



Welcome to edition No.9 of 'Planning Matters', the newsletter of URPS produced twice a year. We hope you enjoy some highlights of the work we've been doing with many of you over recent months. You can also access electronic copies of this and all our past newsletters on our website at [www.urps.com.au](http://www.urps.com.au)

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## Greater flexibility to facilitate growth in the CBD



There is inherent flexibility in the application of the quantitative guidelines in all Development Plans, with the exception of complying standards and non-complying triggers. Until recently, the Adelaide Development Plan included provisions in some zones that formalised this notion of flexibility, providing criteria against which proposals that exceeded the quantitative height guidelines could be assessed.

At the same time, there have been instances where worthy proposals did not satisfy elements of the 'over height' provisions, but were ultimately approved. This led to a degree of uncertainty for developers/applicants during the assessment process, as well as potentially unwarranted assessment challenges for planning officers and decision making bodies.

One such example was the proposal at 152-160 Grote Street, for which we provided development facilitation services. This proposed building has a total height of approximately 48.5m (17 levels), while the Development Plan height guideline was 40m. Adelaide City Council was of the view that the building did not include any of the design criteria identified in the Principle relating to development exceeding the quantitative height guideline and should, therefore, not proceed.

The Development Assessment Commission (DAC), on the other hand, considered this to be "an uncompromising view for a site and locality where the transformational aspects of new development have not been realised" and that "any new development in this area should be seen as a transformative element within the streetscape". DAC also held the view that "approval of a building that exceeds the height threshold by 8.5m does not offend or weaken existing policy (or frustrate future development)". On this basis, the proposal was granted approval by DAC.

This example perhaps sheds some light on why Minister Rau has introduced the Capital City DPA, which removes quantitative height guidelines in the core of the CBD and increases height limits in some other parts of the City and clarifies the circumstances in which development may exceed the height limits.

It is encouraging to see the State Government and Adelaide City Council in agreement over the Development Plan reforms, described by the Premier as "a new era in State Government and City Council co-operation". It is equally encouraging to see that the DPA is supported by the need for all development over \$10 Million to be reviewed by the State Government Architect, assisted by an expert design panel. We believe that this type of initiative will do much to achieve the high quality of design that is so critical to maintaining Adelaide's edge as the nation's most liveable capital city – a place of vibrancy, innovation and charm.

*The exciting mixed use building approved for 152-160 Grote Street (image courtesy of Brown Falconer)*



## Tourism in the Barossa Valley – Converting strategy to Development Plan policy



*The scale of tourism development has an important relationship to the character of the Barossa*

The Barossa Valley is an internationally renowned tourist destination. The region's appeal is intrinsically linked to its famous vineyards, wineries and townships. Through a range of strategic initiatives, both the State Government and the Barossa Council have sought to develop the tourism potential of the Barossa Valley. However, a policy review undertaken by URPS indicates that the Development Plan does not adequately convert the strategic directions of the Government and Council into complementary development controls.

There is currently a disconnect between the broader strategic directions contained within the General Section of the Development Plan and the more detailed policies within the Zones – especially the rural zones. Of particular concern are the mixed messages that the Development Plan is giving in relation to the scale of tourist accommodation. For example, the General Section promotes tourist accommodation of a “medium-scale” outside the townships, while the rural zones clearly restrict tourist accommodation to a “small-scale”. There are also internal inconsistencies within some of the zones where small scale tourism development is envisaged, but a “shop” and “motel” are then listed as non-complying.

The review concluded that changes were required to the Development Regulations to provide clear definitions for tourism development. In addition, it was recommended that Council initiate a Tourism DPA to provide clear and consistent direction in terms of the desired scale of tourist accommodation. Such an exercise should use the National Tourism Planning Guide as a key reference document.

Finally, it was recommended that Council consider “opening up” the rural zones to allow medium-scale tourism development. Such an approach, which has been recommended by the South Australian Tourism Commission to reflect market realities, requires careful consideration to ensure that the key role of the rural zones in primary production is maintained.

## Significant community engagement for a significant plan



In 1836, Adelaide's first planners selected the site for the colony between the Hills and the Gulf based on the need for fresh water and fertile soils, and to ensure the colony was safe. The legacy of this settlement decision is that much of the metropolitan area is located on a floodplain. An unanticipated consequence is that a 1-in-100 year storm in Brownhill Keswick Creek catchment could directly affect up to 7,000 properties, resulting in flood related damages of up to \$178 million and significant trauma in the community.

The five catchment Councils (Adelaide, Burnside, Mitcham, Unley and West Torrens) have prepared a Draft Stormwater Management Plan for the catchment, which proposes a range of flood mitigation measures to reduce the risk of harm to life and property. Preparing this plan was not easy considering the diversity of the catchment, the number of people directly and indirectly affected by the proposals, and the range of views in the community about flooding and flood mitigation works.

We recently completed the consultation process related to the Draft Plan, which included a mail-out to more than 26,000 addresses and three public open days involving information displays, 3D visualisations of flood mitigation infrastructure, and interactive digital flood plain maps. In addition, staff from the five catchment Councils and project consultants Natalie Fuller, WorleyParsons, WAX Design and URPS were on hand to answer questions.

The combination of these techniques and having expertise ‘on hand’ allowed us to respond effectively to people's questions, as well as hear a range of voices and perspectives on the plan. Our Consultation Report will inform the five catchment Councils' finalisation of the Draft Stormwater Management Plan as they take the next steps in managing flood risk in the catchment.

*Design treatments to manage flooding need to be explored with the community*





## Thinking differently about project management

Project management is defined as the “planning, organisation and management of teams, resources, communications, risks and issues to deliver an agreed scope of work”. A project has been well managed not only if the agreed outcomes are delivered on time and on budget – but also when all stakeholders are happy with the quality of the outcome, and the project team feels that they have made a meaningful contribution.

Some of our clients have been exploring different approaches to project management and the use of consultant support. One of our Directors, Grazio Maiorano, has been providing project management assistance to a number of local Councils. At the City of Salisbury, Grazio has been helping steer the formulation of Salisbury City Centre Structure Plan. At Mallala, Grazio has been assisting Council staff as they work with developers and others to progress the Two Wells Residential DPA.

These Councils have found that the extra pair of hands available on an ‘as needs’ basis has been particularly useful, given the political and technical complexity of these projects. In addition, our independence in these projects has enhanced communication channels between relevant Council staff, Elected Members, State Government and a wide range of consultants, as well as maintaining high morale amongst all involved.

We are happy to meet with you to discuss the best way for us to assist managing any of your complex projects so that your resources are used in the most efficient and effective way.

## Breathing life into Tonsley Park

A range of local and global factors are contributing to the loss of the traditional manufacturing base that once underpinned Adelaide’s southern suburbs. The closure of the ‘anchoring’ Mitsubishi plant has been particularly destabilising. In response, the State Government is co-ordinating the redevelopment of the 61 hectare former Mitsubishi site at Tonsley Park.



The Tonsley Park Redevelopment Project aims to bring together ‘learning, inventing, making and living’ in the one place. The co-location of educational, research, advanced manufacturing and residential land uses will provide technologies, products and services for the mining, renewable energy, health care, construction and environmental sectors in a high quality urban environment.

URPS has been assisting the Department for Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy and the Urban Renewal Authority in the creation of a DPA for Tonsley Park which establishes the Development Plan framework to support the sorts of development described above. We have also been providing development facilitation services for the Sustainable Industries Education Centre. The centre will be the first new development on the site and will bring together a range of TAFE programs, providing training for jobs of the future while forming a nucleus around which innovative/advanced manufacturing businesses can establish.

We look forward to the ongoing redevelopment of Tonsley Park as a model for other places in Australia looking to breathe new life into traditional manufacturing regions.

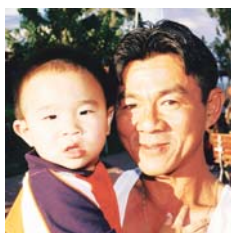


Effective project management is more than just getting the job done on time



Images courtesy of DMITRE

## Gearing up for the release of the 2011 Census



Changes in population characteristics have a significant bearing on how we plan

The characteristics of our population – and the ways in which these are changing – has a significant bearing on how we think about the size and shape of our cities and towns, the sorts of employment and recreation we need and the likely services and supports that will underpin community wellbeing. It is for these reasons that we are eagerly awaiting the release of the 2011 ABS Census data.

Due for release on 21 June 2012, the updated Census is expected to reveal the following trends in South Australia:

- Growth in the number of 0-4 year olds
- More young people aged between 20 and 29 years living at home
- Increasing household sizes
- More rental households while fewer households are purchasing their home.

What are some of the likely ramifications? We may need to think more creatively about the sorts of dwellings needed in our proposed higher density urban villages if households are becoming larger due to booming birthrates, young adults staying at home longer and decreasing housing affordability. Similarly, we may need to re-think our approach to human services delivery if there will be more children in our population in the near future, at a time when baby boomers are transitioning into retirement.

We will be monitoring the release of the census closely – please contact us if we can help you understand what the latest demographic trends will mean for your organisation.

## Creating an edible office

Here at URPS, our commitment to supporting local food production isn't just limited to our project work – it is also apparent in the way we use our office. Together with our co-tenants, WAX Design, we have designed and installed an 'edible green wall' that makes great use of the sunlight available in our building's central glass atrium.

The wall is providing lettuce, baby spinach, strawberries and a number of herbs as healthy additions to our lunches. It has proven to be so successful that there have been calls by some at URPS for a Stage 2 edible wall featuring donuts, custard tarts and lamingtons. Watch this space.



mmm – lunch time yet?



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