

Dear Premier, Ministers, and Others

**Planning, services and finance direction: Towards more open, transparent and inclusive government**

Congratulations on your new positions. As a retired inner Sydney householder and superannuation investor, formerly employed by Sydney University and the NSW public service, I note your government will be rewriting the NSW planning laws within two years and giving more planning powers back to local councils (Australian Financial Review, 28.3.2011, p. 10). **This submission and attachments address how to gain more broadly and effectively coordinated planning and investment.** Discussions of books, digital platforms, and restructuring at Sydney University and beyond, to support all project management, skills development, education and research better are also attached.

Your attention is drawn to the symposium 'The Right to the City' at the Faculty of Architecture Design and Planning at Sydney University on Saturday 9.4.2011. On 7 April, UniSuper management will provide a seminar for members on future fund investment direction. Australian universities present fledgling opportunities for better coordination with other global institutions to assist more effective alignment of their sectional interests with those of all Australians and regional communities. **Talk with Vice Chancellors.**

Many contributors to the Legislative Council Standing Committee on State Development report, 'New South Wales Planning Framework (December 2009)' noted the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) was groundbreaking in having the objects of an openly consultative and integrated understanding of relevant environmental, social and economic issues when making land use planning decisions. The central proposition is that social, environmental and economic goals should be logically linked in regional planning direction and decision making. Direction is ideally tested and developed openly in practice, not confused by lawyers and others writing new versions of many narrowly pre-scientific approaches to regulation that we have often paid for before. **Direct action aimed at reducing climate change should now guide markets better.**

Implementation of the general directions of the Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Natural Resource Management (Climate Change) report requires consideration in linked community, environment and economic planning contexts. The Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water lead preparation of the Biodiversity Strategy for NSW and the Climate Change Action Plan, which ideally also informs the national, regional and local land planning processes. Comparatively independent research, teaching and investment bodies such as universities need to be closely consulted on any related planning directions to achieve the best outcomes for all. **This is ideally done early in cooperation with the Opposition and many others.**

The dominant US practice of risk management, described by Stiglitz and others, increased and spread financial risk and ignorance, cost and loss of accountability to current and future generations until the financial crash. Do not go back to business as usual. Australian governments and industries have managed pools of health care, retirement and

insurance funds better to achieve wellbeing. This has included setting injury prevention and rehabilitation goals related to addressing the health risks of diverse individuals living and working in diverse environments. Ideally, these systems are now improved by more open, honest and less adversarial communication. The global financial crisis showed that any accurate description of risk and cost by financial ‘experts’ appears to be either impossible, unpalatable or both. Open direction of investments to gain more broadly agreed social and environmental goals appears necessary for accurate pricing for investment and related risk. **Discuss this with UniSuper and other fund managers.**

As well as involving knowledge about one or more state, regional and local government contexts, many decisions about land, water or air may refer logically to the Commonwealth policy agenda. Regional management approaches are ideally designed to achieve all social, environmental and economic goals more broadly, fairly and cheaply than is possible under more conventional fund management models which also led to the global financial crisis. Many powerful financial, legal and related sectional interests are designed and have been driven to deny rather than achieve the management aims of the total communities of which all are ideally a part and serve. Systems are ideally designed more broadly to encompass all their sectional and individual interests. **Resist being driven by comparatively closed collegiate cultures and blinkered theoretical forces.**

The Prime Minister said to the US Congress that the rise of the Asia Pacific will define our times. She goes to China soon. Industry and community wellbeing increasingly depend upon more effective and honest communication. The planned direction outlined at the Shanghai Urban Planning Exhibition Center claims to be designed to gain ‘bluer sky, clearer water, greener land and better living’. One wonders how this is supposed to happen and assumes Premier Wen Jiabao’s recent report to the Chinese National People’s Congress may assist many Australian interests in identifying common goals and practices to achieve social and environmental improvements in our region and internationally for current and future generations. The Pope’s new book on Jesus may assist Catholics and others apply His leadership to meet their spiritual goals better. **Universities and other cultural institutions are very well equipped to assist global heritage protection.**

The Treasurer has stated that what the Australian business community wants most is certainty about the direction of carbon pollution reduction plans and the carbon price. Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and the former PM Kevin Rudd signed an agreement on forests and carbon trading. This ideally reflects the new importance of climate change in regional relations and indicates how highly biodiversity is to be valued rather than ignored. Objectives of the Australian aid program ideally seek to achieve UN Millennium Development Goals and targets for poverty reduction. These goals are also ideally related to heritage protection and to fairer and greener development. Open and clear accountability for expenditure related to openly specified actions in pursuit of broadly stated goals also seems to be the best and cheapest protection against corruption.

Many investors probably value guaranteed income security more than unstable returns and governments certainly should if wishing to protect all the communities they represent more effectively and fairly. It concerns me that UniSuper lost so much of my retirement

money suddenly in the global financial crisis and we do not know clearly what we are investing in, but only its supposed level of risk. 'Ethical' investments are not only opaque, but have among the highest risk ratings and were hardest hit by the financial crisis. More stable investment which is openly designed to support healthier, greener and fairer direction should be common fund priorities but one assumes they are not. The 'Living the Retirement Lifestyle' seminar, on 'what's in store' (sic.) is a thrill coming up.

Increasingly productive technologies and work delivery systems have led to 80% of Australians working in services, 9 percent in manufacturing, 3% in agriculture, forestry and fishing and 8% in mining. Accounting which facilitates local and regional understanding of comparative service outcomes and related values depends on better designed and more open administration and communication systems. To gauge and increase service quality and value, more modern service approaches ideally replace or shape feudal perspectives, which rule over our communities in opaque, theoretical and disciplinary ways, rather than more modern and inclusive ones. Rights and duties of consumers, workers and investors are ideally built in linked communities, giving all a fair go. How to price, manage and fund services to achieve total, as distinct from sectional, community goals as well as possible, appears to have been most clearly grasped in health care provision, albeit with mixed results. **Discuss directions with health care experts.**

The World Health Organization (WHO) Declaration of Alma-Ata states primary health care involves, *'in addition to the health sector, all related sectors and aspects of community development, in particular agriculture, animal husbandry, food, industry, education, housing, public works, communications and other sectors; and demands the coordinated efforts of all those sectors'*. The WHO approach to healthy action sees all work, play and living as located in regional communities and on land from which risks and many related environmental challenges arise and are accordingly prioritized for remedial action. The identification and control of the major risks to health are ideally conducted in related regional contexts. Approaches to handling environmental risk and social (health) risk are ideally treated in coordinated ways. **Universities are nests for sectional professional interests. Encourage them to achieve broader goals better.**

The concept of justice means 'fairness' in popular parlance. The administration of 'law and justice' should no longer be dictated by lawyers' feudal practice, but managed more inclusively as service provision ideally related to enhancement of the quality of life for current and future generations. Clear, openly available communication and research services are naturally expected to be part of good administration. In Australia, 'law and justice' are conceptualized too narrowly in too many specific laws and in their supporting court, bureaucratic, professional and disciplinary practices to be useful for gaining or serving clearer national, regional or related group and individual direction. Lack of open, well organized comparative information about types of dispute, their treatment, and their outcomes is common in legal administration. Aid may now be a good arena to address this problem in any region. **An Australian preferred direction is outlined in speeches by Kevin Rudd, Minister for Foreign Affairs. Discuss this aid potential further.**

The new China Studies Centre at Sydney University aims to further develop business, language and cultural links between Australia and China. The former Premier, Kristina Keneally, gave her in-principle support to a formal partnership between the NSW Government and the new Centre which aims to be a hub for leadership dialogue, research partnerships and business and government development between Australia and China. Through its base at Sydney University the Centre will also provide education programs to deliver competitive, China-literate graduates into the NSW workforce. The Centre will engage with major Chinese cities and provincial business and cultural centres, including those in the Guangdong Province, with whom NSW shares a sister-state relationship. NSW Government Offices were opened in Shanghai and Guangzhou last year. The Centre draws on over 130 academics with research interest in China. **Make them useful.**

If university students were allowed broader subject choice across the whole institution, its efficiency and the students' education could be greatly improved as staffing could be more effectively restructured to follow more genuine student demand. At present apparent student demand is artificially created by academic requirements which reflect the particular interests of many collegiate cultures which magnify their differences by their jargon. If student subject choice were related primarily to Governance or Health or Built and Natural Environments, staff could be better allocated in terms of teaching, research or related work contributions to one or more of these areas, so student choice and administrative efficiencies are both maximized. The National Tertiary Education Union policy of a fixed ratio of secure and insecure academic jobs hinders organizational growth and much better, cheaper, openly available, flexible, on-line education.

Nevertheless, universities present many opportunities to establish broader and better coordinated planning, communication, research, education, skills development and investment. The Superannuation Industry (Supervision) (SIS) Act 1993 is also very clear and logical for financial legislation, which often has pre-scientific assumptions and is without clearly stated aims or common dictionary definitions. It may often also be rendered incomprehensible or stupid in its dictates by amendments over time. The SIS Act is much better. Without reading the aims, definitions and key provisions of the Act, one may wonder what many others operating in law or finance are talking about. **Let the SIS Act guide. Many older and more powerful laws mainly serve the legally bent.**

However, 'efficient market theory' drove us to the global financial crisis. It assumes all necessary information about a commodity (a share or other investment) is reflected in its price. It also assumes sectional financial interests drive all the surrounding social and environmental interests most effectively and that pursuit of financial interests is in the interests of all in the longer run, where it is also assumed markets will clear perfectly. The fact that booms and slumps continue, that markets are widening socio-economic differences instead of reducing them, and that global biodiversity is rapidly being destroyed, shows these key financial and legal assumptions are wrong and will also harm future generations. Nevertheless, such assumptions are reflected in many Australian laws which also privilege commercial secrecy. The global financial crisis also showed this financial dogma led closer to perfect ignorance than perfect information, at growing cost.

In 1993, Hilmer's report on a national competition policy to Australian Heads of Government challenged the dominant assumption that price competition ideally drives all. He defined competition as, 'striving or potential striving of two or more persons or organizations against one another for the same or related objects' (1993, p.2). This assumes national goals may be best reached through their related regional social and environmental aims. Ideally, services to meet these goals are then priced and delivered openly and transparently. Comparative evaluation of service outcomes may teach everybody how to perform better in future. Performance depends on what consumers and those who fund them seek in a variety of regional environments and circumstances, which ideally may also support many niche markets. Hilmer's direction was lost in the translation to older prescriptive laws which typically have no clear aims and definitions suited to guiding regional partnerships in gaining more scientific and democratic management practice and service delivery. **Consult Hilmer, who is now VC at UNSW.**

One assumes honest and open communication is ideally the key element of family trust, which may naturally be inclusive of others, in many cases. One wonders why Malcolm and Lucy Turnbull, the Hockey family and many other power couples should bother with lawyers to gain their stated social and environmental goals if they can do so more effectively and educationally for the rest of us in the open. One assumes many have enough money, but would not wish to lose it by going into risky debt while putting their dreams of serving Australians directly to work. **Ask them to lead investment openly.**

The planning symposium at Sydney University should be called the Right to the City and Duty to the Country, if good policy directions, which broadly and effectively link development in the city to regional development, are sought. Talk of rights without duties is likely to produce more feudally partial and ignorant distortions instead of more useful debate and practice as all should ideally be assumed to be internally and externally driven by balancing their rights and duties. Ideally, we also seek to learn and teach about our common communities, histories and natural environments more honestly and with more information, so as to preserve and improve them for all current and future generations inhabiting the world. **Superannuation and related non-profit or charitable giving or investment should be designed to achieve all social and environmental goals better.**

Since the 1960's, the Australian national reserve system has been based on the principles of comprehensiveness, adequateness and representativeness (CAR). These principles directly relate to the Interim Biogeographic Regionalization of Australia (IBRA), which divides Australia into 85 biogeographic regions and 403 sub-regions. IBRA also provides a scientific framework and tool to aid and evaluate the realization of the CAR principles in developing the national reserve system. The treatment of farming, mining, energy, construction and other industries ideally should take account of the impacts of various forms of production and consumption on their related biodiversity and climate change.

The Productivity Commission (PC) report 'Rural Research and Development Corporations' noted the paucity of reliable data on spending across the rural R&D framework. It made excellent recommendations for better and fairer management and data capture by governments on one hand and by the business sector on the other, to

clarify their respective research funding sources, aims, performance outcomes and accountabilities. The PC argues the primary aim of government funding is ideally to enhance the productivity, competitiveness and social and environmental performance of the rural sector and the welfare of the wider community by inducing socially valuable R&D (p. xxxvi). If the PC recommendations were adopted this could provide vital support for new Australian and international government and community paradigms which ideally attempt to attain more sustainable regional development by more openly effective investment and risk management methods to achieve social and environmental goals more cost-effectively. **Support this PC report recommendations.**

A recent exhibition of student work for the Master of Architecture, Bachelor of Design in Architecture and Bachelor of Design Computing at Sydney University produced many beautiful drawings and models, supported by student writings addressing related concepts. However, the viewer had little idea of the student capacity to serve government planning directions; address engineering and construction constraints; address materials and labour availability; or deal with other commercial realities necessary to make such projects attractive to investors. Students and residents of Sydney could benefit greatly if students assisted the City of Sydney Council and others in solving many practical planning problems which exist in our communities and environments. Such open management partnerships are even more urgent in rural areas because skilled labour shortages are often more acute, which increases the costs of development. Health depends on quality of life.

These discussions of ideally related developments at Sydney University and beyond therefore ask how a modest proposal for greener development on our block may also be linked to larger, openly planned and better coordinated state, national and internationally competitive projects to achieve better communication, heritage protection, fairer and greener development and supporting skills accumulation, often while on the job.

This local green development project was suggested to the City of Sydney Council and its Director of City Projects. We seek tree protection and greener maintenance of our body corporate walls in common with those of many neighbours. It also addresses the common illegal dumping of waste with some naïve suggestions. Progression of this project depends upon the possibility for serious dialogue and action by many home owners and related managing institutions on our block. These include the City of Sydney Council, NSW Housing, the Catholic Church, and many private sector owners and managers besides our body corporate. Who and where are the key decision makers? Our problem is likely to be similar to those faced on many blocks, especially when the giant Harold Park development is built nearby. **We want to be among many local greener maintenance projects, conducted in the light of the City Plan and developments such as the Liveable Green Network Strategy, the Decentralised Energy Master Plan, etc.**

The practices of more scientific thought and open communication ideally engage us with the real world and so help reform our prejudices, false beliefs and more blinkered friends, so we all may progress more broadly together. Researchers interested in housing policy, for example, need to directly involve themselves with land developers and those working in construction because these are the men engaged in this practice in the real world.

Whether a woman has the knowledge to ask the right questions or will be told the truth when she asks are separate issues. Judging by some of the questionnaires which are supposedly part of a 'scientific' process in peer reviewed journals this issue has not bothered us much before. More women on boards did zero to stop the combination of nasty rich bastards and fools in the US from driving their increasingly dysfunctional numerical fantasies into our direction. **Bring back the historical understanding.**

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission. Yours truly, Carol O'Donnell, St James Court, 10/11 Rosebank St., Glebe, Sydney 2037 [www.Carolodonnell.com.au](http://www.Carolodonnell.com.au)

To: Peter Fray: Publisher/Editor in Chief, Sydney Publishing

Hi Peter

I refer to our talk after tonight's panel discussion of editors on the future of editing, held in the Sydney Ideas lecture series. Some directions suggested below and attached are offered in answer to my question about whether a broad social service direction can be developed in communications which can also turn around the forces and effects of legal and related collegiate cultures. These have operated narrowly, according to feudal assumptions and their related sectional interests, rather than on the basis of more broadly scientific and democratic organizational models that can serve the public and related individual interest better. See more at [www.Carolodonnell.com.au](http://www.Carolodonnell.com.au) I would be happy to discuss how any of this raw material might be useful in any future media developments.

In this context also note the vital contribution of Professor Christian List of the London School of Economics in the Sydney Ideas debate entitled 'The authority of science: Is science just another voice in the policy debate?' (8.4.2011). List contrasts the concept of aggregative democracy with deliberative democracy and prefers the latter. Deliberative democracy assumes that the combination of belief and the related desire to make rational decisions ideally drive development directions, rather than the aggregation of particular numbers being the main driver. List's distinction between two democratic forms also provides the capacity for belief and more scientific approaches to evidence to drive development regionally and universally. In contrast to List's view, Brown's biography of Michael Kirby suggests the judge sees the UN and its instruments mainly as baubles of English common law, which particularly suits our lawyers. The UN naturally questions Kirby's view of the shared heritage of British (sic.) colonies as the basis for transferring and absorbing human rights and as part of an enlightened vision of a universal order.

The nature of student demand is currently created artificially by professional and academic demands which reflect collegiate interests in blinkered silos which also magnify their differences by their jargon. If students were allowed broader subject choice across the total institution, its efficiency and the students' education could be greatly improved and staffing could be more effectively restructured to follow more genuine student demand. The necessary breakdown of disciplines to reflect reality as well as theory appears to be assisted by the increasing drive to capture students. For example, the recent symposium entitled 'The Right to the City' organized by the Faculty

of Architecture Design and Planning (9.4.2011) suggested that this faculty may now have most in common with literature and art appreciation undertaken by people who have little economic and historical understanding of culture, let alone knowledge of construction.

Today there is a greater need and potential than ever for the rational development of open education content and for effective teaching and workplace supervision to assist in development and assessment of competencies, especially of newer ones vital for greener and fairer development. This may offer many linked service and business opportunities. Industry and other fund managers ideally offer greener, lower risk investment potential.

Cheers, Carol O'Donnell, St James Court, 10/11 Rosebank St., Glebe, Sydney 2037.

