

Ten Years of Metropolitan Strategic Planning in South Australia

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ABSTRACT

The South Australian Planning Review's '2020 Vision – Planning Strategy for Metropolitan Adelaide' (1992) provided the prototype for the current generation of planning strategies for metropolitan Adelaide. The first adopted version appeared in 1994, with revisions in 1998 and 2003. In April 2005 a further draft strategy was published. This departs in style somewhat from its predecessors, but its principal distinguishing feature is an explicit commitment to a set of guiding principles of ecologically sustainable development which are intended to underpin the future planned development of the Adelaide metropolitan area.

This paper provides the background to a recently commenced research project at the University of South Australia which aims to critically review the aims and achievements of metropolitan strategic plans for Adelaide since 1990. One strand of this project is exploring the difficulty of pursuing integrated 'whole of government' planning strategies under prevailing urban governance arrangements. The paper notes within these strategic plans a number of different conceptions of 'planning' which sit uneasily alongside each other – for example, planning as a facilitator of markets, planning as a forum for dialogue and planning as an institution for promoting particular public ends, such as sustainability and economic development. There is a tension between competing views of the nature and purposes of planning which is not resolved simply by including them within the pages of a single strategic planning document. This tension is illustrated in the paper by brief reference to the transport and accessibility sections of successive metropolitan planning and related strategies for Adelaide. The paper notes a rhetorical commitment to integrated land use and transport planning and to increased investment in public transport which fails, however, to confront seriously the powerful interests which support automobility and does not lead to the pursuit of policies which run counter to existing consumer preferences.

The paper concludes that the issues identified around integrated land use and transport planning strategies, as these are illustrated by the analysis of Adelaide's recent experience, are a subset of broader disputes about the extent to which a commitment to 'sustainability' and the maintenance of natural systems may require some limits to economic growth.

INTRODUCTION

This paper provides an outline of the development of strategic planning for metropolitan Adelaide since the early 1990s. It forms part of a research project recently commenced at the University of South Australia which is examining, amongst other things, experience with 'integrated planning' in government and with the integration of land use and transport planning in state government plans and government agency arrangements, in particular. The paper's main starting point is the South Australian 'Planning Review' which reported in 1992 and published a draft metropolitan strategy as part of a series of proposals for new governance and legislative arrangements for planning in South Australia (South Australian Planning Review 1992a). It ends, for the moment, with the situation in

late 2005 which sees a plethora of state plans and strategies at various stages of completion, including a draft metropolitan planning strategy, a state housing plan, an infrastructure strategy and a draft transport plan, all intended to be supportive of an over-arching State Strategic Plan - a 'whole of government' plan to coordinate the various activities of government agencies.

Metropolitan planning for Adelaide goes back long before 1990, of course (see, for example, Forster and McCaskill 1986; Hutchings 1993; Hutchings 2000). The 'Report on the Metropolitan Area of South Australia 1962', produced by the Town Planning Committee, became the metropolitan development plan for the next thirty years. It was typical of the metropolitan-wide spatial plans of the time in its aspiration to 'comprehensiveness', bringing together land use, transport, housing, infrastructure, recreation and other elements between the covers of a single document. It emphasised the arrangement and separation of land uses and, in relation to transport and mobility, proposed both public transport improvements and a road building program including freeways which were seen as an unavoidable '...part of the price the community has to pay if it wishes to live in a wide-spread city with low density detached dwelling houses' (Town Planning Committee 1963, p.265). This notion of planning to meet community preferences is returned to later.

The 1970s and 1980s saw a retreat from broad-based, long-term and 'visionary' metropolitan plans and planning practice became focussed instead for a while on the efficient management of cities and on a project by project approach to urban development (Huxley 2000). These years laid the foundations of the outstanding information systems to support planning for which South Australia remains well-regarded and also saw the development of South Australia's 'staging process' for land release and infrastructure planning – now the 'Residential Metropolitan Development Program' – but there was concern by some at the reactive and trend-based nature of this approach to urban management. A common criticism of the South Australian Planning Act introduced in 1982 was that it was primarily a development control act rather than a strategic planning act (Bunker and Hutchings 1997, p.33). There were some attempts to provide a better long-term policy framework as the basis for planning and development decisions in the later years of the decade, but it was not until 1990 that a substantial review of metropolitan planning arrangements began. This was influenced in part by the growing support nationally for a return to longer-term metropolitan plans, well expressed, for example, by Neutze who, in a seminar at the Australian National University in 1988, observed that '...the gains in flexibility which come with the kind of urban management which is less oriented to a long term vision of the future will necessarily be accompanied by losses in efficiency through less effective co-ordination between different investment decisions, and an inability to consider large scale alternatives to patterns of development' (Neutze 1988, p.14). In the same paper Neutze quoted a report by the British Nuffield Foundation as follows:

'Planning...requires from politicians and their advisors a commitment to decide in advance on what is a desirable future and how to get there, to make decisions in accordance with this original vision and to make sure that individual policies and projects are compatible with it...Land use and development require a long view' (Nuffield Foundation 1986, p.150).

The Brundtland Commission Report of 1987 was also clearly influential at this time through its popularising of the mainstream notion of 'sustainable development' as a concept which required integrated social, economic and environmental planning and a long-term perspective. The late 1980s and early 1990s saw the emergence of a series of new plans for Australian cities, most of which came complete with a Venn diagram or triangle near the start illustrating the inseparable linkages between economic, social and environmental planning (Lennon 2000). A common theme of these plans was the importance of strategic planning, generally defined by contrast to 'traditional' land use planning. Traditional land use planning was about the technical and legal regulation of development. Plans such as the plan for Adelaide which followed the 1962 Report

were seen as problematic because of the ‘...significant difficulties in producing a document with both strategic planning and development control functions’ (South Australian Planning Review 1992b, p.16). Strategic plans did not aspire to comprehensiveness. Rather, they focussed on key issues and their task was to provide a clear strategic spatial framework to guide infrastructure investment and the preparation of more detailed statutory plans

In South Australia the need for a new approach to planning was also seen as a response to local concerns at the apparent shortcomings of the development assessment system, particularly in relation to a series of major controversial marina and tourism projects. It provided, moreover, an opportunity for the then Premier, John Bannon, to seek to remake his image as a visionary leader, rather than as a cautious incrementalist. These, and no doubt other, reasons led to the establishment in 1990 of the South Australian Planning Review

THE PLANNING REVIEW 1990-1992

The Bannon Government established its Planning Review in 1990. It was a well-resourced exercise, led by a three-person steering committee and supported by a strong professional team drawn from within and outside government agencies, as well as by two international expert advisers, Professor Peter Hall and Professor Leonie Sandercock, then based at Berkeley and UCLA respectively. There was a ‘reference group’ of stakeholders drawn from professional, industry and community groups and a generous budget for wider community consultation. The Review’s principal task was to ‘provide advice on improvements to the State planning system and to devise draft policy objectives for metropolitan Adelaide, including the City of Adelaide, for the next 20-25 years’ (South Australian Planning Review 1992b, p.1). The need to adopt a strategic approach to planning was a central recommendation – indeed *the* central recommendation - of the Final Report of the Planning Review, published in 1992. The strategic plan was to outline a ‘vision’, in the form of long-term goals and objectives. It was to have explicit endorsement at the political level and was to be a statement of government and community purpose. It was to provide a framework for privately initiated major projects and a focus for initiating public-funded projects. It was to

- achieve effective public participation
- resolve major policy dilemmas
- guide the provision of and staging of infrastructure and other services
- inform the development control system
- provide a reference point for major projects
- initiate proposals for desirable development
- guide resource allocation decisions’

(South Australian Planning Review 1992b, p.17)

‘Maintaining a level of informed community debate’ was seen as essential to the success of the new planning arrangements, given that the Planning Strategy was intended to reflect a ‘community shared vision of Adelaide’, although the Review stopped short of recommending mandatory public consultation on future changes to planning strategy (South Australian Planning Review 1992b, p.22).

The strategy was to ‘guide the provision of and staging of infrastructure and other services’ (South Australian Planning Review 1992b, p.17) and, to this end, was to be linked directly to budgetary processes. It required high level bureaucratic and political status and hence it was recommended that the task of managing and revising the strategy should be given to the Department of Premier

and Cabinet since it was difficult ‘to conceive of a line agency in government being able to assume sufficient authority for the duties involved’ (South Australian Planning Review 1992b, p.46).

The draft Planning Strategy set some clear strategic directions for spatial development. In particular, the proposal to slow growth to the south and to protect the Willunga Basin from urban expansion was a key strategic decision (Hamnett and Parham 1992). Also important was the strategy’s clear argument for the selective redevelopment of older public housing areas and for changes to the tenure mix in these areas. The draft strategy was criticised for being conservative and unclear on transportation issues, although it did speak strongly against the construction of a north-south freeway for Adelaide (the last vestige of the freeway proposals of the 1960s having been removed from plans in 1985). Many also found the economic sections of the draft strategy to be the weakest parts, although it should be said that the State government at the time did not have a well-articulated economic strategy. The looming crisis around the State Bank of South Australia was also an increasingly important contextual factor in 1992, diverting the state Labor government’s attention from metropolitan planning issues and leading soon after to the resignation of the Premier and the loss of the 1993 election.

It is hard to say quite what might have happened to the recommendations of the Planning Review and to the metropolitan planning strategy had there not been a change of government in 1993. As it was, the task of implementing the Planning Review’s proposals fell to the incoming Brown Liberal government.

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE DOLDRUMS 1993-2003

The new government moved quickly to modify the language and format of the draft strategy, moving economic development issues towards the front of the document and including a new proviso that it was to be a vehicle to assist in achieving an economic growth rate of at least 4 per cent a year.

But it was not so much the content of the strategy that was changed under the Brown and then Olsen governments. Rather, there was an apparent lack of enthusiasm for the notion of a metropolitan planning strategy. The government’s urban development agenda reverted to the pursuit of individual major investment projects across the metropolitan area – several at Technology Park in the northern suburbs and others close to Flinders University and the Adelaide airport. In 1997 Ray Bunker, who had been Chair of the State Development Assessment Commission for some years, and Alan Hutchings, a Commissioner of the South Australian Environment, Resources and Development Court, described the Liberal government’s view of the Planning Strategy as ‘a display case for the Government’s success in attracting individual businesses to Adelaide’ (Bunker and Hutchings 1997, p.46) and the period generally as one of ‘a mixture of broad ideology and ad hoc projects’ (Bunker and Hutchings 1997, p.48). One of the more significant of these ad hoc projects to be implemented was a Southern Expressway. 1997 also saw the final demise of the remarkable Multi-function Polis project (Hamnett 1997).

A revised Planning Strategy appeared in January 1998 and, while the format and structure were recognisably similar to earlier versions, there was a greater rhetorical emphasis on promoting a business environment conducive to investment. This strategy also reflected a desire to update Adelaide’s long-established centres policy, at a time of major growth in suburban retail centres, and it drew on the work of the ‘Adelaide 21’ project which had made a number of recommendations designed to reinvigorate the stagnant city centre property market and to reposition Adelaide as a city able to compete globally in certain niche export markets (Adelaide 21 Steering Committee, 1996). There was an increased emphasis on infill urban development and on the desirability of housing around transport nodes. These notions, together with the continuing redevelopment of older

public housing areas, were brought together in the late 90s under the name ‘urban regeneration’, a term which, in South Australia, could mean a number of different things according to context. The changing demography of the metropolitan area and an increased interest in housing options in the inner and middle suburbs, plus ministerial trips to Portland, Oregon, led eventually to support for the idea of an urban growth boundary and to a bigger potential role for transit-oriented development, with the rail corridor to Port Adelaide as the most likely focus in the first instance. However, the Metropolitan Household Travel Survey of 1999 gave little comfort to advocates of a shift from the car to other, more sustainable modes of transport. A ‘Ten Year Investment Plan for Public Transport’ was rumoured to be under preparation in 1998 and 1999 but never saw the light of day.

A good deal of excellent work was undertaken by state government planners during the late 1990s which there is no space to do justice to here. But the defining characteristic of the period was the emphasis on providing a quick and certain planning approvals system for developers on the argument, regularly contested by some, that delay and inefficiency in the system were scaring off investors. This was a strong theme in the government’s ‘System Improvement Program’ which led to legislative amendments in 2000 and which seemed to reflect a view of the planning system as essentially a permit-issuing process for customers in the property market. Gleeson and Low have described similar ‘neo-liberal’ tendencies elsewhere in Australia which sought to replace ‘...planning as a political and public tool for correcting and avoiding market failure’ with ‘...a new minimalist form of spatial regulation whose chief purpose is to facilitate development’(2000,p.190).

THE RANN GOVERNMENT AND THE RE-EMERGENCE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

A draft update of the Planning Strategy for Metropolitan Adelaide was prepared and released for public consultation in early 2002, although it did not come into effect until 2003, by which time the Rann Labor Government had come into office. The urban growth boundary was reaffirmed, as were associated urban consolidation policies, with an increased emphasis on clearer residential design policies and neighbourhood character studies. Integrated transport and land use planning, a new industrial land review and strategic transport infrastructure for freight movement were other areas which were given higher priority. But, even while adopting the 2003 Planning Strategy, the Rann Government signalled its intention to prepare a new ‘refreshed’ strategy which was to have a stronger focus on ecologically sustainable development than its predecessors:

‘In Australia, we need to start planning cities and surrounding areas with ESD principles as a foundation, not just another issue which needs ticking off on a checklist. The South Australian Planning Strategy aims to establish guiding principles and place emphasis on biophysical resources as a foundation of planning..’ (Bellette 2003, p.12).

After a protracted period of delay, redrafting and restructuring, accompanied by, and related in part to, cabinet changes, this latest version of the metropolitan planning strategy was released for public comment in April 2005. Its introductory section notes the Rann government’s commitment to making Adelaide a ‘leading creative and green city’ and identifies the planning strategy’s task as being to guide physical development and the growth of the city in ways which support this commitment. Four ‘guiding principles’ derived from the 1992 National Strategy on Ecologically Sustainable Development follow:

1. Optimise the net benefit from development, use and management of resources and ensure the integrity of natural, social and economic capital:
2. Create integrated solutions with multiple benefits from sustainable development:
3. Enhance accessibility to, and ensure a fair distribution of, resources throughout the urban area:

4. Provide both certainty to investors and adaptability of policy to allow for innovation' (Planning SA 2005, p.9)

These lead in turn to three 'planning priorities' which are expressed as 'Urban containment', 'Integrated energy provision, transport planning and land use planning', and 'Integrated land and water use planning and development' (Planning SA 2005, p.12)

In comparison to its predecessors, there is no doubt that this latest version of the metropolitan planning strategy is more coherent and convincing in expressing a commitment to sustainability. There is an impressive richness of analysis, particularly in relation to water, waste, energy, bio-diversity and their links to urban development, leading to strategies which aspire to plan with, rather than against, natural cycles. As with most other contemporary Australian metropolitan strategies, there is acceptance of the notion that a compact urban form is likely to be more sustainable and early challenges to the urban growth boundary, mounted by large land developers, have been firmly resisted. Modelling of urban land requirements over the next 25 years has indicated a likely shortage of land within the boundary for the new housing projected unless significant redevelopment of some established areas occurs at higher densities. These higher densities will be sought primarily from mixed use 'transit-oriented developments' around major nodes in the transport network and along public transport corridors (Planning SA 2005, p.10). Strategies are also proposed to encourage the use of non-motorised forms of travel and reductions in car-parking requirements are canvassed in transit-focused areas in order to encourage the use of public transport services.

Modest public transport improvements are referred to – an extension of the Glenelg tram line from its current terminus in Victoria Square to the railway station on North Terrace, new trams to replace the venerable existing fleet, two new suburban bus-rail interchanges and a possible extension of the southern Noarlunga rail line to Seaford. The transport sections of the strategy also mention improvements to the freight transport network, including 'efficient transport links for the north-south corridor through Adelaide' (Planning SA 2005, p.25). (These transport proposals are taken directly from a separate State Infrastructure Plan which is described later).

Overall, the draft metropolitan planning strategy provides a clear and generally coherent set of proposals in support of a more sustainable city, interpreted as being a more compact city, characterised by selective increases in residential density, achieved in particular through transit-oriented development along existing transport corridors. Modest improvements in public transport infrastructure are indicated, along with road improvements to facilitate freight movement, particularly in the north-south corridor. The whole is underpinned by an explicit commitment to ecologically sustainable development as '...development that improves the total quality of life, both now and in the future, in a way that maintains the ecological processes on which life depends' (National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development 1992, cited in Planning SA 2005, p.8).

However, under the Rann government, there have been some significant changes to state strategic planning arrangements and to the processes of infrastructure planning as a part of these. The draft metropolitan planning strategy needs to be read in relation to these broader changes to governance arrangements in order to better understand how 'integrated' planning now works in South Australia. The next section explores the current arrangements for infrastructure planning.

Strategic Infrastructure Planning for South Australia

Soon after coming to office the Rann Government established a new Economic Development Board (EDB) to advise on ways of revitalising the state economy. Early recommendations of the EDB's work in 2003 were to establish a 'whole of government' State Strategic Plan and to support this by

stronger co-ordination arrangements between government agency chief executives through a senior management council. The arguments advanced for a State Strategic Plan are familiar:

‘By implementing an effective State Strategic Plan, this government will be visionary rather than risk being short-term and political in its outlook. A State Strategic Plan would provide guidance to the public sector and the community about the government’s long-term objectives and enable people to plan for their future with more certainty and confidence and respond more dynamically to the challenges they face. It would also allow the private sector to confidently take account of the government’s overall strategic objectives in developing its own long-term business plans...It is the State Strategic Plan that must drive the budget. Successive governments have failed to adhere to this principle: they have chosen to focus on short-term problems rather than adopt a longer-term view and commitment. An effective State Strategic Plan would also facilitate more complex multilateral, cross-agency objectives’ (Economic Development Board 2003, p.26).

Streamlined processes to support economic development were also advocated and, in relation to the land use planning system, these included the introduction of development assessment panels at local government level, including independent experts and a minority of elected local councillors. (Legislative changes to achieve this have been introduced to Parliament but appear to be stalled at present, pending a state election early in 2006). Local authorities and other agencies involved in the planning process are to be made more accountable for timelines in decision-making through performance monitoring, benchmarking and other tools first introduced in the 1990s. Community consultation remains important, although ‘...while government should listen to minority views, these opinions should not drive decision-making or replace proper consideration of what is in the overall best interests of the State. Specifically, the EDB is concerned that there exists within some sections of the community an apparent anti-development sentiment that is hindering our economic opportunities, and which has a disproportionate voice’ (Economic Development Board 2003, p.26).

The State Strategic Plan, as proposed in 2003 by the EDB, was developed and released in early 2004. In April 2005 a ‘Strategic Infrastructure Plan for South Australia’ was also released. This was the work of a new Office for Infrastructure Development, set up following the recommendation of the EDB in order to plan and implement infrastructure in a co-ordinated manner to meet the priorities of the State Strategic Plan. Its prime task was the ‘adoption of an integrated and more rigorous whole-of-government and whole-of-state approach to identifying and prioritising infrastructure requirements. This involves moving the State Government’s approach to capital planning away from the annual bidding process by individual agencies. A culture of managing across rather than within portfolio structures will be fostered to support better outcomes for the state in a more strategic way’(Office for Infrastructure Development 2005, p.6).

This Strategic Infrastructure Plan was not subject to community consultation. Its proposals for improvements to transport infrastructure within the metropolitan area give the highest priority to the construction of road tunnels to improve freight movement in the north-south transport corridor. While increased use of public transport is also identified as an infrastructure priority, in line with a State Strategic Plan target to double public transport usage (to 10 per cent of weekday travel by 2018), the principal short-term measures identified are the extension of the existing Glenelg tram-line for a few city blocks to North Terrace, the purchase of nine new trams and a commitment to ‘investigate’ an extension of the Noarlunga rail line. Electrification of the metropolitan passenger rail system is ranked as a lower priority.

The introduction of an over-arching State Strategic Plan with measurable performance targets by the Rann Government has much to commend it, as does the publication of an infrastructure strategy which includes a clear set of priorities and projects designed to give effect to the State Strategic Plan. However, these changes to overall state planning arrangements have some implications for the

metropolitan planning strategy which need to be further considered. It appears, for example, that, rather than the metropolitan planning strategy 'guiding the provision and staging of infrastructure' as was intended in the early 1990s, it now becomes a vehicle for incorporating and expressing the spatial consequences of infrastructure decisions which have already been taken elsewhere. The rationale put forward by the Planning Review in 1992 for locating the metropolitan strategy in the Premier's Department, moreover, appears to lose any force which it may once have had, since the metropolitan planning strategy now becomes unequivocally a plan which is mainly concerned with the physical or spatial expression of the policies of other government agencies. The reasons for engaging in extensive consultation on the metropolitan planning strategy are also open to question when there is no comparable requirement for consultation in determining major underpinning infrastructure priorities - and indeed, consultation on the 2005 draft metropolitan planning strategy has been limited, in part by budget constraints, to workshops with state agencies, local government and identified stakeholders (O'Leary 2005).

In short, the strong commitment to ecologically sustainable development in the current draft metropolitan planning strategy appears to sit uneasily with what appears to be a dominant economic growth discourse in the State Strategic Plan and the accompanying infrastructure strategy. That conclusion needs to await a more detailed analysis than has been undertaken to this point, although it is instructive to note Premier Rann's foreword to the State Strategic Plan which expresses his desire to prove that

'...South Australia can be *fervently*¹ pro-growth and pro-business, while also being environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive' (Department of Premier and Cabinet 2004).

INTEGRATED LAND USE AND TRANSPORT PLANNING: SOME FURTHER REFLECTIONS

A particular focus of interest in current work at the University of South Australia is on the progress which has been made towards better integration of land use and transport planning in South Australia since 1990. Barriers to interdepartmental co-operation have long been identified in studies of large bureaucracies, by organisational theorists such as Lindblom (1959) and Downs (1967), while Donald Schon's concept of dynamic conservatism – the tendency of large organisations to fight vigorously to retain the status quo – is also well-known (Schon 1971). Integration between planning and transport agencies also often needs to overcome intellectual and professional barriers between highway engineers and land use planners, as well as economists working in public transport management. In South Australia in the mid-1990s a single Department of Transport and Urban Planning was formed but recently this has been broken up, with transport now part of a new Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure, while Planning, rather unexpectedly, has become part of the Department of Primary Industry and Resources SA (PIRSA).

An initial task in exploring integrated planning is to consider the purposes of land use or spatial planning. Owens and Cowell have recently identified three alternative rationales for planning. In the first of these, planning is a justifiable infringement of private property rights to the extent that this is necessary to correct for the well-known problems of externalities and the need to provide public goods. 'Essentially, in this view, the market is seen as the institution that will best satisfy consumer preferences and lead to improvements in welfare' (Owens and Cowell 2002, p.7). A second view is that communicative planning, through its commitment to public engagement, can provide a forum for dialogue 'in which citizens, collectively, might choose outcomes that differ substantially from those reflecting the aggregation of consumer preferences' (Owens and Cowell 2002, p.7). As a further alternative, Owens and Cowell (2002, p.7) suggest that, for many of its supporters, planning

¹ Italics added

is seen as ‘...an institution for promoting particular ends’ - a more ecologically sustainable or socially-inclusive city, for example.

An analysis of metropolitan planning and related strategies in Adelaide indicates that tensions between different views of the nature and purpose of planning are sometimes unresolved even within the pages of a single plan or ‘integrated’ strategy. To illustrate this (perhaps rather obvious) point, the remainder of this section of the paper uses brief extracts from the access and transport sections of successive metropolitan strategies and related transport and infrastructure plans to explore how individual preferences and community goals are balanced or traded off in these documents.

As a precursor to its draft metropolitan planning strategy, the Planning Review published an ‘ideas paper’ in 1991 which had this to say about car use and transport:

‘The private car will be the dominant mode of transport in the metropolitan area well into the next century, whatever the thrust by government, because people in Adelaide value independent mobility highly’ (South Australian Planning Review 1991, p.30).

Hodgson (1991) commented that ‘ the “vision” which the report promises us is, in fact, little more than an extrapolation of present trends assessed against what is likely to be electorally, rather than ecologically, sustainable’(Hodgson 1991, p. 5). Subsequent versions of the metropolitan planning strategy expressed similar positions on private transport. Thus, the 1994 strategy noted that

‘some people advance strong arguments in favour of limiting the use of the car, to reduce the environmental damage it causes, particularly in fuel use and the contribution it makes to greenhouse gas emission’. However, against these arguments ‘is a widespread preference for, and reliance on, private transport. People value personal mobility and their choices should not be unduly constrained’ (Department of Premier and Cabinet 1994, p.39).

The 1998 version of the metropolitan planning strategy acknowledged that

‘...there are strong arguments in favour of limiting the use of the car to reduce the environmental damage it causes....; there is also a widespread preference for, and reliance on, private transport. People value personal mobility and their choices should not be unduly constrained’ (Department of Premier and Cabinet 1998, p. 49).

The 2003 metropolitan planning strategy noted that

‘People have different views about private transport in Adelaide. There are arguments in favour of limiting the use of the car, to reduce environmental damage, particularly from fuel use and the contribution to greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, the adverse effect of traffic in local streets adjacent to busy arterial roads is a major concern. Nevertheless, there is a widespread preference for, and reliance on, private transport.People value personal mobility and their choices should be respected’ (Department of Premier and Cabinet 2003, p.55).

The current (2005) draft strategy focuses on accessibility rather than mobility and seeks to enhance this ‘to all parts of the metropolitan area via the transport network, including via public transport for those unable to use or who choose not to use personal cars..’.

Patterns of travel and mobility do indeed constitute a powerful expression of consumer choice. But, if we accept that the pursuit of individual preferences in this sphere imposes some significant external and environmental costs, policies might at least seek to ensure that consumers are informed

of the 'true costs' of their actions. This was an important theme in the draft South Australian Transport Plan which was the subject of public consultation in 2003 (and which remains as a draft at the time of writing). This draft plan presented a detailed analysis of the negative consequences of our dependence on the car which included

- Global and local air pollution
- Noise
- Watercourse and marine pollution
- Community dislocation
- Negative health impacts
- Escalating use of finite natural resources
- Visual impact
- Death and injury from crashes

(Department of Transport and Urban Planning 2003, p.10)

Education of drivers about the real costs of motoring was seen as a way of encouraging behaviour change towards more sustainable modes of travel. However, ways of recovering or *adding* to those costs through, for example, tougher parking policies or a parking levy in the city centre were not pursued. It is possible – perhaps likely – that a shift to more sustainable travel and to increased use of alternatives to the car might require policies which run counter to consumer preferences to some extent. Motoring organisations are likely to oppose such policies. Others might see them as acceptable ‘...provided that citizens enjoy the positive freedom to be party to the decisions made, and in the process might produce outcomes that differ substantially from the aggregated preferences of consumers (Sagoff, 1988; Owens and Cowell 2002, p.99.) But, as Owens and Cowell note, these are complex issues and it is no surprise that ‘...policies edging in the direction of “stronger” conceptions of sustainable transport meet resistance, for they not only challenge powerful interests but also expose profound disagreements about the nature of freedom and choice’ (2002, p.99).

The draft Transport Plan which appeared in 2003 is a substantial step forward from the first Planning Strategy of the early 1990s in several ways. There is a new framing of problems and a clear recognition of the negative public health consequences of motorised life styles. Yet another draft state plan, South Australia’s Greenhouse Strategy which is soon to be released, adds weight to concerns about the climate change risks associated with motorised travel. There is a strong rhetorical commitment in the 2005 draft metropolitan planning strategy to integrated land use and transport planning and to reducing car use by reducing the need to travel. However, the State Infrastructure Plan, while acknowledging the uncertain effects of rising fuel prices, concludes that ‘cars will continue to be the principal mode of transport for people in South Australia well past the life of this plan’ and, on this basis, argues for road improvements in order to ‘reduce travel times for motorists, with more attention given to selected effective interventions, such as tunnels, bridges or underpasses at key intersections, redesign of other congested intersections, better sequencing of traffic signals and more flexible operation of the road system’ (2005, p.48).

The nine new Glenelg trams will no doubt have more leg room than the ancient vehicles which they will replace but, if reducing car use is a major metropolitan strategic priority, it would be good to see a commitment to more significant investment in new public transport infrastructure for metropolitan Adelaide – the last such investment was the ‘O-Bahn’ or north-east busway, a little over 20 years ago. In the somewhat different context of Melbourne, O’Connor has recently canvassed the merits of using transport improvements to shape land use changes, rather than the other way around (O’Connor 2003, p.212), but public transport investment is not a high priority for the current State Infrastructure Plan, as we have seen. Perhaps it would be naïve to expect anything

else in a city with two major car manufacturers, both committed at present to the production of large cars and both experiencing well-publicised trading difficulties. One suspects that the marketing campaign for the new Mitsubishi 380 will be more expensive and effective than some of the education to improve driver attitudes rather timidly advocated in the yet-to-be released Transport Plan. It is not easy to challenge the powerful interests which support automobility – the car manufacturers, the energy providers, the large suburban retailers and others. But without engagement with these realities, there remains the risk that integrated planning might indeed simply involve including mutually incompatible goals between the covers of the same document.

CONCLUSION

The earlier parts of this paper described the evolution of metropolitan strategic planning in South Australia following the Planning Review of 1990 and the introduction of the first of the current generation of metropolitan strategies in 1994. The latest of these strategies, released for comment earlier this year and still to be officially adopted, represents a clean break with its predecessors in its explicit and coherent commitment to ecologically sustainable development principles as the foundation for metropolitan planning. At the same time, however, the introduction of new ‘whole of government’ strategic planning arrangements in South Australia and the current priority attached to an infrastructure planning process, separate from the metropolitan planning process and with an emphasis on economic growth, suggest that the metropolitan planning strategy may now occupy a more marginal position than was originally intended in the early 1990s.

The brief examination of policies towards the private car in successive metropolitan and related strategies also, unsurprisingly, reveals tensions between environmental and economic imperatives and about whether the role of planning should be essentially subordinated to development and the satisfying of consumer preferences or whether a commitment to sustainability requires, sooner or later, the recognition that natural systems may place some constraints on economic growth.

Integrated planning can encompass a number of related but separate concerns – the integration of organisations and agencies, of budgets, of regulatory and assessment procedures and so on (Albrechts 2003; Gleeson et al 2004). The ideas that land use patterns affect travel behaviour and that transport infrastructure influences land uses are well-established and have supported calls for integrated land use and transport planning for many years. These ideas underpinned, for example, the elaborate transport models of the 1960s and now support the integration of urban containment and transport policies intended, as in the current draft metropolitan planning strategy for Adelaide, to attain urban sustainability.

For economic development interests integrated planning may involve some adaptation to recognise sustainability concerns and also a marketing opportunity ‘for businesses to gain a competitive advantage by supplying “clean and green” products’ (EDB 2003, p.11). It certainly acknowledges the importance of place and environmental quality in attracting new firms and investment (EDB 2003, p.18). It is likely to stop short, however, of integrating environmental concerns to the extent that they challenge the very nature of economic activity and its underlying imperatives for growth. Environmental advocates, however, are likely to support stronger notions of sustainability and to regard some environmental constraints to development as non-negotiable. Integrated planning in this context means modifying economic behaviour to take account of absolute environmental constraints (Blowers, 2000).

A decade or so on, the South Australian Planning Review’s commitment to a ‘community shared vision’ seems rather old-fashioned (South Australian Planning Review 1992b, p.22). Individuals and groups have diverse aspirations and their abilities to fulfil these are not equal. Some have more resources and power to allow them to pursue their aspirations and express their preferences than

others. Fundamental conflicts over values and inequalities of power are not likely to be resolved simply through improved arrangements for administrative co-ordination across government agencies and it seems important not to be naïve about the ease with which strongly opposed views can be ‘integrated’.

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