



Welcome to edition No.6 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

Helping People Understand and Provide Feedback on the Mt Barker Ministerial DPA



Carefully managed community information sessions can provide valuable input to the DPA process

The Minister for Urban Development and Planning released the Ministerial Mount Barker Urban Growth Development Plan Amendment (DPA) in June 2010 for public consultation. This DPA proposes to rezone approximately 1300 hectares of rural land on the edges of Mount Barker and Nairne for residential and light industrial use.

With the aim of ensuring that its community was well informed and empowered to comment on the Ministerial DPA, the District Council of Mount Barker engaged URPS to run a series of information sessions for the local community. These six sessions were extremely well attended, with more than 300 people able to hear about and ask questions regarding the Ministerial DPA process and how to get involved in this part of the planning system.

In a letter to the editor of the Mount Barker Courier, Jean Lovell of Nairne said that "Mount Barker Council is to be congratulated for its commitment to proper community consultation" and that URPS was "highly professional and responded in detail to questions in an articulate, honest and informed manner".

This is evidence of the success of these types of community information sessions and the goodwill and engagement that Mount Barker Council has fostered with its community through the process. We also believe that this type of process leads to informed and valuable input from the community to key planning initiatives such as this Ministerial DPA.

DPA Policy Innovation for Adelaide's First TOD

The creation of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is an important component of the 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide and the first of these will be at Bowden on the former Clipsal site and surrounds.

The Land Management Corporation has engaged URPS to prepare a Ministerial Development Plan Amendment (DPA) for the Bowden Urban Village. The DPA is a fundamental component of the project, setting the framework to advance Adelaide's first TOD.



Responding to the principles embedded in the master planning and community-endorsed vision statement for the site, the DPA will incorporate a variety of planning provisions crafted to suit the high density, mixed use development outcomes sought for this TOD. At the same time, this experience has informed our work with the Department of Planning & Local Government on the draft TOD, Urban Core Zone and Residential High Density Zone modules for the Better Development Plan library. Stay tuned for updates on progress with this innovative policy work.

below right: An artist's impression of the Bowden TOD (courtesy of the LMC)

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Using the Development Plan to Facilitate Affordable Housing Solutions



Dependant accommodation in the form of 'granny flats' is an important affordable housing option

The debate around affordable housing typically focuses on issues of land supply, creative finance mechanisms and the funding/delivery of infrastructure in a timely manner. Dwelling types and sizes tailored to the changing needs of the community are also important pieces of the puzzle.

In the recent City of West Torrens Housing Affordability Study prepared by URPS, one option examined was the development of "granny flats". More formally referred to as a kind of "dependent accommodation" (accommodation that is connected to the services of the main dwelling), these dwelling types have traditionally provided an alternative, low-cost housing option across metropolitan Adelaide.

Such accommodation can facilitate 'ageing in place', which is regularly identified in the Ageing Strategies URPS has prepared various councils as an important aspect of positive ageing (refer to www.urps.com.au for more details). Dependent accommodation can also increase housing choice in established suburbs characterised by homogenous housing stock.

Although the Better Development Plan Policy Library contains guidelines regarding dependent accommodation and encourages the inclusion of prescriptive criteria for floor area and car parking etc, this type of housing option seems to have 'slipped off the radar' in recent affordable housing debates. In New South Wales, dependent accommodation that meets certain performance criteria receives approval in 10 days. The facilitation of such affordable housing through Development Plan policy, without compromising design standards, is one option for local councils committed to improving housing affordability.

More Success at the PIA Awards

Innovation is important to us at URPS. We like to 'push boundaries' where appropriate. It keeps us on our toes and delivers the best possible outcomes for our clients who have to adapt to constant change. This is why we take such pride in winning PIA Awards – they provide evidence of our success in striving for innovation.

We were delighted to receive an award at the recent 2010 PIA SA Division Awards for Excellence for the "Georgetown Urban Design Framework – Georgetown into the Future".



right – artist's impression showing streetscape beautification and traffic calming.

above – creating new places and destinations in Georgetown providing a reason to stop. (courtesy of WAX Design)



Partnering with WAX Design and Historical Research Pty Ltd, this project provides a comprehensive qualitative and quantitative exploration of opportunities for revitalization within this small rural township in the state's mid-north. Dynamic visual and written explanations were used to foster informed debate on how to make Georgetown a more attractive and vibrant place. The end result is a clearly articulated vision for the future physical development of the town that will assist the community, stakeholders and Council to focus their efforts and funding.

This project also highlights the positive impact of the 'Places for People Programme' being delivered by the State Government and, in this instance, the Northern Areas Council.

Our 15th PIA award/commendation in 7 years, this award also emphasizes our commitment to rural and regional planning achievement, following on from our recent National PIA Award for the Alexandrina Council Rural Areas Strategy and Action Plan.

The PIA Awards ceremony was also an exciting night for us with another of our Directors, Grazio Maiorano, being elevated to the position of Fellow of the Planning Institute of Australia.

Congratulations Grazio!



Helping Manage Compliance Systems



Clear and consistent procedures are fundamental to successful compliance with the NRM Act



Natural Resources Management (NRM) Boards have a key responsibility for enforcing the legislation which protects both land and water resources. The NRM Act emphasises “voluntary” rather than “enforced” compliance. This means that Board Officers must be skilled at engaging and supporting landholders in establishing agreed pathways to voluntary compliance.

The Eyre Peninsula NRM Board recently engaged URPS to help develop an instruction manual for Board Officers undertaking enforcement activities. As with most activities undertaken by NRM Boards, the core driver for this manual was to ultimately achieve improved management of the environment. Through clear and consistent compliance procedures, which include the use of template reports/letters/checklists and the logging of incidents, the compliance manual:

- Reduces the amount of subjectivity in decision making regarding compliance activities.
- Protects officers from allegations of impropriety.
- Provides a clear and consistent record management system for matters that may end up in Court.

To ensure that the manual was robust and practical, we ran a training day for all the Officers of the Eyre Peninsula NRM Board. Role plays between patient and composed Board Officers, and angry and frustrated landowners/community members, meant that we were able to explore the various compliance processes in detail and refine the templates where necessary. The result is a compliance manual that will benefit all stakeholders and lead to improved environmental outcomes.

Getting off the Consultation Treadmill

Many of our clients come to us seeking assistance to make their community consultation more effective. They have often tried a variety of techniques that have failed to engage the community, or their processes have triggered only negative responses. They can feel as though they are on a consultation treadmill – going nowhere in spite of all their efforts.

URPS designs consultation strategies that change these dynamics. A recent example is our work with the City of Mitcham engaging the community at the initial stage of planning for the future redevelopment of the Blackwood library. A draft set of “Guiding Principles”, developed in partnership between Council staff, Elected Members and URPS, was taken to the community prior to any concept planning. We were able to get input by survey from over 200 residents and businesses, as well as from more than 50 people who attended two “Positioning Forums”. This interactive exercise generated energetic discussion and great clarity, which is reflected in the final set of Guiding Principles being used to develop the concept plans for the site.

This type of early and effective engagement can result in real progress for complex projects. By getting off the consultation treadmill and onto the running track, Councils and their communities experience a greater sense of unity and satisfaction in the project outcomes.



A New PIA State President

Congratulations to Iris Iwanicki who is the new PIA SA Division President. Iris replaces URPS Director, Angela Hazebroek, after two years in the role.

During her time as State President, Angela has overseen the launch of the "DA On-Line" project, providing a valuable forum for the discussion of issues amongst DA planners. Angela also coordinated the response to the *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide*, bringing together input from all of the Chapters of PIA and Young Planners. She is looking forward to the results of the workforce retention survey for planners in Local Government undertaken by PIA SA for the Local Government Association.

Angela welcomes some of the many planners at this year's Congress



Another highlight for Angela was convening the highly successful EAROPH Congress in early November, which saw well over 300 planners from across the world come together in Adelaide to gain a new sense of purpose and perspective on the important role that planners perform in society. URPS was proud to be a Gold Sponsor of this significant event. You can read more about the key themes explored at the EAROPH Congress in the "Form" section of November's Adelaide Review at www.adelaidereview.com.au/property.php

We look forward to supporting Iris Iwanicki in her presidency of the PIA SA Division, continuing the excellent work of past PIA presidents and volunteers.

Building the URPS team

We are pleased to welcome **Rosanna Palumbo** as our new Office Manager. Rosanna has a background in marketing and administration, having previously worked at the National Wine Centre and the Grosvenor Hotel. We are sure that many of you will enjoy working with Rosanna at the URPS 'shop front'.

We are also pleased to welcome **Michael Arman** to URPS in a full-time capacity. Michael has worked with us on a variety of projects over the past three years, and has recently completed his honours thesis exploring the population-sustainability debate and what this means for planning. A skilled and experienced researcher with an interest in policy development, social planning and development assessment, Michael is a great addition to the URPS team.

More Information

Copies of this and our previous newsletters are available on our website at 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 8333 7999 or drop into our offices at Suite 12/154 Fullarton Road, Rose Park.

Rosanna Palumbo



Michael Arman



URPS

Our people

Marcus Rolfe	marcus@urps.com.au
Grazio Maiorano	grazio@urps.com.au
Angela Hazebroek	angela@urps.com.au
Nicole Halsey	nicole@urps.com.au
Kieron Barnes	kieron@urps.com.au
Julie Lewis	julie@urps.com.au
Geoff Butler	geoff@urps.com.au
Michael Arman	michael@urps.com.au
Rosanna Palumbo	rosanna@urps.com.au

Our place

Suite 12
154 Fullarton Road
Rose Park SA 5067
(Corner of Alexandra Avenue)
Phone: 08 8333 7999
Fax: 08 8331 0017
Email: mail@urps.com.au
Web : www.urps.com.au

