

RODNEY DAVIES RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM 2024

Thursday 21st March 2024, 2.50pm – 5.20pm
Programme, with abstracts (below)

Time:	Presenter	Affiliation	Title
2.50pm	Welcome and Introduction – Joanna Ross (Massey University) and Christina Hanna (Waikato University)		
Approx. times:	PRESENTATIONS: (approx. 12-15 minutes per presentation plus 5 minutes questions)		
3.00pm	Annet Forkink, Xuemei Tang, Robert B Buxton	GNS Science Te P Ao	Extreme Wildfire: Regulatory systems for managing wildfire risk in Aotearoa New Zealand
3.20pm	Clint Betteridge	Massey University Supervisor: Dr Clare Mouat	A more inclusive planning system: The case for Voluntary Planning Assistance in Aotearoa New Zealand
3.40pm	Devon Allen^a Mischa Wild^b	^a University of Otago Supervisor: Dr Mick Strack ^b Lincoln University Supervisor: Dr Shannon Page	Covenants – past, present and future. Restrictive covenant research in residential subdivisions and the need for reform
4.00pm	Brae Ihaka	PhD Candidate, University of Auckland Supervisors: Dr Lee Beattie/Dr I-Ting Chuang	A critical investigation of Masterplanning practice in New Zealand: Is it achieving intended outcomes?
4.20pm	Renee Hanrahan	Otago University Supervisor: Dr Sarah Mager	Towards Te Mana o te Wai – An exploration of partnership under the NPS-FM
4.40pm	Bruce Glavovic Huhana Smith, Hilary Webb, Derrylea Hardy and Martin Garcia Cartagena	Massey University	Champions for climate change action: Learning through community-led adaptation planning
5.00	Melissa Smith	University of Waikato Supervisor: Xinyu Fu	When Bikes Lanes Are Not Enough: An Exploration of the Level of Traffic Stress Framework in Aotearoa New Zealand
5.20pm	Wrap up / concluding comments re the planning/theory nexus		

ABSTRACTS:

Annet Forkink, Xuemei Tang, Robert B Buxton

GNS Science

Extreme Wildfire: Regulatory systems for managing wildfire risk in Aotearoa New Zealand

Presentation presented by: Annet Forkink, GNS Science

Abstract

In recent years, Aotearoa New Zealand has witnessed a significant increase in the occurrence of extreme wildfires. This trend is related to accelerated impacts of climate change, which have intensified the risks associated with such events. Of particular concern is the higher risk observed at the rural-urban interface, where urban development is close to rural vegetation.

This study aims to identify and analyse the regulatory, planning and decision-making systems relevant to wildfire risk management in Aotearoa New Zealand. To achieve this, consultations were conducted with programme partners and experts in the planning field to identify specific parts of the decision-making process that offer opportunities for reducing wildfire risk in the rural-urban interface.

The presentation highlights the importance of clear communication and guidance in decision-making and planning processes. It furthermore empathizes the need for stricter building requirements, wildfire risk awareness programmes, pro-active planning, and effective co-ordination among authorities for effective wildfire management.

Clint Betteridge

Massey University [MRP thesis, Supervisor: Dr Clare Mouat]

A more inclusive planning system: The case for Voluntary Planning Assistance in Aotearoa New Zealand

Inclusive public participation in modern planning systems is complex. The problem explored in this research is a perceived lack of voluntary planning assistance (VPA) for helping people engage with the planning system in Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ), particularly those who cannot afford to pay for planning advice or services. Drivers such as the Rio Declaration and the Sustainable Development Goals help to address the lack of inclusivity in planning globally. This is evident in a number of international planning profession initiatives in providing VPA, particularly those with origins in advocacy planning in the United Kingdom and United States. These influences, and the documented lack of implementation support in NZ's planning system, present an ideal time to consider opportunities for increased inclusiveness from a wider range of people than those resourced to access it.

This paper investigates the opportunity and need for VPA in NZ, learning from international examples and supported by an online survey of Te Kōkiringa Taumata | New Zealand Planning Institute members. Overall, the survey found strong support for the concept and need for VPA in NZ. It also provided interesting insights on the extent of informal VPA practice and interest among planners in providing VPA through some form of facilitated service. The paper concludes with reflections on the importance of VPA in NZ and further research opportunities on the topic.

Devon Allen^a and Mischa Wild^b

^a University of Otago [BSurv(Hons). Supervisor: Dr Mick Strack

^b Lincoln University [IMPlan Thesis, Supervisor: Dr Shannon Page]

Covenants - past, present and future. Restrictive covenant research in residential subdivisions and the need for reform.

Covenants are a mechanism used by developers to control urban design outcomes and the activities undertaken within residential subdivisions. Covenants have benefits, but research suggests they contribute to housing issues, and reform has been recommended. There is little research surrounding restrictive covenants in New Zealand. Individual covenant research has been undertaken by Allen and Wild.

Allen's research investigated the extent to which restrictive covenants restricted or allowed residents to undertake activities on land in residential subdivisions. This research utilised a case study in the Lower Shotover, using detached observation and interviews with residents. The research found covenants were not complied with by residents, and non-compliance was not enforced. However, residents believed covenants were positive as they protected the aesthetic of the development. Overall, the research found covenants are not an appropriate mechanism of control because they fail to recognise the circumstances of the residents who live in the development, and because they contribute to housing unavailability.

Wild's research investigated the use of covenants by developers in residential subdivisions, and the extent to

which covenants exert control over design outcomes. This research utilised a case study in the Selwyn District, using data analysis of covenants and interviews/questionnaires with developers and planners. The research found covenants are a private tool used to create a high level of consistency. The research also found covenants are developer-driven, and specific clauses within covenants themselves can prevent further development. The research identified that the use of covenants could have implications in carrying out the key objectives of the NPS-UD and the MDRS.

This presentation will detail Allen and Wild's respective research, discuss similarities and differences between the two case studies, and discuss what covenant reform and changes may look like in the future in light of the respective research results and recent academic commentary.

Brae Ihaka | MArch (Prof) MUrbPlan (Prof)

Urban Design Doctoral Candidate | University of Auckland | School of Architecture and Urban Planning

Supervisors: Dr Lee Beattie and Dr I-Ting Chuang

A critical investigation of Masterplanning practice in New Zealand: Is it achieving intended outcomes?

Masterplanning is a significant element in New Zealand's urban planning and design practice, often serving as the basis for plan changes or resource consent processes. However, there is a lack of academic research or political guidance regarding the processes and outcomes that masterplanning practitioners should implement. Typically, masterplanning involves a vision, a three-dimensional spatial strategy, and an implementation plan. International literature suggests that the spatial strategy should consider land use, built form, open space, and movement. The need to create a sense of place and identity is often spread across these strategies. Is this approach reflected in New Zealand's practice? This research will analyse three case studies of masterplanned communities in New Zealand and compare them to the expectations derived from existing literature. The literature suggests that the goal of masterplanning is community creation. To achieve this, land use, built form, open space, and movement strategies must all be considered and harmonized to deliver a comprehensive vision. Initial findings reveal that the New Zealand case studies do not adhere to this structure. Issues include the absence of an overarching vision or link to the objectives of District Plans. Some of the case studies either did not incorporate all four key strategies — land use, built form, open space, and movement — or emphasized some at the expense of others. The preliminary analysis indicates that New Zealand masterplanning practices instead revolve around structure plans, landscape plans, and development plans. These plans are predominately focused on residential development, as opposed to community development. The purposes of these plans are distinct from the holistic community creation intent of masterplanning. This forms part of my initial research findings evaluating the influence masterplanning has on achieving its intended outcomes in practice.

Renee Hanrahan

Otago University [MPlan thesis, Supervisor: Dr Sarah Mager]

Towards Te Mana o te Wai – An exploration of partnership under the NPS-FM

Freshwater is an essential element of life. Māori alongside other indigenous peoples have an ancestral connection to this resource that forms an innate part of their culture. In recognition of declining freshwater quality and overallocation in some regions, a major shift to encapsulate a Māori view of the environment involved the inclusion of Te Mana o Te Wai as the 'fundamental concept' of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) 2020.

The objective of this research has been to examine, using case studies, the challenges for implementing an indigenous worldview into the environmental planning paradigm. Through key informant interviews and qualitative data analysis, the varied experiences of partnership when undertaking this directive were explored. Tāngata whenua in Otago and Taranaki are eager to see how Te Mana o te Wai as a concept will cascade into freshwater planning mechanisms. Challenges are intensified by a lack of resourcing within iwi organisations who are tasked with growing responsibilities without the appropriate funding to do so. Alongside this, regional authorities are working to enact the entirety of the NPS-FM alongside other new national directives within a strained time frame. Evidently, the NPS-FM is symptomatic of the increasingly bicultural rhetoric being applied to freshwater management in Aotearoa New Zealand. As such, indigenous ways of knowing are being turned to as a way to combat the effects of climate change, biodiversity loss and freshwater decline. As this shift occurs, it is vitally important that those who hold and share this knowledge are recognized for their expertise in a practical and remunerable way. Implementation of Te Mana o te Wai must recognise pathways towards tino rangatiratanga and improve iwi resourcing to cultivate genuine partnerships between tāngata whenua and local government in the freshwater management of the future.

Bruce Glavovic¹ and Huhana Smith², Hilary Webb, Derrylea Hardy and Martin García Cartagena

¹ School of People, Environment and Planning, Massey University

² Whiti o Rehua School of Art, Massey University

Champions for climate change action: Learning through community-led adaptation planning

The communities of Tangimoana, Pūtiki, Waitōtara, and Rohutu were selected in consultation with regional and local leaders including Horizons' Climate Action Joint Committee as case study champions of adaptation for a Deep South National Science Challenge funded project called 'Living with Uncertainty'. Horizons Regional Council also contributed funding, seeking through social science to understand and address institutional barriers and opportunities to reduce climate risk. A Massey University team, led by Bruce Glavovic and Huhana Smith, deployed a participatory action research approach to community-led adaptation planning. The research aims to learn through doing adaptation, alongside communities – growing community self-awareness and capability to drive adaptation planning and risk reduction. The project supports development of enduring community-based adaptation pathways with the full backing of all relevant governing authorities including marae, hapū and iwi as well as local government and central government Ministries and agencies, and other civil society and private sector stakeholders. Such community-led adaptation creates challenges and opportunities for governing authorities – especially local government. The project shows that climate change responses must deal with deep uncertainty, complexity, dynamism, and contestation. The research approach, and role of academics as facilitators and critical friends is distinctive and innovative with real-world lessons for planning practice. Independent of pre-existing relationships, the Massey team brokers engagement with key partners to find local solutions to build place-based resilience in the face of climate risk, thereby strengthening subsidiarity and validating the role of local communities in adaptation planning.

Melissa Smith

University of Waikato Waikato IMEP Thesis, Supervisor: Xinyu Ful

When Bikes Lanes Are Not Enough: An Exploration of the Level of Traffic Stress Framework in Aotearoa New Zealand

The need for sustainable transportation is paramount. Utilitarian cycling has the potential to improve health outcomes, reduce environmental degradation and greenhouse gas emissions, increase labour productivity, and reduce traffic congestion. For these reasons are more, many cities across Aotearoa New Zealand have committed to increasing utilitarian cycling, however, most have struggled to do so, with only 2% of people commuting to work by bicycle across the country. Surveys have identified, among others, a lack of satisfactory and safe infrastructure as a barrier.

The Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) Framework is a recently developed cycling network classification scheme that is growing in popularity in the field of transportation planning due to its relatively simple data requirements, its intuitive description of cycling networks, and its potential to increase the uptake of cycling through application in policy and planning. This paper explores the LTS Framework in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand, asking: To what extent does the provision of low stress cycling infrastructure relate to cycling uptake in major cities in Aotearoa New Zealand?

The Level of Traffic Stress framework is applied to seven cities that vary in population, topography, and commitment to utilitarian cycling. It is found that for six of the seven studied cities, the majority of the links are sufficiently low stress to be suited to the majority of people, and in all seven cities, such low stress links are poorly connected, forming so-called "islands of low stress connectivity". Modelling reveals a relationship between a greater provision of low stress cycling infrastructure and the number of people cycling to work. Policy makers and planners can have confidence that the provision of low stress infrastructure will increase cycling uptake in Aotearoa New Zealand and beyond.

