

Clarity Planning: Making Strategic Sense of Restoration Complexity

Director Annette Lees¹

¹*Annette Lees And Associates*

Successful restoration projects are underpinned by fresh, visionary and agile planning shaped by clarity of place and scope, intelligent strategy, and timely actions. These desirable attributes of restoration project design are rarely delivered by standard planning frameworks. Commonly, planning approaches are time-consuming without strategic reward. They can confuse an already complex situation. They can lock projects into exhausting, undeliverable, unrealistic or even undesirable outcomes. Despite the critical importance of strategic planning and the effort gone to produce it, project planning documents often lie where they deserve to be - on the shelf, ignored and unread.

This presentation reflects on 30 years of restoration and conservation programmes' strategy design and implementation, drawing on observations and insights across 24 specific restoration projects and programmes. Distilling this experience, simple questions and clear steps emerge that make the planning process effective and indispensable. Critical to this approach is the central strategy - the axis between vision and action - and allowing fresh air to blow between your 50-year-long dream and this month's opportunities.

Six critical attributes for project planning success are outlined in this presentation: understanding your place, your people and the problem you are trying to solve; presenting your long term position; designing effective strategies; underpinning your work with sound governance and management; knowing how to set and implement quick-fire priorities and actions; and planning intelligent, supportive monitoring and evaluation that can actually be implemented. When all six factors align, a programme is powerful, effective and energizing.