



**Submission to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment  
re Draft Community Participation Plan (CPP), December 2018**

Margaret Petrykowski FRAIA (Architect, Planner, Urban Designer) attended the Department of Planning and Environment's Consultation Workshop on 27 November 2018 on behalf of the Walter Burley Griffin Society Inc, and is the author of this submission.

The Society understands that the aim of the Draft CPP is to improve the current engagement with the community concerning making plans, formulating policy, producing planning guidelines, codes, practice notices and policy discussion papers as well as making development assessments.

We appreciate that the draft CPP has the key objective of making community participation open and inclusive, and incorporates the key principle of the community having a right to be informed about planning matters. These aims and principles are very much supported by members of the Griffin Society.

The Society however would like the Department to seriously consider the following very important suggestions in order to make participation by the community in the State's planning system more democratic and meaningful and to improve the trust of the community in the planning system.

1. Community concerns and issues must be listened to, meaningfully considered and properly addressed.
2. All issues raised by the community must be recorded and reported accurately and promptly responded to. Issues raised must be seriously considered and if required, plans amended accordingly.
3. Reintroduction of pre-planning workshops and *charrettes* (intense short-term design projects) with the community groups, in order that the community can develop a plan/strategy for an area with the guidance of professionals, such as planners, economists, geographers, environmental planners, transport planners, architects, heritage specialists and others, will ensure that the development vision for a site has the community's common ownership and the community can engage in meaningful discussions with professionals and hear their opinions.
4. Allowing sufficient time for members of the community to digest complicated plans and numerous technical reports is one of the most critical and frustrating aspects of the current

consultation regime and would assist those responding to complicated planning proposals and rezoning applications.

5. Presentation of development options must be supported by properly formulated arguments for community members to comment on.
6. The exhibition or consultation material presented by Government Departments and private developers must include information that is accurate and presented in a format that is not misleading or ignores critical views. The supporting information must include consultants' reports that are independent, factual and accurate.
7. Community participation and consultation should not be 'easy' as stated in the draft CPP. It should be treated seriously, be comprehensive, meaningful, convincing and respectful and take as long as required to resolve all the community issues and to reach consensus. The community discussions and resolutions must be accurately documented and distributed to all participants.
8. Communication material should be accurate and truly represent the plan/proposal (often artist impressions/illustrations show distorted and inaccurate views and omit important elements).
9. The consultation workshop emphasised that the Department is seeking simple and faster planning. Planning is not simple and what the community wants is a planning process that is well considered and meaningful and embraces community views, respects local character and heritage, scales down development around heritage items, respects natural environments and creates appropriate recreation areas for the additional population planned for an area. Very often plans for renewal areas rely on the surrounding open spaces of existing suburbs rather than plan new parks, squares and public spaces for the additional residential and worker population. This is not considered good planning.
10. Local Government Councils should have a stronger role in representing local communities' views and addressing community concerns in matters such as district development control plans, proposals for urban renewal areas, individual DAs and rezoning applications.
11. The signing of confidentiality agreements by participants of the planning process should be abandoned by the State Government Authorities as it is an undemocratic process (in particular by Council staff involved in the planning of local infrastructure projects affecting many local communities). This practice prevents Council officers from discussing significant local issues with the Councillors and the local community.
12. All the above considerations need to be addressed by the Department in order to repair current broken community participation processes and to restore community trust in the planning system of New South Wales.

Yours sincerely,



Kerry McKillop, Secretary  
Walter Burley Griffin Society Inc  
[www.griffinsociety.org](http://www.griffinsociety.org)