

Submission to a current Review of the WA Local Government Act 1995.

(From: P H Forrest. [REDACTED]) 5/03/2018

This Submission refers particularly to the functional implications for the State Government and Local Authorities concerning responsibilities for Development Planning and is parallel in time to another State Government Review currently being undertaken of the WA Development Planning System.

The writer previously undertook a lengthy independent Functional Review based on extensive observation and engagement with community groups and suburban Local Authorities; and conclusions of it then detailed suggestions regarding the future relative roles of State Government Agencies and of Local Governments in the Development Planning process.

That paper * **'A community based Independent Functional Review Paper of the Development Planning System in WA; with proposals for enhanced relevance and management.'** Is frequently referred to in the following comments; and for convenience is **attached herewith as an APPENDIX** to this Submission.

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'Strategic Planning' should be the founding genesis of planning decision-making and is generally recognised as a fundamental element of management of any business operation, whether privately or publicly owned and financed. Strategic Planning must however have clear Objectives.-

In the Public sector there are many tiers of management operating simultaneously with different roles and purposes, supposedly guided by **broad Strategic Objectives of the Elected Government**.

Changing Objectives?

However, in the case of land-use Development it has **not been at all clear to the wider community from the outcomes, in the Perth and Peel Region what those strategic objectives were.** - Apart from accommodating population growth ; *(and to give commercial developers with very short term engagement largely free rein to clear vast areas of land arbitrarily and subdivide that - to reap enormous private profits – and so inflate residential land block prices outrageously at the expense of incoming residents, with minimal or no attention to creating new long-term viable socially-balanced and integrated communities)*

For instance, through poor overall management of land- use in the Greater Perth Region, commercial developers have been allowed to ignore existing site assets and thoughtlessly destroy them by clear felling trees and bulldozing surface vegetation – only for new residents have to eventually reshape, reconstruct and replant the locality to recreate natural living conditions.

Following Hon Premier McGowan's remarks about opening up the system to be more understandable to all, the first requirement will be to explain what the new **Objectives** for Strategic land-use Development planning are and hopefully how they are to be markedly different to what has gone before?

Management of Land-use Development.

Since the Hon Premier himself is also the Minister for Public Sector Management we must presume that efficient and cost effective management is, or must be applied throughout all of the public sector Departments and Agencies concerned with Land use Development. That must logically include WAPC , DoPLH , Department of Environment and the Department of Local Government.

Those Agencies have some authority drawn from Acts of Parliament. While those are very specific there are also definitions and descriptors used within them that are open to interpretation and those are constantly debated in Law. Those Acts provide Statutory intentions and context, but do not extend to defining the Tactical 'ways and means' that are the operating responsibility of all sectors of Executive Management that are each monitored by and accountable to a State Government Minister.

The 'Tactical' Executive Management Responsibilities of Agencies extend to the whole of the operations, functions and outcomes embraced and directly affected by that Agency even when some of the operations are delegated by agreement or contract to other organisations, public service or otherwise.

A problem lies in creating 'policy (and legislation) which is not tied by integrated linkages i.e 'whole of government' integration but separated and loosely linked to individual operational frameworks that leaves 'others' to coordinate and attempt to link them ; with variable standards and financial compromise, (or in the case of land use Development, unpredictable reference back to SAT or Ministerial jurisdiction having the final say).

Community view of Responsibilities

These Responsibilities are important from a Community perspective to be clear and unambiguous. A most important Operational example in the case of Land-use Development is Responsibility for Managerial accountability as between the existing WAPC/ DoPLH and Local Authorities.

From a community viewpoint that managerial responsibility does not appear to consistently extend in practise to managing the **interface between Local Authorities and commercial Developers**.-

Local Authorities have been 'somehow' obliged to manage this primary tactical interface with private commercial Developers (who themselves have only very short-term and partial involvement with land-use) through local development approvals. But the reality is that Local Authorities are primarily structured and funded by local ratepayers for very different – local Services delivery purposes.- e.g. Roads, Pathway, Drainage, Street Lighting, Refuse removal ,Recreation, Parks and Gardens etc. ; and they are directly accountable for efficient management to the community via rolling 'Community Strategic Plans, monitored (by KPI returns) to the Department of Local Government.

Local Ratepayers ask 'why are they obliged to pay for an inflated development planning bureaucracy - that is not contributing to local social integration or creating genuine socially relevant new community living frameworks?'

From a community perspective, In the case of future physical Development of land and creation of living spaces for human purposes, the present **Tactical system** to supposedly manage land-use and create future living environments called **'Planning' is currently muddled, in part dysfunctional and substantially opaque to the community.-**

Local realities.-

Recently Local Authorities have (in volume) been expected to be the main operational decision-making agencies for land-use Development Planning Approvals; yet they are not adequately staffed for a creative design/planning role. Local Authorities each have multiple work teams and a small number of professional staff reporting to a CEO who is responsible to their local Community (Ratepayers) through their own locally elected lay Councils. But their 'Statutory Planning' staff have legalistic training interpreting the Planning Act, but typically do not engage in sites assessment, local community research or give Design advice, yet those are absolutely essential to delivery of created outcomes for the community.

The rapid growth of population in the Perth Region and therefore the number of land-use Development proposals requiring approval has increased enormously. Also the quality of submissions from commercial Investor- Developers has fallen, - relative to the increasing complexity of required of outcomes, as rapid social and technological change affects community needs.

Many submissions are simply 2 dimensional diagrams showing land subdivisions into blocks that will be on-sold to intending house-holders or speculative builders. Thus have no means to configure or manage 3 dimensional outcomes (that are therefore not predictably determined). While Local Authorities have Building Construction Control expertise, that is in applying Nationally agreed Building Codes of Practice and doesn't involve creative professional Design expertise.

Local Authority services (paid- for by community Ratepayers) have been placed under enormous additional cost pressures by the WAPC/DoPLH issuing directives regarding Development Approvals under terms of the Planning Act (With WAPC/DoPLH still retaining authority to reverse approvals issued by Local Authorities; also allowing Developers to appeal decisions to SAT or even bypass Local Authorities altogether). Yet Ratepayers bear the cost of their Councils losing Appeals by Developers to SAT and that is viewed as completely unreasonable –**"If Councils do not have appropriate expertise and cannot be trusted, then take the approval role elsewhere."** Also a fact often overlooked is that having a formal Approval role legally inhibits Councillors (in having to be both judge and jury) **giving their own personal opinion when discussing submissions with community in open session.**

Notwithstanding the 'escape' by WAPC/ DoPLH currently from any exposure at all to the actual qualities and conditions of Sites in the Region, or to the detailed complexities of design that give rise to actual Development of land for future new communities; they are directly responsible for imposing costly complex bureaucracy upon Local Authorities, that should surely be managed and funded by themselves or by proponent Developers?

The Metropolitan Regional Scheme?

The WAPC/DoPLH have for instance created a massive desk-based synthetic management bureaucracy that includes a **Metropolitan Regional Scheme (MRS)**

This Scheme is entirely theoretical and not qualified by their own exposure to on-site survey conditions, or to design-practicalities involved with the creation of new communities; yet notwithstanding zero exposure, they presume to advise the Planning Minister on the local technicalities and implications.

The Metropolitan Regional Scheme (MRS) in the community view has in retrospect done nothing to usefully manage and balance sprawling development growth and even resulted in an embarrassing reversal to highlighting "INFIL." (While generating massively wasteful bureaucracy through constant need for L/As to advertise and defend 'Amendments' to cope with local realities- i.e. each alteration resulting from community engagement requires copious documentation and submissions to internal committees of WAPC/DoPLH.

That could all be avoided if the Approvals Role of Local Authorities was returned to a restructured DoPLH – (*Ref. as detailed in the writer's "Functional Review" (APPENDIX) at pp 25-30.)

In order that the cost-benefit of the current system can be openly demonstrated, the Community needs to know why this strange arrangement exists where Tactical operational policies are totally detached from the machinery of delivery – leading to a public perception that WAPC/ DoPLH are not properly managing the Land-use Development Planning system, contrary to a 'whole of Government' policy objective.

Remote philosophising and unproductive 'Red Tape'?

Other examples, in the community view, of massive wasteful bureaucracy are in creating the huge volume of expensive glossy publications such as 'Directions 31' and its sequel 'Beyond..' supposedly pointing to future land use scenarios, but largely wishful thinking not based on live on-ground research and already operationally out of date, being overtaken by rapid change in social impact of technological innovations, industrial economics; and variable population growth.

Sadly even the euphemistically named Green 'Growth' Plan that was in reality a Green clearance Plan, was a remote theoretical desk-based-initiative.

When what was/is tactically needed is a Green CONSERVATION_Plan ("Conservation" meaning not simple preservation, but careful selection and management of locally unique biodiversity in the Region to retain key permanently viable areas and assure inherent succession for the future, carefully thought-through to be balanced with locational demands for urban expansion). Failure to achieve that in future will multiply community calls for limits very soon to be set on the population of 'Greater Perth' and Bunbury and Geraldton expanded to become metro centres connected by high-speed rail (at increased infrastructure cost!)

Accommodating Growth - and respecting unique biodiversity?

Sensible Land-use should in future be based on thorough understanding and more respect for the special characteristics of the Perth location.-

This Region physically comprises a flat mainly sandy coastal plain backed inland by a steeply rising heavily vegetated rocky escarpment. The sandy coastal plan extends northward into undulating country and southward into wetland areas draining both outfall from the escarpment and the coastal plain itself from some 20 km south of Perth City. (The northerly scarp natural drainage goes into the Swan River Estuary around which central Perth had developed). The southerly drainage goes into the very large but extremely shallow and substantially land-locked Peel Harvey Estuary ,with one narrow natural ocean link channel at Mandurah and an artificial one created at Dawesville; (a measure originally intended to halt eutrophication of the Estuary (excess nutrients leading to accumulation of algae and depletion of oxygen in shallow waters).

The land surrounding this deceptively shallow Estuary is in reality a vast Wetland rich with rare wildlife, some of it is traditional breeding grounds for annual international water-bird migration and subject to the RAMSAR conservation treaty to which Australia is a signatory.

Despite those known facts, drastic and irrecoverable damage has been inflicted on large areas of the surrounding wetlands by poor land-use Planning management, permitting commercial Developers to indiscriminately clear and cover swamp areas with imported fill over the past two decades, simply for highly profitable private short-term investment purposes. This is in spite of major public health risks due to continuing extensive mosquito infestation and increased pollution; now resulting in the return of substantial eutrophication and destruction of benthic (water-bed) habitat through further encouraging recreational use for high speed deep-draught boats and proliferation of canals.

‘State of Environment’ Reporting should be obligatory for Local Authorities.-

Regarding the Government’s re-appraisal of the Green-Plan; the widespread destruction of internationally recognised local biodiversity by commercial Developers; and paucity of local site assessments; it is suggested that in future all Local Authorities be required as part of their Community Strategic Planning to formally document regularly with KPIs a specific local ‘State of Environment’ Review.

Roles of State and Local Government Agencies – (in the Development planning process)-

The critical community view outlined above has arisen from the State Public Service Agency WAPC / DoPLH currently having exclusive authority to advise on Strategic objectives and determine development planning outcomes. This is through a complex standardised set of remotely conceived (desk-based) Statutory Planning Directives remote from any conceptual link with the needs of real people, or recognition of the complexity of market economics driving commercial investment in land as a commodity.

Those ‘central’ Agencies are viewed as having ‘too much power but not carrying enough responsibility’ in not being exposed-to, or engaged at all with the essential tactical practicalities of sites, social cost or resource delivery.

This now very obvious weakness is being exposed more starkly due to rising pressures on the tactical design response to community needs, due the increasing complexity and rate of change through social and technological impacts on modern living conditions. (Very few of the subject elements of Land- use urban Planning for residential areas remain constant any more, they are increasingly

dynamic and changing rapidly; and that aspect requires very different managerial responses - (e.g. More akin to 'hitting a moving target').

Despite extensive changes in socio-technological and economic circumstances; the Development Planning System in WA has itself been in operation with minimal change for several decades but (as outlined above) now revealed as seriously outdated and unfit for future purpose).

Role of Local Governments ? -

Local Authorities typically (other than some in inner metro City-areas) lack the relevant and essential professional skills and appropriate community engagement practices for e.g.- Detailed physical and environmental site evaluation; social research; design of contemporary and future living conditions – and most in fact do not regularly 'engage' extensively or interactively with their communities. (Note: 'Statutory Planning Officers' have legal training for interpreting the Planning Act but do not have appropriate skills to engage with community or in creative tactical aspects.

Local communities therefore have almost no confidence that their L/A can be trusted to be involved in the location and design of community hubs, future living environments, or make professional assessments as to whether proposals from commercial developers are suitably located and designed as comprehensively 'fit for purpose.' Most communities can point to specific negative outcomes, demonstrating – lack of intergenerational age structure, absence of balanced Community focus, poor or no activity centre design, negligible open space and recreation provision and absence of the ingredients for creating local identity and sense of belonging.

More Red Tape?-

Nevertheless Local Authority Councilors are expected to comprehend 'Statutory Planning' Scheme procedures issued by WAPC that involve Local Authorities applying a set of broad or 'high level' zoning rules with a list of ambiguous 'use-class' definitions -that actually have no tested specific site evaluative or social context (those continually mislead citizens who read published 'have your say' development plan application notices, as to exactly what is being proposed.)

That further 'Local Planning Schemes' layer of Statutory determination creates/obliges an extremely wasteful bureaucratic overburden - to supposedly manage development delivery. But still it does not, due to its extreme detachment from the tactical process itself (particularly for the outer suburban areas where a high overall proportion of Greater Perth urban population are destined to live).

Typically every year, large numbers (hundreds) of such 'Amendments' to LPS are advertised by each L/A locally, yet there is still no assurance whatsoever that what they describe is physically, environmentally or technically design-suitable as a contribution to the present and future local community context.

The evidence of this is clearly seen in most outer suburban localities of the Greater Perth Region that comprise vast areas of ad hoc random designed, uncoordinated, monotonous housing estates on tiny blocks with minimal open space; that will never by any stretch of imagination become viable integrated communities with an identifiable sense of place; but rather a breeding ground for social

isolation and vulnerable disenfranchised young people. (Further evidence of that is in current petty Crime statistics in many such areas).

Overall Effect.-

Consequently the overall system is now obviously failing abysmally – to produce what should be creative, socially relevant and cost-effective development. Naturally the resultant gross uncontained sprawl has in turn induced costly **unplanned-for infrastructure and essential adjunct consumer social services.** (This has occurred in all directions from central Perth, not only north/south along the coastal plain.)

Any enhancement of the current system must therefore address **constructively the current obviously unsatisfactory future role of Local Authorities.** Including why ratepayers should pay for what is a state-wide service outside of their direct benefit that only affects their L/A sporadically, and timed at the whim of commercial Developers who are not themselves competent to design or deliver new communities.

Developer Contribution.

Commercial Developers actually need and would value far more professional help with creative community design and would pay for that, within reason (bearing in mind that their natural business model is profitability and very short-term investment.) They cannot and will not get that from Local Authorities as currently staffed, hence their frequently expressed frustrations, (and preference to apply direct to DAPs)

Role of Development Assessment Panels.

However, despite the convenience and arbitration value to WAPC/DoPLH of **DAPs**, they have largely an ‘end of tactical management’ evaluative/ judgemental role, but are just as remote from the practical, site-related, local social context and local functional realities of creating new communities as the WAPC/DoPLH currently are.

Infrastructure WA

Regarding Infrastructure, while the Government is creating (recently out in draft) **Infrastructure WA**, the community will question duplication and why this is not reconstructed from WAPC when **Development is the essential driver for all new Infrastructure** (and WAPC already – has a membership comprising representatives of most infrastructure providing agencies in WA)?

Metronet.

Obviously the new Metronet rail network will greatly enhance rapid public transportation between major ‘Nodal points’ for development, but the design quality of these Nodal points as major **Community Hubs** will be a crucial challenge yet to face.

Furthermore It would be very wise for the Government to notionally ‘ring-fence’ these major Nodal locations to avoid commercial Developers creating more expensive-to-service ‘Ribbon Development’ sprawl and loss of potential natural recreational ‘Green Belt’ between them.

System Reform concepts.

The first model suggested in concluding the community based *(Ref. '**Functional Review**' Paper, see **APPENDIX**) offers a more reasonable role for Suburban Local Authorities; *(that should be considered differently to those in the inner metro areas that are much better financially resourced from their rateable income).*

That suggested model required L/As to very substantially enhance their interactive community engagement role including the appointment of locally peripatetic professional social science staff; and excludes a Development approval role (except for small sites below one hectare, \$2 million value and single storey).

That model allowed for a number of creative Regional Professional Teams **sharing development design-planning assistance across several L/As** and with an Approving role linked directly to a re-structured Department of Planning (DoP).

(NOTE: "employment of staff with higher order skills" is also recommended in the most recent 2018 Infrastructure Australia Report.

Alternatively one first step could be to require all Local Authorities who may be granted permission to give Planning Approvals for larger projects to show evidence that they consistently employ an interacting creative in-house professional staff team (not external consultants with an unpredictable range of skill sets) -

- a) with visual urban design and spatial creative skills and experience;
- b) interactive social science evaluative capability;
- c) ecological site assessment and analysis capability;
- d) geological survey and civil engineering assessment capability.

Staged introduction and some combination of these concepts and substantial reduction of bureaucracy could achieve the necessary reforms without incurring increased cost to the State Budget or to Local Authority Ratepayers.

Proposed New 'Community Focussed' strategic Objective.-

(It has obviously proved futile to continue attempting to create satisfactory new and modified environments for people or for communities as at present - by Local Planning Scheme (LPS) Statutory directives, two dimensional zoning, printed guidelines or exemplar illustrations all requiring fresh advertising and 'Amendment' each time a substantial size Development proposal is submitted.)

Urban land-use Development policies need a new and different Objective and that could usefully be 'COMMUNITY FOCUSED DEVELOPMENT' highlighting the principles of design that relate to human behaviour, comfort, practicality, functional efficiency, quality of living in an insecure future and affordability. **That concept and the rationale for it is developed on pages 9 to 13 following.**

While the future for people is increasingly complex, the historically timeless instinct for collective sharing of resources – for community survival, protection, conversation and recreation, remains

strong and should be reflected in - Development Planning being above all for people henceforth in constantly changing circumstances that are affecting both community needs and values.

Consequently, the suggested engagement of 'Higher level' specialised multi-skilled professional design teams will bring community-focussed creativity to the fore and ensure not only far better quality outcomes for communities, but cut down Bureaucratic red tape and create more certainty for industry, employment growth; including for Local Authorities

For the future those same 'higher level' creative professional Team skills are required for **all urban development at all levels of population density.**

(Unless the State Government shows clear leadership in Revising the Development Planning System creatively along those lines The Greater Perth Region will never achieve the potential that the location deserves.)

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(The following pages are intended to be explanatory - only for readers who have no professional creative design background or experience.)-

Design objectives.-

Designing and Future Development Planning needs to have a (new) primary objective to focus on the drastically changing social context and focus on Designing for the changing needs of real people helping them to live with increasing resilience in enhanced community harmony; (i.e. Sustainability OF people for the future as well as for them, that has been the popular drive in recent years.)

(To repeat again - the current level of relevant skills available for this purpose within most Local Authorities and the weak chain of Planning decision-making management State-wide, are quite simply unfit for this future purpose.)-

Beginning the Creative Design process -

In outline only, the process of Designing urban settings for people begins with **functional analysis** – observing practical needs, what users do and how they do it and requires both **behavioural comprehension** and an appreciation of **psychological perception** – (how people view and relate to different surroundings) spaces – openness, enclosure, light, sound- vibrancy, peaceful quietness, relaxation and preferred priorities (varies by age and maturity). **Locational analysis** – choice/preferences , why, where and when . **Internal movement analysis** – how people will move and negotiate space locally. **External movement** -travel to and from residential localities - purposes; destinations; frequency; available time; available modes; and as single or group travel. **Recreational values** and preferences outdoor/indoor; convenience affordability and limitations.

All of the above and much more must then be related to the surveyed physical, biological and microclimatic qualities of the proposed site – beginning by properly researching and evaluating the

particular location, then working with whatever natural/ local conditions already exist and both enhancing and creating a sense of place for new inhabitants.

Philosophical reflection recognising key facts of social evolution and Future change.

Human instinct for many centuries of human civilisation, irrespective of cultural or ethnic origin – has been to come together in groups to -share, discuss, plan, survive, gain confidence and invent various means to live long and enjoy life. These ‘collectives’ grew from encampments into village settlements and multiplied, as shared ambitions developed for more than basic food sustenance and by increased collaboration through creative enterprise grew to become infinitely more complex.

A three century ‘flashback’ summary of recent evolution (from Europe).-

‘Someone sometime dug a hole and found coal; then more people were drawn to work a colliery; a village settlement grew around it; then other coal-using industries emerged locally, multiple communities grew into cities, export and exchange of product developed ports and transportation links. World wars wrought massive destruction and accelerated industrial technology. World-wide sharing of technology for production brought in automation; digital control of that evolved into highly complex applications to accelerate and control automation then to remotely serve myriad human labour and time-saving purposes.-

(That has been reflected world-wide and now evolving further at an ever-increasing rate. People today are being born into and now living in extremely complex mental environments that seem to offer higher standards of living, but threaten human values at all levels.- Even including the looming capability for the human race to totally self-destruct.)

Already people must cope with constant change – to home, work, personal time, family time; and simultaneously having to adjust to almost ‘virtual’ lives- i.e. People of all ages being instantly able to know about the whole complex world, but be challenged to relate themselves to what and who is real and immediate around them.

Continuing education will in many ways transcend traditional concepts of work, as ‘intelligent’ automation becomes ever more pervasive, sophisticated and mentally controlling.

In this future, already partly upon us, survival mentally and physically to retain healthy minds and bodies will require new forms of deliberately designed local physical living ‘frameworks’ for people; in purpose-designed community form, to support collaborative activity and foster intergenerational sharing, companionship and sense of belonging.

In short the ‘Village’ must now be reinvented and planned to be re-created locally, but innovatively in a ‘futures’ context.

Since Designing (Planning) today for future living is for those dramatically different human contexts, Designers must be creating new physical and social community contexts in building and spatial assemblies both indoor and outdoor, that can counterbalance relentlessly changing multiple destabilising forces yet respond to basic human behaviours and instincts .

Design Planning Residential settings for people in the future must surely then have the PRIMARY OBJECTIVE of creating new communities that will preserve and enhance quality of life for people of all ages and personal circumstances.

(Locally here and now however, that OBJECTIVE cannot be, achieved without fundamentally changing the current structure and management framework of the Development Planning System in WA.)

The type and range of professional skills and means of deployment required is now different, with a much higher-order of perceptive and creative design input and utilising much more analytical local site insight.

Also the overall organisational ‘modus operandi’ changed with integrated professional analytical and creative design teams creating futures-relevant physical and social living contexts. This operating in parallel (but not co-locational) with on-going social psychology expertise (Community Development Officers) constantly engaging with local people, as neighbourhood design concepts are being developed.

Outcomes then will need to be much more locally ‘bespoke’-and with Community Development/ social psychologist support continuing forward to help build communities, post-construction of the physical ‘frameworks.’

*Conceptual variety then **must henceforth focus on the users.** (Not left to vague chance by theoretical detached standardised Statutory Planning dogma as used by the WA Planning System as it is today).*

Creative Design thinking - creating efficient and liveable future communities.

Designing and site planning for deliberate evolution of a community is very different to the current practice in the outer Perth Regions which is of commercial investors purchasing and subdividing land for ad hoc housing estates with neither themselves nor the responsibly Local Authority having multi-professional design skills.

Creating communities by design must have extensive consideration of multiple user needs and purposes.- A checklist in no priority order could include-

1. Futures – Sociability balancing life with on-line screen focussed personal isolation
2. Quality of life
3. Community spirit
4. Belonging somewhere
5. Conversation
6. Mutual support

7. Sharing life experience
8. Ageless collaboration
9. Growing together
10. Ageing together
11. Affordability
12. Sense of never being isolated
13. Sharing problems
14. Sharing physical abilities and coping with disabilities
15. Working together and shared workspace
16. Playing together exercise and sports
17. Learning together informally
18. Collective creativity
19. Having purpose in life
20. Supporting troubled minds
21. Supporting ambition
22. Income creation discovery
23. Learning new skills
24. Producing to share
25. Sustainable social living context for a cohesive future human community.
26. Meeting incidentally in public spaces
27. Making new friendship
28. Sharing interests
29. Cross-age intergenerational sharing of life experience and skills in upbringing of very young children
30. Having company to share creative and recreational activities
31. Collaborating in productive voluntary work
32. Understanding cultural differences
33. Supporting children and youth self-worth to feel they belong somewhere and respect their community.
34. Meeting other neighbours for a purpose
35. Forming interest groups
36. Creating new facilities
37. Seeking external support
38. Choice of privacy for quiet sharing and contemplation when needed.
39. Close to contact with living natural surroundings – light/shade/shelter/fresh air free from traffic noise .
40. Shared parks, shared productive gardens,

A Professional Design Team would have all the above values and more in mind that will suggest facilities to be considered for inclusion against what is available in the immediate localities.

Then do detailed assessments of all assets of the site – physical, geological, biological flora and fauna, landscape form, microclimate, natural drainage, proximity of available mains services infrastructure, accessibility- minor and major roads, railways, existing footpaths and trails. Proximity to or inclusion of convenience shopping facilities, child care, primary and secondary schools, all-age health clinics, accommodation profiles singles, couples, families, aged persons, care facilities. Public open space incorporating existing landscape features, recreation and sports facilities. Community centre, vehicle parking -private and shared.

Compatible and less compatible uses would be listed and grouped. Depending on site features to be retained; contours and orientation, number of levels, relative height and various plot-ratios considered and trial-located. Relative elevation of access routes and spaces considered. Then advance to producing alternative sketch layouts and 3D depictions of potential mass forms and spatial connections, with pedestrian circulation movement routes as a basic framework. All then tested interactively with local Community Reference Groups and-

In the case of the suggested change to Local Authority Roles (*Ref. Functional Review Paper attached*) the Professional social psychology input would be Local Authority based and employed. Those professional staff would be located in major local community activity areas, and be

continuously engaged and interactive with local people; and so able to not only convey the sense of local collective and personal social issues and aspirations; but also produce regular reports for the L/A Councillors concerning social needs of all kinds but also discover and gauge opinions on future Development. That interaction with Councillors and other Council personnel staff would be through regular ‘workshop’ meetings (open to the public) that would allow Council to **distil and provide balanced resume** of collective local feelings on proposed new larger scale Land-use Developments to the suggested **Regional Development Planning Team**

Those Design Teams would, as above, be preparing alternative Design proposals interactively as and when Proponent Developers wish to commence the Design and Approval process. Furthermore those professional Social Science staff would continue an interactive community development role post- construction as new residents move in,

In this way there would be a very substantial level of assured Local Authority community engagement continuing forward into the future, well in advance of anything that could be achieved by elected Councilors and L/A staff under the current Development System.

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[**Affordability caution.**- With the above OBJECTIVES in mind, the State Government should also now seriously Review the extent to which Development for Residential purposes is currently driven by random private commercial investment purely for short-term profit. That has obviously been **grossly inflationary on land prices in suburban areas** and acted directly against personal community affordability. *(The community unfairly pays in rates and taxes to operate the existing Planning System that currently encourages that practise.* Alternative land purchase arrangements should be examined perhaps with a combination of private and public investment.]

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An * APPENDIX to the above Submission, for convenience is attached separately, namely –

‘A community based Independent Functional Review of the Development Planning System in Western Australia; with proposals for enhanced relevance and management.’

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