



23 December 2013

Public Infrastructure Inquiry  
LB2 Collins Street East  
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Via email: [infrastructure@pc.org.au](mailto:infrastructure@pc.org.au)

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: SUBMISSION TO THE PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION INQUIRY ON  
PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment to the Productivity Commission inquiry on public infrastructure. Public infrastructure plays a vital role in supporting more productive, liveable, sustainable and resilient communities and cities. The Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) believes that government and industry must work together to ensure that public infrastructure is planned, funded, designed and delivered to support the most financially, socially and environmentally sustainable outcomes possible.

**About the GBCA**

The GBCA is the nation's authority on sustainable buildings, communities and cities. Our mission is to accelerate the transformation of Australia's built environment into one that is healthy, liveable, productive, resilient and sustainable. We work together with industry and government to encourage policies and programs that support our mission. We educate thousands of people each year on how to design and deliver sustainable outcomes for our buildings, communities and cities. And we operate Australia's only national, voluntary, holistic rating system for sustainable buildings and communities - Green Star.

The GBCA is a member of the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council (ASBEC) and works closely with other organisations which have an interest in creating a better built environment. In the lead up to the 2013 federal election, the GBCA joined ASBEC, Association of Building Sustainability Assessors, Australian Conservation Foundation, Australian Institute of Architects, Consult Australia, National Growth Areas Alliance, Planning Institute of Australia, Property Council of Australia and the Urban Development Institute of Australia to form the Urban Coalition.

The Urban Coalition recognises that if we are to meet Australia's infrastructure needs now and into the future, we must find new ways to leverage public and private investment. In May 2013, the Urban Coalition released *A New Deal for Urban Australia*, a policy platform which outlined how a new infrastructure investment asset class could be developed offering lower risk, credit enhanced returns for both institutional and retail investors.

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The Urban Coalition is now further developing the recommendations outlined in *A New Deal* and aims to provide a more detailed approach to infrastructure funding that will also take a more holistic view of the productivity benefits to communities, cities and regions that can be realised through the delivery of coordinated packages of projects and initiatives.

The GBCA believes it is vital that clear objectives, targets and outcomes are articulated as part of the planning, design and delivery of any infrastructure project and that robust methods of measurement should be employed to ensure that these are met. A range of indicators and rating tools have already been developed in Australia, such as Green Star - Communities, the Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia's IS rating tool and the Sustainable Australia Report 2013.

### **Green Star - Communities**

In consultation with industry and all levels of government, the GBCA has developed a rating tool for sustainable development projects on a community scale. The first step in developing the Green Star – Communities rating tool was to develop a national framework consisting of five best practice principles:

1. Enhance liveability
2. Create opportunities for economic prosperity
3. Foster environmental responsibility
4. Embrace design excellence
5. Demonstrate visionary leadership and strong governance.

The second stage of the Green Star – Communities project was to establish best practice benchmarks and a set of 38 credits to complement the five principles. The Green Star – Communities rating tool was released as a pilot in June 2012 and provides benchmarks and an independent method of measurement that cities and communities can use to ensure they are meeting their overall goals and objectives. Further information about the Green Star – Communities rating tool can be found on the GBCA website at [www.gbca.org.au](http://www.gbca.org.au) or at [www.greenstarcommunities.org.au](http://www.greenstarcommunities.org.au).

The GBCA encourages the Productivity Commission to engage with ASBEC and members of the Urban Coalition and we would welcome the opportunity to provide further information regarding matters outlined above. Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is any further information that I can provide, or to arrange for further consultation.

Yours sincerely



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