



Evidence Based Policy and Practice for Healthy Built Environments The Three Domains

Never Stand Still

Faculty of the Built Environment

Healthy Built Environments Program

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Outline

1. Introducing the research
2. The three domains – focusing effective built environment interventions
3. The research evidence that links with policy to underpin action
4. Conclusions

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Building the Evidence

Healthy Built Environments: A review of the literature

Major research project

Systematic, comprehensive and rigorous

Proposes three main 'domains' of built environment influence on health

Links research and policy to underpin actions



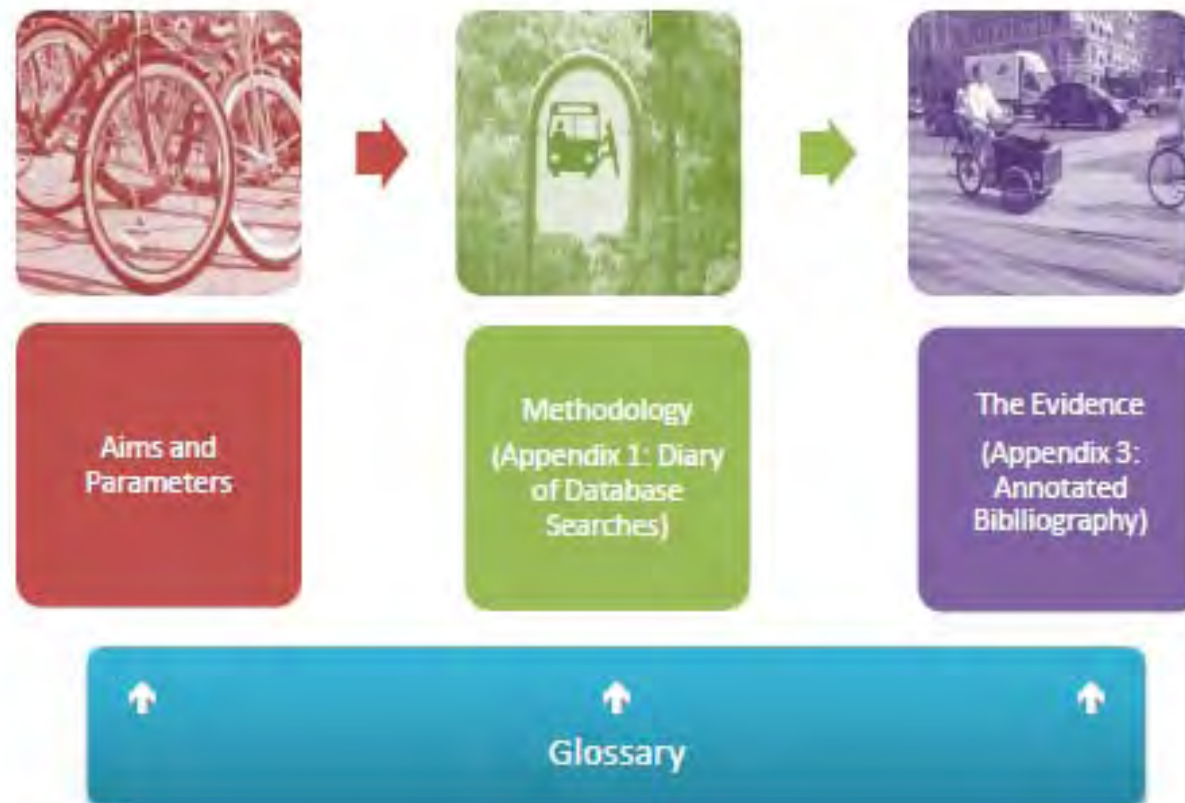
Three key domains of the built environment and health:

- The Built Environment and Getting People Active
- The Built Environment and Connecting and Strengthening Communities
- The Built Environment and Providing Healthy Food Options

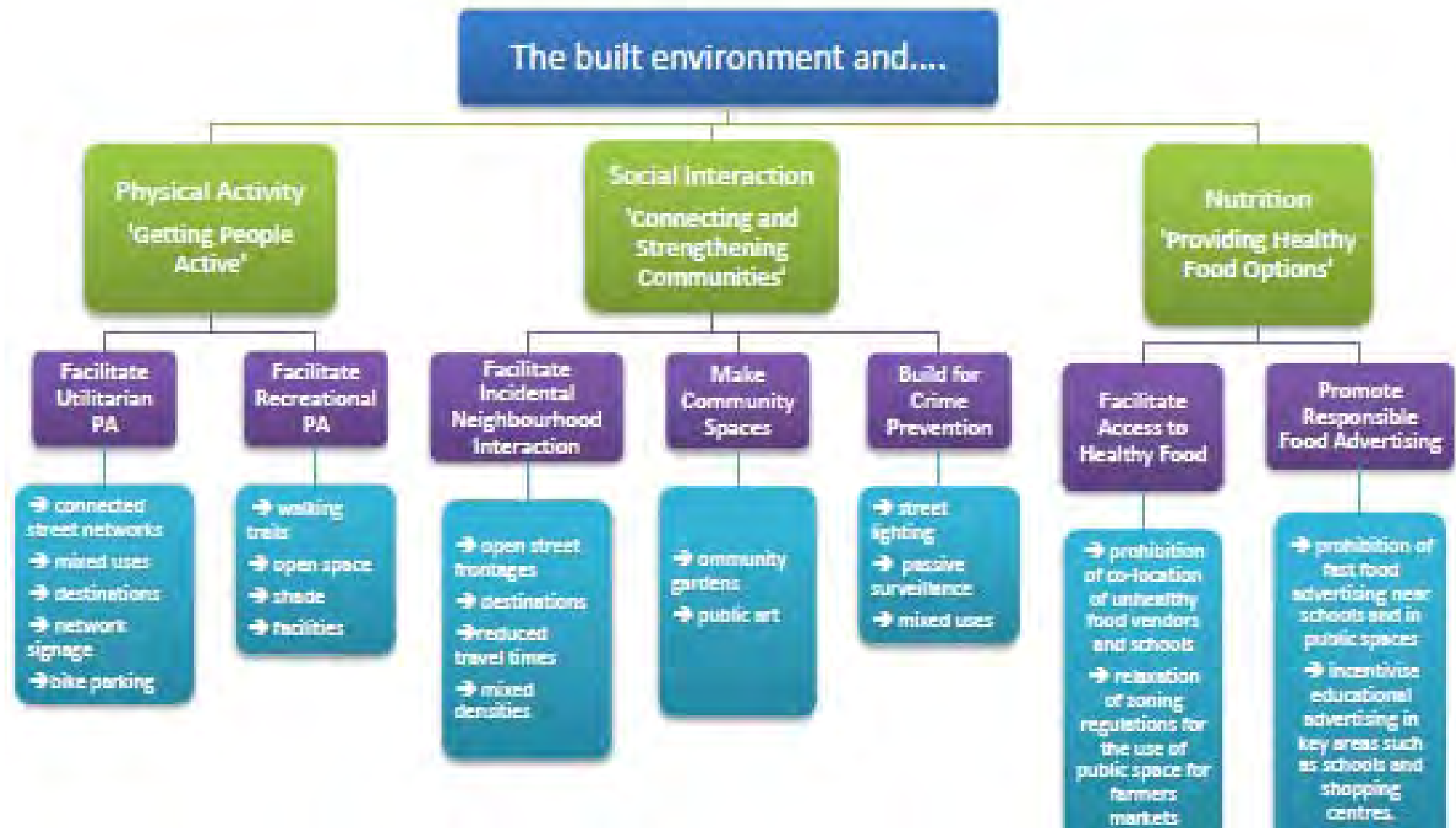
Address major risk factors for chronic disease:

- Physical inactivity
- Social isolation
- Obesity

The structure and contents of the review



The three domains of healthy built environments



Methodology

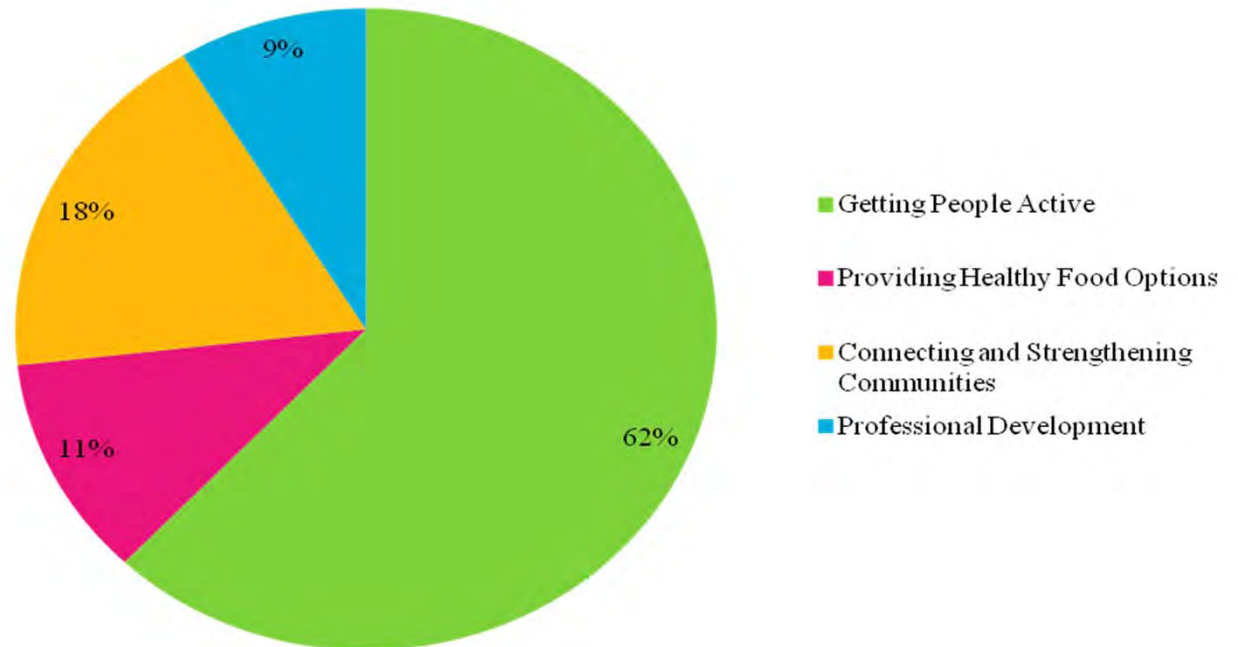
- Systematic review using built environment and health databases
- April and May 2010
- 1,080 references relevant for inclusion in the review
- References categorised into the three key domains of healthy built environments + additional domain of 'Professional Development'

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Breakdown of references after categorisation



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The Built Environment and Getting People Active

While higher density areas generally display environments conducive to physical activity, increasing residential densities alone will not necessarily encourage increased physical activity



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Getting people active ^{ctd}

Density, mixed use and micro-design elements in some combination are most likely to influence levels of physical activity

Short trip distances are associated with higher densities and support active transport, which in turn encourages greater physical activity



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Getting people active ^{ctd}

A mix of social, economic, political and built environment policies will positively influence levels of physical activity



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Getting people active ^{ctd}

Education on how to use facilities, as well as health and well-being benefits of being active









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Getting people active ^{ctd}

Community building events

Economic incentives

Economic support



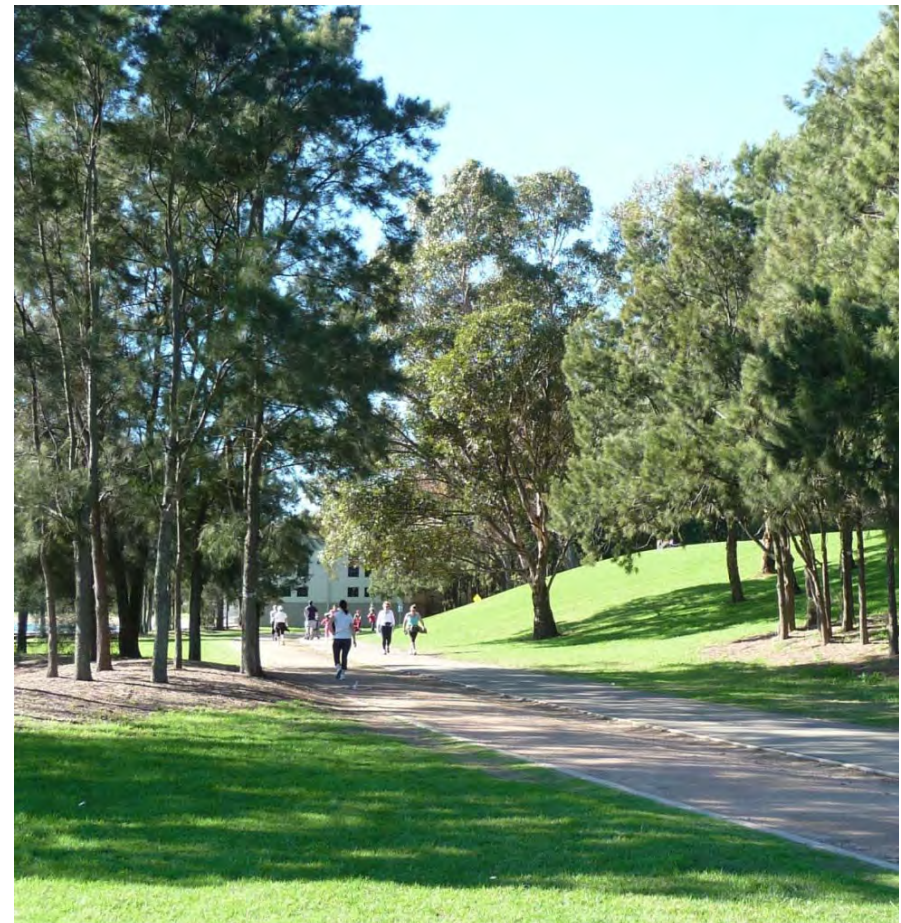
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Getting people active ^{ctd}

Well maintained and connected footpaths, bike paths and open spaces will encourage physical activity



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Getting people active ^{ctd}

Policies to make environments safe (and perceived to be safe) from crime and traffic will encourage physical activity – especially for children



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Getting people active ^{ctd}

Buildings with visible and well signposted stairways encourage physical activity



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The Built Environment and Connecting & Strengthening Communities

The location and treatment of green and open spaces facilitates contact with nature, as well as contact with community

Good quality and sufficient green open space is critical for physical and mental health



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Connecting and strengthening communities ctd

Community gardens have important community building benefits



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Safety is fundamental to connecting and strengthening communities

Community participation in shaping the built environment, including making it safe, supports social interaction and community building



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Connecting and strengthening communities cld

Casual encounters with community can occur anywhere

Provide comfortable waiting at public transport stops to encourage incidental interactions

Provide opportunities for inclusive community building



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When increasing densities,
ensure adequate provision
is made to protect individual
privacy

Accompany increases in
density with other
community building
programs



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The Built Environment and Providing Healthy Food Options

There is a clear link between exposure to healthy food options and healthy eating

Most convincing research concerns the co-location and advertising of unhealthy food options near schools

Reduce fast-food exposure in the vicinity of school environments, including the advertising of fast food and the use of land for fast food outlets



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Providing healthy food options ctd

Retain viable agricultural lands close to population centres to ensure a nearby healthy source of food



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Conclusion

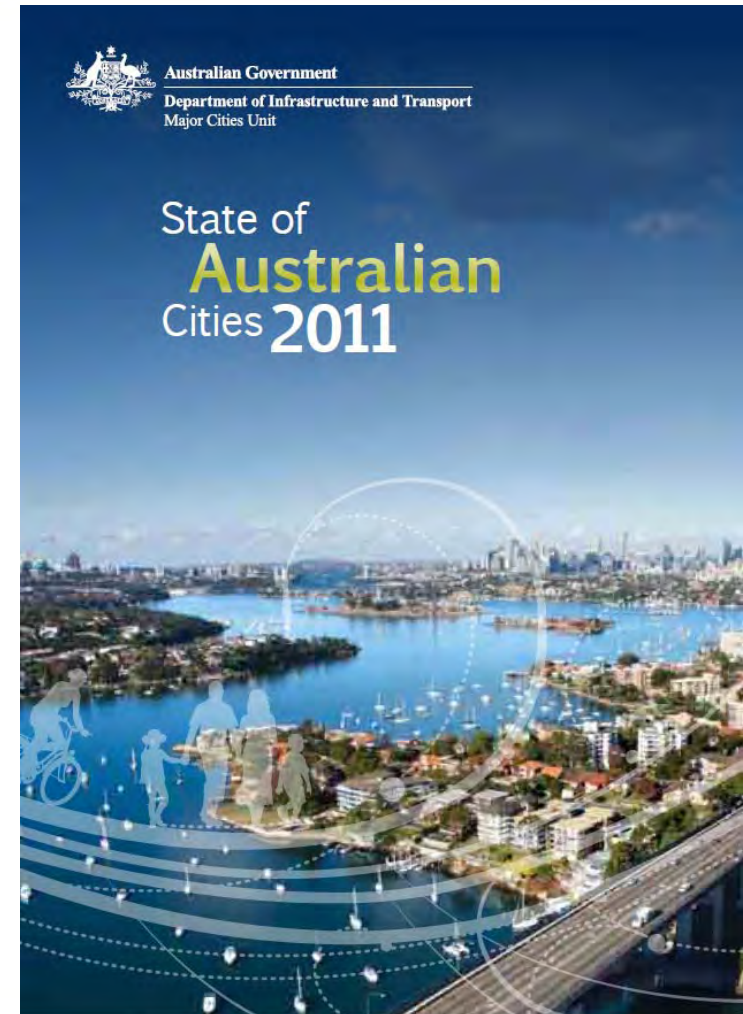
Research evidence supports healthy built environments – policy and action

A suite of policies across the built environment and public health is needed

The issue of density is complex

The evidence for green open space provision is unequivocal

The three domains offer a useful organising frame for HBEs



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Download the Literature Review

<http://www.be.unsw.edu.au/programs/healthy-built-environments-program/literature-review>