22 November 2018

Planning for Entertainment Noise
Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage
Locked Bag 2506
PERTH WA 6001

Dear Reform Team,

Planning for entertainment noise in the Northbridge area – Committee for Perth Submission

The Committee for Perth is an influential, member-based organisation driven by Perth’s business and community leaders. As an advocate for a brighter, more liveable future for Perth and Peel, the Committee promotes and enables change that will improve the cultural diversity, economic prosperity, sustainability and world-class amenity of Perth.

This submission has been prepared by the Committee for Perth with input from our Reshaping Working Group, a multi-disciplinary group that covers planning, design, development, construction, infrastructure, policy and local government.

The Committee supports the proposed reforms to help maintain the unique character of Northbridge as Western Australia’s premier entertainment district. As a key advocate for Perth as it grows to a region of 3.5 million people, the Committee believes that this reform process is critical for a thriving arts and cultural sector, which is central to a strong and engaged community.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Western Australian Planning Commission, the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage and the Department of Water and Environmental regulation on progressing this important initiative for Perth. We give our thanks to Damien Martin for providing a briefing to the Reshaping Working Group and staff of the Committee for Perth.

Should you require any additional information or clarification on the Committee’s submission, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]
Marion Fulker
CEO
Comments – Planning for entertainment noise in the Northbridge area

The Committee generally supports the proposed reforms in the Planning for entertainment noise in the Northbridge area document (proposed reforms). Early research undertaken by the Committee for Perth as part of A cultural compact for Western Australia – the 10 year challenge (cultural compact) identified the importance of a thriving arts and cultural sector in creating a strong and engaged community. The report challenges government, the arts sector and the community to work together to create vibrant places where arts and culture form part of the everyday lives of Western Australians.

We believe that the proposed reforms will assist in this vision, through allowing for a thriving mixed-use precinct that places high value on arts and culture and the positive impact it can have on residents and visitors to a city.

Specifically, the Committee supports the reform objectives that seek to:
- balance the ongoing viability of the Northbridge entertainment district with protection of the amenity of residents and other businesses;
- provide clear and consistent development guidance for new developments; and
- provide an increased level of assurance to music venue operators.

Entertainment Venues and Noise Sensitivity

Northbridge is the location of a significant amount of entertainment venues, contributing to the vibrancy of Perth and providing opportunity for community engagement. These types of venues have a positive impact on the amenity, liveability, attractiveness and perceived sophistication of the city as a place to live and visit, with benefits widely reported in the media and advocated by the tourism industry (Committee for Perth, 2008).

The Committee supports the proposed reforms and believes they will ensure existing entertainment venues operating throughout Northbridge will have increased protection from noise complaints from sensitive land uses, which can place considerable burden on the viability of such operations. Research conducted as part of the Committee’s What We Thought Would Kill Us series highlighted the significant ongoing administrative and financial burden that noise complaints can have on the operations of businesses in mixed use precincts, such as the Raffles Waterfront Development and the Old Swan Brewery development (Committee for Perth, 2015; Committee for Perth, 2017).

Both the developers and residents of these projects could have been assisted by clearer regulation on the requirements for environmental noise emissions during the development application process, or during the purchase of property in a mixed use precinct. The Committee therefore supports the proposed reform measures, including agent of change, putting the onus for the amelioration of potential impact on the new development, requiring noise impact assessments as part of the development application process, placing notices on titles and amending the noise regulations from outdoor to indoor measurements.

Economic Prosperity

A significant amount of Committee for Perth research has demonstrated the importance of arts and culture for economic prosperity across Perth and Peel, including the creation of employment and through contribution to GSP.

The Committee’s recently released Bigger & Better Beyond the Boom: Perth’s Pathway to Prosperity report identified the importance of arts and culture for a diverse and strong
economy, as they add new and creative dimensions to the city. This was supported by an earlier FACTBase Special Report — Perth as a resilient economy, which identified arts and culture as a 'Bright Light' industry, making important contributions to employment and with the ability to propel future growth (Tonts et al., 2017).

In order to ensure a diverse and resilient economy, industries including arts and culture will require support through the proposed reforms. The Committee therefore supports the overall key reform objective to provide an increased level of assurance to music venue operators.

Indicative Boundary

The Committee is concerned that the proposed boundary around the Northbridge precinct is too small, and doesn’t encompass all mixed use land zones within close proximity to this area. Specifically, the boundary should be extended to include all of the central area, which contains a significant amount of entertainment venues, and has a large number of upcoming developments which would benefit from the proposed regulations.

Ensuring that regulations for the central area provide protection for noise sensitive developments coupled with entertainment providers should be a key consideration during this reform process. In addition, there are areas located outside of the central area that would benefit from the proposed reforms. Entertainment venues and noise sensitive developments are increasingly co-located in mixed-use precincts outside of the central area, in locations including but not limited to Fremantle, Leederville, Mount Lawley and Victoria Park.

The Committee also believes that the reforms need to include additional guidance for how adjacent properties outside of the indicative boundary will be dealt with.

Existing Policy

As mentioned on page 10 of the proposed reforms, Draft State Planning Policy 7.3 
Apartments Design (SPP 7.3) provides design solutions that can help to maintain good living amenity in apartment developments under section 4.9 Noise and pollution. The Committee therefore recommends the proposed reforms include how they will integrate with existing policy, especially SPP 7.3 to ensure there is no ambiguity in the responsibility of who will manage external noise impacts in new developments.

References


