

DEVELOPMENT STUDIES GRADUATE

ADAM KENNEDY



**CURRENT ROLE: STRATEGIC LAND USE PLANNER,
LAKE MACQUARIE CITY COUNCIL**

PAST ROLE: PRIVATE INDUSTRY PLANNING CONSULTANCY

**DEGREE: BACHELOR OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE**

FUTURE: POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN URBAN PLANNING

Adam has always had an interest in urban planning, however it took him some time before realising that it was an area he could pursue. Although changing his profession was a decision that made Adam anxious, it has definitely paid off for him.

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO SINCE GRADUATING?

Adam is currently working Council. Adam's position sits within the Integrated Planning Department which is responsible for shaping the future of the City of Lake Macquarie through the implementation of the City's strategic plan, the [Local Strategic Planning Statement](#). Day to day work includes a broad range of strategic land use planning functions and projects such as developing and implementing land use and transport strategies, urban design guidelines, heritage studies, urban structure plans and creating planning policy documents such as local environmental plans and development control plans.

Adam enjoys his position; there are a diverse range of tasks and the focus is always looking towards the future. Overall, he is able to make a positive difference to the City through interaction with the development industry in order to achieve more environmentally sustainable outcomes.

Strategic planning is a longterm game and each project has varying milestone timeframes. Part of Adam's role involves using excellent time management skills to ensure all tasks are being met, thereby leading to a successful outcome of the whole project.

“We prepare and undertake various strategies to ensure future development is well planned and does not have a negative impact to the environment or the society.”

A recent project that Adam has been involved with is the [West Wallsend Heritage Master Plan](#). This plan was developed to guide Lake Macquarie City Council, developers and the community on how the area should look in the future. This includes beautifying the streets and footpaths, how the streets connect, creating community parks as well as rejuvenating heritage assets. Once the plan has been

adopted, it will move to the next stage and the changes can start to be implemented.



Image: Adam Kennedy at the Australian High Commission during his time in Singapore for the New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program.

HOW RELEVANT HAS YOUR DEGREE BEEN SINCE YOU GRADUATED?

Many of the courses that Adam completed in his Development Studies degree have been directly relevant to his role now. Courses that covered environmental legislation, environmental assessment and urban development have been the most critical when it comes to understanding the urban planning framework and process. Adam paired the knowledge he was learning in lectures with a range of practical experiences.

During Adam's second year of his Development Studies degree, he gained the Student Planner position at the Lake Macquarie City Council. Adam developed a lot of the skills and knowledge that he has about urban planning during his internship. Adam took the knowledge that he developed here with him to other positions. The internship is a great

opportunity for anyone who has interest in the urban planning field. Adam's role has come full circle as he now assists current Student Planners.

The highlight of Adam's degree was being awarded the [New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program](#) by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The scholarship took Adam to Singapore and Brunei to study at the [National University of Singapore](#) and work at the [Singaporean Housing Development Board](#) and [Town and Country Planning](#) for eight months.



Image: Adam attending the ASEAN Special Summit 2017, as part of the New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program.

This invaluable experience exposed Adam to how other cultures and societies function in the urban development space and the range of challenges that they face. Adam established many lifelong friendships on the trip, and was able to travel and explore much of Southeast and North Asia.



Image: Adam exploring Singapore.

Adam gained more work experience when he completed his [Work Integrated Learning in Development Studies and Human Geography](#) with the [NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment](#). There Adam was tasked with researching open and recreational spaces and urban forestry to contribute to [The Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan](#) that was being developed at the time. Whilst Adam gained an insight into how the State operates with urban planning, he also built networks with people that he often communicates with now about projects he is working on.



Image: Adam at the National University of Singapore for the New Colombo Scholarship Plan Program.

Adam noted that there are also several soft skills that are acquired whilst completing the Development Studies degree. For example, contributing and facilitating meetings, public speaking, writing and critical thinking are all important skills that Adam uses constantly in his work.

ADVICE: LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES & NETWORK WITHIN YOUR INDUSTRY

“Step outside of your comfort zone.”

Adam recommends attending events such as webinars or workshops within your field of interest. These will open you up to opportunities to network with people in the industry. This allows you to learn more about the profession. These events are often advertised on the [@DevelopmentStudiesatUON](#) Facebook page. [Planning Institute Australia](#) is also a great source for students looking for workshops, webinars and relevant articles around urban planning.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Adam sees himself remaining in his current role for the near future. He will be able to see projects through to completion, while also continuing to develop his skills. Adam is also anticipating completing postgraduate studies to elevate his knowledge within the field of urban planning.

To find out more about Adam, and our other Development Studies graduates please visit; uonblogs.newcastle.edu.au/ges/graduate-profiles/facebook.com/DevelopmentStudiesatUON/

For more information about the [Bachelor of Development Studies](#) you can contact:
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