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### A warm welcome...

Welcome to edition No.4 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, together with news about key additions to our team.

### The 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide

It is exciting to see a renewed focus on strategic and spatial planning expressed in the draft 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide. As you would expect in a pluralist society, there is much debate about the Plan not only within the planning and development industry, but also within the broader community.

We are heartened by a number of elements of the draft Plan including:

- Recognised need to plan for population growth if South Australia is to prosper socially and economically.
- Ambitious targets for increasing the proportion of development that happens in existing urban areas.
- The identification of future mass transit routes linked to a significant budget commitment by State Government.
- Integrated, 'whole of government' approach to the coordination of planning, infrastructure and service provision to achieve the Plan's goals.

The Natural Resources Management Council and the Premier's Climate Change Council engaged URPS to undertake a detailed review of the draft 30 Year Plan from an environmental management perspective. Significantly, we found that the draft Plan responds to the need for a strong strategic foundation to address key environmental issues such as climate change, water security and a more compact urban form to achieve a "carbon efficient city". At the same time, there are some areas of environmental management where it is considered that the Plan could go further.



*Changing the way we think about water in terms of sea level rise and irrigation*

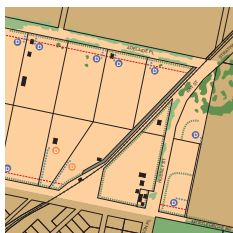


The draft 30 Year Plan acknowledges that sea level rise has been a reality for some time. The Development Plans of coastal Councils include provisions regarding sea level rise. However, the draft Plan does not discuss locating new development outside areas vulnerable to seawater inundation, nor does it include reference to buffers that facilitate development adaptation and habitat retreat if worst-case sea level rise predictions are realised.

The Plan is also silent on the link between water availability and water use by approved development. Currently the planning system permits water dependent development within non-prescribed areas, even where there is no water available to implement the land use. As water resources continue to be pressured across the State it is becoming increasingly important to ensure better alignment between land use planning policy and the availability of water.

Finding the right balance between urban development and appropriate environmental management is extremely difficult. However, the Department of Planning and Local Government is well on the way to striking such a balance within the 30 Year Plan. We look forward to having a continuing role in assisting the government to make the 30 Year Plan for Adelaide the success it deserves to be.

## Better Development Plans Program Strengthens the SA Planning System



Coloured maps are an excellent feature of BDP

The Department of Planning and Local Government engaged URPS to benchmark the Better Development Plans (BDP) program against interstate and New Zealand models. In undertaking this review, we considered the differing structures of each planning system and how the Development Plan equivalents fit within these structures. We also reviewed processes and legislative support for the BDP program and the Planning Policy Library.

We are pleased to highlight the SA Planning System and the BDP program as a vanguard of planning reform. This is because:

- There is ‘whole of government’ input into strategic plans, region by region, with legislated processes for community engagement.
- The Development Plan is more readily linked to the strategic plans.
- All controls for the assessment of development are centralised in the Development Plan.
- The Development Plan is appropriately confined to matters relating to development as defined in the Development Act.
- There is a standardised format and use of language as part of BDP, making Development Plans easier to read and interpret.
- There is a balance between ‘complying’, ‘merits-based’ and ‘non-complying’ assessment.
- Planning procedures are relatively simple and transparent.

## How Do We Know We’re ‘Hitting the Mark’? Evaluating Playford Alive



“Playford Alive” is a major integrated community and urban renewal project that is regenerating existing Peachey Belt suburbs in northern Adelaide and creating new communities nearby. While the project aims to deliver physical improvements and foster ESD, it also has ambitious goals to build skills and capacity in these communities.

URPS has been engaged on behalf of the Department for Families & Communities, the LMC and the City of Playford to spearhead the evaluation process. This follows-on from our work evaluating the urban improvement projects in Mitchell Park, Salisbury North and Risdon Grove.



Too often, evaluation is undertaken once a project has been completed. The problem with this approach is that it is difficult to measure success or otherwise without a clearly defined reference point – that is, the nature of the community as it existed prior to commencement of the project.

Partnering with Truscott Research, Andrew Beer (Flinders University) and Peter Rossini (UniSA), we are currently engaging the community through market research and survey work, undertaking land use analysis and reviewing statistical data as the first on-the-ground works take place. This means that ongoing evaluation of the project will have a clear benchmark, allowing meaningful comparison in coming years. It also means that the creation of any unintended adverse outcomes can be readily examined, together with the identification of better ways to achieve the project objectives as it continues. We commend the State Government and the City of Playford for commencing the evaluation process early in the Playford Alive project.

## Planning for Employment



As part of the continuous improvement of the BDP Planning Policy Library (now moving to their sixth iteration), the Department of Planning and Local Government also engaged us to determine whether the existing land use zoning and BDP Zone Modules adequately cater for employment generating land uses and whether any shortcomings might be addressed by the introduction of an Enterprise Zone.

We found that the commercial, industry, light industry and mixed use zone modules adequately cater for all types of employment land uses. We also found that, while each of the metropolitan Councils has an appropriate mix of centre and industry zones at present, there are gaps and considerable variation in the use of mixed use, light industry and commercial zones where some of the more innovative employment land uses may be best located. Therefore, Councils should carefully examine the introduction of mixed use, light industry and/or commercial zones as part of the BDP conversion of their Development Plans.

## Bridging the Information Gap Regarding Defence Sites

*Ensuring the appropriate interaction between military bases and surrounding land uses*



Defence sites are commonly seen as ‘black holes’ - we know they are there but in many cases we know little about them. Both the State and Federal Governments are committed to addressing this information gap.

It’s a practical reality that defence activities can impact on surrounding land uses to varying degrees. For example, there can be aircraft noise associated with military planes at unusual hours, or there can be munitions testing requiring exclusion zones. At the same time, non-military development can inadvertently limit defence operations. This can be as simple as reflectivity from the roofs of industrial buildings impacting on the visibility of pilots and consequently the safe operation of defence activities.

URPS is working with the Department of Defence to bridge this information gap by developing site-specific information “toolboxes”. These easy-to-read documents will provide information to local communities, council planners and developers regarding the range of activities occurring on defence sites, their military significance and the likely impact of these activities on surrounding communities.

They will also provide practical planning guidance to deal with these impacts. Once completed, the toolboxes will be publicly available via local councils and on the internet.

### Success at the PIA Awards

#### Natural Resources Management and Land Use Planning

We were delighted to receive an award at this year’s Planning Institute of Australia (SA Division) Awards for Planning Excellence for the “Review of Council Development Plans and Relevant Strategies, Plans and Policies as input to the Eyre Peninsula Regional Natural Resources Management Plan”. This project narrows the gap between land use planning and NRM, identifying Development Plan policy amendments necessary to better promote the objectives of the NRM Act and the Eyre Peninsula Regional NRM Plan. In some instances there can be numerous provisions relating to environmental issues which, unless they are easily understood and provide measurable standards for application in development assessment, have limited effectiveness.

The nature of development referred to the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation and/or NRM Boards should also be carefully examined as part of any review of the Development Regulations in order to ensure the most appropriate application of NRM standards to new development. Distinguishing between irrigated and non-irrigated agriculture, as well as different forms of horticultural (e.g. annual and perennial crops), as part of the definitions in the Development Regulations also warrants careful consideration in terms of water management.

#### Planning for Primary Production

Our work with Alexandrina Council on its Rural Areas Strategy and Action Plan also received a PIA Award. Primary Production in the Fleurieu Peninsula yields \$526 million annually to the South Australian economy. One in six of all jobs on the Fleurieu Peninsula is provided in agricultural production and processing, with farm incomes and wages paid to farm workers having direct flow-on benefit to local businesses and services. Without the contribution of farmers, their families and employees to sporting clubs, churches and emergency services, the social life and community fabric of many Fleurieu townships would not survive.

Farmers are also stewards of the natural resources that sustain primary production and custodians of the landscape that provides the rural amenity sought by residents and visitors. Yet, many farmers in the



Alexandrina Council area can feel as though their contribution is not valued and even that they are unwelcome because the impacts of their farming operations cause conflicts with the new residents drawn to the area for a quiet rural life.

As far as we are aware, the Alexandrina Council is the first Local Government Authority in South Australia to undertake such a broad-based Rural Areas Strategy that goes well beyond planning policies and a legislative approach. This Strategy is an acknowledgement of farming as an integral part of the Alexandrina Council area and farmers as valued contributors to our community.

## Serving the Community Beyond Our Work at URPS



Congratulations to Grazio Maiorano who has recently become President of the Rotary Club of Adelaide South. Rotary is a worldwide, apolitical organization of business and professional leaders with the motto of "Service Above Self", providing humanitarian aid and encouraging high ethical standards in all vocations. Rotarians have developed community service projects addressing many of today's most critical issues such as children at risk, poverty and hunger, the environment, illiteracy and violence. We look forward to supporting Grazio in this important community service role over the next 12 months.



## The Expanding URPS Team

We are pleased to welcome Geoff Butler and Amanda Davey to our team. Geoff has more than 30 years experience across State and Local Government, and as a planning consultant, and is a true "all-rounder" specialising in both planning policy and development assessment/facilitation. Amanda has dual qualifications in planning and graphic design, greatly enhancing her primary focus on policy development and strategic planning. The addition of Geoff and Amanda brings enormous versatility to URPS.



We are also pleased to welcome Krystina Fisher as our new Office Manager. Krystina has a background in business management, as well as a Bachelor of Architecture, making her a great addition to the URPS team. We are sure that many of you will enjoy working with Krystina at the URPS 'shop front'.



## More Information

Copies of our previous newsletters are available on our website at [www.urps.com.au](http://www.urps.com.au). If you would like to discuss the information contained in any of our newsletters in further detail please don't hesitate to contact us on 8363 0444 or drop into our offices at 58 Rundle Street, Kent Town or our new offices at 154 Fullarton Road, Rose Park from 14 December 2009.

from top: Grazio, Amanda,  
Geoff, Krystina



### URPS

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