

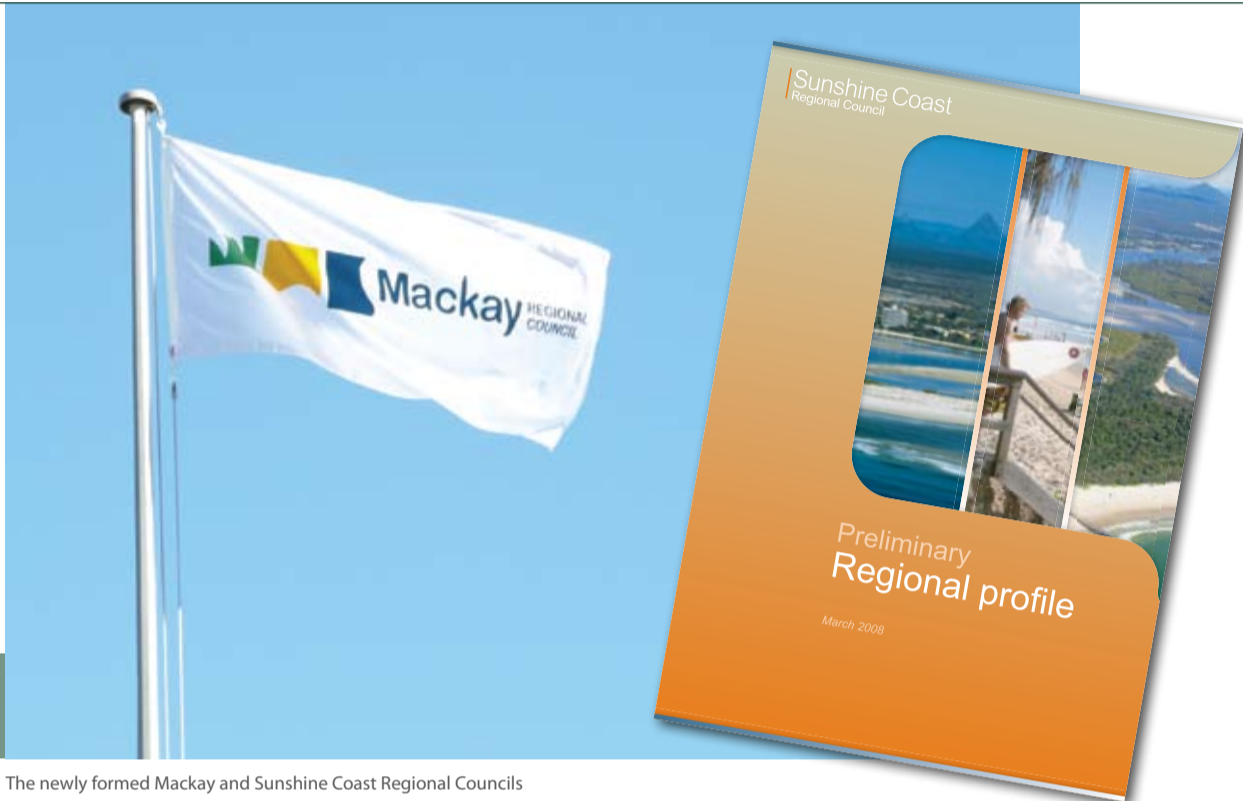
**HUMPHREYS
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Brisbane
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Winter 08

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The newly formed Mackay and Sunshine Coast Regional Councils

Local Government Reform...where to from here?

Saturday 15 March 2008 ushered in a new era in Queensland Local Government with elections held for the 73 local government areas formed in accordance with the recommendations of the Local Government Reform Commission.

The new landscape represents the most significant change in local government for more than 100 years and has more than halved the number of Councils and councillors across the State.

In South-East Queensland, the number of Councils has been consolidated from 17 to 10. Significant amalgamations have also occurred along the Queensland Coast and in the southern and central parts of the State.

The new local government boundaries are focussed on seeking to improve the capacity of local government to respond to the challenges of population growth, infrastructure delivery and economic development.

With the dust now settling on the recent elections and with the new Councils now getting down to work, there are clearly some uncertain times ahead while the new organisations find their feet. This is particularly the case for the amalgamated Councils that need to:-

- integrate two or more administrations that may be characterised by different organisational cultures, structures and operational systems;
- consolidate two or more planning instruments that may be founded upon a fundamentally different planning strategy;
- establish a new dialogue with local communities that takes account of a broader set of strategic considerations; and
- establish a strategic vision and the blueprint for achieving that vision over current and successive administrations.

It is a massive task and one that will inevitably distract from current projects and from the day to day running of operations. It will be a tumultuous time involving rapid and significant change.

For those involved in planning and development the changes brought about by local government reform are a double edged sword. In the medium to long term there should be less planning instruments and these should generally be of a higher quality. There should be greater opportunities to concentrate on strategic planning and streamlined development assessment processes that provide more consistency. There should be more and better planning resources and a more professional approach to conducting business.

However in the short term there are significant risks. Pre-existing and well founded planning projects could fall by the wayside. In South-East Queensland, the SEQ Regional Plan has seen a frenzy of local planning activity over the last four years. Many draft Local Growth Management Strategies, draft Structure Plans and planning scheme amendments are currently in a state of limbo. If these projects do not proceed or are not carried forward into consolidated planning instruments, significant investments in planning, community engagement and collaboration could be lost.

Concerns also exist about ongoing organisational inertia. A changing organisation landscape together with new planning legislation and a significant development assessment workload could all contribute to further extending delays in the approval of major and important development projects within already designated urban areas.

The next four years represent the best opportunity yet to shape a sustainable future for Queensland communities. However, in looking to the future, new Councils need to also keep an eye on the 'now' and on some of the significant and high quality projects that have been commenced by local government and the private sector in the lead up to the recent local government reforms.

There are many babies mixed in with the bath water...

For more information contact Stephen Patey stephen.patey@hrppc.com.au.

Humphreys Reynolds Perkins Turns 10!

Humphreys Reynolds Perkins Planning Consultants marked its tenth year as a planning practice in February this year. It was in that month ten years ago that Steve Reynolds and David Perkins became directors of the practice, and the name was changed, evolving out of the independent town planning practice first established by Jeff Humphreys in 1987.

When the practice first started, the articulated vision was to do innovative excellent town planning work, and pursue ethical town planning practice that serves the public interest. Whatever changes have occurred along the way, those principles remain at the heart of the practice today.

From one office with about ten staff ten years ago, Humphreys Reynolds Perkins now employs 56 staff in

four locations: Brisbane, North Queensland, Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank clients, colleagues and peers in the private and public sectors with whom we have forged close and productive relationships; people who have worked and continue to work within the practice, who we value highly; and our family and friends who have supported us in the work we have been doing over these past ten years.

The ten year milestone provides an opportunity to look back and pause for a moment before looking forward again. We continue to be committed to making better places through our efforts.



The original directors of HRP in 1998 – Jeff Humphreys, Steve Reynolds and David Perkins

Humphreys Reynolds Perkins invites you to visit its

**new
website.**

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Get to know... Nick Vass-Bowen, Senior planner



It's not just the three directors of HRP Brisbane who can remember the practice when it commenced in 1998, so too can Senior Planner Nick Vass-Bowen.

Nick joined the practice in 1998 as a planner.

Later that year he moved on to Ipswich City Council and then returned to his mother country, the UK, in 2000. Earlier this year Nick returned to Brisbane and HRP ten years after he first began at HRP.

What brought you to HRP ten years ago?

I had worked for local authorities for about three and a half years in development assessment and moving to HRP provided me with the opportunity to gain diverse experience, particularly in forward planning and policy.

What brought you back to Brisbane and HRP now, ten years later?

Prior to returning from the UK I had decided after a number of years of working in the public sector that I wanted to move into the private sector. I was particularly interested in working for a consultancy which focussed on town planning and dealt with a range of planning projects. Having worked for HRP before, being confident in the company's ethical approach to planning and knowing that I would be able to work on a diverse range of projects, I returned to the company starting at the end of January.

How has HRP changed over the last 10 years?

The company has changed significantly. When I was there ten years ago HRP had only just formed, there were far fewer staff and it was only based in Brisbane. The company now has far greater resources at its disposal, which in turn brings a greater depth of different skills and experience. It is also very encouraging to see a number of familiar faces from ten years ago (in addition to Steve, Jeff and David) still around the office.

HRP projects in brief



▶ Ipswich GPO

HRP Brisbane assisted Clocktower Partnership Pty Ltd in late 2007 with obtaining approvals for the proposed redevelopment of the historic Ipswich GPO site and adjoining London Pharmacy building.

The development will contribute to the revitalisation of the Ipswich CBD and will see the iconic heritage-listed buildings refurbished and respectfully adapted for a vibrant mix of commercial, retail and café uses, accompanied by a new six storey commercial building at the rear.

Despite the complex issues surrounding this development, we were pleased to be able to deliver, in partnership with Ipswich City Council, an approval to the applicant for this exciting development within two months of lodgement. ●

For more information contact Ben Lyons ben.lyons@hrppc.com.au.



▶ Marina Quays

HRP Gold Coast has been assisting Fish Developments over the past three years with obtaining relevant approvals associated with the land fronting the recently completed Hope Island canal.

The proposed development, known as Marina Quays, represents a rare opportunity to develop a 22.75ha greenfield site within the existing urban area of Hope Island. The project is an innovative residential development based on the urban form that is evident

in Subiaco and West Perth, Western Australia.

To date HRP has delivered four approvals that define the lot layout and road network for Marina Quays, as well as 14 approvals for a mixture of detached dwellings, attached dwellings and apartment buildings all of differing built forms, heights and residential densities. ●

For more information contact Scott Clarke scott.clarke@hrppc.com.au.

Another global award for the Eco Village at Currumbin

Humphreys Reynolds Perkins Gold Coast congratulates Landmatters Currumbin Valley on being awarded the International Real Estate Federation's Prix d'Excellence for Environmental Development for its Ecovillage project.

When presenting the award in May 2008 Mr Kumar Tharmalingam, President of the Prix D'Excellence Panel of Judges Fiabci International said "The judges were impressed that there is this initiative in Australia that is looking at the world wide building industry and providing real hands on carbon positive solutions to construction and development that do not escalate costs."

This accolade is the latest in a string of prizes to be awarded to the project including the 2007 Urban Land Institute Asia Pacific

Award for Excellence. Humphreys Reynolds Perkins Gold Coast is proud to be part of the continuous success of the project, having been the principle planners for the development since its inception in early 1999.



The much awarded Ecovillage at Currumbin

On the Move



HRP's new home on the Sunshine Coast

HRP Sunshine Coast is celebrating three years of success by moving to new and better premises in Maroochydhore.

Sunshine Coast director Stephen Patey said that the move would allow the practice to better serve its clients and respond to the opportunities presented by the formation of the new Sunshine Coast and Fraser Coast regional councils.

"This is an exciting time for the firm. Our new office has been purpose- designed to take the practice to the next level," Stephen said.

"The support we have received from clients over the last three years has been overwhelming and we are confident that everyone will appreciate the high quality amenities and more convenient location offered by our new premises," he said

The address of the new office is Suite 7, Primary Central, 63 Primary School Court, Maroochydhore. If you are in the neighbourhood drop in and check out the new digs.

"You can expect the same high quality advice and service. However, the coffee will be greatly improved," said Stephen.

A Climate Change



The transport sector in Manitoba needs to reduce its emissions.

Senior planner from Humphreys Reynolds Perkins' North Queensland office, Leah Sorohan, shared her Canadian work experience with delegates at the recent National Planning Institute Australia conference last month.

Leah, who was employed as a planning officer in the City of Winnipeg in Manitoba, Canada during 2007, presented a paper on the Manitoba province's world leading climate change planning program. The theme of the 2008 PIA conference was climate change.

Climate change came to the forefront in Canada when they signed the Kyoto Protocol. Although the federal government signed the protocol it is generally up to the Provinces and Territories of Canada to develop and deliver climate change programs.

Leah's paper provided a summary of the efforts of the province of Manitoba, whose climate change plan has been described as the best in the country.

Ms Sorohan said in her paper that the Manitoba province had been recognised as a world leader in planning and preparing for a greener future.

"Key initiatives of the Manitoba climate change program include their award-winning green building design and earth energy systems which provide the lowest cost heating and cooling in the world," Ms Sorohan said.

"However, Manitoba's greatest climate change planning success story is its hydropower which is leading the fight to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

"The province is also going through the process of amending government planning policy and legislation to consider climate change issues. Consultation is underway in relation to amendments to Manitoba's Planning Land Use Policies) and water and energy legislation," she said.

Ms Sorohan said Manitoba's climate change plan was world-leading but there were some areas for improvement such as the need for the reduction of emissions from the transportation sector.

"Emissions from private vehicles have increased and there has been an increase in the use of heavy vehicles for goods transportation instead of rail.

"Although reference to urban consolidation and the efficient use of infrastructure has been included in several planning documents there needs to be more emphasis in the day to day assessment of applications. This could result in a greater reduction of emissions from transportation.

"By looking at the strengths and weaknesses, successes and failures of the Province of Manitoba the Australian town planning industry can learn important lessons which can assist in our own efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions," she said.

Leah's paper is available to view on the Humphrey Reynolds Perkins website www.hrppc.com.au under Publications.

For more information contact Leah Sorohan leah.sorohan@hrppc.com.au.