



Australia and New Zealand Association of Planning Schools Conference, 1-3 November 2018 Conference Theme: “Decisions, decisions”

Hamish G. RENNIE

Department of Environmental Management, Lincoln University, New Zealand

This year the annual meeting of the Australia and New Zealand Association of Planning Schools (ANZAPS) was hosted by Waikato University. This conference was supported by the National Science Challenge 11 – Building better homes, towns and cities.

Andrew Crisp, CEO of the new Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, presented an opening address and the Chair of the Challenge Governance Group, Prof. Richard Bedford (AUT), and the Challenge Director, Ruth Berry (BRANZ), were in the audience. The importance of the event was underlined by the CEO staying for the full first day of the conference and being very approachable during breaks. A key take-home point was that the Ministry is not just about housing, but about developing urban communities.

The quality of the presentations fully justified the high level participation. Most of the papers and the panel on the first day were on urban housing. Keynotes were delivered by well-recognised housing researcher and urban planner Professor Nicole Gurr (University of Sydney) and RMIT's Director of Urban Research Professor Jago Dodson. Aside from housing and urban policy and research, the conference featured sessions on the pedagogy of planning education, teaching indigenous planning, climate change, the environment and resilience. I was particularly interested in the research by Waikato's PhD student Christina Hannah on managed retreat. Her PhD and associated publications will be well worth reading by practitioners as well as researchers.

Discussions between educators indicated that Australia is clearly very much focussed on having to both internationalise and indigenise their planning programmes. The internationalisation includes running government subsidised fieldtrips for planning classes to developing countries, something that is unlikely to be replicated by the New Zealand Government.

ANZAPS continues to be a small but very informative conference and the Planning Programme at Waikato University has provided a good model for the next time it is hosted in New Zealand.