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Dear ODASA

Local Design Review Scheme – Universal Design

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed scheme.

The Local Government Access and Inclusion Network (LGAIN) is a group of Council staff members who have a responsibility for the access to Built Environment, Social Inclusion, Social Planning or Disability Access and Inclusion Plans. This Network includes members with lived experience of disability, professionals with access qualifications and staff in local government roles in facilitating inclusion for people with disability.

Universal Design in the Planning Design and Infrastructure Act

We note that the Planning Design and Infrastructure Act (the Act) recognises the importance of universal design, and that the new planning instruments and processes that are being established under the Act (such as the Local Design Review Scheme) also need to incorporate universal design.

High Quality Design Principles described in the Act:

Built form and the public realm should be designed to be inclusive and accessible to people with differing needs and capabilities (including through the serious consideration of universal design principles)

Principles of Good Planning on page 22 of State Planning Policies:

Built form and the public realm should be designed to be inclusive and accessible to people with differing needs and capabilities (including universal design practices).

State Planning Policy 2.2:

Promote best practice in access and inclusion planning in the design of buildings and places by applying the principles of Universal Design, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design and Access and Inclusion.

Recognition of Universal Design Expertise

South Australia has an aging population and increasing rates of disability. The effective and consistent application of universal design principles in the built environment will have many benefits for the 20% of the general population who recognised as living with a disability, as well as their families and carers, parents using prams, people with injuries and the many people who wish to ‘age in place’ in their communities.

This area is a specialised one that has accredited access consultants <https://www.access.asn.au/>. The field of inclusive or universal design is a growing area of design practice. However, not all design professionals have this specialised knowledge.

Section 2.5 point 2 states ‘All panel members and Chairs must have at least

a) a tertiary degree in a relevant field, such as— i. Architecture; ii. Ecologically Sustainable Design; iii. Landscape Architecture; iv. Urban Design; and

b) 10 years of professional experience relating to that field.’

Architecture and Landscape Architecture have tertiary level accredited degree courses. However, experts within the field of access consulting and emerging area of universal design may have different qualifications. For example, the main qualification for access consultants is a Diploma not a degree.

Ten years of professional experience may be difficult to achieve in an area that is relatively new such as universal design. It also does not take into account other ways of gaining relevant access design experience such as lived experience of a disability. It would be better if the wording allowed more flexibility such as “highly experienced in the field” rather than specifying a *minimum of 10 years* of professional experience.

Recommendation:

Amend Section 2.5 *Design Panel Selection Process* to

1. include reference to access consultants and expertise in universal design, and
2. be more flexible in the required qualifications and experience in order to enable universal design and access expertise to be recognised in the Scheme.

I trust these comments will aid the successful preparation of a Local Design Review Scheme for South Australia which will facilitate more inclusive communities and deliver universal design as required by the Act.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Davis-King', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

Leanne Davis-King