



Current Issues for The New Urbanism in Australia

Evan JonesOn behalf of the ACNU

February 2008

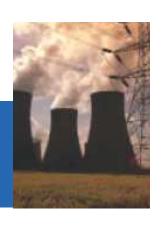
2008 Congress of the Australian Council for New Urbanism



In collaboration with Ecologically Sustainable Design

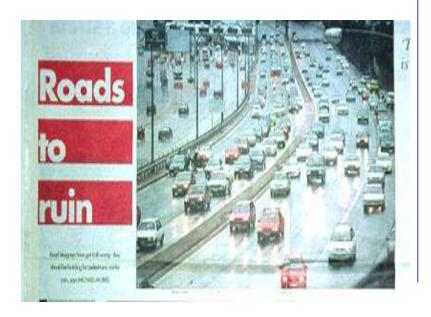


Decisions we take over the next decade will determine Australia's direction for the next half century



We are less than **30 years away** from:

- **Climate catastrophe**
- **■** Fossil fuel depletion
- An aged and almost stable population



- Growth in Australia will be strongest over the next 10 to 20 years and tail off to an almost static population by 2051
- This means that the decisions we make in the next 10 to 20 years the location of growth, its form and the infrastructure that we can afford to provide today will dictate the shape, liveability and sustainability of Australian cities for the whole of the 21st Century
- There is **no second chance** this time for our children to solve problems that we create through our greed, ignorance or incompetence.



What is The New Urbanism?

The New Urbanism is a reaction to sprawl that has grown adaptively into

- A basis for Sustainable Urban Growth/Smart Growth
- An integrated response to Climate Change and Peak Oil
- A basis for addressing physical health and social well-being

The New Urbanism provides a sustainability framework of how to build cities for the long term.



What is New Urbanism in Australia?

... a built environment which is diverse in use and population, scaled for the pedestrian, and capable of accommodating the automobile and mass transit...

... a **well-defined public realm** which is **responsive** to site features and ecology, and supported by an architecture reflecting the climate and culture of the region...

... fine-grained mixed use town and neighbourhood centres with a variety of higher density housing in proximity....

... a **highly-interconnected street network**, with sophisticated traffic management to provide safety and comfort for pedestrians, cyclists and transit-users....

...when applied at the regional, as well as local scale, provides a basis for **comprehensive sustainable growth management**

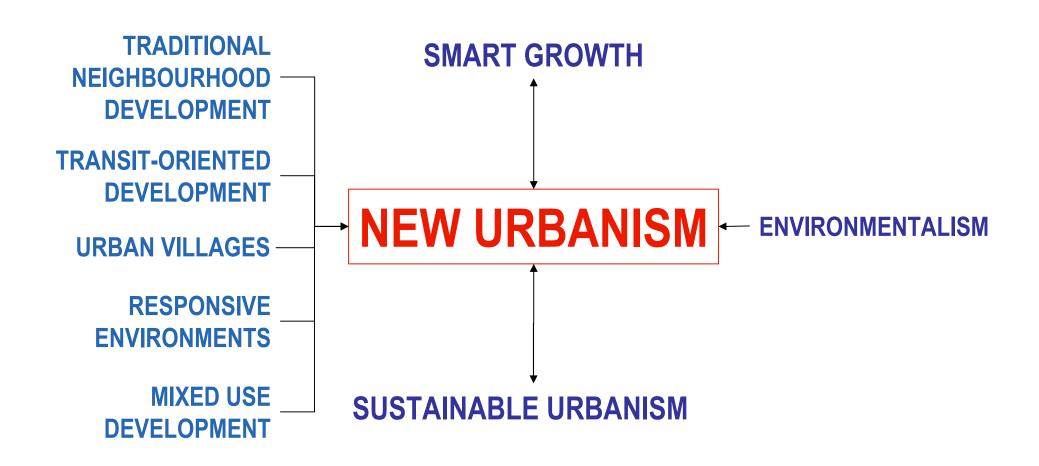


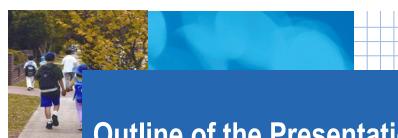






Origins & Evolution of Australian New Urbanism





Outline of the Presentation

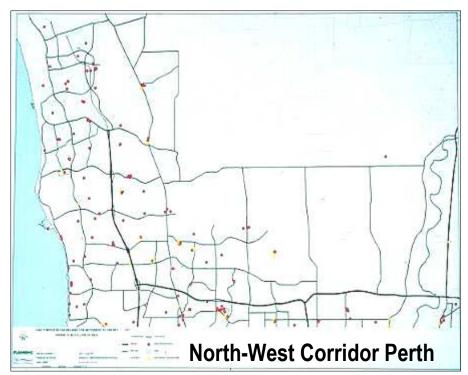
- 1. The Importance to Cities of Physical Form
- 2. The Australian New Urbanist Practice
- 3. Key Challenges and Australian New Urbanism's Responses
 - a) Planning for Sustainable Growth
 - b) Not Throwing the Baby Out With the Bath Water
 - c) Planners and Bureaucracy
 - d) Rooting out Conventional Sprawl Practices
 - e) Achieving Balanced Planning Outcomes
 - **Sustainability in Settlements**



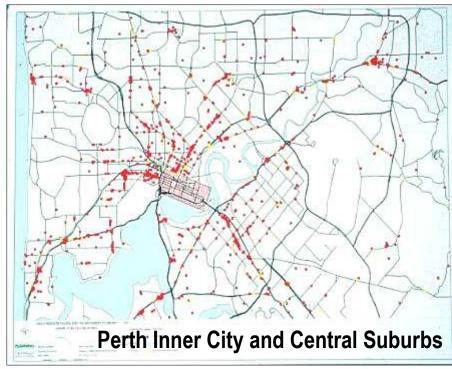
Equity through Access

The decline of the corner store

Conventional/sprawl Suburbs



Traditional 'grid' street Suburbs



Use a litre of petrol to buy a litre of milk!

Buy a litre of milk within walking distance



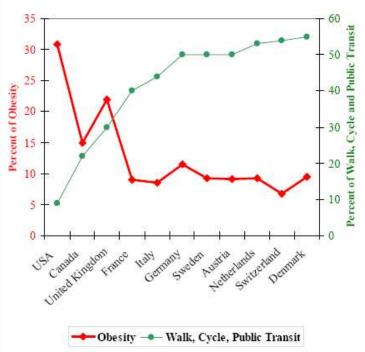
Journal of the American Medical Association

Jeffrey P. Koplan and William H. Dietz of the Centres of Disease Control and

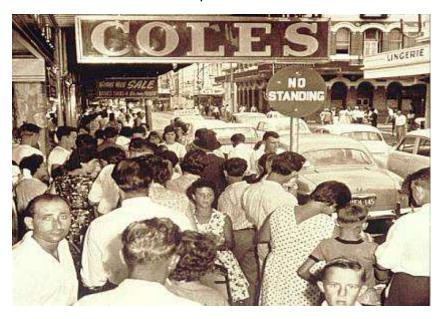
Prevention

The absence of safe walking and bicycling opportunities opportunities in sprawling areas is contributing to sedentary lifestyles and an "epidemic" of obesity among both adults and children.





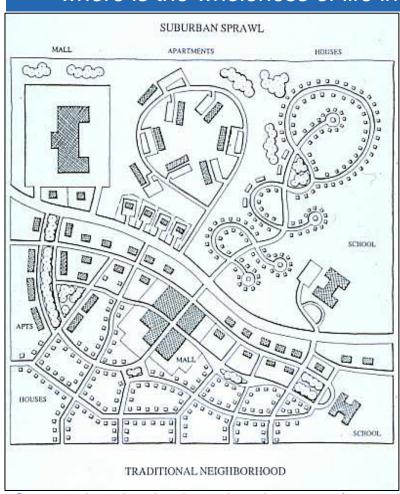
Pucher and Dijkstra, "Promoting Safe Walking and Cycling to Improve Public Health, Am Journal of Public Health, September 2003



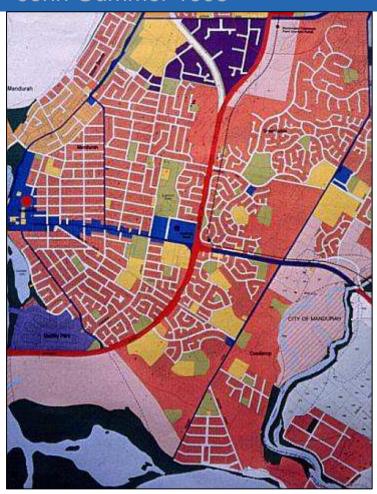
New Urbanism 101: Contrasting Urban Forms

"People live where they do not work, shop where they do not live, and where is the wholeness of life in that?"

John Gummer 1995



Conventional suburban development /sprawl vs traditional urban form



Real case study - Mandurah in WA



Conventional vs Traditional Australian Urbanism

Conventional Subdivision

Exclusivity

Privacy



Traditional Australian Urbanism

Culture

Community

Source: Stephen Thorn



Energy Use and Emissions

Suburb	Energy Use (MJ/cal)	Rating	Ranking
Subiaco (Traditional)	45.40	Low	1
Shenton Park (Traditional)	47.30	Low	2
Nedlands (Traditional)	57.02	Med/Iow	3
Mount Lawley (Traditional)	59.74	Med/Iow	4
Willetton (Conventional)	67.73	Med/high	5
Ballajura (Conventional)	71.79	Med/high	6
Hillarys (Conventional)	82.14	High	7
Kallaroo (Conventional)	84.76	High	8

The **energy use** and **greenhouse gas emissions** of Perth suburbs were calculated by **Prof. Peter Newman** of **Murdoch University**.

The **energy use** and corresponding **greenhouse gas emissions** were noticeably **lower** in the **traditional** areas.

The better performance of the *traditional* suburbs can be largely attributed to their:

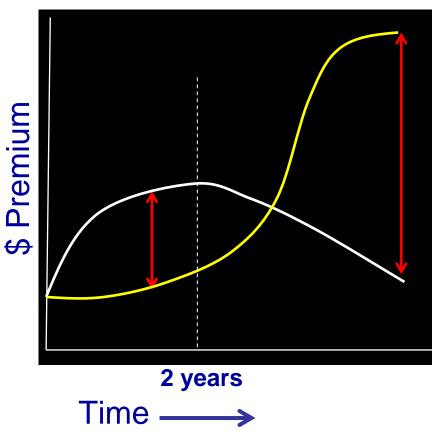
- Higher resident and worker densities;
- Higher levels of connectivity; and
- •**Proximity** to other places (effectively, their proximity to the centre of the overall urban area).

These factors both *reduce* the *need to travel* and make alternatives such as *public transportation* more *viable*.



Exclusivity vs Community

Culture drives the Economy



Community-oriented development



Places become successful over long periods of time, simply because they are well conceived and connected to local culture and community

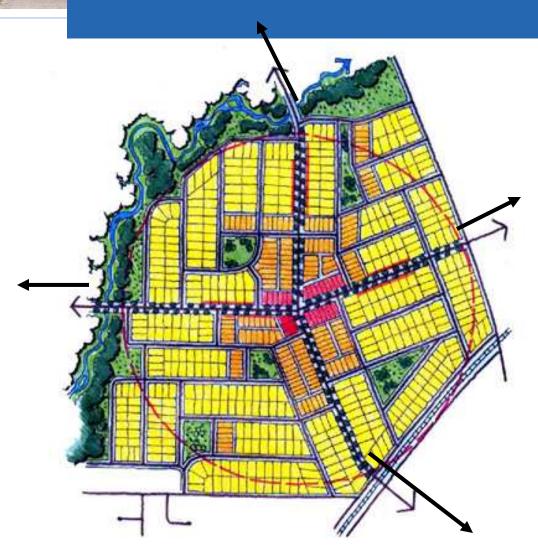
Source: Stephen Thorn



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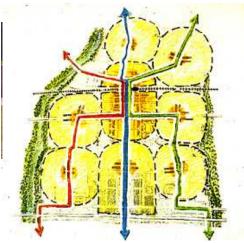
The Basic Element of New Urbanism - A Walkable Neighbourhood



A corner store, child care centre, post box, bus stop and several small businesses provide a walkable focus for a local community, together with diversity in housing choice.

400 metres walkable radius

To support retail, the centre must be on through streets with **at least 3000adt** on them, and serve **750-1000 dwellings**. Corner stores are typically very small (150sqm), and preferably combined with a multi-generational dwelling.



Walkable Neighbourhoods clustering together to form relatively self-contained Towns

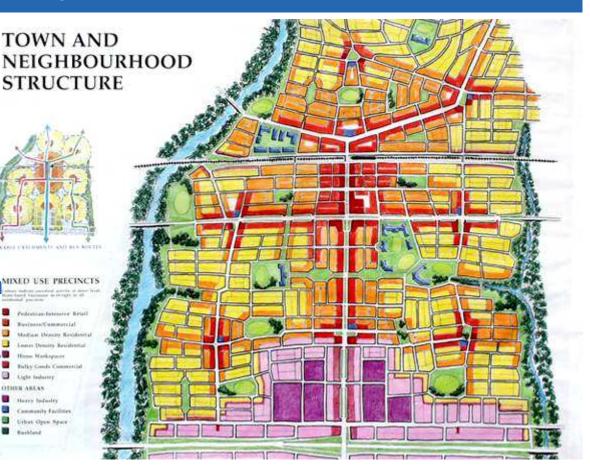
Typically the **mixed use town centre** serves around 15,000 to
30,000 people, and is supported by **six to nine neighbourhoods**.

It contains a main-street based convenience retail node ideally

with two supermarkets, together with service businesses, commercial uses, civic and recreational facilities.

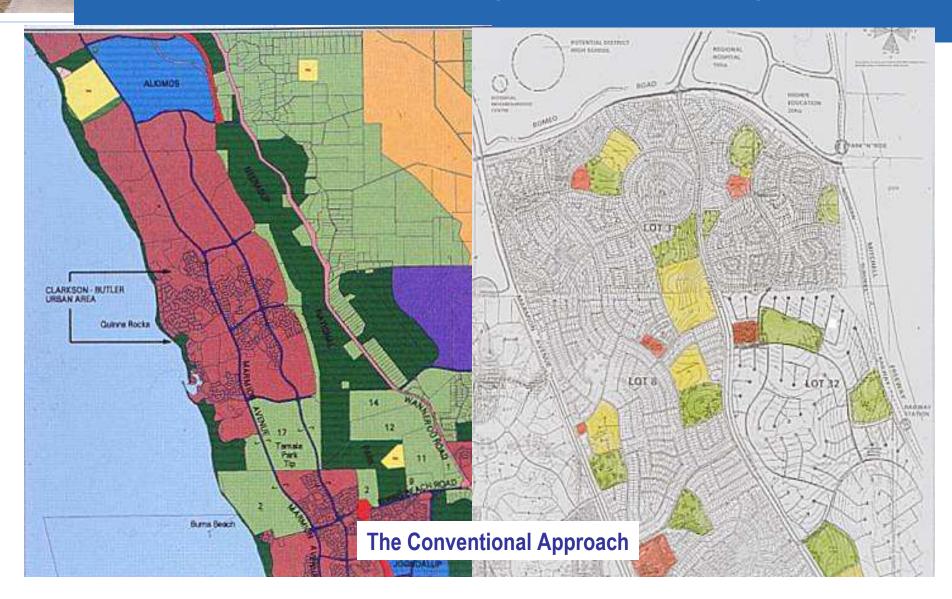
Train and bus services serve the town and neighbourhoods.

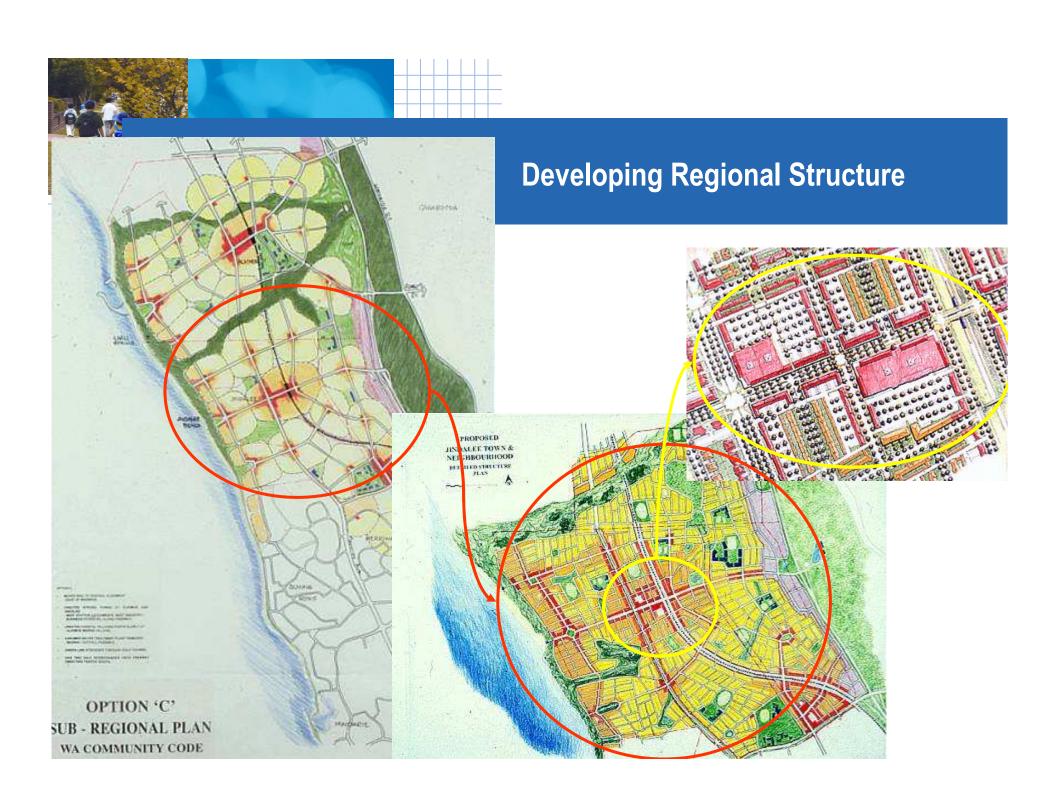
Ideally the green network locates between town catchments, not within the town.



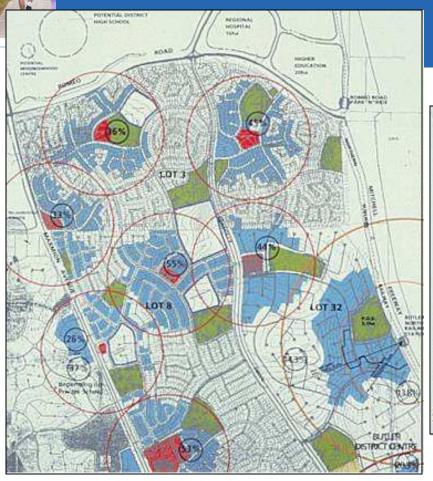
Source: Ecologically Sustainable Design

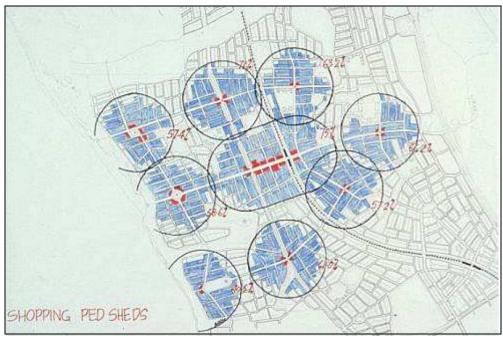
New Urbanist Structure Planning Under Liveable Neighbourhoods



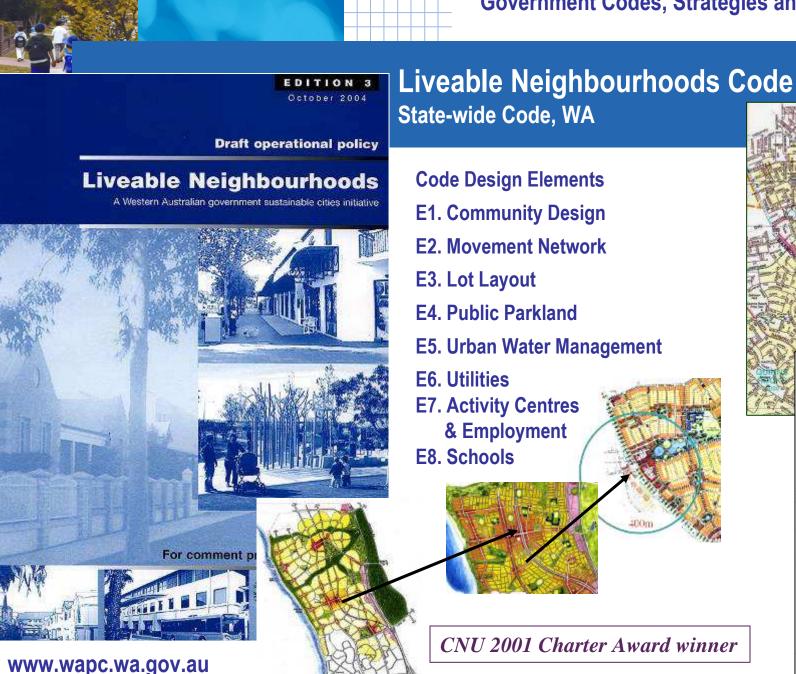


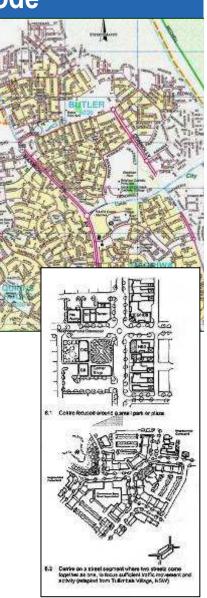






Government Codes, Strategies and Policies







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- **Urban Growth Management Key Challenges**
 - 1. Affordability and livability
 - 2. Ecological footprints
 - 3. Renewing ageing infrastructure

Easy options have been exhausted:

- inflation of land and house prices
- aging population
- resistance to urban consolidation
- managing natural resources
- stresses in urban transport infrastructure with urban development occurring well ahead of the Government's ability to provide adequate transport infrastructure





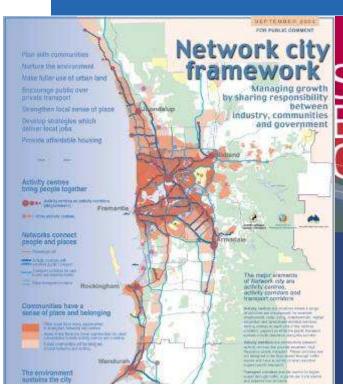
Major and simultaneous challenges for Australian cities:

- 1. Where and how to accommodate growth sustainably
- 2. How to maintain and grow infrastructure in existing urban areas, and how to develop new areas with adequate infrastructure
- 3. How to plan for peak oil and reduced resource consumption particulary water

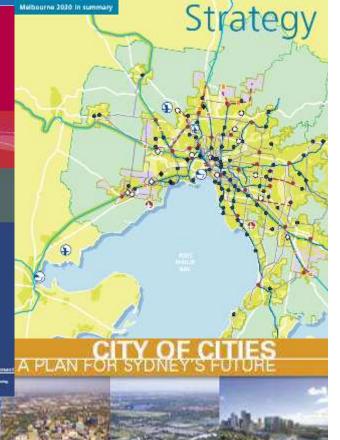




Urban Growth Management – Metropolitan Strategies



South ieensland



Melbourne 2030 in summary

New Urbanist principles are now embedded in all major Australian growth management strategies eg. Melbourne 2030, Perth Network City, Sydney Metropolitan Strategy, SEQ Regional Plan



Urban Growth Management: Infill

... Moving towards better Urban Sustainability and lower Carbon Developments

- Infill intensification and regeneration are better than new extensions, especially when linked to public transport
- Making real progress towards increased residential density and mixed use
- Subi-centro, Kogarah, Wynnum TOD









A more compact city

Build up activity centres as a focus for high-quality development, activity and living for the whole community (Policy 1.1)

Broaden the base of activity in centres that are currently dominated by shopping to include a wider range of services over longer hours, and restrict out-of-centre development (Policy 1.2)

Locate a substantial proportion of new housing in or close to activity centres and other strategic redevelopment sites that offer good access to services and transport (Policy 1.3)







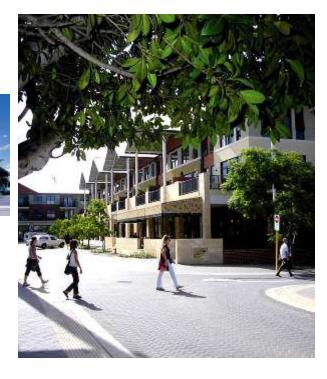






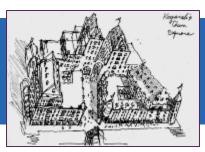
Former industrial. New station, and Rokeby Rd retail anchor. Extensive new commercial/office development, lots of terrace housing and some live-works.

Redevelopment Authority.



Urban Centre Regeneration

Kogarah Town Centre Southern Sydney, NSW



Major revitalisation of middle-ring town centre to walkable urban village. Catalysed by redevelopment of a Council car park to a five-storey mixed use development focussed around a new town square. Leading design demonstration of building energy and water efficiency.







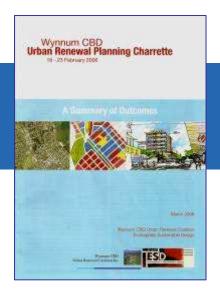




Urban Centre Regeneration

Wynnum Central Brisbane, Qld

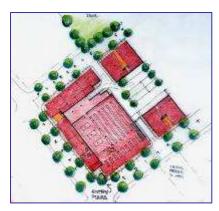
Charrette-based community-initiated TOD revitalisation strategy incorporating 6-8 storey mixed use buildings















Urban Growth Management: Infill

... Moving towards better Urban Sustainability and lower Carbon Developments

Issues

- Political resistance NIMBY residents and financier conservatism are frustrating Metropolitan Strategies (and consumer demand) - people are being denied the opportunity to live in their own suburbs!
- Lower density is often built rather than higher density for ease of approval and higher returns, and scarce brownfields and infill sites are being developed with less density than will be needed
- Governance and finance mechanisms for urban renewal remain embryonic, with only a few specialised arrangements for densifying existing areas – eg WA's Redevelopment Authorities, Queensland's Urban Land Development Authority

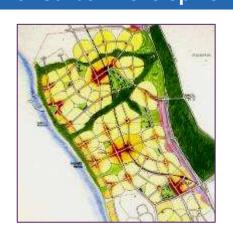


Beacon Cove suburban vs. urban typologies





1. Need regional-scale design-based urban structure plans for the most sustainable outcomes: Perth NW Corridor, Western Sydney Growth Centres, LN





- 2. At town/neighbourhood scale NU creates denser, more walkable, more transit-friendly, more mixed use places: Tullimbar, Wellard, Somerly, Brighton, Harvest Lakes
- 3. Need strong emphasis on making great town centres, both new and as mall retrofits: **Joondalup**, **Rouse Hill**, **Shellharbour**, **Point Cook**

Direction 2

Better management of metropolitan growth

Establish an urban growth boundary to set clear limits to metropolitan Melbourne's outward development (Policy 2.1)

Concentrate urban expansion into growth areas that are served by high-capacity public transport (Policy 2.2)

Manage the sequence of development in growth areas so that services are available from early in the life of new communities (Policy 2.3)

Protect the green wedges of metropolitan Melbourne from inappropriate development (Policy 2.4)







CNU 2005 Charter Award winner

Western Sydney Urban Land Release Western Sydney, NSW

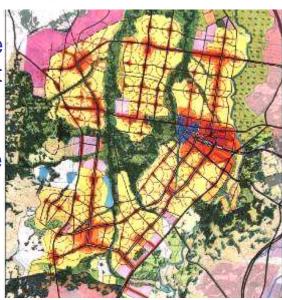
Government Codes, Strategies and Policies

State Government-led large-scale sustainable regional planning initiative for two new major city regions.

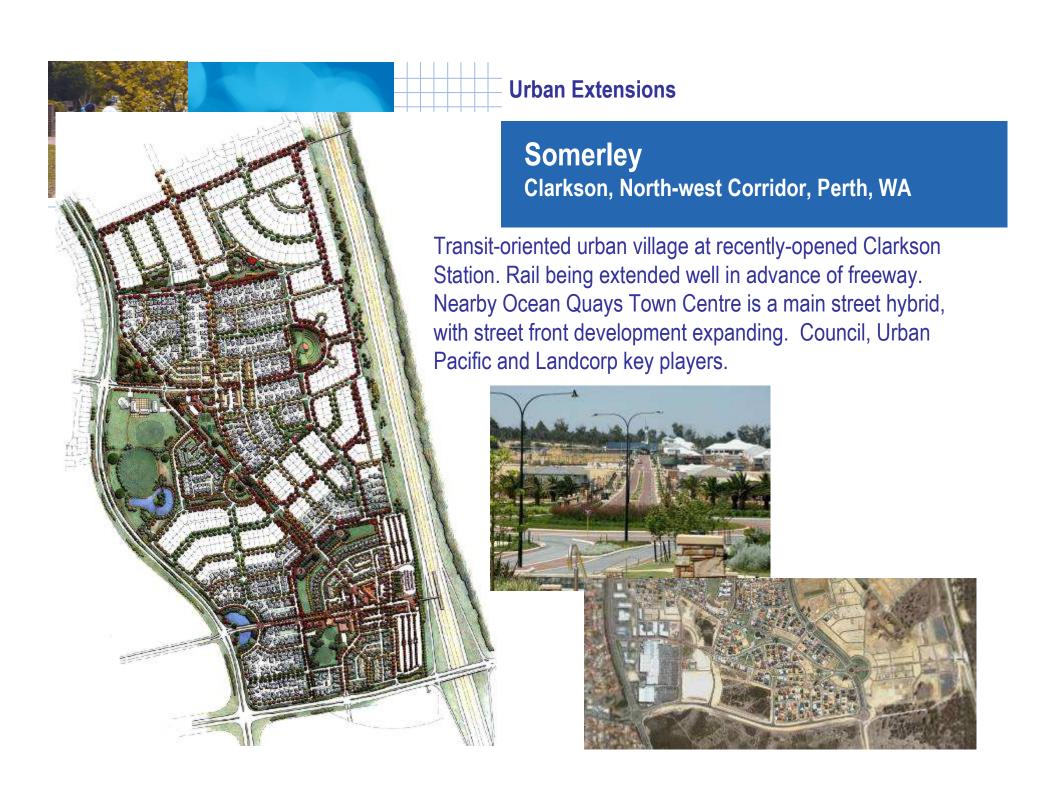
Growth Centres Commission established; innovative infrastructure funding mechanisms set up; mixed use transit-supportive development must be delivered.

Plan shows innovative balance between habitat preservation and efficient urban form.















Albion Park, Illawarra, NSW

Urban extension with proposed mixed use village centre in a rehabilitated farmland valley. Private development-led, with first stages opened in 2006. Relatively dense with extensive use of rear lanes.















Joondalup City Centre North-west Corridor Perth, WA

Creating dense, mixed use inner suburbs around a new urban fringe centre. Extensive terrace housing, rear lanes, studio units and a range of small business spaces.













Urban Growth Management: Urban Extensions

... Moving towards better Urban Sustainability and lower Carbon Developments

Issues

- 1. Refine Metropolitan Strategies into clear and realisable priorities for urban infill/intensification and new urban corridors
- 2. Infrastructure must be delivered concurrent with urban development. New approaches to coordination and funding are needed beyond new agency formation eg. W.A.'s DPI.
- Continuing battles against conservative Local and State Government engineering standards -'land slop'! The only coherent planning code for greenfields is WA's Liveable Neighbourhoods which needs replication for all States.
- 4. Innovation is being stifled from long approval times and approval requirements and trade-off's particularly for environmental constraints. The statutory development control system must support (and not lead) strategic priorities



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Wendell Cox has blamed government red tape for destroying land affordability in cities around the world, describing Perth as possibly the 'ultimate' victim. "The problem is a culture of planning excess, in which land prices have been driven through the roof by **overly restrictive zoning**, **slow land release** and the **imposition of expensive amenities**."

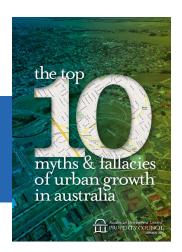
It is pretty apparent now that **reluctance to release new land**, plus the new approach where the **purchaser has to pay for all the services upfront**, is having an effect. But the main reason that prices were so high was **low interest rates**.

Former Reserve Bank Governor Ian MacFarlane

Demogropha (Cox) has exaggerated the importance of restrictions on the fringe, "the housing market was always going to have trouble satisfying the huge surge of demand that came with the **halving of interest rates**"

Rory Robertson, Macquarie Bank





Sprawling development with **no amenities** or **transport** is no answer for consumers, developers or communities. It only looks cheap now because the real cost is deferred into the future (and then to those who can least afford it).

Unfortunately, there are **no effective markets in public goods** like good urban planning and design, clean air, and a sustainable urban environment. In the face of this market failure government must take the lead in partnership with business.

Clearly an investment in planning, infrastructure and the other public goods that are the difference between a liveable city and a congested, polluted city.



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- Planners talk about holistic visions, but as part of the bureaucracy planning relies on linear process-oriented approaches (sequentially reactive and/or dealing with one topic at a time – or per agency).
- The 'management approach' of bureaucratic planning leaves places as a residual of the various inputs from agencies following their own agendas to the vested interests of powerful groups.
- Planners can call for a type of development to occur, but they normally don't not command the resources (such as control over infrastructure) to make it happen often are restricted to playing reactive, regulatory roles.
- Urban structuring at regional and local levels the spatial organisation of elements that determines the function and character of places is a fundamental role of government. However, many State and local planning agencies lack the necessary skill-base needed to undertake these complex plans.



- There are many agencies involved in the planning process at a State Government level that affect the quality of places, many of which operate in their respective 'silos' without sufficiently understanding how their own priorities need to dovetail with others to get a sustainable outcome.
- Agencies outside planning typically have little if any understanding of what it takes to make good places and have their own responsibilities and priorities that may work against good places. For example there have been battles by planners (and residents) against main roads departments across Australia for many years.
- Bureaucratic fiefdoms can set the agenda according to their own needs. For example, the Warren Centre Sustainable Transport in Cities Project: Report on Community Research 2001 found that there was strong support amongst residents for improving public transport, even at the expense of the road budget but the decision makers consistently down played this support (the public didn't really mean what it said).
- As has been noted by John Mant, current government administrative systems do not facilitate the clear allocation of responsibility and accountability for the quality of places and the cohesion of local communities.



Urban Governance: Professional disconnects

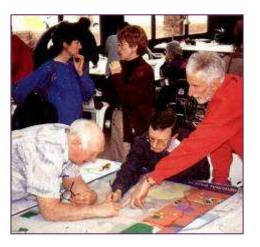
- The **professions** ('guilds') have become both **specialised and compartmentalised** and provide arbitrary and artificial barriers to making good places.
- Balanced transport planning has only recently emerged from the giant shadow cast by road engineering with its preoccupation for cars and efficient (read high volume high speed) roads.
- Too often, architects' perceived obligations to make every building a creative landmark over the appropriateness and contexts that are so important in making responsive and compatible places.



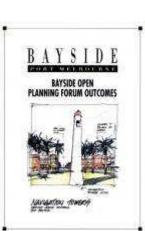
Enquiry-by-Design approach

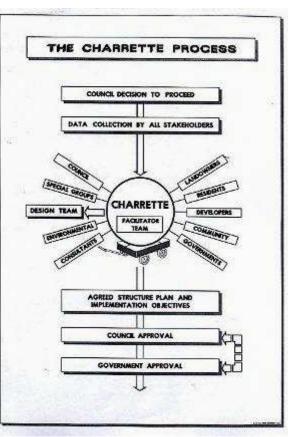
...Encouraging more use of integrative and collaborative design-based planning processes

- Significant design workshops or Charrettes to resolve the competing challenges to achieving good urbanism
- Key to integrative high quality outcomes
- Creates positive vision of development
- Collaboratively resolves technical issues
- Engages with community stakeholders
- Enables the vision to be maintained over time







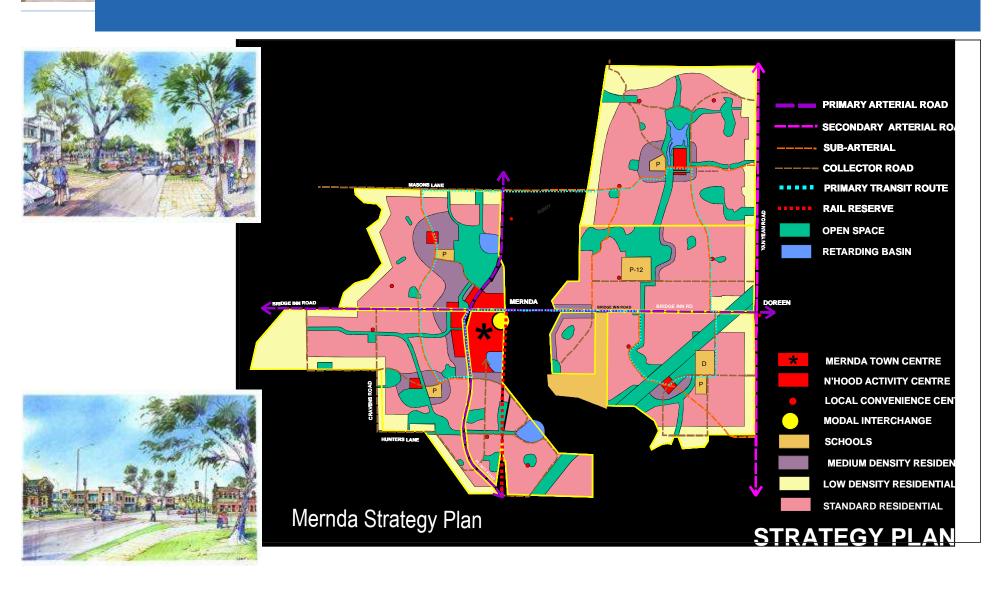






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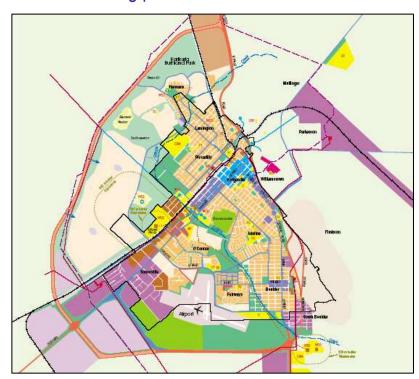




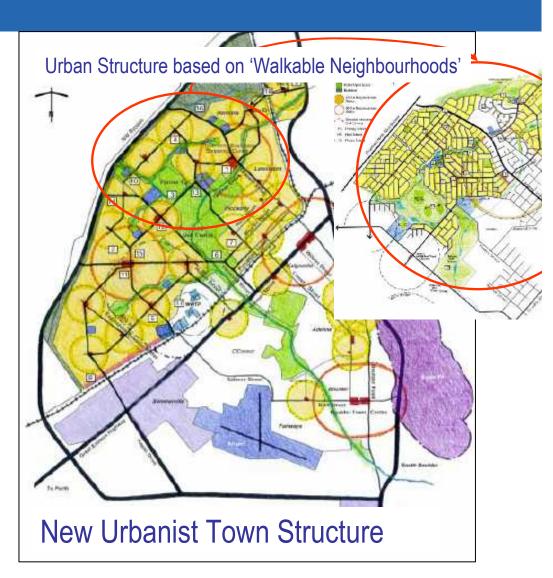


Planning Approaches

Colours and arrows mirroring words; not showing places



Conventional Spatial Planning

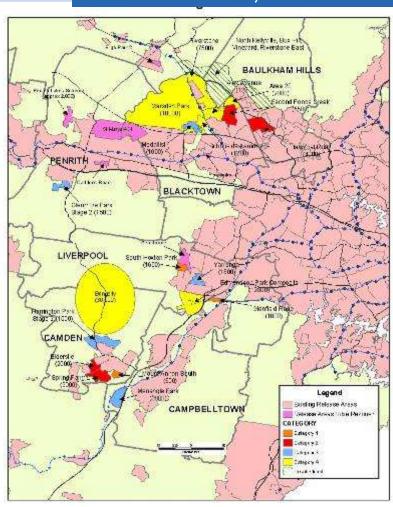




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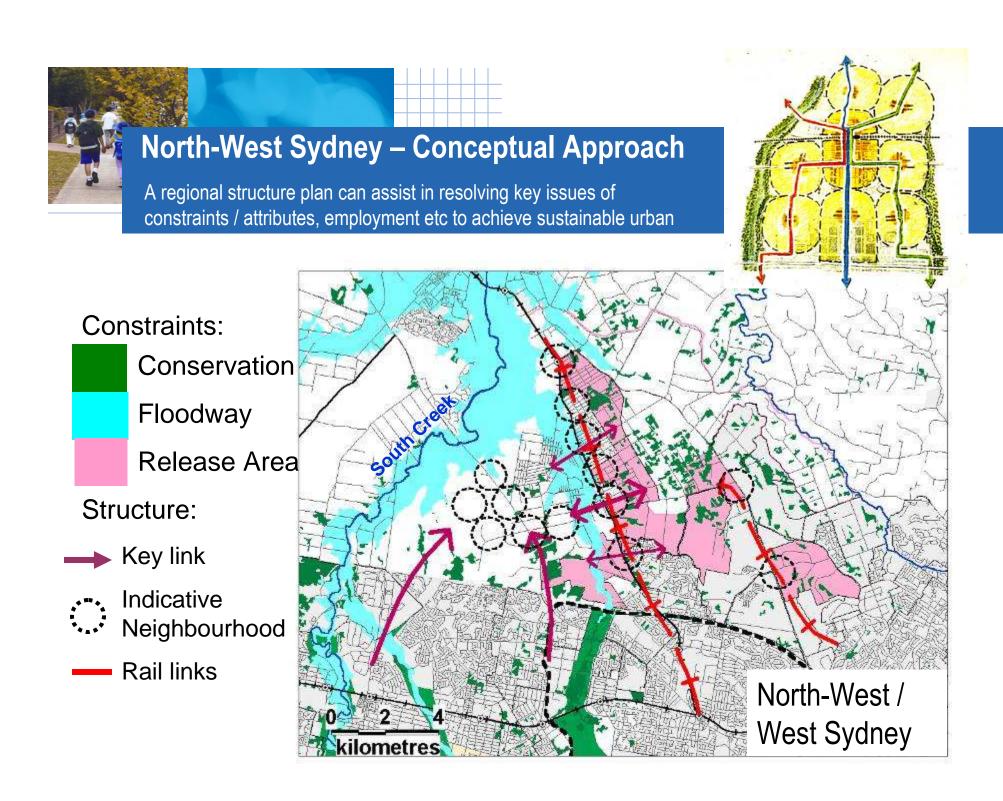
Case Studies:- green/blue 'sustainability' imbalanced with urban structure, to the disbenefit of both



Western Sydney sprawl



Spring Farm South West Sydney – squeezing urban development between conservation constraints leading to sub-optimal results for both conservation and urban development





What items to consider?

Employment

Greenhouse

Integrated Effluent Management Stormwater Management

Transport Options

Western Sydney

Water Sensitive Urban Design

Health & Community

Drinking Water Catchments

y Urban Density

water management act Georges River REP

Air Quality

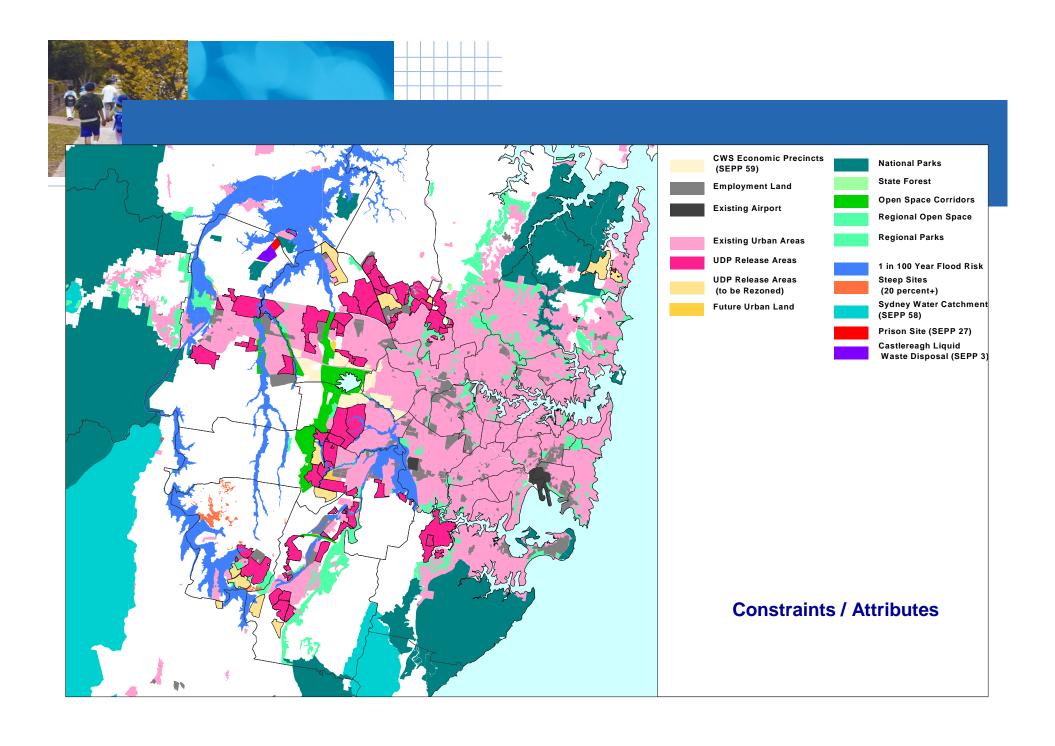
Housing Affordability

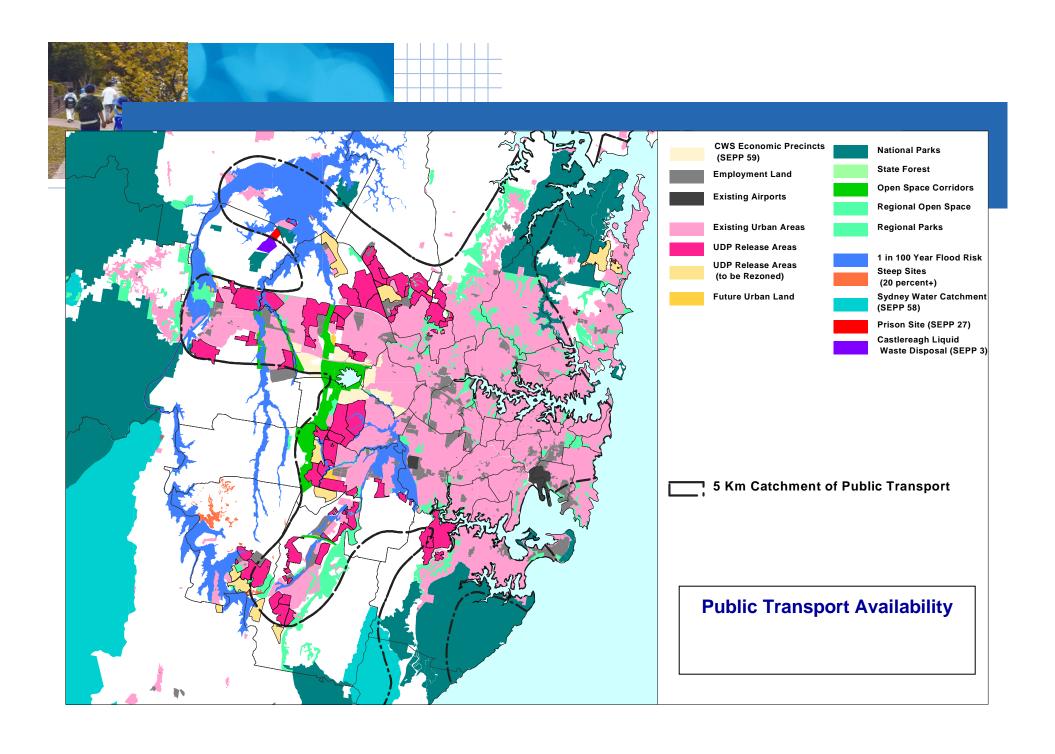
Sustainability

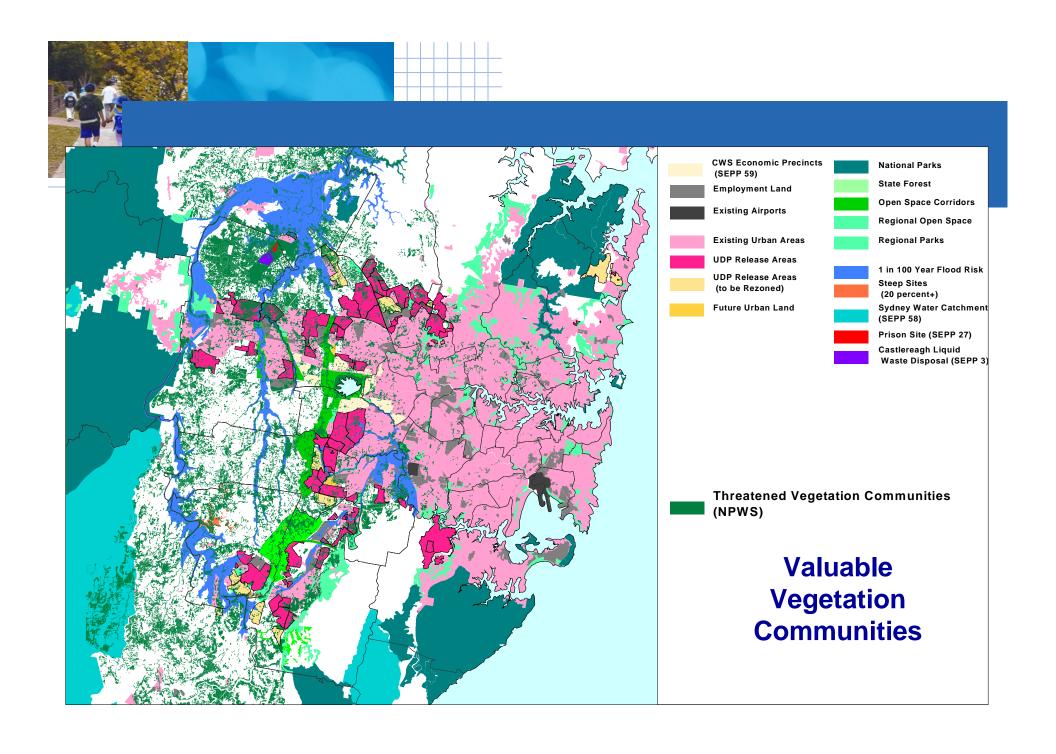
Conservation

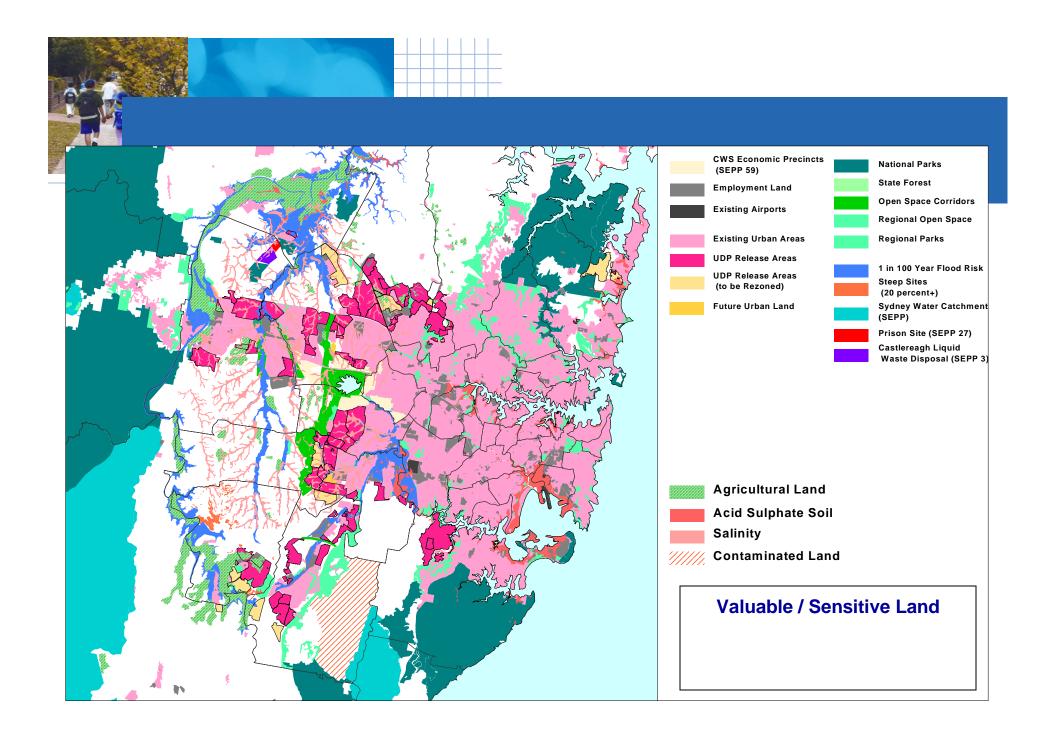
Diversity

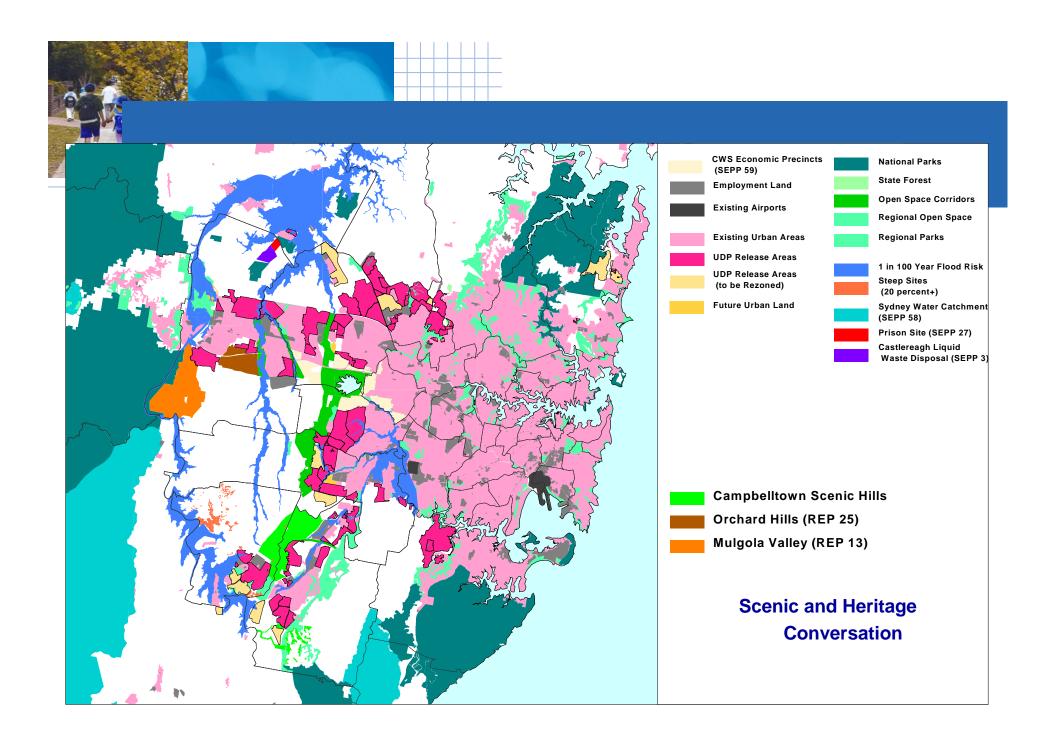
The challenge - to integrate various factors with good urban structure

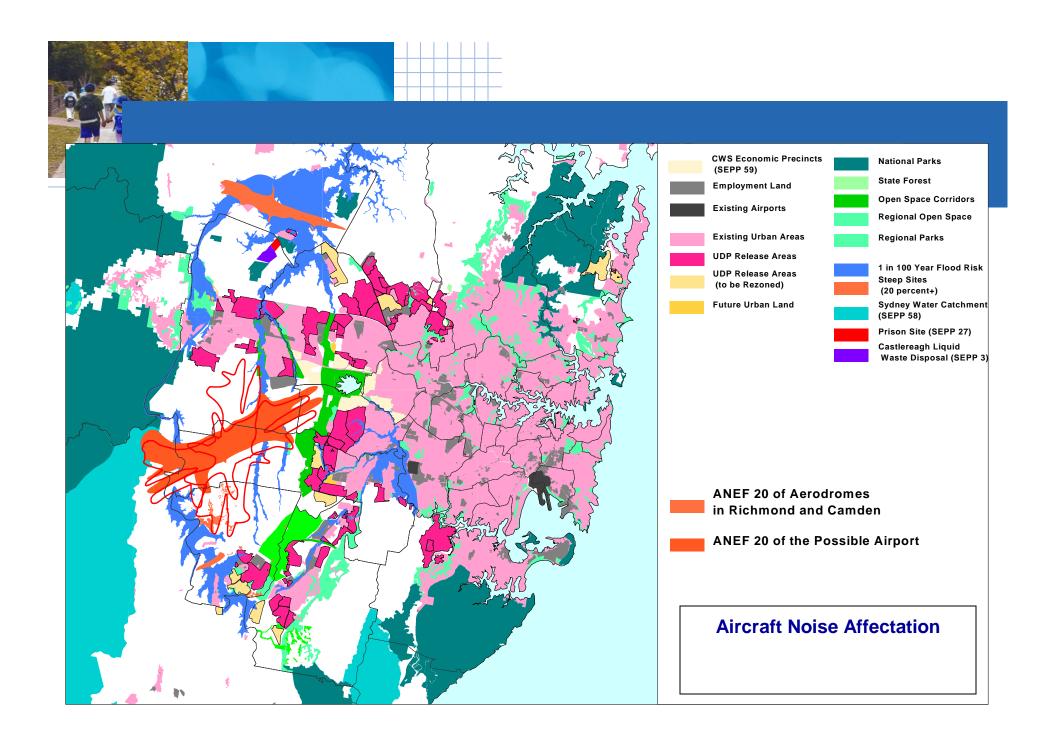


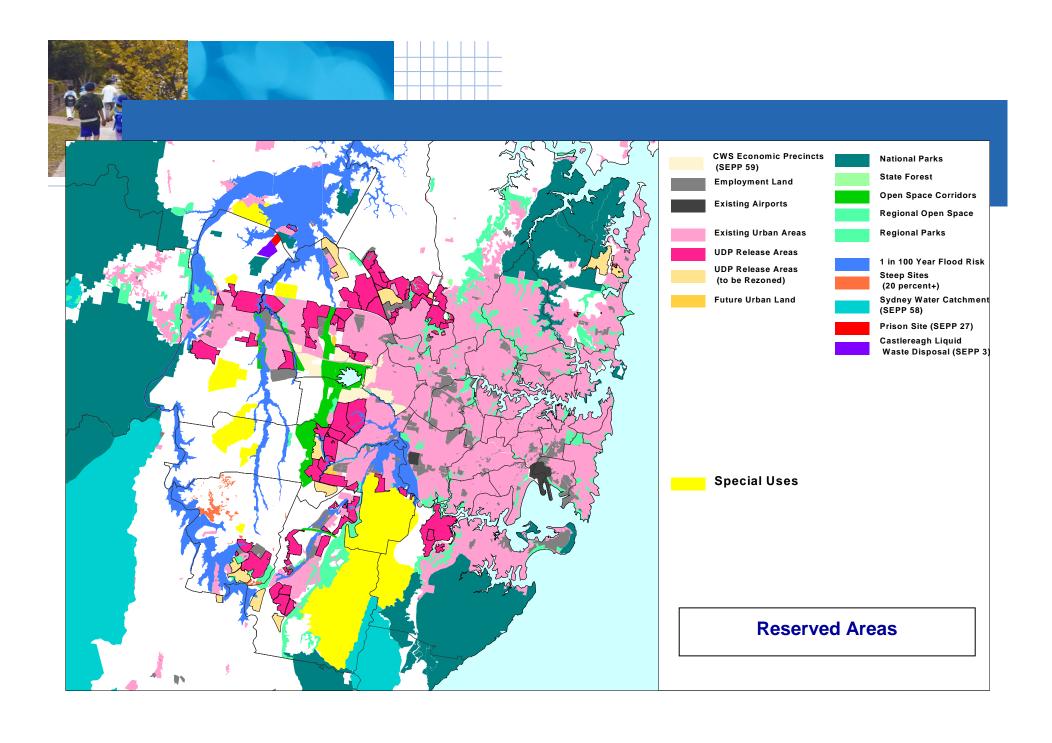


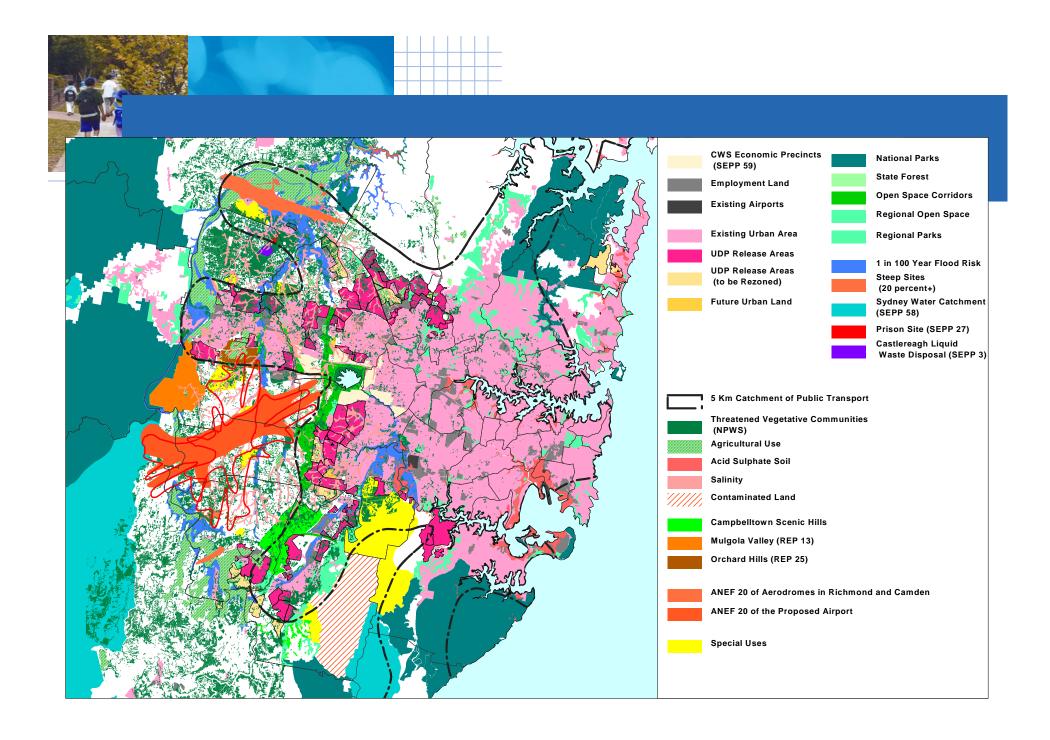






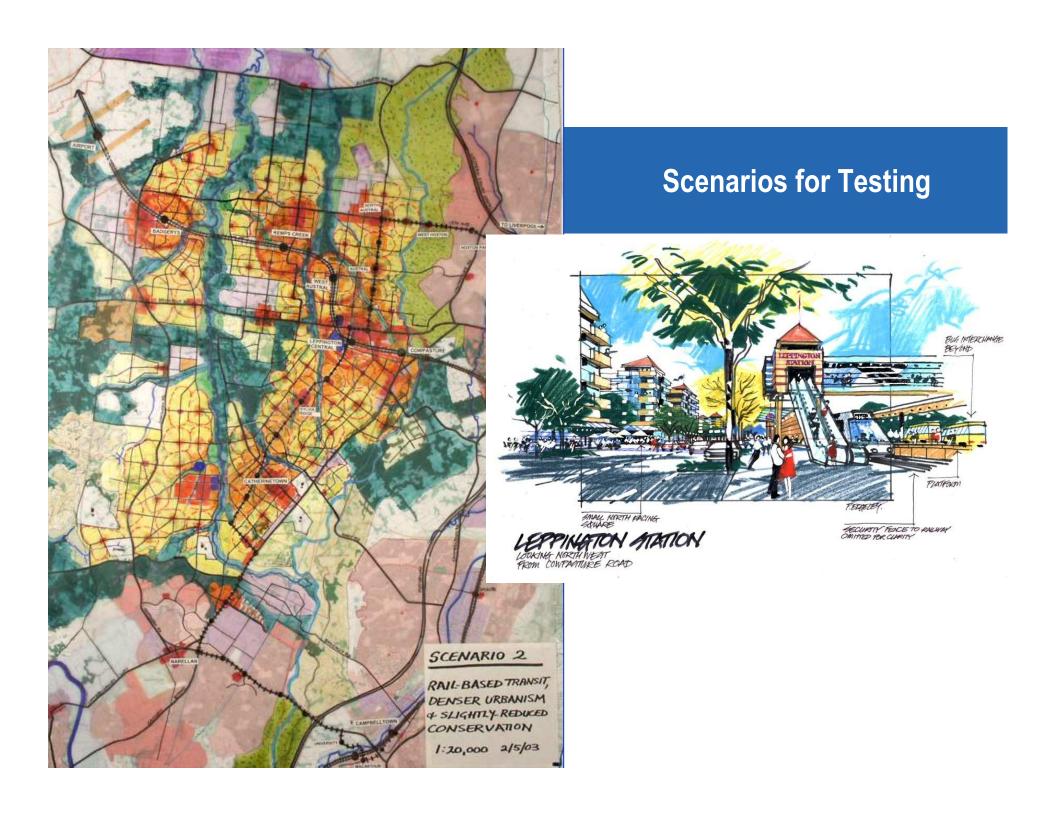








Scenarios for				
Testing	1. Plan for Limited	2. Maximise Conservation	3. Balanced Conservation	4. Optimum Urbanism and
	Dwellings	/Water &Good Urbanism	with Good Urbanism	Public Transport
Conservation Estate	This scenario will test multiple fronts to find the most effective locality/ies for 30,000 dwellings It will test both conservation and public transport priorities	This scenario will test urban structure, density, public transport within a context of maximising the retention of vegetation under the Recovery Plan.	This scenario will test urban structure, density, public transport within a context of retaining most Core and Support for Core Habitat, but rationalising	Public Transport Oriented Development with possible significant modification of conservation. Include priority
Employment				
Public Transport				
City Structure				
Housing		Includes riparian setbacks for	when in important locations for urbanism such as station precincts	on employment.
		streams.		





Outline of the Presentation

- 1. The Importance to Cities of Physical Form
- 2. The Australian New Urbanist Practice
- 3. Key Challenges & Australian New Urbanism's Responses
 - a) Planning for Sustainable Growth
 - b) Not Throwing the Baby Out With the Bath Water
 - c) Planners and Bureaucracy
 - d) Rooting out Conventional Sprawl Practices
 - e) Achieving Balanced Planning Outcomes
 - f) Sustainability in Settlements

Sustainability in Settlements ... a Green and Grey Future



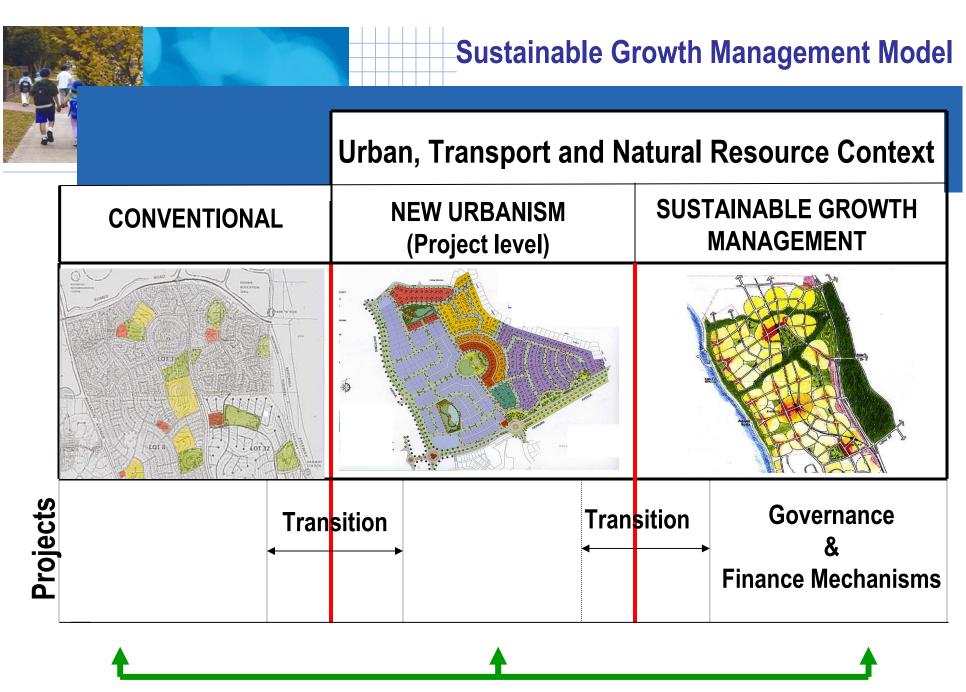


Solar powered suburb of Newington – former Sydney Olympic 2000 village

Sustainability in settlements means reducing the city's ecological footprint (water, energy, land, materials, wastes...) whilst simultaneously improving quality of life (health, housing, employment, community...) within the capacity limits of the city and its bioregion.

(Peter Newman)

- Green living depends on a denser urban environment which requires quality places
- Through density, mixed use and transit oriented design more opportunities are created for walking, biking and reduce car use
- Manage total water cycle management, use energy efficiently and reduce the amount of land used



Green initiatives: water, energy, natural resources, materials, waste



Sustainability for Urban Development

- Growth management through emphasising urban intensification and regeneration and the Regional Structuring of major Australian City Corridors
- A clear priority for **transit down each corridor**
- A land use system that builds densely around centres and local priority for walking/cycling through Liveable
 Neighbourhoods Regional and Town Structuring for all major growth corridors
- Transparent and engaging public processes
- A funding system to facilitate urban development coincident
 with necessary infrastructure
- Initiating, trialling and funding alternative green & grey infrastructures





Every new increment in development needs to improve the sustainability of each Australian city

...there will be no second chance this time for our children to solve problems that we create



On behalf of the ACNU, thank you for attending and we look forward to your contribution

