



REFLECTIONS ON BETTER URBAN PLANNING

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Where have we come from?

- **Pre-RMA**
 - simpler times
 - standardised zoning
 - limited rights
 - the system by-and-large delivered
- **Pre-RMA downsides**
 - urban quality not great
 - sprawl
 - community paid for services/infrastructure
 - all development was good development.



Where have we come from? (continued)

- **Pre-RMA how it worked**

- there was a “development community”
- that community led development
- little to no land banking
- conservative forms of development
- Central government and councils filled the gap in social housing and tried new housing models.



Reforms that led to the RMA

- **Rogernomics**
- **Anti-planning – no “picking winners”, provide a “level playing field”**
- **54 statutes rolled into one**
- **Management through controlling effects**
- **Yet, extensive community/individual rights.**



Planning within the RMA

- **Urban planning has been a subversive activity, no real mandate**
- **Nevertheless, urban councils kept doing it despite challenges**
- **Regional councils fought to be allowed to do it**
- **It was hard.**



Do we need a new Planning System?

- Probably no
- Need to avoid barriers and boundaries between responsibilities
- Recognise planning as “good” not “bad”
- Need to recognise environmental constraints as a framework for urban development opportunities
- Need to create, but more importantly seize, the opportunities
- Resolve the dilemma between control and quality
- Reduce statutory interpretation issues/right to appeal
- Allow for opportunities to take land where it is a block
- Funding to “get ahead” in terms of community facilities, creating attractive areas.



What sort of planners for the future?

- Somewhat visionaries
- Multi-capable teams
- More mandate within local authorities to drive/encourage
- Better national/regional/local partnerships
- Recognised status
- Refocus from control → create.



UDAs

- **A necessary and good idea**
- **More important for re-development than new development**
- **But not a multiplicity of UDAs**
- **A nationwide skilled pool to service demand.**



What really needs fixing?

- **National information , thinking and leadership (eg Planning Council)**
- **National practical capacity- building/assistance (eg MoW)**
- **Deal with land banking /promote “orderly development”**
- **Extend development industry capacity/capability**
- **Better building industry capacity/capability**

