; and
- Innovative housing typologies that improve affordability while maintaining high design standards.

Successful neighbourhoods provide choice, flexibility and social diversity rather than focusing on a single housing model.

5. LONG-TERM DELIVERY AND GOVERNANCE

The staged delivery of the redevelopment provides an opportunity to establish high standards that can be maintained throughout the life of the project.

The Institute recommends that Renewal SA continue meaningful engagement with the community and industry during future master planning and establish governance arrangements that support design quality throughout procurement and delivery.

The Institute would welcome opportunities to contribute professional expertise as the project progresses.

CONCLUSION

The Institute supports the Draft Magill Campus Structure Plan as a positive framework for the renewal of this important metropolitan site.

The proposal appropriately recognises the importance of protecting significant landscape assets, retaining valued community facilities and delivering additional housing within an established urban area. The Institute particularly commends the emphasis on environmental stewardship, adaptive reuse and the creation of generous public open space.

The Institute believes the project now has the opportunity to move beyond delivering housing alone and instead become a benchmark for design-led urban renewal in South Australia. By embedding design excellence, environmental leadership, housing diversity and high-quality place-making into future master planning and implementation, the redevelopment can establish a lasting legacy that demonstrates the value of good design in creating resilient, healthy and enduring communities.

The Australian Institute of Architects looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively with Renewal SA and the South Australian Government as planning for the Magill Campus Redevelopment progresses.