

Behavioural Sciences and Rural-Urban Development Seminar Series

Decision making in the Peri-Urban Fringe: Examples of Responses to Risk, Attraction and Environment

By Prof. Guy Robinson, University of Adelaide, Editor of *Land Use Policy*

11am, Wednesday 9 May 2018

Tower Meeting Room, Department of Land Economy, University of Cambridge

Summary

The peri-urban fringes of large cities provide an environment where residents can interact more directly with the natural and semi-natural environment than most urban dwellers. This interaction can be a major attraction to people seeking to escape from perceived dis-benefits of inner city life, but it can also present risks through greater exposure to damaging events, such as floods and wildfires. In the context of exploring certain aspects of Ulrich Beck's 'risk society', this presentation will draw on several recent strands of research in Australia and the UK to consider decision making by peri-urban fringe residents. The main focus will be on how the residents rationalise living in locales threatened by high risk of bushfires, drawing on a detailed survey of over 3,000 households in Adelaide, capital of South Australia. The complex interaction between maintaining biodiversity on the one hand and protecting residents from damaging fires on the other presents a major challenge to planners. The response to that challenge will also be examined, in terms of the drivers of new development at the city's edge. Analysis of these drivers will be presented based on spatial patterns of residential development in Adelaide during four consecutive periods (ten-year intervals between 1971 and 2010). Some comparisons with changing patterns of land use in south-west London will be made.

About the speaker



Prof. Guy M Robinson is a human geographer with over 40 years of experience as a researcher on issues relating to rural development and environmental management. Currently based at the University of Adelaide, he has held positions at the Universities of Oxford, Edinburgh, Kingston London and South Australia. He has also been an official visitor at 17 universities in the UK, Australia, China, India, Canada and New Zealand, most recently as a Guest Professor at the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing and GIAN Lecturer at Aligarh Muslim University in India. He has edited the journal *Land Use Policy* for the last twelve years and has published 14 books and over 200 academic papers and book chapters. The books include *Conflict and Change in the Countryside*, *Sustainable Rural Systems*, *Geographies of Agriculture*, *Methods and Techniques in Human Geography*, and *Handbook on the Globalisation of Agriculture*. His recent work includes research on three Australian Research Council-funded projects and a Leverhulme grant supporting research on recycling and pro-environmental behaviour by households in London. In Australia, he is leading a team examining tensions between maintaining biodiversity and limiting risk from bushfires in the peri-urban fringe. Other recent Australian-based research has focused on farmers' adaptations to climate change and the impacts on rural and remote communities of corporate social responsibility in the mining industry. He is Co-Chair of the IGU's Commission on Agricultural Geography & Land Engineering (AGLE).