

Thesis topics - 2000

Fiona Barnwell

Smart Suburbs: Energy Efficient and Environmentally Sustainable Design in New Residential Subdivisions

Smart design is a relatively new concept which, in respect of new residential subdivisions, aims to facilitate maximum energy efficiency and minimal impacts on the environment. Awareness of the concept has increased recently in response to the realisation that traditional development practices have manifested residential suburbs that, as a whole, demonstrate little regard for the natural environment they invade, their ongoing impacts thereon and the significant amounts of non-renewable fuel resources they consume through excessive energy use. Smart design in terms of residential development involves a number of considerations that have initiated certain design solutions to support the global notion of ecologically sustainable development. These considerations relate to a number of design elements including the location, layout, orientation, dwelling types and management treatments adopted by a development, as well as policy based approaches to the implementation of smart design. Although a number of new residential developments demonstrate some measure of environmental conscience, it is not enough that only some developments achieve this status. However, through the consideration and adoption of a variety of smart design considerations, guidelines and practices, as well as the support of governments, communities and individuals alike, new residential subdivisions may achieve the status of smart suburbs and hence, maximum energy efficiency and minimal environmental impacts.

Peter Brackenreg

Overcoming the Taboo of Cemetery Planning

For whatever reason, issues which are related to death become issues that are not discussed. Accordingly, one can deduce that the adequacy of cemetery planning is an issue which is irregularly reviewed and consequently, non-responsive to societal changes. Looking at the current situation within the cemetery and crematoria industry, there is a need to pursue the investigation of legislative alternatives like limited tenure and reuse of unwanted gravesites or the proactive approach of acquiring new cemetery lands. Such actions are necessary, given the evidence which documents Sydney's increasingly aged population in opposition to its diminishing burial capacity. While these options for action would extend the 'life' of our existing cemetery resources, successive state governments have ignored the subject altogether. Governments and other planning authorities recognise the low profile that cemetery land has and observe that issues like cemetery planning which are irrevocably connected with death, are seen by the general public as taboo subjects. Such negative associations to cemeteries and their planning thereof, are fed by irresponsible media reporting. From this, the general public overlooks the importance of body disposal and memorialisation functions which cemeteries serve and instead, focus on the negative cemetery attributes. The challenge for the State Government and town planners is to overcome these negative restrictions and promote the need for adequate cemetery planning. For this to happen, we all need to be convinced that cemeteries are worthwhile places, and that they are extremely valuable in terms of their heritage, multicultural and multifunctional components.

David Burge

Regional Open Space in the Sydney Region

The Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (DUAP) is required to plan, acquire and manage regional open space for the benefit of the people in the Sydney Region. The Sydney Region Development Fund (SRDF) is used by DUAP to complete their responsibilities of acquiring Regional Parks, Public reserves /foreshores, Road Reserves and Special Use Corridors. DUAP use metropolitan planning strategies to identify regional open space needs for the community. From this they acquire and manage the land, until such time that the intended land manager (end user) accepts the transfer of

the land. The process fails when the land can not be transferred to the intended end user, as such the SRDF is not reimbursed. The SRDF needs to be continually reimbursed so that future regional open space requirements can be acquired, and this can only be done by transferring or disposing of surplus land.

Siobhan Fox

Views in Urban Environments: A Clearer Perspective

In any urban environment, views are a highly prized and sought after amenity. Whether the views are of water, bushland, townscapes or other attractive landscape elements, they contribute significantly to a person's enjoyment of a place. Although several theories exist, it is not exactly known why people are attracted to views. What is known is that there is great demand for private properties with access to views, and that this demand is commonly expressed through the high monetary premiums that the market attaches to such properties. With almost all of these properties, there is no guarantee that their access to currently available views will be permanent. Yet when proposed developments threaten access to existing views, the adversely affected property owners are quick to raise objection. A view loss conflict typically ensues, and the competing interests of property owners come into play. In light of the currently high levels of development and the planning focus on urban consolidation, such conflicts are increasingly facing planners working within the Sydney metropolitan area, and particularly in waterfront local government areas. Although nothing at law gives a property owner a right to a view, view loss is an environmental effect requiring consideration pursuant to Section 79C(1) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 when determining a development application. Furthermore, the issue of view effects is a matter often specifically called up and addressed in the provisions of development control plans, policies and/or codes. Such planning provisions can apply to private and public views, and typically encourage the concept of "view sharing" and careful and considerate design as means by which to plan for the reasonable protection of views. This thesis does not suggest or advocate that all existing private and public views in urban environments should be preserved. Rather, it examines the issues required for proper and reasonable consideration of views and view loss in the preparation of regulatory instruments and the assessment of development applications. It also offers recommendations to town planners as to how they can more effectively address and deal with views and view loss in urban environments.

Simon French

The road and the street as inspiration for creative gestures

This thesis considers the means by which the road and the street are able to inspire creative gestures. It is argued that particular creative gestures have necessarily been influenced by the road and the street, and that the character of the road and the street has in turn been affected by these pursuits. This thesis aims to look at the road and the street in a manner which goes beyond their functionality. In order to examine this notion that the road and the street can inspire creative gestures, five particular subject areas have been considered: *art*; *writing*; *streetwear*; *cars*; and the *road* itself. By investigating the creative potential of the street from five distinct positions, it is possible to contemplate a wide range of street-influenced experiences. Much urban planning concerns itself with the task of identifying and maintaining the 'character' of an existing area or place. By considering creative gestures that are associated with the road and the street, it becomes apparent that the character of a place can be affected by a large range of influences. It is important to realise and appreciate the inherently public nature of the road and the street. And it is highly desirable that people be able to use the road and the street as a place for self-expression. From the obvious to the subtle, creative gestures that are inspired by the road and the street make an important contribution to the built environment.

Stephen Graham

Progress Through Diversity: Mudgee Shire, New South Wales. A study of economic development in rural New South Wales

The aim of this thesis is to develop an understanding of the role of economic development in contributing to prosperity in rural New South Wales (NSW). While much has been written about the decline of the rural sector and the increasing gap between rural areas and their metropolitan and coastal

counterparts, very little attention has focussed on rural communities that appear to be doing quite well. Investigating the Mudgee Shire in Central-Western NSW, this thesis demonstrates an example of a rural community that has experienced a sustained period of population growth since the 1970s. Utilising population statistics as a catalyst for further investigation, the process of economic development in the Shire since the 1970s is analysed and interpreted. The results show that the employment and economic bases of the Mudgee Shire have become increasingly diversified, the key to the long-term survival of many rural communities. In attempting to explain the reasons for these changes, this thesis finds there are various 'internal' and 'external' factors that have contributed to the economic development of the Mudgee Shire. Changes in the Australian and international economies have had a profound influence on the way the Mudgee Shire operates, and it is demonstrated that the shifts in the Shire's economic base have been more a result of market forces than a consequence of government policies aimed at promoting growth. Overall, this thesis is an illustration that some rural areas in NSW continue to prosper despite the commonly held belief of rural decline.

Rachel Gowing

Cumulative Impact Assessment: Responding to the Impacts of Coal Mining

Coal mining is an important industry for both Australia, as the world's largest exporter of coal and New South Wales, as a significant proportion of this coal is extracted from open-cut mines in the Hunter Valley of NSW. A range of impacts, negative and positive, direct and indirect, are a consequence of coal mining operations, including environmental and socio-economic impacts. These impacts are multiplied with the introduction of every new coal mine, as each individual impact becomes more concentrated. It is necessary for not only the impacts of each individual mine to be assessed, but also the added impacts of a number of mines all operating in close proximity. This can be attempted through Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA). This thesis analyses the CIA process and identifies various issues and difficulties involved in its formulation and implementation, having specific regard to its use within the establishment and operation of multiple coal mines. In this regard, the CIA process and its use in the assessment and potential amelioration of the extensive range of environmental, social and economic impacts are considered in relation to planning and managing mines. A case study example of the Upper Hunter Region and town of Muswellbrook is given in relation to the cumulative impacts that coal mining operations are having on the town and surrounding area.

Raymond Ho

Car Parking Provisions in Sydney Central Business District-Policy Implementation

Finding a parking space in city can be a painful experience. Although local governments within the metropolitan area have been concerned for many years about growing parking problems, there is not a uniform parking policy for the metropolitan area. This thesis was undertaken with the aim of identifying problems associated with parking provision in the Sydney metropolitan area, with a related case study in the Sydney central business district (CBD). Through this thesis, guidelines on different parking policies and located with Sydney CBD area are considered. In chapter 1, problem settings for the thesis and the primary objectives in resolving the existing parking provision are outlined. Chapter 2 looks more closely into the car-parking characteristic in city centres. Various types of parking provisions payment system are examined. Chapter 3 examines car-parking policies: their strength and weaknesses, and their effect on traffic and environment. In chapter 4, the various car-parking policies implemented in the Sydney metropolitan area are examined. Policies such as the Sydney City Local Environmental Plan and policies for local residents disabled persons are discussed. Chapter 5 is the case study based on Sydney CBD, its parking control / provision since 1970s to more recent 1999 / 2000 City of Sydney Council's parking control. Chapter 6 outlines recent trends in parking provision in Sydney CBD. Parking provisions / policies from 1970s to late 1990s are discussed. Chapter 7 provides an overview of the car parking provision in Sydney metropolitan area and examines possible future trend in car parking provision, in term of policies and control.

Kristy Idle

The New Australian Ugliness: Mobile Telecommunications Infrastructure

Mobile telecommunications have been accepted into modern life on an enormous scale. In Australia alone, approximately eight million people currently own a mobile telephone, and Australians are amongst the highest per capita users in the world. The benefits of a mobile telephone are undeniable: parents can use them to keep in contact with children, many emergency calls are made from mobile phones, for many they provide convenience, security or simply add to their image. However, the growth in users of mobile telecommunications technologies has resulted in some negative externalities: the infrastructure required for the networks, namely mobile phone towers and antennas. Some community members have concerns that mobile telecommunications infrastructure will harm human health detract from the amenity of their neighbourhoods and reduce their property values. This thesis has investigated these concerns, and examined the responses and powers of the decision-making bodies that allow the installation of telecommunications infrastructure. It is concluded that there is little possibility of telecommunications infrastructure causing negative health impacts, however it is accepted that there may be negative visual impacts if facilities are not sited and designed sensitively. It is argued that the State and local councils have considerable powers to regulate the siting of facilities, and a more effective and consistent approach is required from these bodies to mitigate any negative impacts.

Abigail Jeffs

State of the Environment Reporting at the Local Level... Has its Potential been Realised?

Environmental responsibilities have been bestowed upon local government over the last decade. The state of the environment reporting process is widely recognised as having the potential to help local councils progress towards sustainability. Yet, it is apparent that some councils are utilising this management tool more effectively than others. Although many factors contribute to this situation, political determination for the green agenda is an overriding force that influences the potential of the state of the environment reporting process. Commitment and enthusiasm to environmental responsibilities eventuates when a spirit of cooperation is fostered both within the internal structures of local government, between councils and communities which they serve, and between local government and higher levels of authority. This willingness and the ability to collaborate is another major force in enabling effective environmental management. As reluctance is replaced by an appreciation for the intrinsic value of environmental sustainability, local councils will increasingly embrace the potential of the reporting process and make tangible, rather than notional, movements towards sustainability.

Rebecca Johnston

The Evolution of the Garage in the Australian suburban landscape

The arrival of the motor car in the early twentieth century saw the need for a purpose built structure in which to store it. Since then the garage has become a significant, but often forgotten feature of the suburban landscape. The garage has undergone a vast transformation over the last one hundred years, with four distinct garage types emerging. The types - the detached, attached, integrated and projecting garages - are distinguished by their form, location and relationship with the house. The evolution of these garage types was influenced by historical, economic, social and technological, factors. These factors not only altered the physical location and appearance of the garage but also its function and status. The garage also had a significant impact on the suburban landscape, dictating the shape and form of the Australian suburb over the past century. This account of evolution and its impact on the suburban landscape provides us with an understanding of how the current suburban landscape was shaped. The management of future garage development and the implications for heritage conservation can only be understood against the evolution of the garage and its move from the back of the allotment to the front.

Anthea Kalodikis

The Olympic Games and Sustainable Urban Improvements

At the turn of the millennium the improvement of ecology, social equity and culture through urban planning are being given recognition due to the realisation that their compromise over the past century have led to adverse impacts on cities. The establishment of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) principles in 1972 and subsequent social theorists have made planning more aware of these concerns. However urban planning has the potential to increase compliance in order to improve planning outcomes. As a spectacle event has a phenomenal impact of implementing change its preparation can be used to provide a catalyst for urban improvement. Thus past, present and future Olympic Games host cities will be assessed in order to identify whether the Olympic Games implements urban improvements for a city based on ecological, social and cultural indicators.

Nicholas Knezevic

High Stakes: Casinos as agents of growth

In the past decade casino gaming has become one of the most rapidly growing and changing industries in the world. City and state governments have embraced casinos as a means of revitalising declining economies, and to booster cities in the face of growing global competition. This has had mixed results because some cities and regions are better suited than others to accommodating casino developments. In the USA many jurisdictions have introduced casinos as a means of stimulating local growth but in most cases this has not eventuated. Las Vegas is often referred to as an ideal model of casino-generated growth, but the city evolved due to a particular set of political, economic and social conditions that cannot be easily replicated. In Australia, most state and territory governments have had a prominent role in the introduction of casinos, often lured by the promise of substantial taxation revenue from casino gaming. As a result some state governments have developed close relationships with private casino interests and often given them preferential treatment so that their developments can be fast tracked or modified. Thus, much Australian casino development is influenced by elites who actively cooperate in order to achieve developmental or growth objectives. In other words, governments participate in 'urban growth machines' in order to establish the preconditions for further growth. However, there is little evidence that suggests that Australian casinos have had a positive impact on growth. Governments often look to casinos as a 'quick fix' for economic woes when it may be more appropriate to channel resources into more productive industries where the returns may be much higher in the long run.

Roy Laria

Cinema Development in Sydney

Cinema development in Sydney has endured many different forms in its evolution over the past century. This development has evolved from early kinetoscope parlours, to local suburban halls, to ornamental and decorative picture palaces, to the rise and fall of the drive-in theatre, and to the modern multi-cinema complex. Evidently, cinema development has been quite temperamental. Despite the booms and lulls, cinema has always been a significant form of urban development. In the early part of the century, cinemas were symbols of civic pride and local progress, today cinemas are important socially as entertainment venues and are an influential form of economic development. Cinemas have become 'anchors' for major retail centres. Over time, the shift in cinema design has gone from the ornamental and decorative, to the technological and functional. The many faces of cinema development that Sydney has experienced have been shaped by economic, social, technological and planning influences to varying degrees. The degree to which planning has played a role in cinema development has altered significantly over time, with the greatest influence being felt in the last ten years.

Rebecca Lau

Industrial Ecology: Eco-Industrial Parks. A new approach to industrial park development

Modern industrial activities have contributed to the extensive degradation of earth's ecological systems. Continued natural resource exploitation, manufacturing processes and pollution have become the focus for worldwide concern which has resulted in the search for alternative methods of achieving ecologically sustainable development. One broad approach emerging in response to these concerns is the new paradigm of industrial ecology. Traditional approaches to industry view economy and the environment as two separate systems. Industrial ecology aims to place human activity in a larger context of the biophysical environment and looks to the natural world as a model for organising efficient industrial activities. Industrial ecology offers a new model of the industrial system. Planners are considered to have the appropriate skills and knowledge to facilitate the integration of industrial ecology into make gains towards ecologically sustainable development. For planners, the eco-industrial park is the most relevant application of the principles of industrial ecology principles. The Kalundborg Symbiosis at Denmark and the Steel River Project in Newcastle, Australia are two interesting examples of eco-industrial parks which provide lessons for future developments. Industrial ecology is still evolving and has its inconsistencies and weaknesses. However, its multi-disciplinary approach may have some impact on the future role of planners and for the planning of industrial development.

Ben Larsson

Sydney's Generation X Professionals - What Inner City Housing Choices Remain?

Generation X – even the term that this demographic has been lumped with has negative connotations. X, representing censorship. X, representing harshness in sound. X, not to be tampered with. Since inception, the term has been used almost exclusively in a negative manner, in a way that is generally undeserved. It is through ignorance and impatience that this term has been so readily thrust upon those of dubious responsibility and maturity. But it is a term used too easily, and too often undeservedly. Generation X, as a product of our fast moving, information based society, has simply responded to the stimuli that they are surrounded by. The information age has created dozens of learning techniques and methods of input that have altered irrevocably the youth and 20ish/early 30ish of the developed world. The need for speed, efficiency, achievement, accuracy, has led Generation X to desire a different set of outcomes that those before them – outcomes professionally, outcomes personally, outcomes domestically, which leads to inner city housing. It is as sought after as it is for the benefits it allows – close to work, services, entertainment, *lifestyle*. With government intervention in Australia actually encouraging inner city living, the old land uses formerly prevalent in the inner city have given way to dense, cosmopolitan living so sought after by a growing number of Generation Xers eager to match the fast pace of their lives with a similarly paced dwelling. The variety and choice being developed in the inner city, as well as a steady overall supply of dwelling stock being provided in Sydney through developer anticipation of future demand, the options for the inner city dweller are vast - and increasingly so.

Laura Locke

Meet You on the Mainstreet: The Rebirth of the Mainstreet as a True Public Realm

The suburban mainstreet is one of the most important, but over-looked urban public spaces. The mainstreet has deteriorated due to a number of social, economic and environmental factors. This thesis analyses the reasons for the degradation of the mainstreet and provides a critical analysis of traditional Main Street programs that have focused almost solely on the physical aspects of the mainstreet. Traditional Main Street revitalisation plans have often produced attractive streets, however these streets have often been devoid of life and a sense of community. I argue that the social, cultural and community aspects of mainstreet revitalisation are more important. This thesis identifies three

inextricably linked criteria for a successful and vibrant suburban mainstreet: the mainstreet as a place for people and pedestrians; the mainstreet as a place to shop and foster local economic development; and the mainstreet as a place for culture, community and to represent local identity. Three case studies of suburban mainstreets of different sizes, pressures and characteristics are carried out to test these three principles in practice. This study concludes with a number of key considerations for planners based on the theory and research presented.

Jacqueline Low

Ecotourism in Fiji: At a Critical Stage of Realising its Development Potential

At the dawn of the new millennium, the vision for tourism development appears to be enthusiastically embracing the high expectations of the relatively new niche market known as ecotourism which now has basic ESD principles behind it. In Fiji, the reality of ecotourism, as it rapidly advances, is continuously encountering numerous challenges to meet the global demands which fundamentally involves achieving a harmonious development balance between conservation and tourism objectives that will ultimately sustain the industry's future growth and preserve Fiji's unique natural and cultural assets. The main purpose of the research was to investigate the extent to which Fiji has realised the potential of ecotourism development by assessing the small developing island nation's position on taking advantage of the global ecotourism demands and examining the Government's commitment towards preparing a framework for ecotourism's future growth. The research findings are based on information gathered from interviews with the wide range of stakeholders who have an interest in Fiji's ecotourism development. The research findings concluded that ecotourism in Fiji is currently at a critical stage of its development process indicating the next four years as an important growth period which could result in Fiji either achieving an internationally renowned ecotourism product or experiencing "bad" ecotourism development due to inadequate controls and guidelines. This is mainly because whilst Fiji has recognised the benefits of ecotourism, it is still relatively unaware of the potential threats that ecotourism is likely to cause if not operated in accordance with the basic principles. However, it was endorsed that with a revived commitment from the Government and the new Fiji Ecotourism Association towards formulating best practice guidelines and ultimately an accreditation program it is clearly evident that Fiji is moving towards realising the full potential of ecotourism by capitalising on and preserving the unique and diverse range of Fiji's ecotourism product.

Jeffrey Mead

The suburban backyard: Its meaning and use in the contemporary suburb

The backyard is the most prominent form of suburban private open space. It accommodates a diverse range of uses, conveys multiple meanings and is part of the suburban vernacular. The conventional manifestation of the backyard is however threatened by urban consolidation initiatives and a movement of contemporary designers who pursue more urbane residential design in place of suburban forms characteristic of the past four or five decades. These forces typically reduce the amount of private open space provided on residential allotments, yet only minimal research has attempted to correlate the impacts of size of private open space with its uses and meaning. No guidelines derived from empirical research currently exist. Accordingly, designers and regulators must proceed on the basis of an assumption that smaller amounts of private open space can accommodate the essential and desired physical and perceptual needs of a contemporary lifestyle. This assertion forms the rationale of this project. The study identifies the way in which the backyard has evolved in terms of design and use and the meanings it conveys, and investigates the nature of contemporary pressures that may affect these outcomes. The current approaches to private open space from the perspective of design theorists and practitioners, regulators and the development industry are subsequently identified. These approaches are assessed by way of analysing resident surveys generated from three case study areas representing different backyard sizes in the Sutherland Local Government Area, in southern Sydney. This evaluation forms the basis for developing a set of design considerations to be used in the design and regulation of backyards in suburban Sydney.

Gary Ng

Harbour Reclamation for Urban Development: An examination of principles and practice with particular reference to Hong Kong and Macau

Harbour reclamation for urban development is an ordinary development process for city expansion. For those cities that lack available development land, harbour reclamation is a common characteristic and mainstream urban development strategy over a long period of time. Because of this reason, the original geography of those cities is modified day after day due to human expansion, and has resulted in a totally different shape and unique style of development. Reclamation not only provides land in prime location for urban development, but also provides a solution for waste disposal. Urban waste disposal has long played a main role in the reclamation of coastal area, and waste material of all kinds still provides a primary source of landfill. Until recently, scientists and people are more concerned about the importance of their natural environment, and have started to become aware of environmental conditions. They believe there are several environmental impacts from harbour reclamation, therefore, decision making for the process of reclamation for urban development seems to be more complicated and facing more pressures and difficulties.

Tanya O'Brien

Resolving Locational Conflict in the siting of safe injecting rooms

Heroin use is an undeniable part of Sydney and a way of life for a marginalised sector of the community. Harm minimisation policies have established facilities for intravenous drug users in Australia since 1985. The most recent development is safe injecting rooms, a facility in which heroin users can safely inject with medical supervision. Public opinions toward the introduction of this use are formed by personal assessments of fear, risk and equity. The outcome of this assessment gives an acceptance or opposing response on a community level. This thesis provides an assessment of the measures available to planners to abate community concern with particular reference to safe injecting rooms. Recommendations as to the optimal siting of safe injecting rooms are discussed. The planning profession needs to accept these facilities and make regulatory provisions for their assessment. Safe injecting rooms, although controversial need planning recognition to help waylay public concerns and provide support to harm minimisation policies.

Kim Shaw

Financial Incentives, Environmental Policy and Sustainable Development: A Local Government Perspective

The growth in understanding of the impacts urban activities have on the environment in recent years has led to an increase in interest in environmental policies and the concept of sustainable development, as a means of providing an integrated framework for the reconciliation of human economic and social needs with the capacity of the environment to meet the such needs on a long term basis. The implementation of sustainable development in environmental policy has however proved problematic in reality, with economic development and environmental protection continuing to be viewed as antagonistic goals. Consequently, financial incentives have increasingly been recognised as a tool for providing greater economic-environment integration in environmental policy and the necessary motivation for society to reduce environmental degradation. Since much of the responsibility for addressing urban environmental issues has fallen on local government, the purpose of this study therefore, is to examine urban local government's response to sustainable development and the extent to which financial incentives have been used in councils' approaches. Using detailed case studies the environmental response of selected urban councils in New South Wales is examined. Despite local governments inertia in relation to the use of financial incentives, the research concludes the inability of conventional methods for dealing with the complex and diverse problems of urban areas has highlighted the fact that new, innovative approaches are necessary. Financial incentives, as part of an integrated approach in environmental policy can provide the stimulation required for large scale implementation of sustainable options in local government processes.

Theresa Smyth

Accommodating Multiple Publics – Participation in Plan Making in the New Millennium. Developing an alternative model for community participation in plan making which accommodates the increasing multiplicity of public interests.

Existing legislative participatory mechanisms within the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979* are evaluated. It appears that these mechanisms fail to adequately facilitate the active involvement of various groups within the plan-making process. Within contemporary Australian society, multiple and often conflicting interests should be accommodated within local plan making in order for decision making to be considered truly inclusive and democratic. This thesis, through an analysis of two selected case studies, has produced a set of objectives and key criteria for a sound participatory model. These criteria have been used to arrive at a recommended model for participation in plan making which seeks to achieve the aim of democratic participation. The model places emphasis on pre-plan involvement and on-going participation. It incorporates the development of land use strategies prior to the preparation of major Local Environmental Plans, involving extensive community participation in cooperation with state government and other agency representatives.

Lisa So

An Analysis of the Social Planning Policy which aims to retain low cost rental accommodation

The introduction of State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) No.10 – Retention of Low Cost Housing, was a controversial step taken by the New South Wales State Government in an attempt to reduce the rate of affordable private rental accommodation across the state. Over the last decade housing costs in NSW have escalated. Fewer households are purchasing a home – the proportion among Sydney households dropped from 31 per cent to 23 per cent between 1986 and 1996. More people are relying on the private rental market for their housing. For many it is now a long-term option rather than an interim phase before becoming a purchaser. Given the urgency of the need to retain the existing stock of affordable rental accommodation, governments have identified that some form of action was essential to ensure that the existing stock of affordable rental accommodation is available to low income renters. The NSW State Government adopted a phased approach to address the protection and retention of low cost rental accommodation, commencing with the introduction of SEPP 10. In short, SEPP 10 requires that alteration and/or strata titling of a low cost residential building and boarding house in NSW are subject to development consent. This thesis has involved a comprehensive case study of SEPP 10. Through this research it has been determined that SEPP 10 is not considered to be an adequate mechanism to ensure the long term protection and retention of affordable rental housing.

Fran O'Brien

The Inconvenience of Going Public: A study of public conveniences in the urban environment

The public convenience has become, in some instances, a paradox. Through a lack of enthusiasm and a reluctance to discuss the public toilet's function, they have remained a public service that is rarely spoken about in detail and whose design is almost never given the consideration it deserves. This thesis aims to examine public conveniences in the urban environment and present a broad range of issues in relation to their design, allocation and management. Although an intrinsic part of everyday life, the public toilet's role as a mediator of changing practices in the provision of public services and facilities remains stalled. They are still an item of public infrastructure that is least likely to receive adequate funding and most likely to be overlooked in terms of design and construction. What began as an innocent attempt to alleviate problems of pollution and falling health standards in early cities has become an ugly scar on many urban landscapes. However, the development of new technologies and efforts to revitalise the humble public toilet may herald an introduction of a new theme in the world of public conveniences, bringing with it further questions about the division and allocation of public and private responsibility in regards to their provision.

Claire Taylor

Diversity, difference and disparity in the post modern multicultural city: An investigation into local planning policy and practice

In this post modern era of fundamental global change, cities around the world are experiencing cultural transformations which are being influenced by parallel changes in political, economic and social systems. Such changes are intimately linked to the shifts in migration systems that have carried diverse sets of people on a variety of paths, and the accompanying new politics of 'multicultural citizenship' (Sandercock 1998b). These changes have created the post modern multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multicultural city. The dilemmas of diversity, difference and disparity, in all cultural, social and spatial manifestations, are significantly challenging and changing planning theory, policy and practice. The debate remains open. What is the relationship between planning and multiculturalism in the context of this post modern multicultural city? Can planners still afford to dream of long-term economic and environmental prosperity (Sandercock, 1998b), in a changing global state of complex culture and ethnicity? Since communities differ in socio-cultural characteristics, planning for the post modern multicultural city requires sensitive objectives and approaches to meet the diverse needs of the multiple 'publics'. This thesis examines this debate by focusing on the many theories to the dilemma and by exploring the varied responses to the following questions: what implications does a culturally diverse community have on local planning policy and practice?; how might planners identify and define cultural justice in cities of increasing cultural diversity?; and what local government planning approaches are leading the way in acknowledging and celebrating multiculturalism for all cultures to enjoy? Specifically, this thesis investigates the responsiveness of planning policy and practice in Sydney and Melbourne, as post modern multicultural cities, to issues of cultural diversity, difference and disparity.

Jason Taylor

Sympathetic Development: The Design and Assessment of Infill in Conservation Areas

Conservation areas are places with unique qualities that are desirable to conserve. We conserve these areas because they are attractive places that demonstrate how our cultural identity has developed. Heritage conservation is embedded in the consciousness of the community and in environmental planning law. However we are not appropriately protecting these places from the impact of new development. The recent standard of infill development does not adequately take into account the qualities of the surrounding built form. The accumulative impact of these unsympathetically designed insertions compromises the special qualities that make these places desirable to conserve and eventually jeopardises their conservation status. There is a sense of opposition and apathy toward to the need to design sympathetically within the built environment professions. The design and assessment process is failing to take into account the qualities of the surrounding built environment that must be applied to infill design if it is to be sympathetic. It is not failing due to a lack of appropriate design guidelines or planning protection. Rather it is failing due to the actions of individuals who have show little, if any interest in applying them.

Kirsty Tepper

Gentrification, Social Conflict and Inner City Homelessness

Gentrification and homelessness are inextricably intertwined, as both traditionally take place within inner city areas. This thesis considers the interrelationship between gentrification and homelessness, and the impacts of that interrelationship on inner city communities. Its central considerations are whether the two concepts represent conflicting desires for the urban environment, whether they can co-exist, and whether a gentrifying community can be encouraged to work with its homeless residents (and *vice versa*) in developing a vision for the future. A qualitative research methodology has been

utilised to gather perceptions about that interrelationship as it impacts the urban environment of Surry Hills. Interviews were conducted with service providers, homeless people, resident action groups and residents of Surry Hills, to gain an understanding of the complex nature of conflict between the homeless and the gentrifiers. A thematic analysis of the interviews has yielded three theories on the interaction of homelessness and gentrification, based on participants' perceptions. These theories cover the areas of affordable housing, community building, and the potential final outcome of gentrification in Surry Hills.

Aoife Wynter

Just cosmetic overtures? Achieving urban design through policy

Increasingly the achievement of a better quality of urban design within the built environment is becoming the jurisdiction of the town planner. However, a limitation exists as to how to carry out this role effectively, within the parameters of the existing New South Wales planning framework, i.e. the required considerations and intrinsic constraints as experienced by policy writers and development assessment officers within NSW local government. The focus is primarily on achieving better urban design through the objectives and controls of policy, in relation to the planner and the assessment of all development proposals, irrespective of scale of development. Policy, as the method for achieving urban design, can be improved, increasing the effectiveness of the controls as well as the implementation process. Existing examples of policies from South Sydney Council, Melbourne City Council, Stonnington Council and Sydney City Council have been assessed in relation to the theory of essential urban design criteria and the quality of the development that results from design and assessment against the policy's objectives. A number of key individuals involved in improving urban design in NSW were asked their opinion of the capability of policy to achieve urban design. Policy cannot achieve urban design alone. The inefficiencies of the planning system, community regard, designer limitations and the organisations within which the assessments are made all contribute towards impacting on policy and assessment proficiency. Recommendations are made in an effort to improve the effectuality of policy by alleviating the constraints where possible. A series of indicators have been devised that when applied to urban design policies and actual designs will ensure urban design is a valid and an appropriate consideration. These recommendations could be transferable to other areas unlike a specific urban design policy.