South East Queensland Regional Plan 2017 *ShapingSEQ*

Background paper 5: Live

September 2017

Queensland Government

Contents

Introduction 6
- **Purpose** 6
- **Theme defined** 6
- **Relationship with other themes** 7

Context 7
- **Key definitions** 8
  - Design 8
  - Defining the role of urban design 8
  - Amenity 9
  - Liveability 9
- **Design and amenity in SEQ** 10
  - Comfortable climate 10
  - Distinctive landscapes 10
  - Life in the outdoors 10
- **Relevance to ShapingSEQ** 10

Issues: Informing how we grow 12
- **Growing** 12
- **SEQ: on global trend** 12
- **The complexity of scale** 13
- **Successfully shaping our future SEQ communities** 14

Design matters and delivering good design 14
- **The value of good design** 14
- **The community dividend** 15
- **Economic benefits of good design** 16
- **Establishing a requirement for good design** 17

Research and review 20
- **Key stakeholders** 20
- **Community attitudes towards design** 20
  - Queensland Growth Summit 20
  - Liveable Compact Cities Project 20
  - Review of South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031 21
  - Design industry feedback 21

Policy directions in ShapingSEQ 23
- **QDesign and QCompanion** 23
- **Valuing good design** 23
- **Working with the weather** 23
- **Inspired by local character** 24
- **Working with natural systems** 24
- **Creating legible and connected streets and spaces** 25
- **Embedding opportunities for adaptation and change** 25
- **Creating great places** 25

Conclusion 26

Appendix A: Strategy context 27
- **National Urban Policy** 27
- **National Urban Design Protocol** 28

Appendix B: Community perceptions 29

Appendix C: Queensland Urban Design and Places Panel workshop 32
Working session with Queensland Urban Design Places Panel 32
Workshop summary 32
Key outcomes 32
Discussion focus 01: Growth 32
Questions posed to the panel 32
Key discussion themes 32
Enriching the growth model 32
Ideas beyond density 32
Delivering innovation 32
Building the places we want 33
Attracting the next generation of big thinkers: 33
Key directions 33
Discussion focus 02: Subtropical lifestyle 33
Questions to the panel 33
Key discussion themes 33
Define a more meaningful subtropicality to guide growth 33
Value the green space as critical urban systems 33
Tackle the barriers to delivering sustainable outcomes 34
Key directions 34
Discussion focus 03: Delivery 34
Questions posed to the panel 34
Key discussion themes 34
Challenging the delivery models 34
Embedding the language of design in the delivery process 34
Liberate visionaries 35
Key directions 35
Establishing priorities: a summary discussion to test where the panel felt priority for action should be focused 35
Discussion focus 01: Growth 35
Discussion focus 02: Subtropical lifestyle 35
Discussion focus 03: Delivery 35

Appendix D: Case studies 36

Appendix E: Delivering good design 37
Establishing a requirement for good design 37
Delivering direction 37
Regional resources 40
State government direction 40
Charter for Queensland Places 40
South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031 40
Local government direction 41
Supplementary guidance 41
For subtropical design direction: The subtropical design in SEQ handbook 41
Next Generation Planning: A handbook for planners, designers and developers in South East Queensland 41
A design guide for great street outcomes: Complete streets 42
Embedding green infrastructure: Water sensitive urban design technical design guidelines for South East Queensland 42

List of tables

Table 1: Summary of key federal urban design policy in Australia 17
Table 2: Summary of responses 31
Table 3: Design in planning policy 37

List of figures

Figure 1: South East Queensland region 6
Figure 2: Shaping a subtropical lifestyle 7
Figure 3: Live theme: testing current influence of theme in the SEQ Regional Plan 2009–2031 40
Figure 4: Live theme: application and opportunity 41

Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to inform, support and provide background material for the policy and implementation provisions of the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2017, called *ShapingSEQ*, in relation to the live theme. This theme explores why design and amenity are important considerations and key contributors to the creation of enjoyable, diverse and attractive places.

Figure 1: South East Queensland region

Another four interrelated background papers have been prepared to support *ShapingSEQ*, including those covering the themes of:

- Grow – considering the preferred pattern of settlement changes to best manage projected regional growth.
- Prosper – considering the approach to supporting improved economic and employment outcomes for the region.
- Sustain – considering issues for the protection and management of our natural environment and sustainable social outcomes for our communities.
- Connect – considering the infrastructure demands and integrating land use and transport planning to improve outcomes in the region.

Combined, the papers provide the foundation upon which *ShapingSEQ* has been prepared.

Theme defined

The live theme explores how design and amenity are important considerations and key contributors to the creation of enjoyable, diverse and attractive subtropical places.

Figure 2 seeks to illustrate concisely:

1. the role of design in shaping distinctive places and contributing to the positive experiences of where we live
2. the contributory role of amenity to the lives we lead
3. the importance of positively combining these two key considerations, in the local context, to set new planning direction that will guide change that is distinctly subtropical.

It is hoped that, by defining a set of key design considerations, we are able to establish a consistent approach to the way we create places in SEQ.

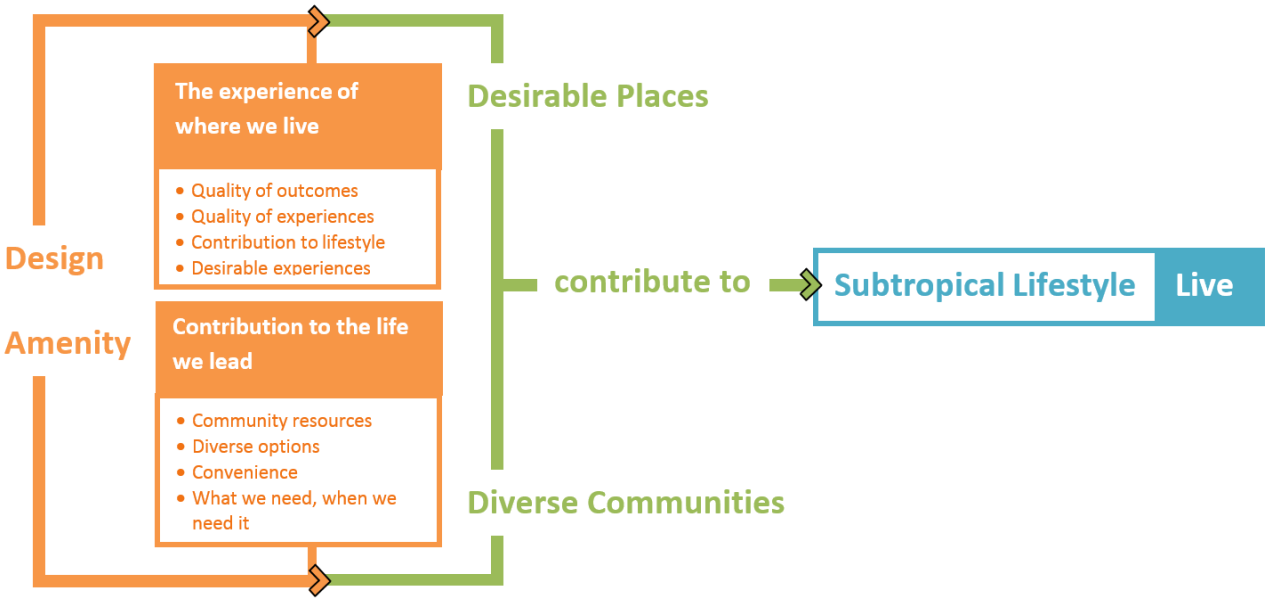

Figure 2: Shaping a subtropical lifestyle

Relationship with other themes

Together, the themes of grow, connect, sustain, and prosper define the essential infrastructure and spatial direction for sustainable place making in SEQ. They identify the facilities we need and, when collectively planned, make them connected and integrated.

The live theme clearly defines how we protect the qualities and characteristics that the region is renowned for and ensures that these elements – those that are key to its identity and lifestyle – are a tangible and influential part of the region's future.

The live theme provides design direction for each of the other themes. It informs how required infrastructure and development need to look and feel, and ensures it becomes a contributory part of the region's future and is reflective of SEQ's subtropical climate.

Context

It is important to first understand what is meant by design and amenity and what these both mean in an SEQ context. To inform the live theme and provide clarity, this section will:

- define key concepts of design and amenity, including what is meant by liveability
- explain the role of urban design, and how it can positively influence people's lifestyle and experiences
- identify contextually distinct opportunities for the interpretation and application of design and amenity in the SEQ region
- outline how design can effectively guide the future character of where we live, in the context of *ShapingSEQ*.

Key definitions

Design

Dictionary definitions of the word 'design' broadly describe it as the art or action of planning the look and feel of something.[1, 2] Design can therefore be considered to be the process of creating something, with a clear outcome in mind. If we extend the definition to understand it in the land use planning context, design has also been defined as 'the process in which intelligence and creativity are applied to a project in order to achieve an efficient and elegant solution' to 'achieve the meaningful and elegant allocation of resources' and offer 'visions of the future'.[3]

Design can influence outcomes. In the context of our communities, design can both positively and negatively affect the experience of a place. Design can therefore be considered to be about the quality of the experiences collectively encountered by communities as a result of their physical environment.

The principles of good design are applicable at all scales (cities, villages, neighbourhoods, streets, and individual buildings) and in all contexts (urban, coastal or rural). When working within an urban context, typically at a scale beyond the individual building, the application of the theories and discipline of 'urban design' is critical.

Defining the role of urban design

'People respond to beauty in cities. They choose to walk from one destination to another along favoured routes. Good design should provide a stimulus to the senses through choice of materials, architectural forms and landscape.' – Towards an Urban Renaissance, 1999.

The principles of good urban design are typically understood to address and set direction for the physical issues of size, mix, layout and density, building forms, movement patterns, materials, and strategies for resource efficiency. The process of delivering good urban design is complex and challenging due to the scale, complexity, and diversity of integrated skills required.

Urban design has emerged as a distinct focus in response to rapid urbanisation over the last 50 years. It can be defined as the coordinated, collaborative and integrated process of delivering sustainable urban outcomes.

The design elements considered in urban design include:

- urban structure and grain
- topography and landscape
- social and economic fabric
- density and mix
- height and massing
- streetscape and landscape
- façade and interface
- details and materials and publicly used spaces.

The Planning Institute of Australia describes urban design as:
'The creation of useful, attractive, safe, environmentally sustainable, economically successful and socially equitable places. Good urban design pursues local identity and sense of place, cultural responsiveness and purposeful environmental innovation. It achieves a high level of quality, comfort, safety, equity, beauty and cohesion in the overall, physical outcome of all the

[1] Macquarie Concise Dictionary (2009). (S. Butler Ed.). Sydney Australia Macquarie Dictionary Publishers Pty Ltd
[2] The Concise Oxford English Dictionary (2004). n.p. Oxford University Press.
[3] Cowan, R. (2005). The Dictionary of Urbanism Streetwise Press Limited, High Street, Tisbury, Wiltshire

development, planning, engineering, architectural and landscape design decisions that contribute to urban change.' – Urban design is concerned with the appearance and the cultural, social, environmental and economic consequences of design.[4]

Urban design operates at the macro level (regions, towns, and infrastructure networks) and the micro level (individual buildings and street furniture). While urban design may be delivered as a specific project, it is a long-term process that moves and changes over time, creating the character and identity of places.[5]

Understanding the requirements of good design in the subtropical context for SEQ is critical to differentiate our region. It is also important to create places people identify with and embrace, and in which they can meet future urban challenges with confidence. To continue to increase densities within SEQ in select locations, means we need to increase the focus on design and amenity and delivering density well.

All aspects of development across government, planning, architecture, landscape, infrastructure, and engineering need to be conversant with the requirements of good design to ensure our places are dynamic, safe, healthy, contextually responsive and sustainable.[6]

Amenity

Dictionary definitions for amenity broadly describe it as being made up of the agreeable features, facilities or services that make for a comfortable and pleasant life.[7,8] If we apply this to land use planning, it more directly defines the things that contribute to the positive environmental, social, economic and cultural experience of a place.[9] This is reflected in the qualities of our streets, landscapes, open spaces, conservation and environmental areas, treatment of heritage, character of buildings, and provision of day-to-day resources.

Good amenity is also about convenience and diversity of options, having safe and easy access to what we need, when we need it, and a clear connection to local culture. These qualities make places pleasant and enjoyable.

Liveability

The term 'liveability' first gained popular use in America in the 1980s. It was used to describe quality of life and the characteristics of cities that make them liveable – reflecting the complex interaction of political, socioeconomic and environmental factors.

Since its early definition, numerous ranking systems and ways to measure city liveability have been developed using data such as:

1. political and social environment (political stability, crime, law enforcement, etc.)
2. economic environment (currency exchange regulations, banking services)
3. sociocultural environment (media availability and censorship, limitations on personal freedom)
4. medical and health considerations (medical supplies and services, infectious diseases, sewage, waste disposal, air pollution, etc.)
5. schools and education (standards and availability of international schools)

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[4] *New Zealand Urban Design Protocol*. Ministry for the Environment, New Zealand Government. 2005.
[5] Creating Places for People: An Urban Design Protocol for Australian Cities. Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development, Australian Government; 2011.
[6] *Queensland Design Strategy 2020*. Queensland Government: Arts Queensland, Department of Education, Training and the Arts. 2008.
[7] Macquarie Concise Dictionary (2009). (S. Butler Ed.). Sydney Australia Macquarie Dictionary Publishers Pty Ltd
[8] The Concise Oxford English Dictionary (2004). n.p. Oxford University Press.
[9] Cowan, R. (2005). The Dictionary of Urbanism Streetwise Press Limited, High Street, Tisbury, Wiltshire

6. public services and transportation (electricity, water, public transportation, traffic congestion, etc.)
7. recreation (restaurants, theatres, cinemas, sports and leisure, etc.)
8. consumer goods (availability of food and daily consumption items, cars, etc.)
9. housing (rental housing, household appliances, furniture, maintenance services)
10. natural environment (climate, record of natural disasters).[10]

The rankings generate strong competition between cities. Being ranked the 'most liveable' is a 'title that can attract new business and investment, boost local economies and real estate markets, and foster community involvement and pride'.[11]

Liveability encompasses the many characteristics that make a location a place where people want to live. These characteristics cover the essentials of living as well as the ability to have preferences. They differ between individuals and through the stages of life. For example, many of the characteristics that make a place liveable are likely to vary between a young student and a retiree, and between people of different interests, cultures and skills.[12]

The delivery of good design and amenity is important as they positively contribute to the liveability of places. Well-designed communities generally have better amenity, more liveable environments, and deliver economic, social and environmental benefits.

Design and amenity in SEQ

If design and amenity influences the experiential quality of place, then the following three key considerations provide the foundations for the development of a locally distinct place 'style' to guide change across the region:

1. The powerful influences of the region's climate.
2. The distinctive qualities of the natural landscape.
3. The needs of our communities.

Comfortable climate

SEQ's climate is described as humid subtropical. It is characterised by warm to hot summers and cool to mild winters, with rainfall most often concentrated in the warmest months. In SEQ, there is a variation in climate between the coastal and inland areas, with slightly higher summer temperatures and slightly colder winter temperatures inland.

Distinctive landscapes

SEQ has a distinct and accessible landscape context with easy access to coastal, hinterland and rural landscapes. SEQ also has a rich and distinctive biodiversity that adds to the SEQ character and way of life.

Life in the outdoors

These distinctive landscapes within SEQ, combined with the climate, allow for a lifestyle that can be spent mainly in the outdoors. The close proximity and accessibility to spectacular natural landscapes are values that characterise SEQ.[13]

Relevance to *ShapingSEQ*

[10] Mercer Quality of Living Rankings
[11] www.livablecities.org The Value of Rankings and the Meaning of Liveability.
[12] *State of Liveability: An inquiry into enhancing Victoria's liveability*. Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission. 2008.
[13] Subtropical design in South East Queensland: Handbook for Planners, Developers and Decision Makers Centre for Subtropical Design. Queensland University of Technology. 2009.

ShapingSEQ seeks to manage regional growth in the most sustainable way, and to protect and enhance quality of life in the region. The opportunity to strengthen the experiential qualities of outcomes and enhance quality of life requires the conscious expression of the character or 'look and feel' of the places we want to create.

ShapingSEQ offers the mechanism to strengthen a collective understanding of what a distinctly SEQ lifestyle is and how it is exhibited in our streets, parks, buildings, and places. Reinforcing the clarity of this vision through policy provides the opportunity to establish a unified and collective understanding of the qualities of a distinctly SEQ place, and to align the vision of all stakeholders involved in shaping the future of SEQ.

With accelerating urbanisation (including increasing densities) it is important our cities and towns are well-designed. The delivery of quality design outcomes that are responsive to the climate and characteristics of the region will enhance the experience of places.

The previous regional plan[14] set out 12 guiding principles of subtropical design:

1. **Recognise subregions:** recognise and reflect the diversity of climatic, landscape, cultural, and habitat subregions of SEQ in the application of design principles.
2. **Respect topography:** protect the integrity and character of the hills, mountains and ridgelines that are important in framing and defining the subtropical environment.
3. **Diversify the built environment:** incorporate a diversity of building densities, heights, type, and scale into new developments.
4. **Consider local character and design:** recognise the contribution of contemporary design and appropriate use of building materials to the character and diversity of the subtropical environment.
5. **Integrate with nature:** design for appropriate climate-based orientation, provide shade and allow for the penetration of breeze, sunlight and the natural environment.
6. **Acknowledge informality:** recognise the informal relationship between the natural, built and rural environments.
7. **Use vegetation:** make use of extensive native vegetation and large shade trees in private and public spaces.
8. **Ensure open space diversity:** ensure open space is diverse, integrated and designed to form networks.
9. **Incorporate access to open space**: reflect the proximity of nature in subtropical environments and SEQ's outdoor-based lifestyle in the access to open space.
10. **Design for water:** reflect the importance and presence of water and provide for public access to any natural or artificial waterways.
11. **Develop outdoor centres:** outdoor dining, entertainment, recreation, sheltered access to public transport and shaded pedestrian pathways are the attributes of informality and village-like character.
12. **Develop outdoor meeting places:** incorporate outdoor meeting places into building and design. [15, 16]

The principles above provided consistent direction and reinforced the value of the lifestyle opportunities the SEQ climate and landscape qualities offer. However, these principles were included as supplementary notes and not policy objectives. These principles for subtropical design established a solid basis to guide the development of specific subtropical design policies provided in *ShapingSEQ*.

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[14] *South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031*

[15] Subtropical design in South East Queensland: Handbook for Planners, Developers and Decision Makers Centre for Subtropical Design. Queensland University of Technology. 2009.

[16] *South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031*. Department of Infrastructure and Planning, Queensland Government 2009

Issues: Informing how we grow

Growing

The current pace of urban growth is unprecedented, with the scale of rapid, global urbanisation widely documented. This trend, towards a more urbanised global future, is set to continue and will take the proportion of the world's total population living in urban areas to 66 per cent in just over 30 years.[17]

The cities that will accommodate this growth will cover only two per cent of the earth's surface. However, they will consume 75 per cent of the earth's resources and produce 75 per cent of all its waste.[18]

Managing factors of scale and urban resource dependency are critical issues in terms of how climate change contributes to the way we live. There is potential to deliver significant negative environmental, social and economic impacts globally if this is left unchecked.[19]

Conversely, there is potential for the places we live to play a contributory role in the future health and wellbeing of our planet and its communities. However, this requires the positive shaping of urban outcomes that are more responsive to local climatic and ecological considerations, and the application of mechanisms to guide development to deliver more sustainable urban change as a priority.[20]

The way we manage growth in urban areas has become one of the most important development challenges of the 21st century.[21]

SEQ: on global trend

The communities of Australia are a significant part of this global trend towards urbanisation. Data published by The World Bank indicates 89 per cent of Australia's population live in urban areas in 2015, making it one of the world's most urbanised populations.

Across the SEQ region the population is heavily urbanised. This urbanisation is concentrated along the coast, with the three largest centres of Brisbane, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast accounting for approximately 90 per cent of the region's population.

Since 2005, the Queensland Government has pursued a compact settlement model for SEQ. This model has concentrated urban growth primarily in well-serviced locations within existing urban areas to guide a more sustainable pattern of growth, through the introduction of an Urban Footprint.

The Urban Footprint has been used to define and consolidate the physical extent of future development within the SEQ region. It is applied in association with other policies focused on

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[17] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2014). World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision, Highlights. United Nations.
[18] Roy, M. (2009). Planning for sustainable urbanisation in fast growing cities: Mitigation and adaptation issues addressed in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Habitat International, 33(3), 276-286. doi:10.1016/j.habitatint.2008.10.022
[19] Wenzel, F., Bendimerad, F., & Sinha, R. (2007). Megacities – megarisks. Natural Hazards, 42(3), 481-491. doi:10.1007/s11069-006-9073-2
[20] Bharathi, K., & Nicol, L. (2013). Between Research and Practice: Experts on Implementing Sustainable Construction. Buildings, 3(4), 739-765. doi:10.3390/buildings3040739
[21] Cowan, R. (2005). The Dictionary of Urbanism Streetwise Press Limited, High Street, Tisbury, Wiltshire

increasing densities and urban infill development to mitigate the risk of urban sprawl. The adoption of this approach reflects global trends to deliver compact urban settlements.

During the next 25 years, the population of the SEQ region is expected to grow by a further 1.9 million people (to 5.3 million), with a sustained trend for the growth to concentrate in urban areas. This focus for growth requires an accelerated understanding of new models of urban infill that broaden the residential portfolio of the region to manage growth, while maintaining the regional character and characteristics of the distinctive SEQ lifestyle.

The complexity of scale

Policy makers consider there to be a minimum threshold of population required to make public transport and local shops and services more viable and better utilised, recognising the clear relationship between the number of services and businesses that can be provided and the number of people working and living in the surrounding area.[22]

Significant progress has been made in understanding the physical implications as well as the community benefits of increasing density. Well-designed places that facilitate social interaction help to build a sense of community that in turn has positive flow-on effects for our health, economy, community resilience and prosperity.

Community benefits associated with urban densification can include:

- facilitating greater housing choice
- curbing urban sprawl
- mitigating climate change impacts
- decreasing energy costs
- improving health, safety and diversity
- more efficient use of roads, services, transport [23]
- better response to needs of less advantaged groups
- increasing accessibility and connectedness
- enhancing the sense of place
- increasing the viability of businesses, services and facilities.

Good practice principles of sustainable development strongly advocate the compact city model. This model is characterised by high density, mixed-use urban form, with integrated public transport, high-quality public spaces, and energy-efficient buildings.

However, opportunities across city-scale infrastructure and development outcomes continue to fall short of balancing environmental, social and economic objectives. Even in countries where comprehensive regulatory urban planning and governance structures exist, progressive sustainable development outcomes have been limited.[24]

Poor quality environments have social, environmental and economic costs. Research has shown a relationship between low quality environments and poor health outcomes, including increased mental health issues and higher rates of obesity, diabetes and respiratory illnesses. Also poor integration of land use and transport can lead to long commutes for residents, less efficient use of

[22] Udell T, Daley M, Johnson B, Tolley, R. *Does density matter? The role of density in creating walkable neighbourhoods*. Melbourne: National Heart Foundation of Australia. 2014.
[23] Density done well, and not just Downtown. Brent Toderian. 2013.
[24] Bon, R., & Hutchinson, K. (2000). *Sustainable construction: some economic challenges. Building Research & Information,* 28(5-6), 310-314. doi:10.1080/096132100418465

transport infrastructure, and increased time away from family, increasing social costs.[25]

Design is particularly important when density increases, as places become more urban, the community becomes more diverse, and the provision and integration of the required social infrastructure becomes more complex. Good design practices provide an integrated and collaborative platform to ensure these complex layers of technical issues are considered equitably and collectively.

Successfully shaping our future SEQ communities

With continued population growth, considering where and how SEQ residents are housed, where they work and where they play becomes increasingly important.

The aim of the regional plan is to limit our sprawl outwards and to look at how we could make more efficient use of land in the Urban Footprint. Communities are being created in both expansion and consolidation areas[26], with an emphasis on increasing densities in areas with good public transport.

With accelerating urbanisation and the desire to create compact liveable places, consolidation development is increasingly providing the opportunity to deliver the region's growth.

However, there is a risk that new buildings and developments will not enhance the look and feel of our existing neighbourhoods, particularly those places with special meaning or importance to well established local communities.

Historically, creating a SEQ lifestyle that is compact, connected, and sustainable with good employment opportunities has been easier to achieve in expansion communities. Creating the same communities in a consolidation context has been more challenging.

Key opportunities for the region have informed *ShapingSEQ* to guide the region's future sustainable growth by:

- utilising successful examples of densification and urbanisation, reviewing the experience and lessons learnt, and developing policy direction
- reinforcing a requirement for new buildings, streets, parks and other open spaces that are responsive to the local subtropical context
- defining a subtropical model of medium density urban development, or missing [27] that provides a range of multi-unit or clustered housing types compatible in scale with single family homes
- providing policy to guide the delivery of new subtropical urban typologies that respond to the need for walkable, integrated urban living – easy local living
- providing policy direction to guide the delivery of buildings, streets and spaces that have inbuilt flexibility and adaptability to accommodate new uses and users in the long-term.

Design matters and delivering good design

The value of good design

The built environment has a crucial role to play in supporting human health as part of everyday

[25] Our Cities, Our Future. *A national urban policy for productive, sustainable and liveable future. Department of Infrastructure and Transport,* Commonwealth of Australia. 2011.
[26] Refer to Background paper 1: Grow for explanation of consolidation and expansion
[27] Parolek, D. www.missingmiddlehousing.com

living.[28] The way places are designed has direct and indirect impacts on health and wellbeing.[29]

The value of good urban design has been well-documented. Well-delivered urban environments have been demonstrated to produce benefits at a regional level, city-wide level, neighbourhood scale, and for individual buildings and spaces.

The Australian Prime Minister's Urban Design Taskforce (1994) acknowledged the combined economic and social benefits of good urban design in its report, Urban Design in Australia.

The quality of urban design matters. It does so in terms of experience and meaning because of the messages and feelings different places provide us with; functionally, for the efficient and effective working of the city; socially, as a means of building equitably supportive towns and cities; and for the way it can strengthen economic life and competitiveness. Urban design gives us the tools with which we can consciously improve the quality of cities and regions.

Further information regarding the importance of good design including documents that demonstrate the importance of delivering these outcomes are provided in Appendix E.

The community dividend

Good design can improve quality of life. It can help avoid problems such as congestion, increased health costs, social isolation, inefficient use of non-renewable resources, higher crime rates, poor health outcomes, dysfunctional spaces, longer term higher maintenance and prevention costs. [30,31, 32]

A well-designed hospital will help patients recover more quickly; a well-designed school will improve the education outcomes of its students; a well-designed neighbourhood will benefit from higher housing values.[33]

A short list of the environmental and social value of good urban design includes:

- increasing safety and security through surveillance
- better access to jobs
- reinforcing sense of identity for residents
- better access to public transport
- better social connectedness, improving mental health
- better access to facilities and services
- more efficient use of land
- creation of conditions for regular physical activity, which assists in the reduction of obesity and health related problems
- increasing the opportunity for active transport, which reduces noise and air pollution

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[28] Kent J, Thompson S, Jalaludin B. *Healthy built environments: a review of the literature*: Healthy Built Environments Program, City Futures Research Centre, The University of New South Wales; 2011.
[29] Giles-Corti B, Ryan K, Foster S. Evidence review. Increasing density in Australia: maximising the health benefits and minimising harm. Melbourne: National Heart Foundation of Australia, 2012.
[30] Mercer Quality of Living Rankings
[31] *State of Liveability: An inquiry into enhancing Victoria's liveability*. Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission. 2008.
[32] *Delivering Quality Places: Urban Design Compendium 2*. 2nd edition. Homes and Communities Agency, UK, 2012.
[33] The value of good design. How buildings and spaces create economic and social value. Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, 2002.

- incorporating green infrastructure to decrease urban heat island effects, reduce impacts on stormwater services, and protect the natural environment.[34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40]

Economic benefits of good design

Considerable research has been done to understand the economic benefits of good design. Consistently, the research has found that investment in good design, and in this case good urban design, adds value by increasing the economic viability of development and, in addition to general community wellbeing, investment in well-designed places delivers economic advantage into the community.

Well-designed places can produce higher rental returns and capital values, can lower long-term maintenance costs, can increase productivity, and can create better security, less crime, less fear of crime and can increase civic pride.[41]

An exploratory study carried out by international property consultants FPD Savills in 2002 indicated that volume house builders who had invested in higher quality design in residential schemes could expect to yield a residual value per hectare of up to 15 per cent more than conventionally designed schemes.[42]

Good design can also help avoid the economic implications of badly designed places including congestion, increased health costs, social isolation, and inefficient use of non-renewable resources. This is particularly important when the costs of poor design can have long-term continuing costs e.g. higher crime rates, poor health outcomes, dysfunctional spaces, longer term maintenance and prevention.[43]

A study for the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors carried out in 1997 estimated that more money – as much as £2 billion per year – is spent on treating illnesses arising from poor housing conditions than is spent by local authorities on their own housing stock. National annual estimates of the increased costs associated with the 7.6 per cent of public sector homes considered unfit for habitation are £3 billion due to poor health, £1.8 billion due to increased crime and £120 million for the cost of fire services. Although not definitive figures, they show the extent of the problem.[44]

The economic benefits of investment in good design therefore extend outwards, delivering value

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[34] *Delivering Quality Places: Urban Design Compendium 2*. 2nd edition. Homes and Communities Agency, UK. 2012.
[35] The value of urban design: The economic, environmental and social benefits of urban design. Ministry for the Environment, New Zealand. 2005.
[36] Roberts-Hughes R. *City health check—how design can save lives and money*. London: Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), 2013.
[37] Kent J, Thompson S, Jalaludin B. *Healthy built environments: a review of the literature*: Healthy Built Environments Program, City Futures Research Centre, The University of New South Wales, 2011.
[38] Giles-Corti B, Ryan K, Foster S. Evidence review. Increasing density in Australia: maximising the health benefits and minimising harm. Melbourne: National Heart Foundation of Australia, 2012.
[39] Obesity working Group for the National Preventative Health Taskforce. Technical Paper 1: Obesity in Australia: a need for urgent action. Commonwealth of Australia, 2009
[40] Burke, M, Hatfield, E and Pascoe, J. Urban planning for physical activity and nutrition: A review of evidence and interventions. Urban Research Program, Griffith University, 2008
[41] New Zealand Urban Design Protocol. Ministry for the Environment. 2005
[42] The value of urban design: A research project commissioned by CABE and DETR to examine the value added by good urban design. Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment. 2001.
[43] *State of Liveability: An inquiry into enhancing Victoria's liveability*. Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission. 2008 / UDC2 / NZ Urb Design Prot
[44] The value of urban design: A research project commissioned by CABE and DETR to examine the value added by good urban design. Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment. 2001.

across the community:

- Investors benefit through favourable returns on their investments and through satisfying occupier demand, although the full pay-off may not be immediate.
- Developers benefit by attracting investors and pre-lets more easily and hence from enhanced company image. If they retain a stake in their developments for long enough, they also benefit from good returns on their investments.
- Designers benefit because good urban design is crucially dependent on their input.
- Occupiers benefit from the better performance, loyalty, health and satisfaction of their employees and from the increased prestige that well-designed developments command with guests and clients.
- Everyday users and society as a whole benefit from the economic advantages of successful regeneration, including new and retained jobs, and also through access to a better quality environment and an enhanced range of amenities and facilities.
- Public authorities benefit by meeting their obligation to deliver a well-designed, economically and socially viable environment and often by ripple effects to adjoining areas.[45]

Establishing a requirement for good design

Australia is an urban nation, and the planning and design of our cities is vital to our wealth, health and happiness.

While the major infrastructure of our nation involves planning freeways, civil engineering, airports and cities, it is how we live with, and amongst these things that mean the most to people – our suburb, our local places, shops and streets that we relate to and where we feel most comfortable. Living in a better way means that everyone should have the right to a well-designed living and working environment, at least in as much as their socio-economic circumstances allow, and this is where urban design plays a part. – His Excellency Mr Michael Bryce, Urban Voices – Celebrating Urban Design in Australia

At a national level, the need for an urban policy was recognised as important in response to the long-term challenges of population growth, demographic change, increased fuel costs, resource limitations, climate change, housing affordability, technological change, and accelerating globalisation.

In 2011, a national urban policy established the objective and directions of the Australian Government, recognising the roles of state, territory and local governments and private sector in planning, managing and investing in cities (refer to Table 1).

Table 1: Summary of key federal urban design policy in Australia

Document	Year	Summary
Urban Design in Australia	1994	Report commissioned by the Prime Minister's Office and produced by the Urban Design Task Force. The report set out to understand what could be done to improve the quality of urban design in Australia. The document concentrates on the fundamental changes required to provide the basis for higher quality urban design in the future, and provides an Australia-wide review examining ways of improving the quality of urban areas, and of strengthening the role that can be

[45] The value of urban design: A research project commissioned by CABE and DETR to examine the value added by good urban design. Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment. 2001.

		played by urban design.
Our Cities, Our Future: A national urban policy for a productive, sustainable and liveable future	2011	Subsequent to the discussion paper, Our Cities – building a productive, sustainable and liveable future, the Australian Government released the next step in the framework, Our Cities, Our Future: a national urban policy. The policy sets out principles, goals and objectives (see appendix A) to guide policy development and investment in our cities.[46]
National Urban Design Protocol	2011	The intent of the National Urban Design Protocol was to provide guidance for decision-makers, professionals and members of the general public (individuals and community groups) who have an interest in urban design and the built environment. It recognises that as we increase density, good quality urban design becomes even more important in order to cater for the increasing and changing population. The protocol establishes 12 principles (based around five pillars) for quality urban places in Australia, regardless of location or size. The objective of the Protocol is '…to encourage the highest standard of urban design across all parts of our suburbs, towns and cities.'[47] Appendix A includes a snapshot of the protocol.
Smart Cities Plan	2016	The Smart Cities Plan sets out the Australian Government's vision for cities, to maximise their potential. It includes three pillars: Smart Investment, Smart Policy and Smart Technology. It provides a foundation for ongoing reform and cooperative action. It represents a new framework for cities policy at the federal level and is a framework that will guide action across various portfolios, to deliver better outcomes for our cities, the people who live in them and all Australians.

Well-conceived design policy is generally considered to be one of the key tools through which the planning process can raise design quality and standards.

In the context of SEQ, the delivery of good design should be led by the regional plan to ensure the benefits summarised in this paper are delivered to the SEQ community.

From experience elsewhere, three key strategies are required:
1. Effective policy – well-conceived design policy is one of the key tools through which the planning process can raise design quality and standards.
2. Design champions – good urban design outcomes require political will, leadership and

[46] Our Cities, Our Future: A national urban policy for productive, sustainable and liveable future. Department of Infrastructure and Transport, Commonwealth of Australia. 2011
[47] *Creating Places for People: An Urban Design Protocol for Australian Cities*. Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development, Australian Government; 2011.

sustained determination to raise standards as well as a long-term view.
3. Empowered professionals – those determining planning applications must be given the confidence and skills to evaluate proposals and demand quality.

Research and review

Key stakeholders

In order to determine critical factors for success, and understand the qualities and characteristics of places that are valued, insights from experience are useful. Through the review process, input was sought from three key sources to better understand current issues and concerns of the SEQ community:

1. Community attitudes towards design – to garner insight from the broader community who are often third party participants in the urbanisation process.
2. Design industry feedback – to seek insights and test ideas with key practitioners and design champions involved daily in the challenges of development and the delivery of our urban future.
3. Existing case studies – a portfolio of examples provided an invaluable resource to help us understand what is possible, to share experiences and demonstrate clearly how to aim higher.

Community attitudes towards design

Internationally, research has sought to understand the experiences of the community regarding design in the development process. The research has identified there is general agreement from the community that good design is desirable and is seen to have a positive impact on the community.

The following sections provide insight into key SEQ community conversations and their findings. Appendix B provides further detail on a selection of international, national and SEQ research studies into community attitudes and design.

Queensland Growth Summit

In 2010, a survey into community attitudes towards population growth and liveability in SEQ was conducted as part of the Queensland Growth Summit. There was general agreement through the feedback from the survey that:

- higher density housing was felt to be best suited to inner city areas
- medium density housing was best suited to major suburban centres with transport interchanges
- low density housing was best suited to suburban areas.[48]

Liveable Compact Cities Project

As part of the Liveable Compact Cities Project (finalised in 2011), the council of mayors (SEQ) commissioned community perceptions research around infill development, particularly medium density developments in SEQ. Research results indicated that affordability and proximity to services and facilities were key factors in community considerations.[49]

Overall, the research showed there is a demand for smaller housing options in SEQ, and for medium density options, those with a separate front entry (e.g. small lot house, terrace house) are most appealing.

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[48] *Social Research on Population Growth and Liveability in South East Queensland*. TNS social research for Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Queensland Government. 2010.

[49] *Community perceptions research report* – Liveable Compact Cities Project. Council of Mayors (SEQ). 2011

Review of *South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031*

Community attitude research was conducted as part of the community conversations for the review. This research built on the Queensland Growth Summit research undertaken in 2010 by using the same questions, as well as including additional questions.

When comparing recent research results with the results from 2010, there is still general agreement that higher density housing is best suited to inner city areas, with medium density housing best suited to major suburban centres with transport interchanges and low density housing best suited to suburban areas. However, the overall percentages were lower across the board than in 2010.[50]

To benchmark the results from 2010 another community attitudes survey was undertaken in April 2016. This survey informed development of key policies in *ShapingSEQ* and surveyed 1004 people. In relation to the live theme the survey found there was:

- strong community preference for the community to be able to change over time to take advantage of new housing and transport technology.
- support for parks, shopping areas and streets in the community to be well-designed.
- significant support for high quality development in the community.
- strong support for townhouses, units and apartments in the community to be well-designed.

In acknowledging that the outcomes of the regional plan will be realised by the younger generation, the *ShapingSEQ* Youth Summit was held in February 2017, to hear the future aspirations of the region's under 25s. Key themes that emerged from the youth summit included:

- the valued important of greenspace
- support for density development if it aided protection of greenspace and valuable agricultural land
- support for higher density development, as long as it is well-designed an located conveniently to amenities
- opportunities to access entertainment and cultural events, and precincts.

To complement the Youth Summit, the department completed a qualitative market research survey targeting SEQ residents aged between 18 and 30. The purpose of this survey was to test the policies of *ShapingSEQ* with young people within the general community. Survey questions were focused on housing density and affordability, lifestyle preferences, and factors influencing decisions about lifestyle choices.

For further information on the *ShapingSEQ* Youth Summit and community attitudes surveys please refer to the consultation report.[51]

Design industry feedback

To inform *ShapingSEQ*, a workshop was held with the newly formed Queensland Urban Design and Places Panel, at its inaugural meeting on 27 May 2016. This workshop was designed to gain peer review inputs into their theme considerations and project development.

The panel is an advisory body to the Queensland Government on design matters relating to significant projects across the state. Chaired by the Queensland Government Architect, it consists of 18 professionals from a range of key design disciplines including landscape architecture, urban design, planning, economics and architecture from across Australia with experience at local,

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[50] *SEQ regional plan Community Attitudes Research – High level results 21 April 2016*. TNS for Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, Queensland Government. 2016.

[51] South East Queensland Regional Plan 2017 (ShapingSEQ) Consultation report, Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, August 2017

national and international levels.

The workshop with the panel sought to explore the issue of how *ShapingSEQ* might assist in elevating the quality of design and amenity being delivered across SEQ. (Appendix C provides a summary of meeting notes from the workshops).

Key points raised by the panel in the workshops include:

- There is room for improvement in development outcomes with a need to give key architectural and urban design requirements greater emphasis in policy.
- The requirement for good design needs to be defined and embedded in planning policy.
- The importance of design and urban development outcomes need greater emphasis in development assessments.
- It would be beneficial to outline simple principles to achieve subtropical design outcomes and use these to guide development across the region.
- Provide more guidance on how higher density developments can achieve more diversity.
- Demonstrate examples and provide greater guidance to deliver a liveable spectrum of density and quality delivery.
- Explore issues of social density, not just urban density, to ensure the life style implications of development are considered.
- Use case studies to demonstrate desirable outcomes and quality delivery.
- In order to mitigate climate change implications of development, embedding green infrastructure initiatives should be a requirement for development. Green infrastructure such as water sensitive urban design features and solar power provides improves environmental value and can offer economic resilience to our communities.
- Investigate barriers to achieving higher levels of design innovation, for example building codes and regulation, property economics, access to skilled designers etc.
- Facilitate design innovation by attracting the next generation of big design thinkers and reward innovation.
- Use case studies to demonstrate acceptable design outcomes and demonstrate learning from experiences. Details of relevant case studies are provided in Appendix D.

Engagement with the design industry, including the Queensland Government Architect Office, continued throughout the review process, providing input to this background paper and the final *ShapingSEQ*.

Policy directions in *ShapingSEQ*

ShapingSEQ has used the opportunity to define the essential characteristics for a distinctive subtropical urbanism to assist in delivering good amenity and great places across SEQ and embed these characteristics as requirements of regional policy.

To take the subtropical design approach is to understand the link between lifestyle and climate and how design that encourages living with our climate, rather than locking ourselves away from it, can achieve sustainable solutions. Subtropical design is climate responsive, resource conscious, water frugal and values sensitive.[52]

QDesign and QCompanion

The policy for *ShapingSEQ* strongly aligns with QDesign and QCompanion being delivered by the Office of the Queensland Government Architect (OQGA) in collaboration with the department and other key stakeholders. QDesign and QCompanion will provide a common basis for, and examples of, excellence in subtropical design and urban greening initiatives to improve the region's sustainability, climate change resilience and community health.

QDesign sets out nine priority principles to guide design, development and delivery of buildings, streets, parks and open spaces across Queensland. QDesign will be framed as a reference resource for decision makers involved in the consideration and assessment of proposals including design review panels and local authorities. It's companion document, QCompanion, is being prepared by the OQGA to provide a supplementary resource, providing ideas and techniques for the application of the nine priority design principles contained in QDesign.

The department will continue to engage with OQGA to implement QDesign and QCompanion and ensure key design and amenity outcomes are achieved.

Valuing good design

As the region grows and we seek to accommodate more people in our urban environments, the value of high-amenity urban places will become increasingly important. *ShapingSEQ* recognises that good design will be fundamental to creating these places.

Good urban design is rarely brought about by a local authority prescribing physical solutions, or by setting rigid solutions or empirical design standards but by approaches which emphasise design objectives or principles.[53]

Principles of valuing good design:

- Ensure high-quality design for all development, particularly higher densities.
- Deliver well-designed development in accordance with QDesign and QCompanion.
- Ensure good quality design is embedded in the planning system.

Working with the weather

The climate of SEQ is unique. SEQ is one of the few places in the world that supports outdoor living all year round. This comfortable climate allows us to create places where we can live closer to nature, in buildings that use less energy, and contribute to an affordable and healthy lifestyle for

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[52] Design, C. f. S. (2010). *Subtropical Design in South East Queensland - A Handbook for Planners, Developers and Decision Makers* (1st ed.). Queensland University of Technology Centre for Subtropical Design

[53] Commission for Architecture & The Built Environment. (2000) By Design – Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards better practice. Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions

all. *ShapingSEQ* seeks to maximise use of the region's climate and promote integration of greening networks into the urban environment.

Principles of climate responsive design:

- Orient urban form to optimise user comfort naturally and provide low energy, low-cost living.
- Create indoor and outdoor spaces that provide easy access to comfortable outdoor living throughout the year.
- Create urban places that contribute to activity and life on the street through building layout design and architectural features.
- Promote adaptable living spaces for climatic comfort by providing movable elements, such as windows that open and bi-fold doors.

Inspired by local character

Places that grow true to their locality are likely to be sustainable, enjoyable and attract investment – intellectual, cultural and financial. An appreciation of local urban form, culture, topography, building types and materials is necessary to nurture local distinctiveness.[54]

SEQ's distinctive character and identity has evolved in response to its subtropical climate and diversity of natural landscapes.[55] This synergy between built environment and subtropical setting has defined a strong heritage and place vernacular that is distinct to context and reflects local character. *ShapingSEQ* requires communities of the SEQ to demonstrate a strong respect for this heritage.

Principles of contextually respectful and place responsive design:

- Identify and conserve local landscape, heritage and cultural assets, including Indigenous landscape values, and where appropriate, integrate or adaptively re-use them in building, streets and spaces.
- Work respectfully with natural topography to create development that contributes positively to the environmental and visual experience of a place.
- Minimise cut and fill to preserve local ecologies and naturally manage drainage.
- Explore the appropriate use of building materials to create contemporary design that adds to a local area's character and diversity.
- Work with the characteristics, traditions and values of the local community to create a distinctive local character and contributory community value.

Working with natural systems

Trees, green spaces, and waterways contribute to a strong sense of place and are essential for the healthy ecology of subtropical places and their communities.

The distinctive vegetation of SEQ offers great opportunities to create places that are instantly recognisable and part of our landscape heritage. Well-planned and maintained vegetation supports urban wildlife and flora, can help manage stormwater quantity and quality, contribute to air quality, enhance views and increase visual privacy between buildings. In addition, access to trees and green areas in urban environments has been demonstrated to increase people's physical and mental wellbeing.

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[54] Delivering Quality Places: Urban Design Compendium 2, 2nd edition. Homes and Communities Agency, UK. 2012.

[55] Design, C. f. S. (2010). Subtropical Design in South East Queensland - A Handbook for Planners, Developers and Decision Makers (1st ed.). Queensland University of Technology Centre for Subtropical Design

ShapingSEQ outlines strategies that encourage development and planning to work with its natural landscape assets to deliver progressive urban outcomes that protect and enhance these green infrastructure networks.

Principles of ecologically responsive design:

- Respect and add to local landscape character and ecological diversity to create places that demonstrate a strong respect for nature. For example, koala-friendly design protects, manages and integrates this threatened species.
- Conserve and protect significant trees, plants of scale and significant species, as valuable community assets and use these features to enhance local character.
- Use extensive native vegetation and large shade trees in public spaces and along streets to encourage walking, cycling and comfortable use of the outdoors.
- Work with the region's landscapes and waterways to deal with water management and urban heat island effects sustainable, provide urban scale recreational resources and support small-scale urban food production by residents.

Creating legible and connected streets and spaces

Creating an integrated network of legible and connected streets and spaces ensures connectivity and supports economically vibrant communities. *ShapingSEQ* encourages us to make better use of these public spaces and consider their use for multiple purposes.

Principles to promote integration and connectivity:

- Use existing streets and spaces to create places that are part of a well-connected network with simple and direct links.
- Deliver a range of street and spaces scales that easily and comfortably accommodate the needs of all users.
- Design streets and spaces to be fit for purpose, reflecting their role within the wider urban context.
- Use appropriate vegetation, large trees and awnings in public spaces and along streets to provide shade and shelter for the community as places to spend time, whether for walking, socialising or riding a bike.

Embedding opportunities for adaptation and change

ShapingSEQ requires flexibility and adaptability be embedded into our buildings, streets and spaces. This is essential to ensuring new uses and users can be accommodated in the long-term.

Principles for embedding flexibility and adaptability:

- Provide facilities to enable communities to be more resilient and self-sufficient by embedding opportunities for food to be homegrown and water and energy to be locally sourced.
- Create flexible buildings, streets and spaces that are capable of adapting to new uses and user needs over time.
- Create places capable of accommodating individual needs throughout their whole life, adopting design principles to specifically address the needs of children, older people and people with disabilities.
- Design places to be resource efficient, durable and low maintenance to reduce energy demand and therefore costs in construction and maintenance in the long-term.

Creating great places

The quality of the places in which we live has an impact on all aspects of life. How well they are designed will influence how safe we feel, how easy it is to walk around, whether we have shops, community facilities and schools nearby, and whether our children have safe places to play. It will also affect whether there is good access to public transport and a good choice of homes in which

to live. It is essential that the places we create and improve embody the principles of good urban design.[56]

Most people want to play a part in making better places but they need to be shown that it is achievable and how they can play an active role. A range of urban places identified in the SEQ region are already great places and will be supported as exemplars of urban design and place-making that reinforces the region's identity and creates social and economic dividends for our communities.

ShapingSEQ supports the creation of great places throughout the region. Great places provide a focus on urban quality of regional importance, as they contribute to a more socially cohesive and economically successful region. Great places are built environments that provide focal points which foster a range of activities, including shopping, socialising, dining and recreation, and contribute to local identity and economies.

Principles to promote the creation of great places:

- Support local government and community place-making efforts in urban areas and rural towns, to enhance our regional reputation for liveability, subtropical and temperate design, economic vitality, and our commitment to great design and community involvement in place-making.
- Promote an ethos of place-making that unlocks the creativity and potential of local communities to become part of making these places great.
  This may involve initiatives such as:
  - quick, inexpensive and temporary experimentation in the nature and use of streets and public spaces (referred to as 'tactical urbanism')
  - shared spaces that encourage collaboration
  - new models of inclusive decision-making for local community focus areas
  - new ways to involve young people in projects
  - fostering a culture of entrepreneurship.

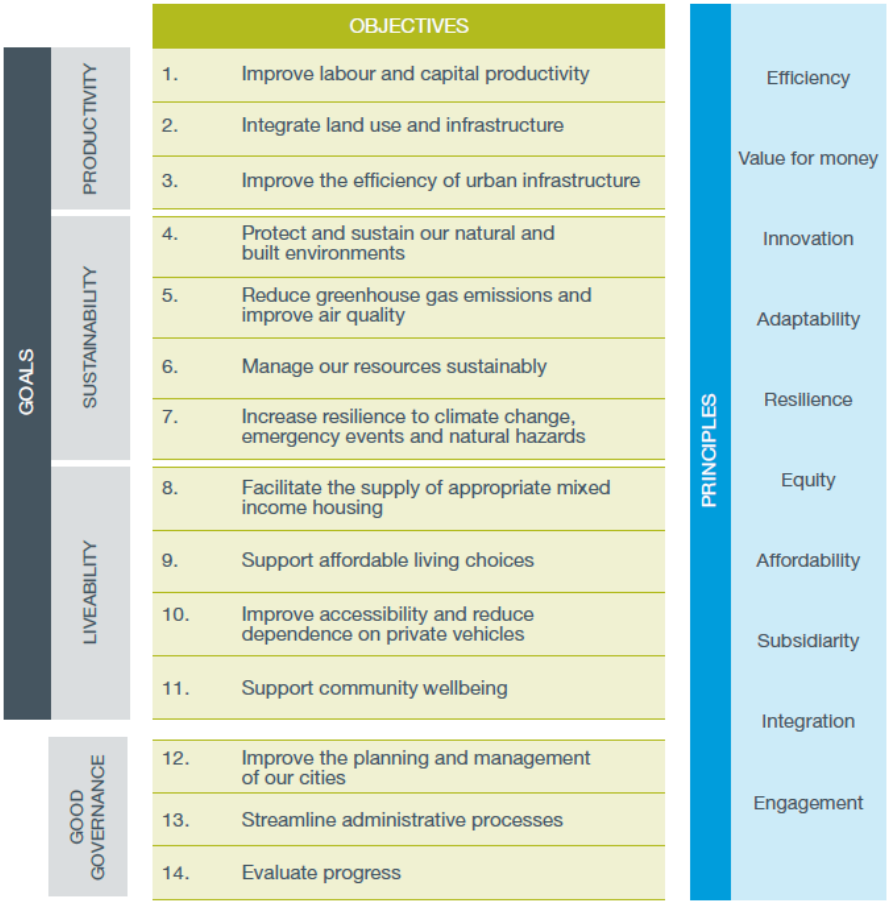
Conclusion

ShapingSEQ sets out the long-term vision for the sustainable management of growth of the region and will establish a regional and sub-regional framework to achieve this long-term vision. This paper has provided the basis for the development of the live policy framework of *ShapingSEQ* and demonstrates the importance of creating enjoyable, diverse and attractive subtropical places that contribute to the region's unique lifestyle. This theme recognises the value of design and place-making and identifies the role planning plays to delivering good quality design outcomes in our communities.

[56] Delivering Quality Places: Urban Design Compendium 2 2nd edition. Homes and Communities Agency, UK. 2012.

Appendix A: Strategy context

National Urban Policy[57]



[57] *Our Cities, Our Future: A national urban policy for productive, sustainable and liveable future*. Department of Infrastructure and Transport, Commonwealth of Australia. 2011. Retrieved from http://infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/policy-publications/publications/Our-Cities-Our-Future-2011.aspx

National Urban Design Protocol[58]

[58] *Creating Places for People: An Urban Design Protocol for Australian Cities*. Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development, Australian Government; 2011. Retrieved from http://infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/policy-publications/publications/Creating-Places-for-People-an-urban-design-protocol-for-Australian-cities-2011.aspx

Appendix B: Community perceptions

General

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)

1. The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) in the United Kingdom commissioned a poll in 2002 asking questions about the built environment and design. The following is a summary of some of the findings of the poll.
   - 77 per cent of respondents agreed and seven per cent disagreed with the statement 'people work more productively in well-designed offices'.
   - 70 per cent of respondents agreed and 17 per cent disagreed with the statement 'well-designed schools improve children's education'.
   - 29 per cent of respondents agreed and 52 per cent disagreed with the statement 'the design of hospitals makes no difference to how fast patients recover'.
   - 22 per cent of respondents agreed and 66 per cent disagreed with the statement 'how streets look and feel makes no real difference to crime'.
   - 72 per cent of respondents agreed and nine per cent disagreed with the statement 'well-designed houses will increase in value quicker than average'. [59]

2. In 2004, Sarkissian Associates, Planners, and Urban and Regional Planning Solutions were engaged to report on social issues and trends in relation to medium and high density housing for the Land Management Corporation of South Australia. The work included expert workshops and site visits to Adelaide, Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane.

   Their research found there are a number of important factors for those living or considering living in higher density housing (generally attached types of housing) including:
   - space around the home
   - upkeep or maintenance
   - greenery and vegetation
   - views of activity from the dwelling
   - acoustic controls
   - privacy (inside and outside)
   - how the building works
   - lack of understanding about what medium density means
   - poor examples
   - landscaping (from a neighbour viewpoint)
   - parking
   - traffic
   - noise
   - internal planning of the dwelling.[60]

3. Queensland University of Technology completed research into residential satisfaction with higher density living in 2009. Their research found that liveability can be linked to certain specific features of a home or building as well as the features of the broader neighbourhood. Their survey of residents across six inner city suburbs in Brisbane came up with nine common attributes that design should focus on.

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[59] *The cost of bad design*. Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, UK. 2006.
[60] *Social issues and trends associated with medium- to high density urban living: Final report for the land management corporation*. Dr Wendy Sarkissian, Steph Walton, Helen Kerr, Angela Hazebroek, Elyssa Ludher and Yollana Shore with Johanna Hazebroek and Claire Humphreys SARKISSIAN ASSOCIATES PLANNERS PTY LTD for Land Management Corporation of South Australia. May 2004

The common factors of importance and relevance to residents are:

- ventilation/thermal comfort
- natural light
- noise mitigation
- shared space
- good neighbour protocols
- environmental sustainability
- accessible and sustainable public transport
- amenities and services
- sense of community. [61]

SEQ specific feedback

1. As part of the Liveable Compact Cities Project (finalised in 2011), the Council of Mayors (SEQ) commissioned BBS to carry out community perceptions research around infill development, particularly medium density developments, in SEQ.

   The research consisted of formal market research, an online forum and four face-to-face deliberative forums (Gold Coast, Brisbane, Toowoomba and Sunshine Coast).

   The following were identified as common themes across each of the research streams:

   - People are happy to compromise to remain in their local neighbourhood.
   - Diversity of product is key, with the option to choose different housing types as they move through their lifecycle.
   - Proximity to public transport and community facilities is important.
   - A change in both built form and community mindset is needed. Respondents were open to different housing types, but believed a change in the way housing is valued is required e.g. detached dwellings are perceived to have a higher value than attached dwellings).
   - Obstacles still exist with respect to medium density housing. The biggest obstacles identified were being too close to neighbours, and body corporate costs.
   - Sustainability adds to affordability. Most respondents were willing to pay an up-front premium for sustainable features believed to provide long-term associated energy cost savings.

   Overall, the research showed there is a demand for smaller housing options in SEQ and of the medium density options; those with a separate front entry (e.g. small lot house, terrace house) are most appealing. Affordability and proximity to services and facilities are key factors.[62]

2. To prepare for the Growth Management Summit in 2010, the Department of Premier and Cabinet commissioned a survey into community attitudes to population growth and liveability in SEQ.

   As part of the survey, respondents were asked questions about the suitability of particular types of housing in particular locations. The responses to these questions showed the following (where 0 is not at all suited and 100 is very well suited):

   - High density housing is considered best suited to Brisbane's inner city – an average score of 72.6.

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[61] *High Density Liveability Guide,* Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane. 2010

[62] *Community perceptions research report*—Liveable Compact Cities Project. Council of Mayors (SEQ). 2011

- Medium density housing is considered best suited to major suburban centres with transport interchanges (average score of 70.1), major coastal tourism centres (average score of 65.7) and Brisbane's inner city (average score of 62.6).
- Low density housing is considered best suited to suburban areas – an average score of 74.4.

The common responses to the most attractive aspects of higher density living were:
- closeness to amenities and/or work
- better use of space
- reduced reliance on private vehicles/more efficient use of public transport
- low home or garden maintenance.

The common responses to negative aspects of higher density living were:
- feeling of being overcrowded or having no space
- noise levels
- not having a backyard, particularly for those with children.[63]

3. As part of the community conversations for the review of the SEQRP, the Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning commissioned TNS to survey SEQ residents regarding attitudes to a number of matters including living in SEQ, regional planning in SEQ, population growth, housing density, and engagement with government. [64]

   The questions asked about suitability of particular types of housing to particular locations were the same as those asked for the survey for the Queensland Growth Management Summit in 2010. The responses in 2016 were as follows (where 0 is not at all suited and 100 are very well suited):
   - High density housing is considered best suited to Brisbane's inner city – an average score of 71.3.
   - Medium density housing is considered best suited to major suburban centres with transport interchange (average score of 63.38) and major coastal tourism centres (average score of 60.42).
   - Low density housing is considered best suited to suburban areas – an average score of 70.27 for 'my suburb or area' and an average score of 67.2 for 'other suburban areas'.

   Respondents were also asked about their view on the quality of design (including buildings, public spaces, and look and feel) of high, medium and low density developments in SEQ. The responses are in Table 2. [65]

Table 2: Summary of responses

View of the quality of design of developments in SEQ	High density	Medium density	Low density
Poor	19%	9%	7%
Acceptable	54%	60%	40%
Very good	20%	25%	48%
Don't know/unsure	7%	5%	5%

[63] *Social Research on Population Growth and Liveability in South East Queensland*. TNS social research for Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Queensland Government. 2010.
[64] *SEQ regional plan Community Attitudes Research—High level results 21 April 2016*. TNS for Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, Queensland Government. 2016.
[65] *SEQ regional plan Community Attitudes Research—High level results 21 April 2016*. TNS for Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, Queensland Government. 2016.

Appendix C: Queensland Urban Design and Places Panel workshop

Working session with Queensland Urban Design Places Panel

27 May 2016

Workshop summary

The following notes provide a summary of the key thoughts and observations provided by the newly formed Queensland Urban Design and Places Panel. This workshop was held to test ideas as part of the SEQRP review process.

Key outcomes

Discussion focus 01: Growth

Questions posed to the panel

- What are the critical issues affecting the future growth of SEQ?
- What are seen as priorities for the five themes: grow, prosper, sustain, connect, live?

Key discussion themes

The group discussion explored issues of where we grow and how we grow, at both a macro and micro level. The group discussion provided the following reflections on the key trends and ideas, and in some cases remained as questions to be taken forward by the SEQRP review team.

Enriching the growth model

- Do we need to think of SEQ as one urban entity, or a series of Urban Villages? Could the region be considered as a single city i.e. 'Sydney with shorts'.
- What should our future growth pattern be? Should focus remain on intensifying infill. There is likely to remain a demand for greenfield development but we need to advance the model to deliver it more sustainably.
- Should we be more specific about the appropriate location for intensity and density? Associated with green space and transport networks.
- There is a beneficial relationship that could be leveraged between green space and density that values the southern side of waterways/open spaces for more intense development.
- Extend and augment the green infrastructure network along movement corridors, to improve the outcomes of densification shaped in response to transit-oriented development principles.

Ideas beyond density

- There is a growing appetite for density, but it is tempered by community perceptions of the negative impacts associated with height based on current experiences.
- There are implications to scale and density, both in delivery and integration with established communities, that strongly challenge whether we are delivering density well. Are we delivering the appropriate density?
- New models/rules are required to provide greater direction to how we successfully deliver density, particularly across the suburbs.

Delivering innovation

- Building Code of Australia (BCA) requirements appear to limit innovation and the delivery of more 'sustainable' building outcomes.

Building the places we want

- Are there some questions to be asked about our current reliance on investor driven density? Is this a short-term solution to finance urban growth that is falling short of delivering long-term city/urban design outcomes?

Attracting the next generation of big thinkers:

- The regional employment base needs to diversify, to encourage high performing/ knowledge based industries that will sustain the region's growth.
- If we value the distinctive amenity of the region, and build future focus of the economy around this we could compete with Sydney in attracting knowledge jobs.

Key directions

The following list summarises the key directions provided by each group in summary, and listed in order of the priority weighting given by the whole working group in a collective wrap-up discussion:

1. Demonstrate examples and provide greater guidance to deliver a liveable spectrum of density and quality delivery.
2. Explore issues of social density not just urban density.
3. Pilot new building technologies to unlock the missing middle. Review the BCA.
4. Shift to village thinking: village characteristics—distinctiveness, social density, local containment, access to amenity, local services, ethnicity and character.
5. Utilise our green 'assets' better. Understand what we have, conserve and augment as a priority and utilise as a key piece of green infrastructure in our future urban model.
6. Explore the infill vs greenfield growth dilemma and deliver development sustainably despite scale.
7. Reconsider the model for growth. Are we one region or a network of urban villages?

Discussion focus 02: Subtropical lifestyle

Questions to the panel

- What are the priorities for SEQ in managing its growth and delivering a subtropical lifestyle for its communities over the next 15 years?
- What are the current critical barriers to delivery?

Key discussion themes

The group discussion explored issues of development character, and specifically the issues of delivering culturally and contextually responsive design outcomes that achieve a strong sense of place. The following key issues and ideas were explored.

Define a more meaningful subtropicality to guide growth

- The phrase subtropical needs to be more carefully and holistically considered, to guide design and planning outcomes, and to avoid tokenism and market spin.
- Recognise the unique opportunity that the idea of subtropical design enables – to live without heating and cooling, and the ability to dry washing outside.
- Subtropical needs to be interpreted and defined to easily and equally apply at all scales.
- The term should be explored to emerge from community values and link these to the ecological survival of the region.
- Is subtropical better described as considerations of 'culture, climate, context'?

Value the green space as critical urban systems

- Preserve and augment green space as a first priority in development.
- Expand the value placed on our green assets to recognise their key role and contribution to delivering sustainable subtropical urbanism – sustainability, ecological survival, openness and landscape character.
- Define policy around green infrastructure in the same way that we do transport infrastructure.

- Leverage established resources such as green plot ratio to embed the value of green space more holistically as a key urban system.

Tackle the barriers to delivering sustainable outcomes

- The importance of language and the message in engagement – sell the value of sustainability. E.g. reduction in energy costs.
- Challenge the codes. Are existing planning mechanisms barriers rather than enablers of innovative sustainable urbanism, i.e. Planning Code, BCA, Green Star.
- Establish processes to ensure stronger leadership at all levels of delivery.

Key directions

1. Expand the definition of the subtropical lifestyle narrative to reflect genuine and whole-of-life experiences that community values.
2. Define and embed the ideas of an urban ecological system in future planning policy.
3. Utilise our green assets better. Understand what we have, conserve and augment as a priority and utilise as a key piece of green infrastructure in our future urban model.
4. Embed the requirements of a sustainable urban ecological system in every level of planning legislation and guidance.
5. Establish a framework to educate/upskill the politicians, professionals and community about the design and delivery requirements for subtropical urbanism.

Discussion focus 03: Delivery

Questions posed to the panel

- What inclusions should be explored in the SEQRP revision to strengthen and support its role in guiding growth?
- What other information/documentation/agencies could be drawn on?
- Are there potential new governance structures?

Key discussion themes

The group discussion explored development and delivery, specifically issues affecting alignment between the visions set in planning and policy documents and outcomes on the ground. The following key issues and ideas were explored.

Challenging the delivery models

- Typically, in delivery, project performance is assessed on cost effectiveness and timely delivery.
- Research is needed to explore case study exemplars of delivery models that apply equal weighting to the character/design of outcomes.
- Procurement framework needs assessing. Other than PPP, straight funding, what other delivery models are there?
- Performance vs prescription. Is the challenge the performance based system? Community wants to know exactly what's coming whereas planning and the development industry wants flexibility.
- Everything falls down to the lowest common denominator.
- Design should have an equal weighting to commercial expectations.
- Shift the culture of low value being placed on design.

Embedding the language of design in the delivery process

- Need for greater levels of skill, knowledge and support through the process and across all key stakeholders involved in the process.
- Should there be an expanded remit for review panels in the planning and development process to test design within projects and across planning schemes?

- Is there the opportunity for an expanded role for the Government Architect's Office to assist in the selection and support of local design review panels?

Liberate visionaries

- Is there a fear of vision at a political level?
- Is there a lack of commitment and leadership to deliver clear urban design led planning?

Key directions

1. Educate and liberate the influential champions of design as a key city making skill.
2. Research is needed to explore case study exemplars of delivery models that apply equal weighting to the character/design of outcomes.
3. Explore alternative delivery models for large scale urban infrastructure and regeneration projects.
4. Explore an expanded governance framework that embeds additional skilled resources that can influence, shape and control design outcomes.
5. Look for mechanisms to incentivise good outcomes and value capture based on design outcomes.

Establishing priorities: a summary discussion to test where the panel felt priority for action should be focused

Discussion focus 01: Growth

1. Demonstrate examples and provide greater guidance to deliver a liveable spectrum of density and quality delivery.
2. Explore issues of social density not just urban density.
3. Pilot new building technologies to unlock the missing middle. Review the BCA.
4. Shift to village thinking: village characteristics—distinctiveness, social density, local containment, access to amenity, local services, ethnicity and character.
5. Explore the infill vs greenfield growth dilemma and deliver development sustainably despite scale.
6. Reconsider the model for growth. Are we one region or a network of urban villages?

Discussion focus 02: Subtropical lifestyle

1. Expand the definition of the subtropical lifestyle narrative to reflect genuine and whole of life experiences that community values.
2. Define and embed the ideas of an urban ecological system in future planning policy.
3. Utilise our green assets better. Understand what we have, conserve and augment as a priority and utilise as a key piece of green infrastructure in our future urban model.
4. Embed the requirements of a sustainable urban ecological system in every level of planning legislation and guidance
5. Establish a framework to educate/upskill the politicians, professionals and community about the design and delivery requirements for subtropical urbanism.

Discussion focus 03: Delivery

1. Educate and liberate the influential champions of design as a key city making skill.
2. Research is needed to explore case study exemplars of delivery models that apply equal weighting to the character/design of outcomes.
3. Explore alternative delivery models for large scale urban infrastructure and regeneration projects.
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Appendix D: Case studies

Appendix E: Delivering good design

Establishing a requirement for good design

As the need to urbanise has become more pressing and the characteristics of good urban environments better understood, they have been translated into an increasingly prolific catalogue of government policies, objectives, and targets globally. This policy has been used to inform and drive professional practice and change the nature of built outcomes and patterns of urbanisation with varied success.

Well-conceived design policy is generally considered to be one of the key tools through which the planning process can raise design quality and standards. It is an essential tool for making sustainable places.

Good urban design requires:

- political will, leadership, and sustained determination to raise standards, as well as a long-term view
- effective policies to provide support for urban design at every level, from the strategic to the local
- those determining planning applications to have the confidence and skills to evaluate proposals and demand quality.

Delivering direction

At a national level, the need for an urban policy was recognised as important in response to the long-term challenges of population growth, demographic change, increased fuel costs, resource limitations, climate change, housing affordability, technological change and accelerating globalisation. In 2011, a national urban policy established the objective and directions of the Australian Government, recognising the roles of state, territory and local governments and private sector in planning, managing and investing in cities.

Table 3 summarises the key planning policy direction for urban design in Australia.

Table 3: Design in planning policy

Document	Year	Summary
Urban Design in Australia	1994	Report commissioned by the Prime Minister's Office and produced by the Urban Design Task Force. The report set out to understand what could be done to improve the quality of urban design in Australia. The document concentrates on the fundamental changes required to provide the basis for higher quality urban design in the future, and provides an Australia-wide review examining ways of improving the quality of urban areas, and of strengthening the role that can be played by urban design.
Our Cities, Our Future: A national urban policy for a productive, sustainable and liveable future	2011	Subsequent to the discussion paper, Our Cities – building a productive, sustainable and liveable future, the Australian Government released the next step in the framework, Our Cities, Our Future: A national urban policy. The policy sets out principles, goals and objectives (see appendix A). These are proposed to guide policy development and investment in our cities.[66]
National Urban Design Protocol	2011	The intent of the National Urban Design Protocol was to provide guidance for decision makers, professionals and members of the general public (individuals and community groups) who have an interest in urban design and the built environment. It recognises that as we increase density, good quality urban design becomes even more important in order to cater for the increasing and changing population. The protocol establishes 12 principles (based around five pillars) for quality urban places in Australia, regardless of location or size. The objective of the Protocol being '…to encourage the highest standard of urban design across all parts of our suburbs, towns and cities.'[67] See Appendix A for a snapshot of the protocol.

[66] Our Cities, Our Future: A national urban policy for productive, sustainable and liveable future. Department of Infrastructure and Transport, Commonwealth of Australia. 2011

[67] *Creating Places for People: An Urban Design Protocol for Australian Cities*. Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development, Australian Government. 2011.

Smart Cities Plan	2016	The Smart Cities Plan sets out the Australian Government's vision for cities, to maximise their potential. It includes three pillars: Smart Investment, Smart Policy and Smart Technology. It provides a foundation for ongoing reform and cooperative action. It represents a new framework for cities policy at the federal level. It is a framework that will guide action across various portfolios, to deliver better outcomes for our cities, the people who live in them and all Australians.

Regional resources

At a regional level, documents refer to the need for quality place outcomes, but they do not establish a statutory definition requirement.

State government direction

Charter for Queensland Places

Formulated in 2010 by the Queensland Board for Urban Places, the Charter for Queensland Places sets out seven principles for place making in Queensland. It is proposed to be used by those who scope, plan, procure, develop, and transform our places—the community, designers, developers, educators and policy and decision makers. It will also provide a framework to review and evaluate places.

The seven principles are:

1. Our places embody our values and our uniqueness.
2. Our places are for people and about people.
3. Our places are ecosystems that we respect and nurture.
4. Our places value our natural landscape and waterways.
5. Our place experiences are enhanced by what we build and the spaces within and between.
6. Our places are connected, accessible and contribute to the surrounding neighbourhoods.
7. Our places are shaped by design, our shared responsibility and our management.[68]

These principles are further defined with descriptions of what good places are.

South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009–2031

There are multiple references to design and amenity in the SEQRP. Figure 3 and Figure 4 show the direct and indirect references to design and amenity across the desired regional outcomes.

Figure 3: Live theme: testing current influence of theme in the SEQ Regional Plan 2009–2031

[68] *Charter for Queensland Places*. Queensland Board for Urban Places, Queensland Government. 2010

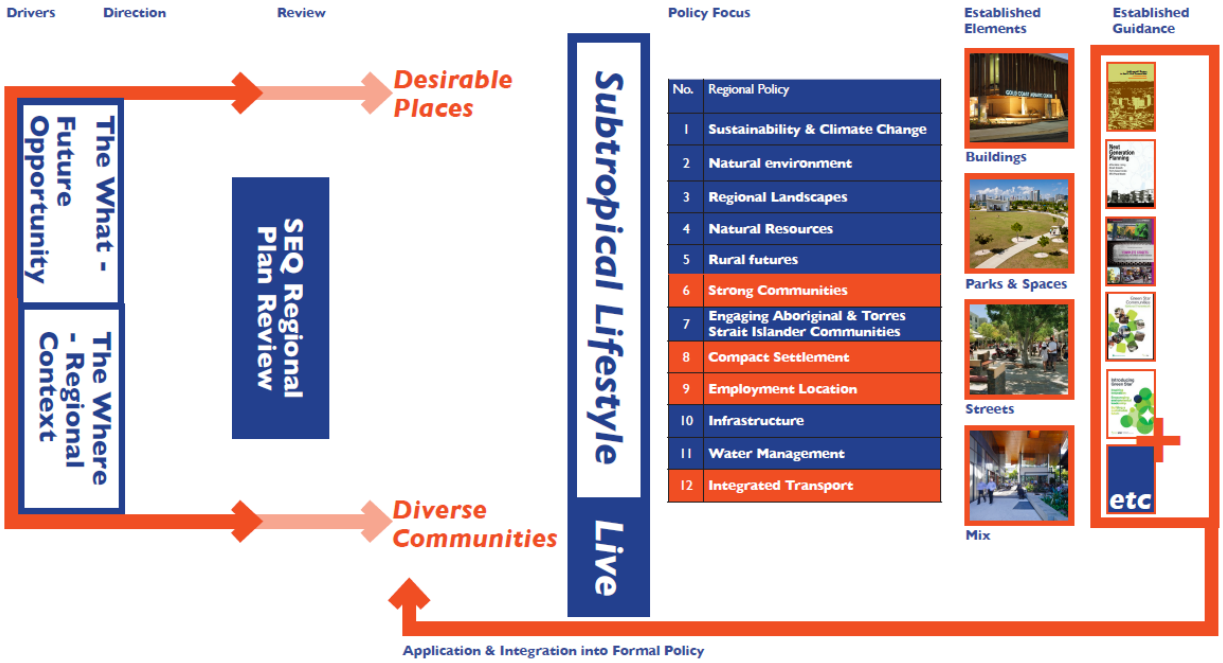

Figure 4: Live theme: application and opportunity

Local government direction

Local governments provide varying levels of design guidance for development in their local government areas. Planning schemes, in particular, will host the requirements for design as well as providing advice.

Design requirements are often distributed across various codes in a planning scheme and in planning scheme policies. Some councils also have other documents that provide advice about design that sit outside the planning scheme.

Supplementary guidance

When looking at what is currently available in SEQ to guide development outcomes (outside of local government) there are numerous documents that can be referenced by local authority officers, developers and their design teams for guidance of good practice.

Collectively these documents provide a comprehensive resource of design guidance for development in SEQ. The four most significant within the context of this paper follow.

For subtropical design direction: The subtropical design in SEQ handbook

With emphasis on incorporating subtropical design principles into different scales of planning, the document provides advice on how these principles can be applied from the regional level to an individual site or building level. The 12 principles outlined cover aspects such as designing for place and context, diversity of built form and uses.

A planning toolkit to improve housing affordability and liveability: Next generation planning handbook.

Next Generation Planning: A handbook for planners, designers and developers in South East Queensland

This handbook looks at the attributes that have made great places in SEQ and distils these into products to help those planning for future places to make them great places. It also has a focus on affordable living and how the features of great places can assist in planning for this. The handbook

discussed the attributes or key features of case study great places and then outlines tools (e.g. SEQ place model) that can be adapted into planning schemes and local area planning.

A design guide for great street outcomes: Complete streets

Complete Streets is a revised version of Queensland Streets, and is a guideline for designing streets to cater for more than just motor vehicles. It supports the creation of sustainable and quality neighbourhoods by emphasising the role and function of streets as places for people as well as vehicles. It distinguishes between streets and roads, describing roads as providing a transport function, and streets as destinations and places for people to experience.

The principles promote classifying streets by their form not their function, that make movement easy and where pedestrians and cyclists come first. The principles cover a range of users – not just motor vehicles, parking for place, services, street furniture and street trees. They also cover a range of options for streets including shared streets and motor vehicle free streets.

Embedding green infrastructure: Water sensitive urban design technical design guidelines for South East Queensland

Water sensitive urban design provides strategies for designing solutions to minimise the impacts on the urban water cycle. It is an integrated approach for all aspects of the water cycle (potable water, wastewater, stormwater quantity and stormwater quality) and results in site-responsive design solutions.

The key principles are: reducing use; minimising wastewater disposal; stormwater treatment; improving the health of waterways; and improving the aesthetics of how water is treated in suburbs, towns and cities. The guidelines in the document are specifically for use during the detailed design and construction, operation and maintenance stages of the urban development process.

Across SEQ there is currently no explicit policy established that legislates for quality design outcomes. The region relies on non-binding design and planning guidance design to deliver design quality and development outcomes.

Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning
1 William Street, Brisbane
tel 13 QGOV (13 74 68)

www.dilgp.qld.gov.au