SPSW3070 - Regional Policy and Planning  
Semester 1 - 2006  
Course Outline

Lecturer: Geraldine O'Connor  
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Course Co-ordinator: Debbie Plath  
Email: Debbie.Plath@newcastle.edu.au  
Ph: 49215765

Consultation times:  
Students are advised to consult with the lecturer about course content and assessment matters. Geraldine O'Connor is available by appointment, email and phone.  
The course coordinator (Debbie Plath) is also available for consultation in room W228 at the following times: Wednesdays 12.00 – 1.00, Thursdays 11.00 – 12.00 (Feb / March), Wednesdays 11.00 – 1.00 (from 5th April) or by appointment.

Unit Weighting 10  
Teaching Methods Workshops, field trips and online learning

Brief Course Description  
In this course students examine current social planning practice and techniques through a regional focus. Students also explore concepts of locational disadvantage, regional policy, and ecological sustainability. Relevant project work is undertaken to develop knowledge and skills in social planning practice.

Learning Materials/Texts  
Literature and resource material is made available through Blackboard and Short Loans. A list of references and resources for the course are provided at the end of this outline.
Course Objectives
At the completion of this course students will demonstrate:
1. An understanding of the concept, principles and application of ecological sustainability and their relevance to the social and community services sector.
2. A critical understanding of the concept of regionalism.
3. An understanding of regional political and planning processes.
4. An appreciation of the impact of location on economic standards of living, social structure, sense of community, environmental quality, political processes and cultural experience.
5. A critical understanding of relevant legislative and policy contexts.

Course Content
1. Regionalism;
2. Ecologically sustainable development;
3. Planning structures and processes;
4. Relevant legislative and policy frameworks;
5. Social capital and citizen participation;
6. Relevance to social and community sector work.

Assessment Items

| Essays / Written Assignments | Essay 1; 1500 words; 40%.
|---|---
| Essays / Written Assignments | Essay 2; 1500 – 2,000 words; 60%.
| Other: (please specify) | In addition students will be required to successfully participate in group tasks and will be given advice and assistance to meet the criteria for these tasks as published in the course outline.

Assumed Knowledge
A knowledge base developed in SPSW1001 Australian Welfare Policy (formerly SPSW1010) and SPSW2110 Community Processes and Social change (formerly SPSW2010), SWRK1001 Introduction to Social Work (formerly SWRK1010) and SWRK2001 Social Work Theory and Practice 1 (formerly SWRK2100) or equivalent courses.

Callaghan Campus Timetable
SPSW3070
REGIONAL SOCIAL POLICY AND PLANNING
Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science
Semester 1 – 2006
Fieldwork
Fridays
13:00 - 16:00
Field Trips - Dates & times to be Advised.
and Tutorial
Wednesday
13:00 - 16:00
HA58
Weeks 1-7 Only.
Plus On-line Component.

Plagiarism
University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. A student plagiarises if he or she presents the thoughts or works of another as one’s own. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:
- copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;
- using another's ideas without due acknowledgment;
- working with others without permission and presenting the resulting work as though it was completed independently.

Plagiarism is not only related to written works, but also to material such as data, images, music, formulae, websites and computer programs. Aiding another student to plagiarise is also a violation of the Plagiarism Policy and may invoke a penalty.

For further information on the University policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Policy on Student Academic Integrity at the following link - http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/academic_integrity_policy_new.pdf

The University has established a software plagiarism detection system called Turnitin. When you submit assessment items please be aware that for the purpose of assessing any assessment item the University may -
- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or
- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking).
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

**Written Assessment Items**

Students may be required to provide written assessment items in electronic form as well as hard copy.

**Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations**

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date, as advised in the Course Outline, unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension of time for submission of the item. University policy is that an assessment item submitted after the due date, without an approved extension, will be penalised.

Any student:

1. who is applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment: or

2. whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment;

must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, to the appropriate officer on the prescribed form.

Please go to the Policy and the on-line form for further information, particulary for information on the options available to you, at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/adm_prog/adverse_circumstances.pdf
Changing your Enrolment

The last date to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (called the HECS Census Date) is:

For semester 1 courses: **31 March 2006**

Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of semester and prior to the commencement of the formal exam period. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of semester will result in a fail grade.

Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of semester/trimester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of semester/trimester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with the School Office.

To change your enrolment online, please refer to [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/changingenrolment.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/changingenrolment.html)

Contact Details

**Faculty Student Service Office**

The Faculty of Education and Arts

Room: GP1-22 (General Purpose Building)

Phone: 0249 215 314

**The Dean of Students**

Dr Jennifer Archer

Phone: 492 15806    Fax: 492 17151

resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

Various services are offered by the University Student Support Unit: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/studentsupport/index.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/studentsupport/index.html)

Alteration of this Course Outline

No change to this course outline will be permitted after the end of the second week of the term except in exceptional circumstances and with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of any approved changes to this outline.

**Web Address for Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards**
STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS

The University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness.

If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies, please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator.

Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register please contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 49 21 5766, or via email at:

student-disability@newcastle.edu.au

As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester.

For more information related to confidentiality and documentation please visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website at:

www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability

ASSESSMENT TASKS

There are 2 ungraded (pass / fail) group assessment tasks for this course and 2 graded individual assessment tasks.

Ungraded Assessment Tasks

1. **State of the Environment Report on an aspect of Sustainability (ESD)**
   (Group Assignment)

Understanding sustainability and its relevance for those working in the social service sector

This assignment requires students to research a particular aspect of sustainability and demonstrate an understanding of the meaning of sustainability and its relevance to those working in the social services sector.

A quote by Eva Cox provides an insight into what is expected in terms of ‘defining sustainability. While this term should apply to a wide range of policy areas, it is too often limited by its environmental genesis and focus. If we are to use the term to frame actions that will produce futures, which do not diminish present resources and mend some of the current problems, sustainability must clearly include at its core the social relationships that govern our actions and decision-making. This approach puts the social at the centre of sustainability,….’ (Eva Cox, Social Sustainability is about People’ in *Sustainability and Social Science Round Table Proceedings* eds Helen Cheney, Evie Katz and Fiona Solomon, Institute for Sustainable Futures Sydney and CSIRO Minerals Melbourne available on Blackboard.)

Students are to:

- form themselves into groups of 6-8,
- choose a topic from pollution, non-renewable natural resources, water, air, vegetation clearing, loss of community or other relevant topics. Students have
the opportunity to select an area of interest, as negotiated within the group and with the lecturer.

• prepare a 10-15min presentation on chosen topic
• presentation to include a review of the current situation and practices, highlight problematic practices, highlight future directions and possibilities, review current reporting in newspaper/radio on topic; and
• information to be presented in a format that is relevant and meaningful to fellow students.

Groups are expected to work cooperatively in deciding how to approach the task and how work will be distributed and managed between group members. Some time will be spent in the first group meeting discussing group expectations and negotiating a group contract. Group members are to take responsibility for developing strategies for managing group processes and addressing any conflict that may arise in the group. The lecturer will be available as a resource to groups during class times and by appointment outside of class times to discuss any concerns in relation to the content or processes entailed in the group task.

Value: The group task will be graded as satisfactory or unsatisfactory, based on the assessment criteria listed below. All group members will obtain the same result, unless a case is made to the lecturer or course coordinator to exclude one or more group members from the final result. Such cases will be reviewed by the course coordinator in consultation with the Social Work Discipline Convenor. Groups or individuals with an unsatisfactory grade will be required to submit additional work to a satisfactory standard.

Due Date: Weekly presentations by groups nominated by Week 2
Length: 15 minute group presentation.

Criteria:
• Demonstrated research, reading and understanding of chosen aspect, integrated through report with well-presented and supported ideas and opinions;
• Explanation of the meaning of, implications and need for sustainability;
• Appreciation of the current opportunities and problems;
• Appreciation of future directions and possibilities; and
• Discussion of the implications for those working in the social services sector.

Groups will be given written feedback in relation to each of these assessment criteria.

2. Follow-up paper on relevance of sustainability for those working in the social service sector

This task provides students with the opportunity to obtain individual feedback in relation to their learning from the group task. Based on what you have learnt from your group assignment, each student is to prepare a paper on your understanding of the relevance of sustainability to those working in the social services sector.

Value: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
Due Date: Week following group presentation
Length: two page double spaced & A4
Criteria:

- Demonstrated understanding of the relevance of sustainability to those working in the social services sector;
- Appreciation of the current opportunities and problems, future directions and possibilities; and
- Well presented and supported ideas and opinions.

Students will be given written feedback in response to each of these assessment criteria.

Graded Assessment Tasks

1. **Social Services Perspective Opinion Piece (40%) (Individual Assignment)**

**Achieving Social Outcomes through the draft Lower Hunter Regional Strategy (copy on Blackboard)**

The Lower Hunter Regional Strategy is developing a blue-print to guide development and is impacts in the Lower Hunter Region (Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Port Stephens, Maitland and Cessnock) for the next 25 years. The Strategy aims to balance good environmental, transport, infrastructure and community outcomes with this projected growth. Regional difference and Social Outcomes need to be considered along with development outcomes.

Write an opinion piece for the NCOSS news that critiques the Strategy against desirable Social Outcomes. The purpose of this critique is to outline how the structure and content of the draft Lower Hunter Regional Strategy supports regional difference and deals with the delivery of social services.

Your critique needs to tease out the strengths and weaknesses of the Strategy, highlight inequities and to suggest ways to strengthen the Strategy. Comment is particularly required on regional difference, sustainability (ESD) and social planning.

Your review needs to consider regional requirements and implications, environmental impacts and the achievement of sustainable development, social policy and planning outcomes.

**Value:** 40%

**Due Date:** Monday 10th April

**Length:** 1500 words, double spaced & A4

**Criteria:**

- Demonstrated understanding and analysis of the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy including Social Outcomes analysis;
- Demonstrated understanding of regional difference, sustainability (ESD) and regional social planning needs and delivery;
- Demonstrated reading and research integrated into opinion piece with well-presented and supported opinions, and accurate referencing;
- Reference to speakers and field trip; and
- Discussion of the implications for those working in the social services sector.

2. **Background Paper for future Policy Review**

Your Minister/Department is required to review its social policies. The first step in this process is to prepare a background paper that will form the basis for round table, multi-disciplinary discussion about any changes that need to be made and provide
ideas about new practices that could be implemented to improve service delivery.

Choose one relevant social planning issue such as housing, health, aged care, education, transport, etc and prepare a background paper. This paper must include a detailed understanding and appreciation of the chosen issue, identify the current opportunities and problems and identify the political, legislative and community forces impacting on this area that will need to be considered in the future policy review. You are required to discuss the channels (local/regional/state) through which identified needs could be best met and make recommendations about current shortcomings and future possibilities. A comment on how the draft Lower Hunter Regional Strategy addresses this issue should also be included.

The paper must include a discussion of the impacts of regional difference and local factors and an appreciation of relevant statistics and trends.

Value: 60%
Due Date: Friday 9 June 2006 (Week 14)
Length: 1,500 - 2,000 words, double spaced & A4
Criteria:

- Demonstrated reading and research integrated into paper with well-presented and supported opinions, and accurate referencing.
- Demonstrated understanding of the current issues and practices in relation to the chosen issue.
- Demonstrated understanding of opportunities and problems relating to this issue.
- Appreciation of the role of regional policy and legislation in relation to this issue.
- Appreciation of past and current trends and best practice regarding the chosen issue including relevant statistics.
- Comment on the draft Lower Hunter Regional Strategy.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT PRESENTATION AND SUBMISSION DETAILS
Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

Hard copy submission:
- **Type your assignments:** All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 or double spacing, and include page numbers.
- **Word length:** The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.
- **Proof read your work** because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
- **Staple the pages** of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).
- **University coversheet:** All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet: [www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/assess_coversheet.pdf](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/assess_coversheet.pdf)
- **Assignments are to be deposited in the relevant discipline assignment box:**
  - Callaghan students: School of Humanities and Social Science Office, Level 1, McMullin Building, MC127
- **Do not fax or email assignments:** Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment. Inability to physically submit a hard copy of an assignment by the deadline due to other commitments or distance from campus is an unacceptable excuse. Assignments mailed to Schools are accepted from the date posted.
Keep a copy of all assignments: All assignments are date-stamped upon receipt. However, it is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in hard copy and on disk.

Online copy submission to Turnitin
In addition to hard copy submission, students are required to submit an electronic version of the following assignments to Turnitin via the course Blackboard website:

Essay 1: 1500 words; 40%. (Due: Monday 10th April 2006)

Essay 2: 1,500 -2,000 words; 60%. (Due: Fri 9th June 2006)

Prior to final submission, all students have the opportunity to submit one draft of their assignment to Turnitin to self-check their referencing.

Assignments will not be marked until both hard copy and online versions have been submitted. Marks may be deducted for late submission of either version.

Penalties for Late Assignments
Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted more than ten days after the due date will be awarded zero marks.

Special Consideration/Extension of Time Applications
Students wishing to apply for Special Consideration or Extension of Time should obtain the appropriate form from the Student HUB at GP1-22 or online at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/adverseforma.pdf

No Assignment Re-submission
Students who have failed an assignment are not permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. However, students are always welcome to contact their Tutor, Lecturer or Course Coordinator to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.

Remarks
Students can request to have their work re-marked by the Course Coordinator or Discipline Convenor (or their delegate); three outcomes are possible: the same grade, a lower grade, or a higher grade being awarded. Students may also appeal against their final result for a course. Please consult the University policy at: www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/adm_prog/procedures_appeals_finalresult.pdf

Return of Assignments
Where possible, assignments will be marked within 3 weeks and returned to students in class. At the end of semester, students can collect assignments from the Student HUB at GP1-22.

Preferred Referencing Style
In this course, it is recommended that you use the use the Harvard in-text referencing system (similar to the APA system) for referencing sources of information.
used in assignments. Inadequate or incorrect reference to the work of others may be viewed as plagiarism and result in reduced marks or failure.

An in-text citation names the author of the source, gives the date of publication, and for a direct quote includes a page number, in parentheses. At the end of the paper, a list of references provides publication information about the source; the list is alphabetised by authors’ last names (or by titles for works without authors). Further information on referencing and general study skills can be obtained from:

**Infoskills:**  

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<th>Grading guide</th>
<th>Fail (FF)</th>
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<th>Credit (C)</th>
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<th>High Distinction (HD)</th>
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<tr>
<td>49% or less</td>
<td>An unacceptable effort, including non-completion. The student has not understood the basic principles of the subject matter and/or has been unable to express their understanding in a comprehensible way. Deficient in terms of answering the question, research, referencing and correct presentation (spelling, grammar etc). May include extensive plagiarism.</td>
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<td>50% to 64%</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a reasonable attempt to answer the question, shows some grasp of the basic principles of the subject matter and a basic knowledge of the required readings, is comprehensible, accurate and adequately referenced.</td>
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<td>65% to 74%</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question, a capacity to integrate research into the discussion, and a critical appreciation of a range of different theoretical perspectives. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought. The work is coherent and accurate.</td>
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<td>75% to 84%</td>
<td>Evidence of substantial additional reading and/or research, and evidence of the ability to generalise from the theoretical content to develop an argument in an informed and original manner. The work is well organised, clearly expressed and shows a capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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<td>85% upwards</td>
<td>All of the above, plus a thorough understanding of the subject matter based on substantial additional reading and/or research. The work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion of the topic, particularly the theoretical issues involved, and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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**Student Representatives**

We are very interested in your feedback and suggestions for improvement. Student Representatives are the channel of communication between students and the School Board. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on the School website.

**STUDENT MAIL AND BLACKBOARD**  
[www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/](http://www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/)

This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis. Students are expected to make use of the discussion board on the Blackboard site in preparing for the group task and for discussion on course issues.

**Student Communication**

Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

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School of Humanities and Social Science
**Essential Online Information for Students**
Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services can be found at:


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<th>Week</th>
<th>Week beginning</th>
<th>Lecture Topic &amp; Assessment at a Glance</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>February 22</td>
<td>Introduction to Regional Social Policy &amp; Planning</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>Regions Video Broken Dreams Macquarie Fields Group Sustainability Topic</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>March 8</td>
<td>Social Planning Guest Speaker – Asha Ramsan NCOSS Group Sustainability Topic</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>Planning Local, Regional State opportunities to assist and hinder Guest Speaker DoP David Bonger DVD End of Suburbia Group Sustainability Topic</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>March 22</td>
<td>Community Development Guest Speaker Mayfield community development officer Group Sustainability Topic</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thursday March 23</td>
<td>FIELD TRIP : Wyong Council Warnervale/Wadalba</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>March 29</td>
<td>Social Capital, Politics &amp; Participation Guest Speaker Group Sustainability Topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>April 5</td>
<td>Triple Bottom Line - Economic Environment Social Video Search for a Supermodel Group Sustainability Topic</td>
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</table>

**Mid-Semester Recess: Friday 14 April - Friday 28 April**

| 9    | May 3         | Blackboard Discussion |
| 10   | May 10        | Blackboard Discussion |
| 11   | May 17        | Blackboard Discussion |
| 12   | May 24        | Blackboard Discussion |
| 13   | May 30        | Blackboard Discussion |
| 14   | June 7        | Blackboard Discussion |

Queen’s Birthday Public Holiday: Monday 12 June
Examination period: Tuesday 13 June - Friday 30 June
REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Required weekly reading and other resource material will be placed on Blackboard.

Essential reading (available in short loans)

Additional Resources:
Engwicht, D (1996) Towards an Eco-city Calming the Traffic Envirobook
Hunter Regional Development Organisation HEDC Newcastle Reports
Hunter Valley Research Foundation Hunter Region Economics Indicators (Quarterly) HVRF

Newcastle City Council (2000) *Indicators of a Sustainable Community* The Australia Institute and Newcastle City Council  


**Useful Websites**

**Lower Hunter Regional Strategy**  

**Australian Council of Social Service**  

**Australia Institute**  
[www.tai.org.au](http://www.tai.org.au)

**Community Builders NSW - Project of the NSW Government**  

**Department of Urban Affairs and Planning**  

**Hunter Region Organisation of Councils**  
Newcastle Social Plan on this site

**Local Governments for Sustainability**  
[www.iclei.org](http://www.iclei.org)

**Jesuit report on disadvantaged suburbs by post code**  
[www.jss.org.au](http://www.jss.org.au)

**Planning Institute of Australia Social Planning Chapter**  

**Social Research Murray Catchment**  
'Blueprint for a Living Continent. A way forward from the Wentworth Group of concerned scientists.'

www.westpac.com.au social impact report

www.aaas.org/international/atlas/index2.html analysis of relationship between human population and the environment

www.tblaustralia.net/ triple bottom line conference

www.climatecam.com NCC ClimateCam

www.ipan.nsw.gov.au/engagement (reference to regional strategies under PlanFirst are no longer relevant)

www.metrostrategy.nsw.gov.au update
www.dipnr.nsw.gov.au
then go to infrastructure link and find transport and Population Data Centre under ‘Programs and Services’ for population projections available for regions.

Videos
Regional Planning and Sense of Place
Rebuilding Communities 307.34162089 REBU
Lost in the Suburbs 307.74 LOST
Lost in Space 307.760994 LOST
In Search of Identity 307.7640954 INSE
Urban Living – The influence of Place on Behaviour 307.76 URBA
Ocean Views

Sustainability
No Forest No Future 307.14 NOFO
Search for a Supermodel 3333.70994SEAR
Sold Down the River