

Wednesday, January 11, 2024

Andrew Chesterman  
Chief Executive Officer  
Redland City Council  
PO Box 21  
Cleveland QLD 4163  
c/o e. rcc@redland.qld.gov.au

**RE: A Meeting to Discuss Concerns Regarding Transparency in Community Planning and Infrastructure Development**

Dear Andrew,

I am writing to express concerns about a perceived lack of transparency in community planning processes, including some specific public buildings and infrastructure.

As the Queensland Chapter President of the Institute of Architects, it is my duty to advocate for open processes, genuine consultation, and the promotion of design excellence in development projects. In light of the concerns raised, I respectfully request a meeting with a suitable representative of the Council to discuss these issues further. We believe that an open dialogue and collaboration are crucial to address these deficiencies and ensure that future development processes adhere to best practices, foster genuine community engagement, and prioritize design excellence. I appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to arranging a meeting at your earliest convenience.

This letter specifically relates to:

- The Toondah Priority Development Area (PDA); and,
- The Conservation Management Plan for the heritage-listed portions of Coochiemudlo Island.

The specific concerns related to the Toondah Priority Development Area (PDA); and the Conservation Management Plan for the heritage-listed portions of Coochiemudlo Island are detailed on the following pages..

Thank you for your attention and favourable consideration of this request, and I hope to look forward to meeting you in the near future to further these important discussions.

Yours sincerely,



Amy Degenhart LFRAIA  
Queensland Chapter President  
Australian Institute of Architects

## **The Toondah PDA**

Regarding the Toondah PDA, Members have drawn to attention to a lack of transparency and/or listening around issues relating to the sale and intent of properties; unreported agreements between the state, council, and the project proponent; and a lack of timely and effective public consultation/listening. One example is the lack of clear explanation regarding the increase in the project yield (400% above the yield proposed by an expert panel) without adequate acknowledgment of implications on the Moreton Bay Ramsar Area, the Moreton Bay Marine Park, or compliance with the EPBC Act. The initial consultation in 2014, focusing on approximately 800 apartments, was followed by an expert panel convened by the Institute of Architects in March 2014 (see <https://redlands2030.net/alternative-plan-toondah-harbour/>). Despite the early involvement of the Institute and independent experts, the concerns raised by an esteemed group of professionals have not been well addressed, compounding the concerns raised by allied experts and the community alike.

The Australian Institute of Architects has consistently advocated for open processes and meaningful consultation among federal, state, and local governments to ensure the best outcomes for communities. In the example of the Toondah PDA, in our opinion, the process has fallen short of this mark.

Further concerns raised with us, around the quality of submissions under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act, sit beside these issues.

## **Coochiemudlo Island CMP concerns**

Regarding the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the heritage-listed portions of Coochiemudlo Island, a similar lack of transparency has been brought to our attention. The scarcity of public communication on the progress of this plan and an undefined timeline for the delivery of it has raised public concerns which have been the source of many discussions amongst our members. These concerns weaken the credibility of development processes and add to general apprehensions and disquiet around Council's prioritisation of best practice process and outcomes.

A specific example which has brought to my attention, where this process is affecting the best outcomes, is that of the construction of a building within the Coochiemudlo Island Emerald Fringe, which I understand is a Heritage Listed area. Without a Conservation Management Plan to guide publicly funded building projects, it is hard for the public to have confidence that what will be built is appropriate to the delicacy of the location and heritage qualities. Such a fundamental lack of confidence puts the procurement process for public buildings into question.