



CONNECT NEWSLETTER



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EDITOR'S LETTER

BEN BRAGAGNOLO • OOPS VICE PRESIDENT

Climate change has made its way back into the news cycle for the first time since Coronavirus monopolised our televisions and newsfeeds. With news of major commitments regarding the use of plastic and production of energy using fossil fuels, not to mention Australia's first School Strike for Climate since the pandemic began, it's once again being spoken about. The 7th issue of the OOPS Connect Newsletter discusses climate design. Namely, the implementation of climate responsive urban design, its importance, and why it's so crucial now more than ever. As always, you will read submissions from current and graduated UQ students, UQ faculty members, and industry professionals. To those who contributed, thank you so much for allowing the publication to continue at a high standard. My name is Ben Bragagnolo and I'm thrilled to present to you, the 7th issue of the OOPS Connect Newsletter.



PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

CHELSEA O'CONNOR • OOPS PRESIDENT

What a semester it has been! Whilst last year, we slightly came back to normal, this semester we came back swinging. Luckily for us, all of our annual events have been able to go ahead and thrive thanks to the wonderful organising committee of executives.

We have seen some amazing events this semester, with my personal favourite being the OOPS Women in Planning night. This night is always an eye opener for me and this year was no different. I remember a question about the gender pay gap and how someone in their early career could address the issue, something I would never feel comfortable asking in any other scenario. This is the benefit of such an amazing night, it starts conversations that continue on, which is what I love most. Even a week later, I was talking with our planner in residence, Stephanie Wyeth about the importance of topics covered and how emerging planners can make a difference.

Other highlights for me have been watching the first and second years become more involved in the society including some eager members partaking in our semester sporting teams which was fantastic. I just want to thank everyone who has made this semester a great one. To our sponsors who have supported us in our industry events, to the executive committee for organising the events, everyone has played a crucial role. Here's to an even better Semester 2!

Much love, Chelsea

OOPS OPPORTUNITIES

BEN BRAGAGNOLO • OOPS VICE PRESIDENT

In an effort to find more ways to benefit OOPS members and all town planning students, we're introducing a new section to the Newsletter - OOPS Opportunities. After liaising with our trusted sponsors, we will provide you with some amazing opportunities to help advance your career as a Planner. Our advice? Take full advantage of them all!



PLANNING INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA (PIA)

- **Planners in the Pub** - A Queensland Young Planners Event
25th June 2021 | Beehaus - Shop 6/45 King St, Bowen Hills, 4006
<https://www.facebook.com/qldyoungplannersgroup/>
- **Mentoring Program**
Applications close 17th June
<https://www.planning.org.au/qldcontent/mentoring>



WOLTER CONSULTING GROUP

- **Work Experience**
For students in their 2nd, 3rd and 4th year of study
Send through a resume and cover letter explaining why you think you'll be a great fit for their team and how the YIMBY mindset and values resonate with you
Email: careerse@wolterconsulting.com.au



URBAN & REGIONAL PLANNING EDUCATION CENTRE

- **Practical Skills Based Courses**
95% off all courses for students - reducing some courses to only \$10!
<https://urpec.com.au/>

OOPS INDUSTRY UPDATE

EMMA GURNEY • OOPS INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVE



Last April, OOPS joined forces with fellow UQ society, GEMS to host our annual **Employable Skills Night**. Students learned valuable tips and tricks for emerging into the planning industry and the skills employers consider crucial in students and graduates. OOPS understands how competitive the industry can be, so we are always looking to give our members an edge in employability. I would love to thank our fantastic speakers for their valuable insight and guidance: Thomas Bisset from Town Planning Alliance, Alex Steffan from Steffan Town Planning, and Marnie Wood and Hannah Barrenger from Wolter Consulting Group.

Our next OOPS industry event is **Industry Night** on Tuesday 17th August with other societies within the School of Earth and Environmental Sciences. This event is our largest of the year and involves dozens of companies, firms and councils coming to tell us who they are, what they are about, and how planners can be of value in the workforce. **Industry Night** is the event of the year, so we hope to see you there!

OOPS SOCIAL UPDATE

PATRICK HART • OOPS SOCIAL REPRESENTATIVE

Since the last social entry for the OOPS Newsletter, the biannual **Pub Crawl** occurred on Sunday the 2nd of May, which was co-hosted by UQBARS, UQISS, and TH&E with a 'Where's Wally?' theme. It is safe to say that this was the best event on the OOPS calendar so far after our last **Pub Crawl** back in August 2019 (due to the joys of COVID-19). Crawlers scurried through Brisbane in our red and white striped shirts from the Royal Exchange (RE), to the newly refurbished Stock Exchange Hotel (Stockies), to Rics Bar in the Valley, and finally found Wally at Birdies. Now that SWOTVAC has rolled around, the OOPS social team is working on the semester 2 **Pub Crawl** as well as a special event that will be announced soon. We hope everyone loved our semester 1 social events and is looking forward to what's in store for semester 2. For those of you who can't wait for the **OOPS Ball**, we've got some really fun plans in the works and can't wait to unmask them!



OOPS SPORTS & MERCH UPDATE

NATHANIEL DALLAS • OOPS SPORTS & MERCH REPRESENTATIVE



What a semester of social sport that OOPS has had! OOPS' touch team 'Funky Town' finished off the season with four wins and three losses. Unfortunately, we lost the semi-final 7-2, but were able to finish strong, with an awesome win of 10-1, placing third in the competition. It was great to see some familiar faces along with some new ones and we hope that all the players enjoyed the season and got something out of it. OOPS' social netball team is still battling it out for top place. We are currently standing on two wins and five losses but are coming into the qualifying finals to hopefully revive ourselves. OOPS hopes that all the players are enjoying the competition and having fun. We will be competing again next semester in social netball and UQIC's TRL competition.

If you would like to know anything else about OOPS sport, please don't hesitate to contact our Sports and Merchandise Representative, Nathaniel Dallas.

URBAN PLANNERS ARE THE KEY TO THE SOLUTION

TAYLOR RAVENSCROFT • 2ND YEAR BTRP STUDENT

Dominating conversations across the globe, the term climate change has become a constant reminder of the planet's future; but despite its urgency, it's not always prominent in decisions that we make. Impacts of rising sea levels and higher temperatures can be seen in every corner of the planet and are quickly scoring prominence in our cities. With urbanisation and city growth causing an increase in urban populations, the effects of climate change are enhanced as more emissions are being produced in concentrated areas. As our cities grow, planners are feeling the pressure to accommodate densification while using innovative approaches to planning that are centred around sustainability.

Climate responsive design is something that should be at the forefront of every planner's mind. It has the ability to reduce the impacts of urbanisation on the environment, the city, and people's lifestyles. To create spaces that are useful, attractive, and sustainable, climate responsive urban design needs to be utilized by incorporating environmental responsibility, social progress, and economic development aspects. Through the use of urban design, planners can combat climate change through sustainably focused projects.

Situated in a subtropical environment, Brisbane is prone to the consequences of climate change. This gives the city a chance, and a responsibility, to thoroughly utilise and invest in climate responsive urban design. Traveling around Brisbane, there are some excellent examples of climate design. Although, there are also some inner city locations and low socio-economic areas that have been left in the lurch. South Bank is an incredibly successful example of climate design, with the entire area overflowing with green space, reducing the heat island and benefiting people's active lifestyle and mental health. On the other hand, King George Square and Victoria Bridge are prime examples of missed opportunities in the climate and planning sphere. Both spaces have minimal green space and aren't designed to suit Brisbane's subtropical climate; creating an uncomfortable environment for users.

Brisbane is rapidly progressing in its aim to be a clean, green, and sustainable city. Its efforts in sustainable design and its contribution to the global fight against climate change lie in the relationship between planning for the climate and focusing on the potential of under invested spaces across the city.

PLANNING FOR A CHANGING CLIMATE

LEAH HAMEL • GRADUATE TOWN PLANNER AT DEVELOPMENT DIRECTIVE

Climate change is a major global issue that is becoming increasingly important in our cities. Cities are both the reason and solution for current environmental issues facing our planet.

Since mass industrialisation and an increase of greenhouse gas pollution, the earth has experienced global warming of 1 degree which is already showing impacts around the world. Within Australia, these impacts are being seen with the longer lasting and more intense bushfires, droughts, and flooding. Climate responsive developments are being proposed more frequently throughout the world's cities.

Town Planners, in both the private and public sectors, have a responsibility to integrate climate responsive urban design into developments to ensure the sustainability of our cities and regions. 'Urban Forest' (refer to image) is an example of how cities can respond to climate change through architectural design and is currently going through the development application process. The site is located within South Brisbane on the corner of Merivale Street and Glenelg Street. The proposed development is claiming to be the world's greenest residential building which will accommodate a total of 1,003 trees and 20,000 plants. This uniquely designed development is aiming to earn a 6 star Green Star residential rating. If approved, this development will set a precedent for how green buildings can be designed and may pave the way for other residential developments to adopt more green and sustainable designs.



Town Planners are in a unique position in that we can band together and influence a range of different systems and disciplines. Going forward, town planners will have a significant role in our cities adapting to climate change

BALANCING THE SCALES OF INFRASTRUCTURE & ECOLOGY

DAVID UHLMANN • DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY AT WOLTER CONSULTING GROUP

The climate is changing. Climate scientists are predicting that the occurrence of extreme weather events will increase – both in frequency and severity. As Urban designers, it is our responsibility to plan, design, and deliver built environments that minimise the risk to life or property from the impact of these events.

Over the last few years, we have seen the adverse outcomes that result from poor planning and design – outcomes that result in damage caused by bushfires, floods, cyclones, and severe storms. Much of this damage can be attributed to past decisions on siting and design of our buildings and infrastructure that did not adequately consider climate risk. At the scale of individual buildings, while we are increasing building standards for more robust and storm resilient homes, we are still building new residential communities in flood plains, still building houses and infrastructure in bushfire prone areas, and still building homes without consideration of storm damage risk. Homeowners living in minimum standard project homes are too often left carrying the responsibility for retrofitting their homes to be more climate responsive and resilient – often without insurance cover as their area is considered “uninsurable” due to high risk factors.

At the precinct and city scale, we need to place a greater emphasis on climate responsive planning – in particular, by respecting and planning for the natural processes and topography of the land, and how it responds to extreme events. This is particularly the case for planning new developments near flood prone rivers or bushfire prone hills. There are some areas that should never have been developed – they should have been left as environmental management zones to help the city better cope with the extreme events. Incorporating maintainability into our buildings and public spaces is also fundamental. Just like regularly cleaning out your roof gutters can significantly reduce the risk of pipe blockages and associated water damage, designing and maintaining our creek corridors to function more naturally in storm events can minimise the risk of flooding.

Projects such as Small Creek (Ipswich City Council) and Hanlon Park (Brisbane City Council) are both designed to re-naturalise the creek corridor by removing old concrete-lined channels and replanting with native species accustomed to periodic inundation and drought periods – native vegetation species which also provide habitat for native bird species, reduce water velocities, and help reduce risk of associated flood damage.

Climate responsive urban design is fundamentally about leaving space for natural systems to function while keeping human activity out of harm's way. In some cases, this may mean retrofitting or relocating human activities – such was done in Grantham after the 2011 floods. As Ian McHarg, author of the landmark book “Design with Nature” said: “Ecological planning should be health giving. Success in such planning or fitting should be revealed in the existence of healthy communities, physical, biological, and social system in dynamic equilibrium.”

TACKLING URBAN HEAT IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

STEPHANIE WYETH • SENIOR LECTURER & PLANNER IN RESIDENCE AT UQ

FAST FACT: By 2030 (that’s two years before the proposed SEQ Olympics), Brisbane’s climate is on track to be more like Bundaberg, and the climate of Cairns will resemble Cooktown.

Now is a great time of year to take a Sunday drive through the suburbs and master planned communities across South East Queensland; and look at what urban planners have created. There are many thriving places built around local centres, greenspaces and well-loved contemporary and heritage homes where neighbours feel engaged and connected. Some neighbourhoods are just getting started, with freshly painted homes, local parks and new schools. I love the suburbs but am concerned for their future liveability in the changing climate.



Figure 1: Loving the suburbs in SEQ 2018 (Nearmap 2021)





In too many local streets and neighbourhoods; dark grey or charcoal exteriors, fences and roofs dominate streetscapes and ridgelines; street trees struggle to grow around on-street parking; views from eave-free, fixed glass and hopper windows overlook the street; and the hum of air conditioning units and pool filters provide background noise. In some locations this change has been incremental, with family renovations and new builds popping up in response to family circumstance and opportunity. Rear extensions are increasing roof areas; outdoor entertainment zones are expanding hardstand and reducing tree cover and greenspace. Granny flats and secondary dwellings are providing extended care and housing options for families and communities. As one-off interventions in the built and natural landscape it's all good, an 'acceptable outcome' – but geez, it is going to be hard to keep cool. All of these incremental changes, along with the densification of the suburbs, add to the urban heat island (UHI) effect.

Hotter and more frequent warmer days are a result of a changing climate. What you may not know is that more Australians have died as a result of heat stress, than from cyclones, floods and bushfires combined over the past 100 years. Heat stress is deadly, and research conducted by UQ demonstrates a clear link between densification and UHI. As planners and city-makers, we need to rethink our approach to development and start to regulate, plan, and design for urban microclimates rather than streetscapes if we are going to promote healthy and sustainable living and protect our most vulnerable. Planners will need to team up with scientists, designers, industry partners and communities if we are to successfully codesign a cooler future for the suburbs. No more business as usual. I am up for this retrofitting challenge. Are you?

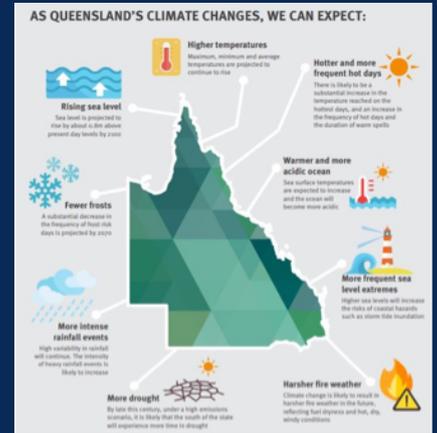
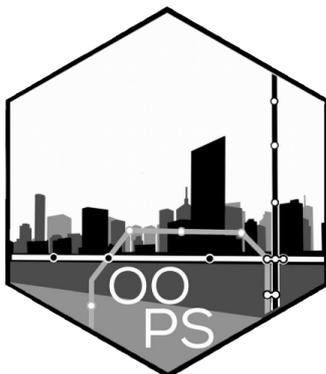


Figure 2: Changing Queensland Climate (Queensland Government 2017)

THE NEXT CONNECT

BEN BRAGAGNOLO • OOPS VICE PRESIDENT

This has been our 7th issue of the OOPS Connect Newsletter - 'Climate Design' - and I truly hope you've enjoyed reading it! Once again, I would like to extend my wholehearted appreciation to those people who contributed to the issue and enlightened us on the fascinating world of Climate Design. If you are interested in writing a submission for our next issue, I would highly encourage you to do so. For students, it is an excellent platform to get your name out into the industry and start networking; for our sponsors, it is a great way to contribute to a student publication and enlighten budding planners on the expansive world of town and regional planning. The theme for the 8th issue will be posted shortly after the Mid-Year Break, on our social media pages, so keep an eye out! If you have any questions about the OOPS Connect Newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact me at b.bragagnolo@uq.net.au. Before I wrap up this issue entirely, I'd like to announce our new website! With the invaluable help of Henry Rogers, you can now head to www.uqoops.com to read all of our newsletters, find out about our sponsors, and much more! Stay safe everyone, and for any students reading this, have a great Winter Break!



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