‘A vital necessity’? Town planning in Launceston 1915-1930

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Abstract

By the early twentieth century Launceston had earned a reputation as one of the most progressive cities in Australia and leader in the provision of municipal services. But by 1914, despite its beautiful parks and natural surroundings, many citizens perceived that it lagged behind in town planning. Town planning was regarded as ‘a vital necessity’ as Launceston was becoming a growing industrial centre and port, the population was increasing and the city was expanding. The 1915-16 lectures by British town planning advocate Charles C. Reade stimulated much interest in town planning and for the next fifteen years town planning developments in Australia and abroad were widely discussed. Bodies such as the Northern Tasmanian Town Planning Association and the Launceston Fifty Thousand League, leading architects and the city newspapers urged the City Council to improve eyesores such as insanitary housing and swamps, to beautify existing parks and to plan for future growth. The provision of parks and reserves in the growing suburbs, the subdivision of suburban estates along town planning lines, wider streets and a Town Planning Act were also common demands. Private enterprise cashed in on the interest in town planning by advertising their estates as garden suburbs or providing housing for workers. This paper examines what was achieved in Launceston by 1930 after a major flood and the onset of economic depression distracted attention from town planning.

Introduction

In 1902 the Town Clerk of Adelaide, Torrington George Ellery, surveyed Australian local government for the New York journal Municipal Affairs and asserted that Launceston, the second largest city in Tasmania and the island’s commercial capital, was ‘far in advance of most Australian cities in the development of municipal functions’.1 The Launceston City Council managed its sewerage, water, and electric light works, built a large public hall, opened a museum and art gallery, ran swimming, plunge and Turkish baths, maintained streets, parks and recreation grounds and managed an abattoir. It provided a provident fund for its employees. Until 1899 it controlled its own police force. Even overseas visitors commented on Launceston’s progressiveness. In March 1898 English trade unionist and Fabian Socialist alderman on the London County Council, Ben Tillett, called Launceston ‘a veritable heaven’ for a municipal
reformer and lamented that ‘other colonial cities were not so advanced’ in utilizing ‘natural resources’ to further ‘the material prosperity’ of its residents.²

Although Launceston was a leader in the provision of municipal services, the city council had been less willing to adopt town planning principles by 1914. One area that stood out was the provision of parks in the inner city, which were widely praised for their beauty and health giving qualities.³ The parks included City Park, Prince’s Square, Victoria Square, and Albert Square as well as the Cataract and Cliff Grounds with its picturesque bush setting and in 1912 began developing what became Royal Park. But in other areas, notably dealing with dilapidated housing and providing a noxious trades area, the city council lagged behind.⁴ Although the city’s leading newspaper the Examiner and, to a lesser extent, its rival the Daily Telegraph were favourably disposed towards town planning ideas, aldermen did not discuss town planning before 1914.⁵

Interest in town planning was stimulated in 1915-16 by the visit of Charles C. Reade, who represented the British Garden Cities and Town Planning Association on an Australasian town planning tour.⁶ Reade’s lectures attracted large audiences in Launceston and were fully reported in the local press. For the next fifteen years different town planning ideas and their applicability to Launceston were discussed in various quarters: city-wide and suburban associations, boosters wanting to develop the city, the city council, the press, individual architects and developers of estates all referred to the necessity of town planning for Launceston as industry and the port developed and as the population grew.⁷ Town planning would ensure that improvement schemes would correct the defects of the past, that in future the mistakes of the past would be avoided and that new residential areas would be allocated land for parks and recreation areas, thus retaining Launceston’s reputation as a garden city.⁸ This paper provides an overview of what was discussed and achieved in Launceston by 1930 when a serious flood followed by economic depression distracted attention from town planning. Much early twentieth century Australian planning history focuses on capital cities and this paper moves away from metropolitan centres to examine the impact of planning ideas on a leading regional city.⁹

In Australia capital cities have been by far the largest urban entities, but this was not the case in Tasmania.¹⁰ Launceston was the only ‘second’ city of any Australian State to rival its capital Hobart in size and importance. By 1914 the population of Launceston and surrounding suburbs was 24,678, while the population of Hobart and its suburbs was 39,914.¹¹ First settled at the confluence of the Tamar, North and South Esk Rivers in 1806, Launceston became the dominant town in northern Tasmania in 1824. The establishment of Australia’s first Chamber of Commerce in 1849 signalled Launceston’s emergence as the commercial capital, if not the actual capital, of Tasmania and this was reinforced when Launceston’s geographical position enabled it to benefit
economically from the growth of mining from the 1870s. In the 1880s Launceston further benefited from railway construction and manufacturing flourished. Possibly due to Nonconformist influences and its isolation from the political capital, Launceston was an independent and assertive city, proud of its willingness to adopt progressive causes and to be forward thinking. This characteristic was evident in March 1913 when ratepayers overwhelmingly supported the Hunter report on major port extensions and were ‘seized with a vision of a pulsating, prosperous port’. Would town planning capture the public imagination?

Planning During World War One

One of the most committed advocates of town planning in Launceston was Harold Masters, the northern secretary of the Tasmanian Institute of Architects, and he hoped that Reade’s visit would lead to the formation of a town planning association as occurred in Hobart. The Examiner thought that past mistakes, such as running streets up Cataract Hill on ‘impossible gradients’ and failing to build the suburb of Inveresk on land ‘raised well above the flood level’, would have been averted if town planning legislation had been passed. Noting that action was required before land values increased, the Examiner advocated wider thoroughfares, more space around dwellings, the end of terrace houses and more provision for parks in outlying suburbs. The Examiner also hoped that Reade’s lectures would result in the formation of a citizens’ body to agitate for Tasmanian legislation based on the British Town Planning and Housing Act 1909 and to ensure that aldermen enforced the Act. Launceston should follow the example set by the garden suburbs of Letchworth and Hampstead and ensure city development and improvement occurred along ‘properly-organised and scientific lines’.

On 19 April 1915 Reade lectured on British garden cities to a large and representative audience at the Mechanics’ Institute. He impressed with his ‘great wealth of knowledge’ and ‘some remarkably striking lantern slides’. Reade suggested that Launceston aldermen obtain a contour survey, which would be of ‘incalculable value’ to the city engineer for road construction and sewerage. Aldermen should also obtain town planning legislation and develop a plan of what Launceston would be in forty years, insisting that ‘new development should proceed in conformity with the plan’. He suggested that a drive be built along the river bank to connect with the Cataract Gorge, which was ‘unquestionably one of the finest things he had seen in Australia’. He warned against allowing any encroachments on city reserves such as Royal Park and favoured creating gardens on reclaimed land between the old municipal baths site and Royal Park. As for the proposed scheme of harbour improvements, he suggested that reclaimed land at Stephenson’s Bend be turned into ‘a large park, with lakes’, and not be ‘devoted entirely to building areas’. When Launceston received its much-needed modern railway accommodation, Reade hoped that the buildings ‘would be set well back, with plenty of open spaces and wide approaches’.
proposed an independent and representative town planning board to plan for ‘the future development, amenity and improvement of the city and suburbs, irrespective of present administrative boundaries’ and to enforce ‘comprehensive’ town planning legislation dealing with street construction, building lines, the number of buildings per acre, special districts for factories and the provision of parks, open spaces and green belts. He also wanted government to build a model garden suburb and reduce fares on trains and trams so workers could travel from the garden suburb to the city.

Reade’s lecture generated much excitement. The *Examiner* thought the lecture showed that town planning was ‘no mere fad or crank movement’, but was ‘a business proposition’, saving councils and ratepayers ‘considerable sums of money’.18 In May the Trevallyn Improvement Association was formed with the aim of ensuring that new areas and subdivisions were surveyed ‘on garden suburb lines’, limiting the number of buildings per acre and generally maintaining the beauty of the suburb adjoining Cataract Gorge.19 At Reade’s lecture Harold Masters successfully moved for the formation of the Northern Tasmanian Town Planning Association (NTTPA) and it combined with the Launceston City Council to invite Reade to lecture again in Launceston in February 1916.20 His first lecture was on modern town planning principles as applied in Britain and Europe.21 His second lecture was on how to make Launceston a garden city, which in nearly two hours traversed much of the ground covered in 1915.22 Reade again excited much enthusiasm, but enthusiasm waned after his departure, despite the formation of the NTTPA.

The NTTPA provisional committee represented members of the public, government and institutions ‘likely to be most interested’ in town planning.23 The City Council and architects were prominent. Masters obtained ‘considerable information’ from mainland associations to develop the NTTPA’s objectives, which mirrored those of the Town Planning Association of New South Wales. These included promoting town planning ‘on the principles enunciated by recognized authorities’ to regulate ‘badly arranged sections of older cities and towns’, ‘suburban development of cities and towns’ and ‘new garden cities, towns and settlement areas’.24 A second set of objectives concerned improving ‘civic architecture, planning of streets and other highways’, ‘housing, sanitation and other services’ and the ‘environment of residential and manufacturing areas’. The association would ‘collect and disseminate’ information on these subjects and educate the public by lectures, reports and exhibitions. Finally, the association sought to urge ‘effective administration under existing powers’ and to obtain new legislation where necessary to achieve its objectives. The Mayor was ex officio president of the association.

This was an impressive list of objectives, but it appears that the NTTPA rarely met. In March 1917 it held a meeting to welcome ‘the “father of town planning”’ in Australia, John Sulman, who was
visiting Launceston.\textsuperscript{25} Sulman’s health was indifferent and he was not able to give a public lecture, but he told the \textit{Examiner} that Launceston had many attractions, especially its parks and reserves, and had reached an optimum population of 30,000, which town planners considered ‘sufficient for a self-contained city’.\textsuperscript{26} Hydro-electric power would ensure that Tasmania became ‘one of the most important manufacturing centres in the Southern Hemisphere’ and Launceston would grow rapidly. If Launceston did not adopt town planning immediately, it would ‘reproduce all the evils so apparent in industrial centres’ like Sydney and Melbourne. Sulman proposed ‘a belt of land’ of a quarter of a mile wide around the city that would be free of buildings. This would increase the value of land on either side of the belt and improve ‘health and pleasure’. Sulman’s encouragement had little effect on the NTTPA, which seemed disillusioned that Reade’s Town Planning Bill had not been introduced into parliament.\textsuperscript{27} The NTTPA played no part in public life after 1917 and aldermen lacked ‘the gift of vision and idealism’ to plan for the post-war future.\textsuperscript{28} As Masters was a ‘very restless’ man, he might have lost interest in town planning, especially as his architectural practice was ‘seriously disrupted’ by the war and little money was spent on new buildings.\textsuperscript{29} Without strong leadership, the town planning movement foundered.

Moreover, other agendas diverted attention from town planning. In February 1916 influential citizens initiated a movement to make Launceston the capital of Tasmania, but the cost stymied that proposal.\textsuperscript{30} This was followed in July 1916 with the emergence of the Northern Tasmanian League to seek a ‘fair share of State enterprise and expenditure’ for all areas north of the 42nd parallel of latitude.\textsuperscript{31} Its motto was ‘Advance Northern Tasmania’ and its concerns were tourism, railways, an improved mail service and the extension of hydro-electric schemes but not town planning. The Northern Tasmanian League also petered out. The temporary nature of these movements raised the possibility that, during the war at least, Launceston had ‘lost its vitality’ and lacked citizens with ‘a spirit of aggressiveness’, who were willing to make ‘bold bids in the direction of progress’ for ‘the common good’.\textsuperscript{32} If true, this might explain why town planning was not taken up with gusto.

**Planning in Post-World War One Launceston**

In 1920 the \textit{Examiner} renewed its agitation for town planning. In May it published two articles by H.D. Flannagan, a former member of the Southern Tasmanian Town Planning Association, who had been transferred in his job to Launceston. Flannagan argued that town planning would only be a key to post-war reconstruction if a ‘numerous and determined body of citizens with continuity of purpose’ exerted ‘every force possible’ on government.\textsuperscript{33} In 1921 the \textit{Examiner} bemoaned the absence of ‘a live town planning, improvement or progressive association’ in Launceston to agitate for town planning and follow the examples of American cities by boosting the interests of the city.\textsuperscript{34}
Although the NTTPA was not revived in the 1920s, the formation of a number of public bodies showed that a vigorous public spirit had not died. In 1922 the Launceston Progress Association was formed to make Launceston more attractive for tourists and advertise the tourist attractions of northern Tasmania. It sought to ensure that, as Launceston grew in size, it remained ‘a clean and healthy city’. More long-lasting were the progress associations formed to improve different parts of Launceston because of perceived neglect by municipal government: the West Launceston Progress Association and South Launceston Progress Association were formed in 1924. Rotary was established in 1924 to work for ‘civic progress and peace’. The most prominent civic body was the Launceston Fifty Thousand League, formed in 1926 to increase Launceston’s population to 50,000. It took up issues such as attracting more tourists, immigrants and industries and helping the city council make Launceston ‘more attractive and beautiful’. Of all the civic-minded bodies, the Fifty Thousand League took a consistently city-wide approach and showed most interest in town planning.

In 1922 the Examiner suggested that interest in town planning had lapsed because of ‘a disposition to let the future look after itself’. This judgment was too pessimistic because in the 1920s town planning ideas and initiatives were more prominent in Launceston than ever before in the city’s history. Perhaps the most prominent spokesman for ‘a holistic approach’ to town planning was the architect and a founding member of the NTTPA F.J. Heyward. In August 1921 Heyward was an alderman and he urged his colleagues to consider ‘the future development’ of Launceston on ‘modern lines’. Businesses were being attracted to Launceston and they must move before the city was ‘ringed with factories’. The city council needed ‘a clearly defined policy for the development of the city’, making provision for ‘open spaces, the direction in which the city should extend, noxious trade areas, [and] ordinary factories’.

Perhaps because his ideas on town planning alienated powerful property interests, Heyward failed to gain re-election to the city council in 1922. But to his credit Heyward did not wane in his commitment and regularly gave talks and wrote articles on the benefits of town planning. In June 1927 Heyward argued that town planning would ensure ‘the growth and development of physically and mentally sound citizens’ and ‘make both business and private life happier and easier’. Town planning restricted ‘the liberty of the individual in order to give the mass greater freedom’. Individuals would not be allowed to cut up an estate into ‘pocket handkerchief’ blocks, forming streets running regardless of grades and ending in dead ends. Heyward found it hard to explain why Launceston experienced ‘many temporary flushes of interest’ in town planning, but could not sustain that interest to achieve practical outcomes. He urged citizens ‘to band together for some concerted effort in the interests of the generations to follow’.

Heyward noted
Launceston’s transition from ‘a market town, residential area and port’ to an industrial centre and pushed the idea of zoning land specifically for factories and industries on flat land near the rail service and with water frontage or wharves.\(^{46}\)

Heyward was not alone in putting much faith in new town planning legislation to empower Launceston to plan before cheap electrical power transformed it into an industrial centre.\(^{47}\) In 1923 the Mayor George Shields pinned hopes on a town planning bill drafted by Nationalist MP J.C. McPhee being passed, but, despite McPhee’s strenuous efforts, it failed to get support in Parliament.\(^{48}\) In 1925 Heyward told members of the northern branch of the Royal Society of Tasmania that it was useless to start town planning until they had up-to-date legislation, but politicians lacked the will to tackle such a difficult and contentious subject.\(^{49}\) Town planning legislation remained an unfulfilled desideratum at the end of the 1920s.\(^{50}\)

The need for town planning was also connected with the emergence of a Greater Launceston movement. As the municipality embraced a mere 3,900 acres, more land was needed to allow for port and city development while retaining the city’s ‘existing pleasant and healthful residential features’.\(^{51}\) For the *Daily Telegraph*, an obvious solution was to amalgamate with adjoining areas. Once the area for expansion was determined, the old and new areas should be included in ‘a comprehensive plan’ that would ensure orderly ‘industrial and business growth’, new recreational areas and water, light, power and tramway services. The Launceston City Council should abandon its past policy of ‘piecemeal changes and experiments’ and take up a Greater Launceston with ‘the necessary breadth of view and enterprise’ with adjoining municipalities. As areas outside the municipality like Kings Meadows, Lawrence Vale and Franklin Village already received city council water, tram and light services, there was ‘a considerable community of interest’, which all will find ‘advantageous to increase and strengthen’.\(^{52}\) The Launceston Progress Association supported a Greater Launceston.\(^{53}\) Some amalgamation did occur in the 1920s. After a petition by two-thirds of the residents, Mowbray and part of Invermay within the St. Leonards municipality were taken over by the Launceston City Council in 1925.\(^{54}\) But amalgamation was piecemeal, generated by disgruntled residents, and not part of an overall plan.

**Housing**

More attention was directed at dealing with insanitary housing, meeting the demand for more houses and creating garden suburbs. As noted earlier, the city council had failed to deal effectively with insanitary housing before the war, but the situation had worsened since 1914 and needed urgent action. In December 1918 the *Examiner* noted the development of slums and overcrowding and blamed ‘the grasping land or property owner’, who was ‘content to draw his income from insanitary and crowded dwellings, and the jerry-builder who builds houses to sell, and not to live
Launceston had abundant land, but needed legislation to fix the minimum area on which a house should be built and to ensure that new homes were ‘constructed according to hygienic rules’.

In 1919 the city council identified fifty houses unfit for human habitation and ordered the demolition of twenty and the repair of the rest. Aldermen did not order demolition of the other thirty because an acute shortage of workmen’s dwellings in Launceston would have left the tenants homeless. Alderman David Storrer pointed out that the council owned land suitable for workmen’s cottages and persuaded the council to investigate the possibilities. The proposal was helped by the Municipal Homes Act 1919, which allowed the council to borrow money to build homes for ‘necessitous people’. Ultimately, the city council concluded that municipal homes would be a risky investment at a time when materials and labour were either too costly or scarce and declined to build them.

Two other solutions were suggested as ways of improving housing conditions. One was changing the rating system. The assessment on the value of property taxed improvements and discouraged property owners from repairing their properties and developing their land. In 1919 Alderman J.F. Ockerby thought the introduction of an unimproved value rating system would encourage building improvements because property owners would be taxed more heavily if they did not improve their properties. The Examiner supported the change, but the Daily Telegraph opposed it. In 1920 aldermen decided against proceeding with a contentious issue that divided the city. Further investigations revealed that, under the proposed change, property owners would be encouraged to huddle houses together on ‘little blocks’ and thus create slums, which the city council was trying to remove.

The other solution was to strengthen the Launceston Building Act 1894. The city council discovered that many of the repairs it had ordered did little to improve sanitation or the owner could not afford the cost of repairs. Aldermen realized that prevention was better than the cure and that the Launceston Building Act needed revision to prevent the creation of new slum areas. A prime mover was Alderman F.J. Heyward. In August 1921 Heyward wanted a committee appointed to amend the Building Act, which was twenty-five years ‘behind the times’. The Examiner supported revision because Launceston should not be allowed to continue in ‘the same haphazard style’ and it was ‘absolutely essential’ to obtain modern building laws to regulate future expansion.

The Building Bill drafted by the committee was not as comprehensive as Heyward wished, but it strengthened the council’s powers over building and was supported by aldermen. The proposed
bill removed defects in existing legislation and empowered the council to specify areas where certain buildings could be allowed. The council would be able to regulate ‘the methods of construction and the minimum size of building lots’. Building plans had to be submitted to the city council to ensure that the building conformed to the provisions of the new legislation. The *Examiner* was confident that the council’s new powers would stop slum areas developing in the future, but soon condemned the council for not using its ‘vast’ new powers or passing by-laws ‘to declare zones and specify the class of building allowable in each zone’.69

In 1925 Mayor Osborne announced the council’s intention ‘gradually’ to deal with ‘every property that was a menace to the health of the people’. Seeking to ‘eradicate or minimize’ the spread of the ‘dreaded disease’ consumption, the new Health Officer Dr. Pardey headed ‘a crusade against dilapidated and insanitary houses’, many located on valuable land in the city centre. As the post-war housing shortage was easing, Pardey wanted to raise ‘the average of city housing’ and reflected community expectations, as expressed by Workers’ Educational Association lecturer, William Judd. In September 1927 Judd praised Pardey for ‘fearlessly’ doing his duty in condemning houses unfit for habitation, but warned that his campaign would not destroy ‘the slum spirit’, as displaced tenants would move to equally insanitary housing elsewhere. As industry grew and population increased, they needed to plan for the building of decent homes for workers and their families who moved to Launceston. Cheaper transport to outer suburbs, new houses built by the State and municipal governments and unimproved rating of city property were some measures that Judd suggested would improve housing conditions. Legislation to remove insanitary dwellings needed to be reinforced by ‘arousing an implacable hostility in the mass of people against all enemies of the people’ who housed mothers and children ‘in conditions, where the decencies of life could not be observed’.

The floods of April 1929 badly affected the poor living in low-lying areas such as Invermey and Inveresk: in all 1,073 dwellings were inundated and about 3,000 people were rendered homeless. Some aldermen attacked Pardey for condemning twenty houses, but flood damage made them uninhabitable and the occupants’ health was at risk; many other houses remained empty from choice. Although many houses had been repaired, between 1918/19 and 1929/30 the city council demolished only 57 (43 of those while Pardey was Health Officer). The *Examiner* praised Pardey for effecting improvement on ‘gradual, persistent lines’ rather than taking ‘drastic’ action, which in the circumstances would have been ‘unwise’. The only way to avoid ‘unpleasant’ duties like condemning houses was, argued the *Examiner*, not ‘to tax and discourage improvement’, but that argument had been lost. Fortunately, tenants from condemned houses had accommodation to move into.
Some new developments eased the housing shortage. In 1920 the War Service Homes Commission bought land at South Launceston, Cataract Hill and Mowbray on which to build 250 homes for returned soldiers. But Legislative Councillor J.W. Cheek claimed they created ‘a new slum area’ by not allowing sufficient space around each house. In 1923 the city council sold the ten-acre Glen Dhu reserve to the English-based woollen spinning firm Patons and Baldwins, which planned to build forty cottages for its workers. Eight cottages, ‘most conveniently designed and mostly of five rooms’, were built for married workers transferred from England. New sub-divisions, such as Mowbray Heights at Newnham and the large Elphin Rise Estate at Newstead, were designed as garden suburbs.

Parks and Reserves
Launcestonians were rightly proud of their many parks perfected by the Superintendent of Reserves William McGowan from his appointment in 1882, but after the war, as population and building expanded, the neglect of parks and reserves in new suburbs caused concern that residents would not share the benefits enjoyed by older suburbs. While most citizens accepted that the city needed industry, they wanted Launceston to remain ‘a garden city’. In 1925 the Examiner estimated that Launceston had ‘less open spaces than when it had only half the population’. The city council received assistance from two citizens. One was a 1918 bequest from John Hart of £10,000 to be applied first to maintaining his grave at Carr Villa cemetery and the residue to ‘beautifying and improving’ the city. The other came from Launceston-born and Paris-trained architect, Charles Edward Ritchie, who provided the city council with ‘an elaborate plan of the city and environs’ in November 1924. Details are scarce, but the Daily Telegraph called it ‘an artistically designed and executed installment of what Launceston had long needed’—‘a development scheme for working out as circumstances permit’.

In 1912 the city council had taken over the old military barracks and invalid depot and renamed it Royal Park. In three years McGowan beautified the park and turned it into ‘a handsome and creditable adornment to the city and a source of pleasure to the people’. Further development made Royal Park ‘the most picturesque and attractive reserve’ in Launceston. The foreshore remained an eyesore, but the city council did not proceed with plans drawn up by McGowan in 1918 because of the cost and a dispute with the Marine Board over land. In December 1924 the Launceston Foreshores Improvement Association was formed to beautify the foreshore. As the originator of the idea, Mayor Claude James praised this evidence of ‘civic consciousness’ to produce ‘a comprehensive plan for the lay-out and improvement of the foreshore’. Architects Frank Heyward, H.S. East and C.E. Ritchie suggested designs and the committee decided to build a boulevard 100 feet wide along the foreshore with an avenue of trees on each side, two pathways fifteen feet wide inside the trees and two roadways sixteen feet wide divided in the centre by a
rock garden and shrubbery eight feet wide. Progress was slow until money from the Hart bequest was allocated to the project and much had been accomplished by 1928. The floods of April 1929 damaged the improvements and diverted money from other park developments.

The city council made some additions in the 1920s. In 1921 York Park had been transformed from a swamp and ‘a public rubbish tip’ into ‘a well-appointed sports ground’. In 1923 the city council leased from the government over sixteen acres adjoining Glen Dhu House for a recreation reserve. But more was required and citizens combined all over Launceston to provide open spaces for recreation. The City and Suburban Improvement Association had set the precedent by making the Cataract Gorge available for public use in 1898. In 1921 the East Launceston School Parents Association bought four acres of land for a playground next to the local school and raised £2000 to convert the land. The city council assisted by supplying trees, building drainage and laying on water. In 1925 the Launceston City Council encouraged the South Launceston Progress Association to turn seventy acres of land known as the Punch Bowl into a public reserve. The Secretary of the association, B.D. Pinkard, thought the reserve’s ‘natural beauty’, with its ‘glorious panoramas, open spaces and timbered hills’ made it ‘the natural playground for people who love the freedom of the great out-of-doors’. It would stand as ‘a monument to the community spirit and patriotic citizenship of the people of Launceston’.

In Newer suburbs open spaces remained at a premium. When residents of Newstead sought twenty-two acres of Dry’s estate for a park to improve ‘health, character and efficiency’ in 1929, they highlighted John Sulman’s prescription that one-tenth of a city should be reserved for recreation and pointed out that Launceston was falling behind in the provision of parkland: Adelaide’s percentage of park land to total area was 51.5%, Melbourne’s 19.5%, and Sydney’s 15.5%, while Launceston’s was 4.5%. In November 1929 a Fifty Thousand League deputation wanted the city council to ensure parks were provided for in new estates by producing ‘a definite plan’ for those areas and for ‘future improvement’. Mayor Osborne was impressed with both proposals, but the city council took no action before 1930.

Conclusion
From 1915 to 1930 town planning ideas were discussed in various quarters in Launceston. While no city-wide plan was prepared to guide development and expansion, town planning enthusiasts, citizens’ groups and city officials did devote attention to removing unsightly and unhealthy housing, building garden suburbs, beautifying the city and adding to the number of parks and reserves. But what was achieved simply extended what had already occurred in the city from the late nineteenth-century. Experts like Frank Heyward failed to persuade the city council to accept comprehensive town planning as vital necessity for a modern city and a way to preserve
Launceston’s self-image as a garden city as the city expanded. The absence of a town planning association to shape public opinion in support of town planning and to press for legislation and more co-ordinated town planning reforms was a major retarding factor and prevented Launceston from growing in an orderly fashion. But all was not lost. After overcoming the effects of the flood and economic depression, town planning was taken up with renewed ardour by the revived NTTPA in the early 1930s and some of the initiatives proposed in the 1920s were brought to fruition.

Endnotes

2 Examiner, 5 March 1898, 11.
3 Examiner, 4 January 1923, 5.
5 Petrow, Sanatorium, 95-6.
7 Examiner, 22 September 1923, 7.
8 Launceston saw itself and was called by visitors a garden city, see Examiner, 27 October 1923, 7, 16 October 1926, 5, 25 February 1927, 4, 29 June 1927, 4.
11 Petrow, Sanatorium of the South, 27, 102.
12 Petrow, Sanatorium of the South, 85.
14 Examiner, 1 March 1915, 1.
15 Examiner, 19 April 1915, 4.
16 Examiner, 19 April 1915, 5.
17 Examiner, 20 April 1915, 3.
19 Examiner, 18 May 1915, 3.
21 Examiner, 4 February 1916, 6.
22 Examiner, 10 February 1916, 7.
24 Examiner, 18 February 1916, 3.
25 Examiner, 9 March 1917, 4.
26 Examiner, 10 March 1917, 9.
27 Examiner, 18 May 1917, 3.
28 Examiner, 15 August 1919, 4.
30 Daily Telegraph, 29 February 1916, 6, 16 March 1916, 6.
31 Daily Telegraph, 29 July 1916, 6, 1 August 1916, 6.
32 Daily Telegraph, 16 September 1919, 5.
33 Examiner, 22 May 1920, 5.
34 Examiner, 31 August 1921, 4.
35 Examiner, 22 February 1922, 6.
36 Examiner, 10 May 1923, 4.
37 Examiner, 22 February 1924, 3; Daily Telegraph, 6 June 1924, 3.
38 Examiner, 19 February 1924, 4; Daily Telegraph, 26 February 1925, 5.
40 Examiner, 22 August 1922, 4.

Daily Telegraph, 15 May 1915, 3; Examiner, 30 August 1921, 4.

For example, see his talk to the Launceston Fifty Thousand League, Examiner, 24 May 1927, 4.


Heyward lecture to the Launceston Art Society, Examiner, 2 August 1927, 7.


Examiner, 22 August 1922, 4; Daily Telegraph, 20 April 1923, 4.

Examiner, 8 October 1923, 4; Petrov, ‘Regenerating the People’, 156-8.

Examiner, 2 June 1925, 5.

Daily Telegraph, 7 September 1927, 4.

Daily Telegraph, 8 September 1920, 4.

Daily Telegraph, 5 November 1920, 2; Examiner, 29 September 1922, 4.

Daily Telegraph, 10 May 1923, 2.

Examiner, 3 December 1924, 6; the part of Trevallyn in Beaconsfield also showed interest in amalgamation, Daily Telegraph, 6 October 1925, 10.

Examiner, 28 December 1918, 4.

Daily Telegraph, 15 July 1919, 4; Examiner, 23 September 1919, 3.

Examiner, 14 February 1920, 6.

Examiner, 21 September, 4.

Examiner, 29 July 1919, 7.

Examiner, 14 September 1920, 5, 9 November 1920, 8; City of Launceston, Mayor’s Valedictory Address and Annual Departmental Reports 1919-20, 1.

The debate over the rating system continued in the 1920s, see for example see Daily Telegraph, 9 September 1927, 3, letter by Donald Fraser and 12 September 1926, 8, letter by E.L. Tuffin. Fraser and Tuffin continued their epistolary warfare in the Daily Telegraph for the rest of September; see also Examiner, 2 July 1929, 6.

Examiner, 6 February 1923, 8.

Examiner, 5 August 1921, 6.

Daily Telegraph, 15 May 1915, 3.

Examiner, 30 August 1921, 4.

Examiner, 31 August 1921, 4.

Examiner, 22 August 1922, 6.

Examiner, 1 March 1923, 6.

Examiner, 2 April 1923, 4, 15 August 1824, 4, 6 June 1925, 12.

Examiner, 31 March 1925, 6.

Examiner, 1 April 1925, 4; memorandum by Pardey, 16 February 1927, LCC A/4.3, Community History Museum, Launceston.

Judd had earlier been asked by the Launceston Housewives Association to lecture on ‘The Housing Problem’ during its Health Week Exhibition in 1925, see Examiner, 22 June 1925, 5.

Examiner, 6 September 1927, 4.

City of Launceston, Mayor’s Valedictory Address and Annual Departmental Reports 1928-29, 64.

Examiner, 9 July 1929, 7, 10 July 1929, 8; Masters, ‘Seven Homes’, 72.

The number of demolitions is derived from the annual reports of the Health Officer.

Examiner, 10 July 1929, 8.

Examiner, 10 July 1929, 8.

Examiner, 15 June 1920, 4.

Examiner, 5 August 1920, 8, 1 March 1923, 6.

Examiner, 1 May 1923, 5.

Examiner, 26 January 1924, 6; a picture of the cottages is at Examiner, 12 August 1927, 2.

Examiner, 10 May 1919, 7, 9 December 1927, 11, 6 April 1928, 5.

Examiner, 22 September 1914, 4; Daily Telegraph, 7 September 1927, 4.

Examiner, 13 July 1925, 4.

Examiner, 3 December 1918, 4.

Daily Telegraph, 5 November 1924, 3.

Daily Telegraph, 6 November 1924, 4.

Examiner, 12 May 1915, 4.

City of Launceston, Mayor’s Valedictory Address and Annual Departmental Reports 1925-26, 62.

Examiner, 12 March 1918, 4.

Examiner, 3 December 1924, 5.

Examiner, 2 March 1925, 2.

Examiner, 28 June 1927, 5, 4 December 1928, 5; City of Launceston, Mayor’s Valedictory Address and Annual Departmental Reports 1926-27, 62.

Examiner, 10 December 1929, 11, 9 December 1930, 3.

City of Launceston, Mayor’s Valedictory Address and Annual Reports 1919-20, p. 3.
In some respects Launceston showed greater interest in town planning than other Australian cities, see Alan Hutchings, "From Theory to Practice: The Inter-war Years" in Hamnett and Freestone, *The Australian Metropolis*, 73-77.