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Australian Institute of Architects

11 December 2017

Ms Susan Campbell
Manager Lerwin
Rural City of Murray Bridge
2 Seventh Street
Murray Bridge, SA 5253

Dear Susan,

1724-17 Lerwin Refurbishment and Expansion

The Australian Institute of Architects (The Institute) and the Association of Consulting Architects (ACA) are peak bodies representing architects in Australia. The Institute has over 800 members locally and offers member services and resources, advocacy and education services. The ACA represents the majority of South Australian practices, providing advocacy, management, professional development and practice support.

We are writing in relation to tender 1724-17 Lerwin Refurbishment and Expansion. We understand that the tender includes Stage 1 – Concept Design as part of the tender submission. This would require tenderers to provide conceptual design information, artist impressions and high-level estimates without payment.

Design expertise is a core component of the services provided by architects. Architects' ability to generate highly resolved, unique responses to specific criteria is a highly specialised skill set. When done properly this adds significant value to projects. However, the provision of free design services limits the benefit that can be provided by an architect by constraining their access to briefing information and the client/users.

Given that this is a project involving complex operational and technical requirements and vulnerable users, this methodology will significantly increase the risk of sub-optimal outcomes for staff, residents and the Rural City of Murray Bridge (Council).

In addition to compromising the value to Council of the concept designs produced, the proposed methodology:

- Devalues the intellectual property and expertise of the architectural profession
- Compromises the financial viability of the practices involved



- Contravenes the intent of the Architectural Practice Act 2009
- Attracts liability regardless of whether the architect is paid

As a result, we understand that many respected practices with experience in aged care projects will not submit a tender.

It is our understanding that Government at all levels aims to observe best practice procedures. *AS4121-1994 Code of ethics and procedures for the selection of consultants*, which defines best practice in the procurement of consultant services, states that the Principal shall not require work without payment. Tender 1724-17 would therefore not comply to this objective in its current form.

The Institute and ACA are happy to assist Council in developing a more suitable methodology for procuring architectural services, which will result in significantly better outcomes for all parties. We also believe that observing best practice procurement will provide improved value for money over the life of the facility.

We look forward to working with you in relation to this matter.

Regards

Nicolette Di Lernia
SA Executive Director
Australian Institute of Architects

John Held
President
Association of Consulting Architects

CC Brenton Lewis – Mayor – Rural City of Murray Bridge
 Micheal Sedgman – Chief Executive Officer - Rural City of Murray Bridge