FuturePerth Comment

City of Perth Proposed Scheme Amendment No. 26 (Built Form Controls)

January 2013
Thank you for inviting FuturePerth to provide comment on the City of Perth’s proposed Scheme Amendment No. 26 (Built Form Controls).

Our organisation supports the City’s efforts to adapt and improve its planning framework through the currently advertised amendment, and the recent plot ratio amendment.

We have reviewed the amendment documentation in detail and have also taken into consideration the City’s response to our plot ratio amendment submission in preparing this letter.

As with the plot ratio amendment, FuturePerth considers that Scheme Amendment No. 26 represents a net positive to the City, however does not go far enough.

The City of Perth made a number of incremental changes to plot ratio limits in Scheme Amendment No. 25. However, we believe the limited range and extent of bonus categories and an inability to exercise discretion in regards to plot ratio will not enable the CBD to reach its potential.

FuturePerth considers that Scheme Amendment No. 26, as currently proposed, represents a similar outcome. A significant review of the amendment is required to achieve the City’s goals of increased intensification and vibrancy.

We do however strongly support a large number of changes in the proposed amendment, including:

- Relaxing of height controls in the west end of the CBD and the Stirling Street area, and
- The significant easing of height controls in the Goderich Street precinct in East Perth, and in the block between Adelaide Terrace and Hay Street in East Perth.

We express concern at the following provisions, which we consider do not sufficiently allow for true CBD-scale development:

- Continued restrictive height planes around the City’s main retail malls, this could inhibit the redevelopment of major sites such as Forrest Chase.
• Continued restrictive height planes in Northbridge. With the imminent completion of the Perth City Link, continued expansion of CBD-scale development north of St Georges Terrace should be encouraged.
• Continued very low height limits in West Perth (generally 29 metres), that are inhibiting the growth of this undeveloped portion of the CBD. The small concessions granted on parts of Hay Street in West Perth are insufficient to provide for the activation of this area of the city.
• Continued restrictions on the height of buildings on the southern side of Adelaide Terrace (only 100 metres). As the emerging residential heart of the CBD these restrictions appear arbitrary and will prevent much needed new large-scale residential development.

Overall, we do not see the need to control height in the CBD – with tower on podium requirements providing an appropriate built form for the whole municipality. With our metropolitan area covering over 5,000 square kilometres, the Perth CBD should play an essential role in accommodating density.

We consider it unlikely the City of Perth will substantially review its amendment based on public submissions. Consequently, we propose that the City’s discretion clauses be amended to provide additional flexibility to built form controls. Major building height encroachments into height planes should be considered more widely in cases such as

• Where a building is of exceptional design quality or will provide a new landmark for the city skyline,
• Where a proposal will provide a significant number of dwellings (for example more than 100) into the city,
• Where a proposal will provide significantly increased activity to a precinct, or function as a main attractor or service centre, or
• Where a proposals non compliance does not adversely compromise the desired character of a precinct, and aligns with the strategic goals of the CBDs role in the metropolitan region.

Maintaining maximum flexibility is crucially important to attracting investment into the CBD. In its current form, FuturePerth considers that the amendment represents an evolution rather than a major revision of built form controls. The opportunity should be taken to substantially relax existing provisions given that major scheme amendments such as No. 26 are rare and time consuming.
Again, we thank the City of Perth for the opportunity to comment and hope that the City of Perth revises Amendment No. 26 to achieve its goals for the city, many of which align with those of FuturePerth.

Kind Regards

Sean Morrison
Chairman, OBO FuturePerth Committee
FuturePerth Inc.
Who are we?

FuturePerth is an incorporated association devoted to supporting development and action that enhances the vibrancy and livability of Perth.

We are a pro-good-development group consisting of a variety of professionals and students from a wide range of fields including planning, law, architecture, health and hospitality.

We have been incorporated since early 2007 and operate as a non-profit, non-partisan organisation.

FuturePerth looks forward to providing comment on future City of Perth projects and undertakings.

Vision

To provide a voice of progressive thinking to ensure that development in Perth is livable, vibrant, integrated, connected and of a high amenity.

Objectives

To promote the economic and social development of Western Australia and to lend support to similarly minded organisations where appropriate.

To promote the Perth central area as the primary area in the State for entertainment, retail, office, residential and recreational purposes.

To promote the densification and growth of suburban development nodes.

To promote the investment in and expansion of the public transportation system in Perth and Western Australia and the discouragement of policies which further motor vehicle dependence.

To promote the diversification and growth of metropolitan regional centres

To promote urban regeneration projects.

To provide a voice for pro-development, progressive, forward thinking people and to dispel unfounded arguments by anti-development groups or individuals.

To generally support a reduction in the growth of urban sprawl and encourage the consolidation of development within the existing Perth urban area.