

sunshine coast

URBAN DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL

inaugural report 2010/2011



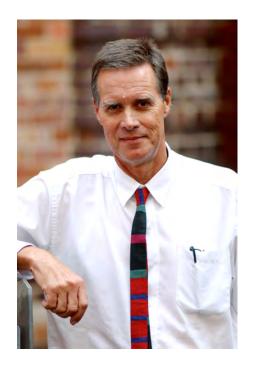








Comment from the Chair



From its inaugural meeting two years ago, the panel has acted enthusiastically, drawing on the wide range of experience of the various members, to deliver professional, insightful and practical critique on a large number of the major urban design issues facing the Sunshine Coast.

By coordinating and running design workshops, by working with council officers and council programmes, and by meeting with urban developers, the panel has assisted in achieving timely and high quality resolution of planning and urban design schemes within the Sunshine Coast region.

Through initiating practical urban research studies, and by defining appropriate urban design goals, the panel has been proactive in bringing new and useful ideas to the council, to assist it in developing relevant, attractive and vibrant urban places for the Sunshine Coast.

I would like to thank all members of the panel for their most generous support, their diligent and thoughtful input, and for the camaraderie and enthusiasm that has characterised all of our deliberations.

For the panel to operate effectively, an enormous amount of back-up, logistics, and professional support has been necessary. This has been enthusiastically provided by the Council's urban design and planning staff, and in particular, Raul Weychardt, Andrew Cooksley, Jade Bebbington, Evelyn Murphy, Sam Cunningham, Flynn Lewer, Leigh Abernethy and Jamie Franklin.

John Hockings Chair Sunshine Coast Urban Design Advisory Panel Design Director Architectus

Role of the Sunshine Coast Urban Design Advisory Panel

The purpose of the Sunshine Coast Urban Design Advisory Panel is to provide independent expert design advice to council on general design outcomes and proposals for policy, master plans and particular development applications that are referred to the panel, in order to inform council's decision making processes.

The panel is intended to stimulate debate on wider urban design issues affecting the Sunshine Coast and on trends that are influencing the profession. It provides advice on key planning policy which involves issues of design, at the request of the Executive Director, Regional Strategy and Planning, and the Executive Director, Infrastructure Services.

Objectives of the Urban Design Advisory Panel:

- Provide a mechanism to foster the exchange of ideas and leading edge thinking on urban design and architectural issues
- Provide a forum to peer review policy and strategy documentation
- Draw on the skills and expertise of recognised leaders and specialists to keep abreast of latest design innovation
- Facilitate discussions on design issues related to key proposals

The Urban Design Advisory Panel provide advice including recommendations on the following:

- Built Form the overall built form merits
- Public Realm
- Urban Fabric
- Character and Heritage
- Architectural Design
- Sustainability
- Urban Design
- Housing policy

The Urban Design Advisory Panel consists of 8 independent expert members who are professionals in such fields as urban design, architecture, landscape architecture, and town planning. The Panel have held robust debate over the last 18 months on a range of projects providing input and advice to council and developers.

The Project Director Strategic Planning, Raul Weychardt, is delegated by the Chief Executive Officer to support the Urban Design Advisory Panel.

Membership of the Sunshine Coast Urban Design Advisory Panel



Design Director Architectus

Architect



Associate Professor Urban Planning Bond University

Urban Design & Planning Academic Head, Urban Design and Planning Program Bond University



Managing Principal AECOM Design & Planning

Landscape Architect



CEO & Chairman Noel Robinson Architects

Architect

Mark Doonar

Director
Tract Consultants

Urban Planner

Roger Todd

Director

Roger Todd Architect

Architect

Rachael Harmston

OLD Government Corporate Support
Division: Department of Community Safety

Town Planner

Phil Smith

Deicke Richards

Architect













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The Charter for **Sunshine Coast Places**

The Charter for Sunshine Coast Places has been prepared by the Urban Design Advisory Panel and provided to council as a quide for the enhancement and creation of a successful sense of place. It is a high level strategic document which describes the principles and values that may quide development on the Sunshine Coast, be it policy, private development or infrastructure in the public realm.



OUR COMMUNITY OF TOWNSHIPS



OUR COASTAL CONTEXT





OUR HUMAN AND COMMUNITY SCALE



OUR PRODUCTIVE AND FERTILE RURAL BASE



OUR VIEWS AND VISTAS



THE DIVERSE CHARACTER OF OUR RURAL TOWNS



OUR RESPONSIVE DESIGN ETHOS AND GREEN CREDENTIALS







Maroochydore City Centre (Horton Park Golf Course)



The State Government and Sunshine Coast Council have identified Maroochydore as the Principal Activity Centre for the Sunshine Coast. The Horton Park Golf Course site provides the largest greenfield development opportunity in Maroochydore and is fundamental to the delivery of a realigned transit corridor and the city structure identified in the Maroochydore Principal Activity Centre Structure Plan.

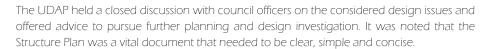
The Sunshine Coast Council's project officer presented the Maroochydore Principal Activity Centre Structure Plan (MPACSP) to the Urban Design Advisory Panel followed by a presentation about the Lend Lease proposal for the Horton Park Golf Course in June 2010.







- Different Station locations between 2003 & 2009
- 65000 sqm of retail
- 150000 sqm of commercial
- It may be more than 10 years before a dedicated transit corridor comes on board
- Height restrictions of 10 storeys
- BVN masterplanning for the site and key differences with Sunshine Coast Council masterplan
- Delivery of a David Jones Store and the relationship to the existing Sunshine Plaza



Council subsequently decided to proceed with a resumption of the Horton Park Golf Course.





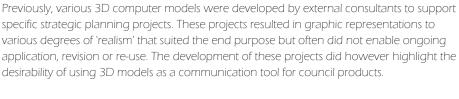
3D Modelling Sunshine Coast Town Centres

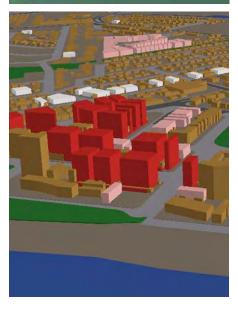






The aim of this project is to bring together existing capabilities to generate interactive 3D computer modelling while enhancing the synergies between various council branches and the broader development industry.





Sunshine Coast Council, through the Development Services Directorate, is continuing to develop a number of 3D computer models of key town centres which can be updated as new Development Applications are lodged or as planning policy changes. These models use ArchiCAD software and support Development Application assessment and also the development of Strategic Planning Projects.

Sunshine Coast Council officers provided detailed information on the development of the 3D model and on the capabilities of modelling various projects, including Kawana Town Centre, Maroochydore Activity Centre, Nambour Mill site and various small lot housing projects, and noted several key benefits:

- as an important visual aid and communication tool to council and Councillors;
- the ability to generate realistic 'fly throughs';
- the model's use in technical tasks such as checking building heights and counting residential units and car parks; and
- existing in-house skills can be utilised with ongoing project adaptability and growth.

The Panel were asked to review the concept and provide advice on project control, application and direction. Specific advice was sought on:

- project objectives;
- the proposed platform / software recommendations;
- opportunities for stakeholder and user types and levels of interaction; and
- accessibility of the platform including consideration for web access and cost to the public users.

The Panel considered that council was on the right track with a pragmatic presentable approach that considers the big picture. They advised continuation of the current form and mass based approach rather than specific design details to ensure it remained a planning and urban design tool. The Panel provided further points for officer consideration to ensure a robust product that would continue to serve both the development industry and community needs.

Engaging the Community about Development Density







The Sunshine Coast Council's project officer presented an overview of where council and the Sunshine Coast community currently finds itself in relation to additional development densities in existing urban places.

The issue of density has a growing relevance as council seeks to address issues of affordability, housing choice, access to public transport and the review of existing planning schemes including the identified greenfield and infill opportunities. Opportunities exist for partnerships and financial assistance for policy development and demonstration projects via current federal and state initiatives, such as the recently announced Liveable Compact Cities project, although it is recognised that the implementation of these may be limited if there is poor community acceptance.



Community concerns range across the issues of building height, erosion of character and associated adverse socioeconomic impacts. Whilst the high-rise form of Mooloolaba, Caloundra and other tourism centres is generally accepted within those locales, there appears to be a limited understanding of what form density might take and the impact it can have on other centres. Possibly as a result of the lack of local exemplars, the community's expectation of density appears informed by the coastal examples.

The key issues identified for the Panel's consideration and comment included:

- Overarching growth scenario elements proposed by the SEQ Regional Plan.
- Capacity of existing zonings within the Urban Footprint.
- Community responses to increasing density.
- Councillor reflection of community concerns.
- Absence of tools to communicate with the public about future potential outcomes.

The Panel proposed a clear set of initiatives that could inform future community engagement on the topic of increased densities and advised that a 'bigger vision' was needed as we design new cites and towns. It was suggested that council return to a language that is more readily understood by the community and ensure continuity of this language to reduce confusion over changing definitions.

While addressing the need for growth across the Sunshine Coast and to accommodate SEO Regional Plan targets it was advised that density is about delivery of diversity and housing choice and development can focus on the benefits of increased density such as improved open space and healthy living - council's affordable housing strategy was considered a useful model for creation of design ideas.

The Panel finished the discussion by raising questions with council about the resources available to take this issue further forward including workshops and discussions with designers and the community to identify design concepts and address growth concerns.





The Kawana Town Centre is a greenfield site that sits within the broader Kawana Waters development area and is subject to a Development Agreement established in 1996. In addition to a Development Control Plan the Development Agreement provides for a master planning process and the provision of infrastructure, open space and community facilities.

Since the establishment of the Development Agreement a range of factors have prompted the need to review the planning framework that was established for Kawana in the mid 1990's. These factors include:

- identification of the CAMCOS transport corridor;
- policy directions in the SEQ Regional Plan identifying Kawana as a Major Regional Activity Centre;
- State Government's expectations for mixed-use centres, residential densities, and transport oriented developments; and
- location of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital at Kawana

Council has endorsed a Policy Position for Kawana, providing preferred direction for built form, public realm, and land use, that would form the basis of a review of existing planning provisions in consultation and negotiation with the master developer (Stockland) and the State Government.

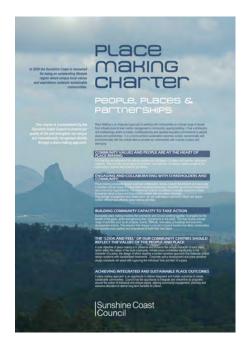
The Sunshine Coast Council project officer provided a detailed presentation on the history, development and structure of council's planning for the Kawana Town Centre. A representative of Urbis consultants presented the current scheme proposed by the master developer. The presentation was then followed by panel questions to Stockland representatives and a subsequent internal panel discussion on the proposal.

The focus of the discussion was on the proposed commercial centre located between the Birtinya Canal and transit station although the broader context was provided of the centre's relationship to the hospital, residential and mixed use areas to the south east and the eastern beaches.

General comments were made on the character, town structure and legibility, town square and esplanade, cycling, loading areas and carpark ramps, roof top carparking and residential units, and perimeter roads and streets.

The Panel urged making the most of the opportunity to create a 'great' town centre with a sense of place reflecting its water side setting and coastal location.

Place Making Strategy



Place Making as a concept has received growing interest and understanding across council, the development industry and the community. The capacity to enhance cross-departmental cooperation and the delivery of integrated outcomes which meet the diverse needs of communities is forefront to the idea of a holistic 'Place' oriented design approach.

Council has endorsed a Place Making charter and has sought the advice and direction of industry experts in order to understand the function and role that Place Making has within our organisation and the delivery methodology to achieve maximum results for the community. The Executive Leadership Team agreed to the creation of a Place Making Coordination Group with the objectives of departmental collaboration, development of consistent definition and methodology, and application of Place Making that puts people and community at the heart of the process.

The Sunshine Coast Council's project officers provided an overview of the development of council's Place Making Coordination Group and the subsequent creation by this group of a Place Making corporate policy. Further ongoing projects for the Group were highlighted including a study to assess the character and needs of 44 places across the Sunshine Coast.

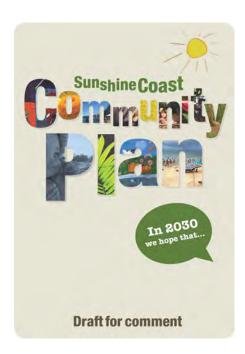
The creation of the Place Making Coordination Group, populated from across each department, reflects the diverse development, design and delivery potential of SCC. The corporate Place Making Policy responds to the objectives identified by the CEO and focuses on the delivery of a localised place based approach to the way council does business. It is intended in large part to be an operational framework for council to deliver its services to communities and places in a coordinated, effective and efficient manner though may require the subsequent development or review of policy documents to support this approach.

The Panel identified a series of key points to consider with further development of a Place Making approach – relating to the creation of towns and centres reflective of community needs, commercial reality and development of 'place':

- Lease and tenancy mix is an important consideration in centres;
- Residential levies etc / marketing should be considered to support centres;
- Build relationships and strengthen bonds with community and industry;
- Consider that community capacity building (not infrastructure) is often more appropriate – understand when it is necessary to build and when to facilitate;
- It was noted that a 'stewardship' approach was needed when considering Place and consultation.
- Need to consider communities' needs beyond the physical for example musical communities and arts communities.

The Panel felt that further in-depth work was necessary in understanding the character and profile of places across the Sunshine Coast but that the advantage of the strategy would be to allow and enshrine the evolution of communities.

The Community Plan



By adopting the values identified in the draft Community Plan we can create a place where people have a sense of identity and belonging to their community and inclusive neighbourhoods where everyone takes responsibility for their own actions and gives others a fair go.

The Local Government Act 2009 requires that every Old council develop a Community Plan for their area which identifies a preferred future, represents the community's views, vision and values for a local government region, and informs all other planning processes within council.

The Sunshine Coast Council project officer presented the draft Community Plan to the Urban Design Advisory Panel as a high level aspirational document which proposes the following values:

- Integrity, honesty and openness
- Fairness and equity
- Generosity
- Acceptance and respect for others
- Courage to make the difficult decisions

The Queensland Government provideds advice as to what constitutes a well drafted community plan.

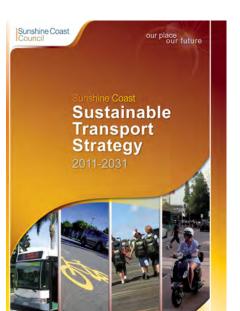
- Focus community activity on important issues and proactively manage change towards a desired future
- Facilitate joint planning and prioritisation (across levels of government, industry and the community) in relation to future direction of an area
- Balance competing pressures for economic development, environmental protection and a more equitable society

It was noted that it was a high level document although significant discussion had occurred within council on how aspirational the document could be versus a more detailed approach that could have potential conflict with other council planning processes. With this in mind it was noted that the draft Community Plan:

- Is a starting point
- Is relatively short
- Is written in a non bureaucratic style
- Scans a twenty year future horizon, but also references the region's history
- Reinforces the vision of a sustainable region and the 8 themes in the corporate plan
- Details community values and sustainability principles
- Identifies a number of key challenges for each theme along with outcomes sought and one big idea per theme
- Includes a set of indicators to measure how we are travelling towards our goals
- Will contain images and photos generated by the community as part of Zooming into 2030

The Panel offered supportive comments on the draft Community Plan.

Sunshine Coast Sustainable Transport Strategy

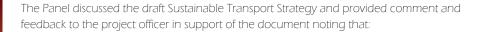


Addressing the transport needs of a growing population while maintaining the lifestyle values of the Sunshine Coast and achieving council's goal 'to become Australia's most sustainable region – vibrant, green, diverse' is a significant challenge. Achieving sustainable transport outcomes will be essential to achieve this goal.

The Sunshine Coast Council is working to achieve a shift in travel demand, from a predominant use of the private motor vehicle to a greater use of alternative green transport modes, with development of comprehensive parking management, active transport, public transport, transport and freight plans to provide the impetus for change.

Implementing the Sustainable Transport Strategy while addressing parking management issues forms one of the challenging elements of an integrated, whole of council approach to transport strategy and planning in achieving council's goals for sustainable transport. Sunshine Coast Council's project officer presented the draft Sustainable Transport Strategy, released for public consultation, noting the following key points for consideration:

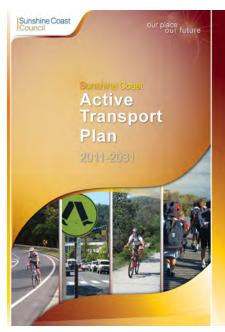
- Coastal and foreshore values are under pressure with increased transport and parking
- Community doesn't want to see large infrastructure
- Conflicts between hinterland and coastal pressures and needs
- Focus on intra-regional and not inter-regional travel, such as to Brisbane'
- Review of car parking management approaches





- A consultation idea worth considering would be the Paris example which turned a road into a 'beach' for a day to provide an example of what the 'road' could be for the public if not dominated by carparking
- Consider what 'rewards' might be possible
- The Strategy offered a positive opportunity for community focus and sustainability

The Sunshine Coast Sustainable Transport Strategy 2011 – 2031 and Active Transport Plan 2011 – 2031 have since been adopted by council as a step towards achieving a sustainable, highly efficient, integrated and safe transport system for the region.



Draft Corridor Place Making Strategy



The regional landscape diversity of the Sunshine Coast is broad and stretches from the coastal marine ecosystem of headlands, estuaries and ocean, to the hinterland with its fertile agricultural land, pine forests, heath land and tropical rainforests. It is this high level of diversity and access to unique landscapes that 'Future Journeys' aims to draw on; viewing corridors as place making opportunities, gateways, thresholds and destinations.

Encompassing both the vision for a sustainable integrated transport network and a locally sensitive response to population growth the Regional Corridor Place Making Strategy, entitled 'Future Journeys', aims to be both an innovative and effective approach to the planning, design and implementation of landscape and Place Making treatments to transit corridors across the region. Developed as a framework and toolkit, the core philosophy revolves around an integrated urban design approach greater than landscape and infrastructure recognising the potential for a dynamic system environment.

The outcome of the Regional Corridor Place Making Strategy is an opportunity to impact on the daily experience and cognitive memory of a broad ranging local and worldwide audience. This strategy aims to strengthen the identity of the Sunshine Coast and create a 'point of difference' both at the micro regional level and globally.

Presented to the Panel as a draft strategy the Sunshine Coast Council project officer outlined the background work done to date, the theoretical context, the typological analysis approach, the policy context, key corridors being assessed, associated projects and proposed outcomes. Of particular note was the debate as to how such a Strategy could apply to State controlled roads as well as council owned roads.

A key question asked of the Panel was about how much the design and function of our transport corridors impact on the experience and character of the Sunshine Coast, and how would, or should, this differ from other Australian areas?

The Panel provided feedback on specific areas of the Strategy and noted the challenge of State owned roads that limit opportunity to influence outcomes. General comments on 'Future Journeys' identified that:

- The document needed to be flexible allow for changes over time
- Community contribution was important 'take into account' long term community values rather than short term objectives - consider a photo competition to establish valued corridors and places
- Value and protection of historic identities was critical when upgrading corridors and places
- A 'Signage Policy' as relates to corridor development could be considered
- Necessary buffering could be identified
- The relationship and separation of bikes/pedestrian/cars could be further considered

The Panel considered the Strategy a very good and worthwhile project and were highly supportive. The Strategy has since been renamed and is now refered to as the Draft Corridor Place Making Implementation Plan entitled PLACE + Corridors.

Maroochydore Bus Station



The State Government identified the Maroochydore Bus Station as a priority project during their concept planning for the Coast Connect project. The project is to review the bus facility currently located within Sunshine Plaza while upgrading the safety and capacity constraints.

In March, 2011 Sunshine Coast Council commissioned Deicke Richards to facilitate an Enquiry by Design into the proposed Bus Station in Horton Parade. The workshop outcomes would be utilised to inform the Department of Transport and Main Roads design process. The Enquiry by Design re-examined the key issues and identify a preferred layout generated from existing options.

Sunshine Coast Council officers presented the outcomes and the 3 conceptual options of the Enquiry by Design workshop to the Panel for comment.

The panel saw significant potential in the project including as a catalyst for the precinct.

Bokarina Development



The Development Control Plan and master planning for Bokarina Beach allows for development of a coastal tourist node with a range of visitor and permanent accommodation, conference facilities and related retail, commercial, entertainment and recreational facilities.

Stockland, as the master developer, lodged master plans with council for the development of the 30 hectare Bokarina site. The Panel were briefed by council officers to provide comment and a design review.

The Sunshine Coast Council project officer provided an overview of the development intent and master plans highlighting the connectivity with the new Kawana Town Centre, the intended site development use, and the integration and function of proposed residential uses. Given the progressive nature of the development process advice was sought from the panel on specific areas:

- Lot orientation and appropriate mix
- Likely streetscape outcomes and amenity
- Recommended urban design performance criteria
- Design provisions to ensure the tourism function is achieved
- Siting provisions appropriate to small lot housing

The Panel reviewed the project and provided commentary on:

- Building
- Wayfinding and legibility
- Utilising open space to facilitate message of access to beach
- Locating open space for recreation outcomes
- Visitor parking and access to facilities including beach access
- Wetland protection
- Nature of Arrival
- Small Lot development

A series of workshop sketches were produced as part of the group discussion to reiterate good design outcomes for the development. The panel highlighted the opportunity to be had with this site being the last 'beach' development along the coastal strip.

A Panel sub-committee subsequently interacted directly with Stockland to discuss the master plan.

Centres Design Palette Project Brief

The Sunshine Coast Council has identified 44 localities each with their own identities and sense of place. These localities have commercial areas and other significant attractions that contribute to their identification. These atributes assist in establishing their status in the centres hierarchy for use with a manual or pallette that facilitates consistent design practice and implementation across the region.

Council is in the process of developing this Centres Design Palette which is intended to be used to define streetscape and open space finishes for specific town and village centres of the Sunshine Coast region. It is proposed that the Palette contribute towards council's technical standards and be used by internal and external stakeholders delivering infrastructure in the public realm.

A core objective of this project is to preserve and enhance the unique character of each place and to reflect the values of the local community by providing a context sensitive approach that balances unique design solutions with standardised treatments. These place sensitive design standards may assist with capturing the individual 'look and feel' of a place. Sunshine Coast Council project officers provided an overview of the Centre Design Palette and noting that the project brief was still being developed, sought advice and initial comment on the following matters:

- Principles and strategies to provide a locally and regionally 'context sensitive' approach for town centres;
- Principles and strategies to deliver a high quality public realm which is economic to maintain and manage;
- The future application and implementation of the Manual as relates to legibility, ease of use, formatting, availability etc.
- Other opportunities to encourage a high quality public realm design through policy and process innovation.

The Panel considered the overall project to be a good step in the direction of character preservation and protection of the Sunshine Coast identity. They proposed key points for the project officer to consider in further developing the brief and project intent:

- Utilise existing data collected over many years of community engagement and analyse existing centres to identify what their character and identity is
- How can the distinction between centres and place be maintained?
- Consider whether the palette is preserving or creating character
- Look for generic cost saving product opportunity to enable majority use of resources for individual statements
- Before deciding on palette tools for overlay of product consider what needs to be retained – identify the robust simple elements that make up a town, such as swales vs. kerb and channel
- Create a 'toolkit' or 'kit of parts' that enables simple interpretation
- The palette to have a protocol for use and re-use of materials including use of local products
- Is there a Sunshine Coast 'style' that can facilitate identity?

Ongoing consultation with the Panel will occur at key stages throughout the project development.

Beerwah Major Regional Activity Centre







The South East Queensland Regional Plan identifies Beerwah as a Major Regional Activity Centre highlighting the need for planned sustainable growth in and around the existing town centre. The intent is to facilitate urban growth while preserving the region's landscape, open spaces and farmland, and provide significant environmental quality and health benefits.

Located in the southern central part of the Sunshine Coast on the North Coast Rail Line between Landsborough and Glass House Mountains, the rural township of Beerwah is surrounded by productive agriculture and State forest. The intent to grow and evolve as a Major Regional Activity Centre is to be balanced with the need to retain surrounding food production industries requiring creative development of the town centre and surrounds to accommodate increased density and upgraded public transport connectivity.

In order to understand the impacts of growth on the existing town centre, and how to best accommodate it while maintaining and or establishing the character and identity of Beerwah, the Panel engaged in a master planning workshop to identify future design concepts for consideration and research.

Sunshine Coast Council officers gave an introduction to Beerwah to initiate general panel discussion of the key issues for Beerwah observing that:

- There is a vision for Beerwah
- Transport is important to the town, the Steve Irwin Way, the train line and the future rail junction to be located at this point.
- The town is currently divided by the rail line and may be more so in the future with the addition of the future rail junction – pedestrian connectivity is an ongoing issue
- Lands dedicated to agriculture, food production and State Forest surround the town
- The town of Beerwah has a young demographic with an average age of 36
- There is a current place making project with access to \$3.5m of capital works funding to utilise for the centre of Beerwah
- There is currently good connection and views to the Glasshouse Mountains.

The Panel engaged in a general discussion of the key points, such as land use, employment, access routes and connectivity, main street environment, heritage, and growth, prior to breaking into two sub-groups for development of a master planning direction and more in-depth discussion. Similar issues were identified by both sub-groups and ideas and suggestions were provided to council officers for further planning and design development.

Feedback

The Urban Design Advisory Panel has provided advice and direction on many significant projects across the organisation. Their support and feedback is respected and sought from a variety of stakeholders.

— The UDAP provided excellent feedback over a couple of workshops on the proposed Sunshine Coast Entertainment and Exhibition centre. It was great having such a diverse group of professionals available to comment on the proposal and provide their insights and suggestions. John Hocking also chaired the meetings very well. I certainly think that the panel is a very useful one to have and would recommend it be kept going.

Alan (Fox) Rogers, Project Director, Partnerships & Engagement, Executive Office SCC

- The Panel provides a very experienced sounding board on urban design issues that council couldn't feasibly obtain through any other means. The diverse backgrounds and extensive industry practice of the Panel has been utilised to identify practical improvements to existing projects, and to fully scope the range of possibilities for new projects.
 - Matthew Stevenson, Coordinator Planning Projects, Strategic Planning South, Regional Strategy and Planning SCC
- I would like to support the continuation of the Urban Design Advisory Panel as an objective mechanism in council and see their involvement grow and adapt, with more flexibility in meeting arrangement and process that would facilitate inclusion in Enquiry by Design projects and membership of workshops and committees within the PLACE + Program.

Leigh Abernethy, Place Coordinator, Place Design & Standards, Infrastructure Services SCC

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