

# Planning Social Infrastructure and Community Services for Urban Growth Areas – Theme Document

CITY OF CHARLES STURT

CITY OF PLAYFORD

CITY OF SALISBURY

CITY OF ONKAPARINGA

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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# Introduction

This Theme Document has been prepared for the City of Charles Sturt and the councils of Playford, Salisbury and Onkaparinga and the Local Government Association of South Australia, as part of the Planning Social Infrastructure and Community Services for Urban Growth Areas project. This document provides a summary of relevant demographic data, case studies and literature to inform future planning for medium and higher density infill projects in the City of Charles Sturt and wider Adelaide.

This section of the document (Section 1) introduces the Theme Document as part of the broader project and contextualises the material presented within existing urban policy and planning frameworks.

## Purpose and objectives

The Theme Document:

- » Identifies the key characteristics of selected residential communities living in medium and higher density housing in Adelaide and across Australia (see Section 2)
- » Analyses resident perceptions and preferences related to higher density living (see Section 3)
- » Discusses a number of key themes for consideration in the establishment of medium and higher density infill projects, to enhance liveability and enable sustainable lifestyles for all residents – importantly, including social infrastructure provision (see Section 4)
- » Identifies social infrastructure priorities for medium and higher density infill projects, to address the needs of new and existing communities (see Section 5).

There is limited experience of medium and higher density infill development in Adelaide, and limited available Adelaide-specific data that can be drawn upon for the purposes of this study. However, Adelaide-based projects and experiences are discussed in this document where possible. This information is supplemented with case study material and literature relating to interstate and international experiences, with a focus on those of greatest relevance to the Adelaide context.

## What type of development and where

### Policy and planning context

Outward urban expansion and low density residential development in Australia's major cities has contributed to greater separation between homes and jobs, increased car dependency, higher transport costs and loss of productive agricultural land. In 2006 Adelaide was characterised by a predominance of separate houses, and smaller proportions of detached housing and apartments. Of Australia's major cities, Adelaide's housing stock profile was most similar to Canberra and Perth (Infrastructure Australia, 2010).

Urban planning policy trends are now commonly focusing on increasing the proportion of population growth being accommodated in existing inner and middle suburban areas in Australian cities. Higher density residential development is generally concentrated around CBDs with decreasing densities in outer areas, as is the case in Adelaide. The 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide (2010) ('The 30 Year Plan') provides a long term vision for the future of the city, and identifies how Adelaide will grow and where population growth will be accommodated over the next three decades.

The 30 Year Plan places increased emphasis on higher density infill development linked to improved public transport infrastructure and within key transit corridors. It is anticipated that the Adelaide metropolitan infill to fringe ratio will remain around 50:50 for the first few years of the Plan, before increasing to 70:30 by 2038.

## Defining medium and higher density infill development

The 30 Year Plan identifies policies and targets which aim to achieve a greater diversity of dwelling types to cater for the changing composition of the Adelaide population. These range from single detached dwellings to low rise attached accommodation, such as townhouses and villas and medium-density housing including well designed multi-storey apartment blocks (the latter confined to appropriate locations).

The 30 Year Plan (p.65) identifies the following density ranges and building heights for low, medium and high density development.

**Housing density** (guide for individual developments):

- » Low density = less than 35 dwelling units per hectare
- » Medium density = 37-70 dwelling units per hectare
- » High density = more than 70 dwelling units per hectare

**Building height** (guide for individual developments whether residential, commercial or mixed use):

- » Low rise = 1-3 storeys
- » Medium rise = 4-10 storeys
- » High rise = more than 10 storeys.

## Where is medium and higher density infill proposed?

The Plan proposes to locate the majority of new housing in current urban lands around transport corridors and to set aside a net land supply of more than 10,000 hectares to create new growth areas. This will involve creating 14 new transit oriented development (TOD) areas and incorporating transit-oriented principles and design characteristics in more than 20 sites.

The western suburbs of Adelaide will absorb a considerable proportion of the planned growth. The City of Charles Sturt is expected to accommodate approximately 50,000 of an additional 90,000 people projected for the Western Region by 2039. Areas in the City of Charles Sturt which have been identified for major investment of resources and infrastructure include West Lakes, Bowden Village, St Clair, Seaton and Woodville West.

## What is Transit Oriented Development?

Transit Oriented Developments (TODs) are 'walkable, mixed use, connected communities that collocate medium- to high-density residential housing with retail services, other key services such as health, education and government, and a variety of employment opportunities, particularly knowledge economy jobs. They are adjacent to key public transport interchanges – railway and tram stations and major bus interchanges...It is also proposed that key government services, such as primary and community health, social services, and Service SA Centres, will be collocated in the new transit-oriented developments.'

*(The 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide, page 61)*

# Who lives in medium and higher density housing in urban growth areas?

## Inner urban locations with recent infill development

In order to provide greatest relevance for planned urban growth in the City of Charles Sturt, the following analysis focuses on a selection of infill development locations around Australia, which are characterised by recent higher density development. These locations<sup>1</sup> are:



**Subiaco** – An inner western suburb of Perth, situated to the north of Kings Park. The suburb has undergone considerable urban redevelopment including the residential precinct Subi Centro and had a total population of 7,629 in 2006.

**Kelvin Grove** – Located approximately three kilometres from the Brisbane CBD and in 2006 had a population of 4,246. The suburb is characterised by a mix of traditional Queenslander homes, some post-war housing stock and more modern apartment buildings.

**Zetland** – Located in inner city Sydney approximately four kilometres south of the CBD and had a total population of 2,614 in 2006. The suburb is largely industrial and incorporates medium and higher density residential areas. Zetland includes Victoria Park, a high density residential precinct, and is part of the Green Square district which is undergoing urban renewal.<sup>2</sup>



**Kangaroo Point** – Located on a peninsula to the east of the Brisbane CBD, to which it is connected by the Story Bridge. It is also located in close proximity to the Queensland University of Technology. This suburb contains a mix of dwellings, with a predominance of high rise apartments towards the tip of the peninsula, and mainly low to medium density apartments and houses in its remainder. Kangaroo Point had a total population of 6,826 at the last Census.

**Rhodes** – Located in Sydney's inner west approximately 16 kilometres from the CBD, on the southern bank of the Parramatta River and in close proximity to Sydney Olympic Park. The western section of the suburb includes considerable recent higher density development. In 2006 Rhodes suburb had a total population of 1,668.

1 ABS 2006 Census data for 'State Suburb' has been used for each location.

2 Images on this page from [www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au), [www.planning.nsw.gov.au](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au), [www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com) (Accessed May 2011)



**Docklands** – A high density mixed use precinct in the City of Melbourne with a total residential population of 3,939 in 2006. This waterfront precinct contains a number of high density residential apartment buildings, alongside numerous high rise commercial buildings, Southern Cross Station, Etihad Stadium and a range of entertainment venues.

## Population profile

A summary of the key demographic characteristics of the existing resident population living in the select locations is discussed in this section of the report and detailed data is presented in the table in Appendix A. Data for the City of Charles Sturt LGA and Australia is also presented for comparative purposes. Maps showing the boundaries of each of the select suburbs are attached (Appendix B).

The population profile is not comprehensive. Rather, it focuses specifically on the main demographic factors which are likely to influence future demand for social infrastructure, including age and lifecycle stage, family / household composition, cultural diversity, income and employment. The data is also limited by the timing of the Census with the most recent data available being 2006 which does not capture the development that has occurred over the last five years.

An analysis of the population profiles for the select locations shows that in 2006 residential communities in these areas were generally characterised by:

- » **Smaller proportions of children and young people (0-4 and 5-14 years), and larger proportions of people in the middle age groups (25-54 years),** compared with Charles Sturt LGA and Australia. Some areas were characterised by much lower proportions of people in the older age groups (55-64 and 65+) than the study area and Australia, while others had higher proportions of people in these older age ranges.
- » **A mix of family and household types,** including some families with children (particularly in Rhodes, Subiaco and Kelvin Grove), combined with relatively large proportions of couples without children (particularly in Docklands and Kangaroo Point), other families (across all areas), and group households (the latter particularly in Kelvin Grove and Zetland):

- Smaller proportions of *couple families with children* than in the City of Charles Sturt and Australia (particularly in Docklands)
  - *Much larger* proportions of *couple families without children* than in the City of Charles Sturt and Australia (particularly in Docklands and Kangaroo Point)
  - Smaller proportions of *one-parent families*, compared with the City of Charles Sturt and Australia (particularly in Docklands)
  - Larger proportions of *other families* than in the City of Charles Sturt and Australia, particularly in Docklands and Kelvin Grove
  - Smaller proportions of *family households* than in the City of Charles Sturt and Australia, particularly in Kangaroo Point
  - Similar proportions of *lone person households* as in the City of Charles Sturt and Australia
  - *Much larger* proportions of *group households* compared with the City of Charles Sturt and Australia, particularly in Kelvin Grove and Zetland.
- » **Slightly smaller households**, generally ranging in size from 1.9 to 2.2 persons per household in the selected locations (with the exception of Rhodes which had an average household size of 2.4 persons). This compared with 2.3 and 2.6 persons per household respectively, in the City of Charles Sturt and Australia.
  - » **Much larger proportions of high income households** compared with the City of Charles Sturt and Australia (across all selected locations). Weekly median household incomes in Kangaroo Point and Kelvin Grove were comparable with those in the City of Charles Sturt and Australia. However, household incomes in all other selected locations were higher than those in the City of Charles Sturt and Australia.
  - » **Much larger proportions of people with university qualifications** than the City of Charles Sturt and Australia (in several cases, around three times as many).
  - » **Slightly lower rates of unemployment and slightly higher labour force participation rates** compared with the City of Charles Sturt and Australia. The exception to this was slightly higher than average rates of unemployment in Rhodes and Kelvin Grove.
  - » **Much larger proportions of homes being rented** (in some cases twice as many), combined with lower proportions of homes which are fully owned and those being purchased, compared with both the City of Charles Sturt and Australia.
  - » **Lower proportions of Indigenous persons** than in both the City of Charles Sturt and Australia.
  - » **At least comparable or larger proportions of people who were born overseas** than in the City of Charles Sturt and Australia (with almost twice as many overseas born residents in Zetland), and **larger proportions of people who speak a language other than English at home**. The main community languages spoken at home in the select locations were predominantly Asian languages, with a smaller number of European languages also spoken.

**Table 2:** Snapshot population profile for select locations – comparison of higher density infill locations\* with Charles Sturt LGA and wider Adelaide

Age:		Household/Family types:	
Children	⬇	Couple families with children	⬇
Young adults	⬆	Couple families without children	⬆⬆
Middle age groups	⬆	One-parent families	⬇
Older people	⚡	Other families	⬆
<b>Other factors:</b>		Family households	⬇
High income households	⬆⬆	Lone person households	=
University qualifications	⬆⬆	Group households	⬆⬆
Rental tenure	⬆⬆	<b>Household size:</b>	
Cultural and linguistic diversity	⬆	Average household size	⬇

**Key:** ⬆ Larger proportion; ⬆⬆ Significantly larger proportion; ⬇ Smaller proportion; ⬇⬇ Significantly smaller proportion; ⚡ Mixed results / no clear trend; = Comparable proportion

For example the table shows that there are smaller proportions of children in the higher density infill locations compared to Charles Sturt and Adelaide

\* Higher density infill locations include the six identified in 2.1: Zetland, Rhodes, Subiaco, Kelvin Grove, Kangaroo Point, Docklands

Data from Adelaide is limited at present. The next release of Census data will be useful for understanding more about who is moving into some of the higher density development areas such as Holdfast Bay and in Port Adelaide.

In preparing the *Social Planning Report for Bowen Hills TOD* for the Urban Land Development Authority (the ULDA is the Queensland equivalent of the Land Management Corporation) a number of higher density infill developments were analysed then a likely household composition for Bowen Hills was projected. The table below shows that projected household composition and reflects what is understood to be the predominant household mix for higher density urban infill development projects across Australia.

**Table 3:** Expected Household Mix for Bowen Hills TOD, Brisbane

Household type	Bowen Hills projected distribution	Comparison to Brisbane
Couples with children at home	11%	30%
Couples only	35%	26%
Single parent	5%	10%
Lone person	32%	7%
Group households	13%	25%
Other family	4%	2%

Source: Andrea Young Planning Consultants for Urban Land Development Authority, 2008

The *Bowen Hills Social Planning Report* explains that “it is reasonable to expect fewer families, more couple only and lone person households and fewer group households in Bowen Hills than the Brisbane average.”

## Study implications

The demographic data shows that a selection of the inner urban locations characterised by recent infill across Australia were home to a large working age population including younger couples with and without children, empty nesters, singles, and a large proportion of group households.

A review of ABS data suggests that residents of planned medium and higher density inner urban infill projects in the City of Charles Sturt are likely to include:

- » People who work or study in the Adelaide CBD and surrounds
- » People who want to live in close proximity to the Adelaide CBD and surrounds (including beaches) for lifestyle and amenity reasons
- » People who have previously lived in medium or higher density housing and or who perceive these housing forms as a desirable housing option (such as people who have lived in Asian and European cities).

Residents are likely to be characterised by:

- » A larger proportion of smaller households than in the wider City of Charles Sturt including couples without children, other families, and group households
- » A larger proportion of renters than in the wider City of Charles Sturt
- » Larger proportions of people born overseas and those who speak a language other than English at home than in the wider City of Charles Sturt
- » Potentially, larger proportions of university qualified and high income households compared with the wider City of Charles Sturt – with location and level of amenity likely to influence this.

## Market research and post occupancy studies

### Who is moving into medium and higher density housing in inner urban locations?

2006 Census data is now several years old and often identifies established medium and high density areas, rather than more recent developments. For this reason ABS data is supplemented in this section of the document with insights from market research and post occupancy studies recently conducted for a number of relevant projects, with a focus on recent medium and higher density infill development projects in Australia and overseas.

#### Victoria Park, Sydney

Landcom (the New South Wales equivalent of the Land Management Corporation) conducted a post occupancy study of Victoria Park, a higher density precinct in Sydney. At the time the research was conducted (2004) residents living in Victoria Park were characterised by:

- » A large working age population, with the majority of residents aged 30-39 and many residents in the 25-29 and 40-54 year age groups
- » Large proportions of DINKS (double-income no kids) (40%) and SINKS (single-income no kids) (37%), with smaller proportions of young families, older families and empty nesters
- » A highly educated population (with just under 60% of residents with university qualifications), with a large proportion of white collar professionals
- » A high income profile, with 94% of residents in paid employment
- » Mainly Australian and New Zealand born residents, with a higher than average Asian born population (around 25%)
- » Potential skew towards a homosexual population (potentially 1 in 5 residents).

Research conducted with residents living in Victoria Park highlights some of the reasons that residents chose to live in the area and what their experience has been:

- » Location is the strongest single driver for living at Victoria Park, however a holistic offer at Victoria Park (the development, building, apartment) was also vital.

- » Lack of amenities and noise (in the area and onsite) were identified as the largest drawbacks, and parking was also a significant issue.
- » There was a strong sense of community among owners, particularly among owner occupiers.
- » Sense of community among owner occupiers was driven by satisfaction with common areas and social interactions. While renters valued friendly neighbours, common areas, consultation and communications and community diversity.

## Melbourne Docklands

The *Docklands Community Infrastructure Planning Final Report* includes the following analysis of the Docklands population (as at 2008). The report recognises that Docklands is significantly different than other residential areas of Melbourne. Docklands is characterised by:

- » High concentration of young adults and others of working age
- » Only small numbers of children under 14
- » Only small numbers of people aged 65 years and over
- » 54% of the population are aged 20-34 years
- » Significantly higher individual and household income
- » Majority of population employed in management or professional occupations
- » All dwellings are apartments or flats
- » Median rent and housing loan repayments are double the State average
- » Relatively large numbers of people born overseas
- » A significant Chinese population.

## Academic research

A scan of relevant local and international literature has identified a number of characteristics of residential communities living in medium and higher density housing. The literature scan focuses specifically on recent medium and higher density inner urban neighbourhoods in Australia with much of the literature focused on Queensland given the extent of growth projected there and the policy emphasis on transit oriented development (TOD).

## QUT Dimensions of Liveability: A Tool for Sustainable Cities (2011) / QUT High Density Liveability Study

### Who lives in higher density housing?

Between 2006 and 2009, Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and Port of Brisbane Northshore Development Group undertook a study of six inner city Brisbane neighbourhoods to investigate the environmental, social and economic impacts experienced by residents living in high density urban area in order to better understand the attributes of attractive higher density neighbourhoods which offer a high quality of life (Kennedy and Buys 2011).

The study defined high density as 30 or more dwellings per hectare. The six neighbourhoods studied were Highgate Hill/West End, South Brisbane, Teneriffe/New Farm, Kangaroo Point, Fortitude Valley and Hamilton. Each neighbourhood is characterised by higher density, mixed building types and ages, diverse tenancies and cultural diversity.

The study found that people living in higher density areas in inner Brisbane were predominantly in single person and couple only households, the latter including some empty nesters. One person households made up 31% of all households, and two person households comprised 54% of households. The remainder of households (15%) included between three and six people. Very few households included children under 18 years. Just over half (56%) were owner-occupiers and 44% were renters. Overall, respondents were well educated with a high average household income.

In an interview with one of the study's authors, Laurie Buys, she commented that price and product offering are the key determinants of who is living in the surveyed higher density developments: "The people who are there are the people that it is designed for". That is, if only one and two bedroom apartments are developed, these are less likely to attract larger or family households. The Queensland Government recognises that a more balanced mix of people would be desirable and is presently undertaking further work to examine opportunities for enhancing diversity in higher density communities.

## Study implications

The study suggests that existing higher density communities are characterised by a predominantly adult population living in smaller households, with a slightly higher proportion of owner occupiers to renters. The socio economic profile of the surveyed communities was characterised by high levels of education and high income.

In order to attract more diverse communities, planned development projects in Adelaide will need to target diverse household types (including larger households with children) at a range of price points, from early in the planning and development phases.

## Queensland Government Transit Oriented Development: Guide to Community Diversity (2010)

### Who lives in TODs?

The *Transit Oriented Development: Guide to Community Diversity* (Queensland Government, 2010a:18) identified the most common characteristics of Australian TOD precincts as:

- » A high proportion of renters
- » A fairly transient population
- » A relatively high proportion of first home buyers as purchasers
- » Socio-economic variation, ranging from high status in premium locations, to middle income professionals such as Generation X-ers, and low income public housing tenants
- » Relatively low proportions of school aged children
- » A low proportion of older people
- » Smaller households – most commonly single person or couple only (with no dependent children)
- » Education and income levels often higher than the existing or surrounding population
- » In some cases, a high proportion of people from culturally diverse backgrounds
- » People seeking convenience to jobs, services and networks
- » People seeking affordable housing.

## Study implications

The study suggest that planning for identified urban infill projects in the City of Charles Sturt and other parts of Adelaide is likely to require consideration of a relatively diverse population which incorporates a number of submarkets, and is characterised by significant socio economic variation, a range of household types (including family households), cultural diversity and a range of lifestyle preferences. Socio-economic variation and its relationship to both location and type of development is likely to be of particular importance for the planned urban infill projects.

Using Charles Sturt as an example, the five major infill redevelopment projects (West Lakes, Bowden Village, St Clair, Seaton and Woodville West) are reasonably diverse in terms of location, likely housing type, likely tenant mix, and so forth. Each of these projects also has potential for substantial internal socio-economic variation. A key challenge will be offering high levels of amenity across locations and precincts, not only those targeting higher income households.

## In summary

Key considerations for medium and higher density housing in the City of Charles Sturt include:

- » Provision of a mix of housing types targeting a range of households and price points
- » Offering high levels of amenity across locations and precincts, not just for those targeting higher income households
- » Considering specific requirements for locations and precincts which are likely to attract higher levels of cultural diversity or higher student populations
- » While medium and higher density housing is generally characterised by higher rates of renting, potential weakening of the investor market in the short term, allowing for a potential increase in the proportion of owner occupiers.

# Understanding residents' perceptions and preferences

This section of the Theme Document examines residents' perceptions and preferences in relation to medium to higher density living in urban infill environments. It begins with a brief analysis of Adelaide-based community engagement activities which explore residents' responses to urban growth. This section also includes an overview of post occupancy studies which examine the perspectives of residents who live in urban growth areas. Also included is an overview of relevant academic research on residents' experiences in medium to higher density urban living environments.

## Context

Owner occupied detached housing has been the most common type of housing in Australian cities for most of the past century. Over the last decade, social trends, such as couples having children later in life, more people living alone, and a greater proportion of empty nesters, have begun to impact on housing in several ways. Households are becoming smaller in size, but more numerous relative to population growth. The number of smaller households is also rapidly increasing, in line with population ageing (Infrastructure Australia, 2010).

These various types of household will require more diverse housing stock, highlighting the mismatch between the identified social trends and current patterns of housing development. Despite these trends, Australians' preference for detached houses has continued.

Increases in residential density are often perceived to be associated with adverse effects on quality of life (Howley et al, 2009; Sarkissian et al, 2004). In addition, previous studies have indicated that community attitudes towards higher density living in Australia have been neither positive nor supportive of the concept of density, suggesting that the transition to higher density living presents an ongoing challenge (Kennedy and Buys 2011).

A number of studies identify the importance of ensuring that medium and higher density housing projects offer a range of benefits for new residents and the communities where they are located – and that these benefits are clearly communicated.

## Local government community engagement data

This section is based on a review of community engagement activities undertaken in relation to recent (and current) urban development projects in Adelaide. The review identifies key issues for how medium and higher density infill projects are viewed by community members in Adelaide and highlights some of the key priorities for the community when considering a move to more dense urban living. The implications of these views are helpful in identifying community priorities in relation to future urban growth and infill development projects.

### City of Charles Sturt

As identified in the City of Charles Sturt *City Services Division End of Year Report 2009-10*, community engagement within the city was largely focussed on major projects occurring within the City including the Bowden Village Master Plan, St Clair Reserve Community Land Revocation, Cheltenham and Woodville Open Space Consultation and Woodville Village Master Plan. Consultation was also undertaken in relation to the desired characteristics of the proposed new Henley Hub.

In 2010 the City of Charles Sturt undertook community engagement as part of its *Residential Growth Strategy and Character Study for the City*. The study sought to undertake a strategic review of residential land within the City and to identify areas for potential increased residential development and regeneration, in response to the *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide*.

The related community engagement process sought to obtain community feedback on increasing residential densities, with a focus on growth corridors and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) areas which offer a mix of high density, high quality housing located with employment, mass transit connections, services and recreational activities.

A series of eight focus groups were conducted with a selection of residents from across the City of Charles Sturt. The majority of focus group participants were randomly selected from residential areas identified for potential higher density redevelopment, and a smaller number were representatives of local interest groups. The key outcomes of the engagement process of most relevance to the Planning Social Infrastructure for Urban Growth Areas project are summarised below.

### **Aspects of Adelaide's Western Suburbs to be retained in TODs**

Focus group participants highly valued a range of attributes of living in Adelaide's Western Suburbs, while at the same time identifying a number of barriers to the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) concept. Commonly identified attributes of the area which residents seek to retain and enhance were:

- » Proximity to the city and sea
- » Local character and heritage – particularly large lot sizes
- » Good public transport – train services were particularly highly valued, however there was perceived to be a lack of connectivity of public transport services across suburbs
- » Open spaces, trees and green areas
- » Easy access to a wide range of services and social infrastructure
- » Cultural and demographic diversity.

### **Issues relating to higher density housing and potential barriers**

Participants expressed a number of common concerns about higher density housing (from infill through to smaller lot housing) and identified several barriers to higher density housing for potential purchasers. The key issues identified by participants were:

- » The importance of retaining the character of the area (not just in specific character zones) and built form. Residents of the Western Suburbs believed that much contemporary built form (1-2 storey detached houses with minimal setbacks) is poorly designed and detracts from the character of the area

- » The need for more usable open spaces, and higher levels of provision in some areas including Cheltenham, Woodville and the Grange Road area. The limited provision of outdoor areas in many contemporary houses (see above) was also noted
- » The potential for increased traffic congestion in local areas and loss of existing on street parking relating to the development of TODs
- » The need for appropriate water conservation, management and security systems
- » Many participants perceived higher density dwellings to result in higher energy consumption than lower density dwellings
- » There was some limited support for eco-friendly developments
- » Almost all participants believed they would still be living in the same house and area in ten years time, regardless of age or household structure
- » Affordability. Higher density housing types were perceived as providing 'transitional' housing and being of particular interest to the 'next generation' of younger people (including students, young couples and singles and couples with no children), rather than older people. Higher density housing was perceived as being relatively expensive for many older residents who believed they would not be able to 'buy back' into their existing community.
- » Accessibility. Multi-storey higher density housing, such as 3 and 4 storey walk-ups, was perceived as being less appealing for older purchasers and those with limited mobility.

The main positive attributes of the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) concept identified by participants were:

- » The proposed extension of the light rail line to West Lakes
- » The potential for the Growth Strategy to enable participants' children to live nearby after they leave home
- » Linking of open space areas, encouraging reduced reliance on cars and encouraging physical activity.

## Study implications

A review of the consultation outcomes suggests the following social needs require consideration in terms of provision of social infrastructure and built form for future higher density development projects:

- » Maintaining / enhancing accessibility to the city and sea (for instance, through public spaces, public access to foreshore areas for all)
- » Proximity to local amenities including open space areas (with play areas, jogging tracks, dog walking areas and potentially community gardens) and other local attractions
- » Design of built form that compliments the existing character and heritage of the local area. 'Sense of community' was identified as an important aspect of the unique character of particular communities, to be retained and fostered
- » Maintaining/enhancing accessibility to reliable and efficient public transport, particularly trains – with potential for improved public transport infrastructure and services, as demand for services increases over time
- » Provision of usable open space areas, trees and landscaping within new developments (incorporating a children's playground and potentially a community garden)
- » Provision of walking and cycle paths that connect new developments with wider local and regional networks
- » Provision of a range of housing types including those which incorporate private outdoor space such as courtyards, gardens, balconies
- » Proximity to / provision of a wide range of services and social infrastructure where possible, within walking distance such as:
  - Parks and open space
  - Activities and facilities for young people (e.g. skate parks, neighbourhood basketball courts, large open space, bike and walking tracks)
  - Schools
  - Doctors surgeries
  - Shops
  - Cafes
  - Public services
  - Support services (e.g. to support the needs of new arrivals including refugees)

- Space for exercise (e.g. Tai Chi)
- Other services and infrastructure to meet the needs of people from a range of age groups including young singles and young couples with no children.
- » Provision of a range of housing types to meet the needs of people from a range of age groups, family types, cultural groups and income groups. Housing affordability was identified as a key 'selling point' for higher density housing, while 'sense of community' was identified as an important aspect of a diverse community
- » Design that enables successful integration of new and existing communities, for instance through appropriate location of height, appropriate setbacks and design that minimises amenity impacts such as overlooking and noise transfer between dwellings. Higher density housing was identified by some participants as providing benefits in terms of public safety.
- » Provision of adequate and accessible onsite car parking for new residents and visitors, and appropriate traffic management strategies
- » Ecologically Sustainable Development that minimises water and energy use, and related promotion of key initiatives and related benefits
- » Targeted communications with the community that provide clear and accurate information on higher density development, the TOD concept and related environmental and social issues – including potential community benefits.

## City of Onkaparinga

Recent Social Impact Assessments undertaken in the City of Onkaparinga have been completed for Aldinga and Seaford and Moana (URPS).

### Aldinga

The supplementary Social Impact Assessment report for Aldinga (URPS 2009) indicates that there is potential for the creation of 3,200 allotments within the study area, the majority of which are expected to be located within Aldinga Beach. The report states that more than an additional 5,000 allotments will need to be created in the Aldinga area to achieve the fringe growth targets identified in the Southern Adelaide directions in the draft The 30 Year Plan for Adelaide.

This is expected to result in an incoming population of approximately 12,000 people, bringing the total population of the area to around 35,000. Significant growth is anticipated in the number of children aged 0-14 and those aged over 60 years, to 2016. The area includes a large proportion of 'working poor'.

The report suggests there may be an increasing need for financial support and access to free or low cost recreation and entertainment, with libraries, community centres, churches and community organisations likely to experience increasing community demand.

Key social infrastructure priorities identified in the report to meet the increased demand from 2009-2019 are:

- » Childcare, out of school hours care and vacation care
- » Activities for primary school children aged 9-12 years
- » Youth participation and training programs
- » Indoor recreation
- » Open space and outdoor recreation including walking and cycling
- » Expanded library facilities
- » Community meeting spaces
- » Accommodation, support and activities for older people
- » Public and community transport.

### **Seaford and Moana**

The report emphasises the significant anticipated increase in the Seaford and Moana areas population of 250%, to 27,000 when fully developed.

The report makes a series of recommendations for Council to address increased population growth and social infrastructure priorities. These are:

- » Advocate for increased levels of service provision in childcare, out of school hours care and vacation care
- » Advocate for access to public education for all new residents
- » Advocate to DTEI for safe pedestrian access to facilities across major roads and for improvements to the road network to cater for increased traffic volumes

- » Advocate for funding to support community development, community information provision and initiatives that promote social interaction
- » Provide leadership in progressing the extension of rail services to Seaford Heights and achieving integrated transport and development
- » Facilitate and initiate:
  - The involvement of existing community organisations in meeting future needs
  - Increased community access to schools and other venues
  - Planning for appropriate provision of open space and recreation areas and trails
  - A collaborative approach to better meeting the needs of young people
  - Projects that contribute to environmental protection and enhancement
- » Part funding and or provide:
  - Increased levels of services in Council owned facilities
  - Recreation areas and sports grounds to meet existing and future needs
  - Assistance to Seaford Moana Neighbourhood Centre to increase and diversify the range of services it provides
  - Services to support older people and people with a disability including obtaining increased funding from HACC
- » As owner/custodian manage and maintain:
  - Existing facilities and infrastructure
  - Open spaces and reserves
  - Access to the coast and facilities that support use of the beach
  - Trails and other pedestrian and cycle paths
- » As an information provider:
  - Support provision of timely and accurate information to new residents
  - Assist service providers to provide information to improve access to services and support by older people.

## Study implications

The social impact assessments suggest the following social issues require consideration in terms of future higher density development projects:

- » Provision of social infrastructure which meets the specific needs of local communities. For instance, free or low cost entertainment for communities with a lower socio-economic profile, and age-specific facilities and programs where there are concentrations of particular age groups.
- » The important role of local government in: the provision of services and facilities; creating partnerships; advocacy; management and maintenance of social infrastructure; and as an information provider.

## Feedback from residents of higher density developments

The following sections focus on residents' perceptions of higher density development based on case studies of those development types and/or post occupancy surveys of people living in higher density infill locations. This information is an important supplement to the previous Adelaide-based information which mainly dealt with peoples' perceptions about the potential impacts of higher density development. In contrast, this section focuses more on the lived experience of those places.

### False Creek North, City of Vancouver, Canada

The University of British Columbia School of Community and Regional Planning undertook a major post occupancy evaluation of the False Creek North neighbourhood that was published in 2008. The key findings from that study included:

- » A high level of satisfaction among residents of False Creek North with 96% claiming they would recommend living in the neighbourhood
- » Proximity to work, public and private amenities and a liveable, urban lifestyle were identified as the most important factors influencing peoples' decisions to move into False Creek North
- » False Creek North, in comparison to other high density neighbourhoods in Vancouver, is viewed to have a more 'suburban' feel with specific reference to generous park space, active lifestyles, slower pace, schools and large numbers of children
- » False Creek North was found to be responding well to the needs of children with positive feedback from children on social interaction, learning, public spaces and the built environment. "They enjoy having a mix of uses in their neighbourhood so they do not need to go outside of the neighbourhood; they like places they can play freely, play sports, shop, hang out with friends and entertain themselves."
- » Residents, including children, praised the walkability of the community which is possible because of the range of community amenities and commercial services nearby. Walking is the primary means by which children get around the neighbourhood
- » Renters and owner-occupiers felt that had a connection and sense of ownership of the community
- » Social activities and neighbourliness were seen to confer

the benefits of 'eyes on the street' which is recognised by residents as being the foundation of the community's feeling of safety and security

- » Most residents are overwhelmingly satisfied with local parks – they are appreciated for their size, quantity and wide open spaces. "The parks are well used and considered one of the neighbourhood strongest attributes"
- » While the child care and school facilities are commended and especially welcomed by those families whose children have been able to secure a place, the lack of capacity of these facilities to meet demand is "an ongoing frustration, concern and challenge to raising a family in False Creek North". 'School/day care' was perceived as a challenge by more than half (53%) of respondents with children
- » The Roundhouse Community Centre is a 'well loved' community hub that is recognised as providing valuable services to the community. However, it is also reported that there are too few activities for a wide enough range of ages, especially seniors and youth
- » Outstanding needs beyond more family focused social infrastructure, include a greater diversity of shops and services that are affordable and reflect the range of incomes in the neighbourhood with demand indicated for a mid sized grocery store, bakery, hardware, clothing shops and family and children oriented stores and restaurants
- » Lack of sufficient space and programming for older children and young people
- » Lack of affordability, not only of living units, but also of the available facilities and services is a key issue for residents.

It is important to note that the City of Vancouver has had a longstanding policy position to encourage more families to live in the downtown area. In 1992 the City of Vancouver adopted the *City's High Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines* that stipulate that one quarter of units are required to have at least two bedrooms and the city requires that developers contribute to public amenities such as child care facilities, parks and community centres. The post occupancy results in False Creek North may, therefore, be somewhat unique as that development has been influenced by the City's deliberate policy position to make higher density urban infill projects more appealing to a wider range of households including families and lower income households (the *False Creek North Official Development Plan* also includes a requirement for 12.94% affordable housing).

## Docklands Community Infrastructure Planning Final Report (2008)

The *Docklands Community Infrastructure Planning Report* (City of Melbourne and VicUrban, 2008) identifies a number of general lessons learned from case studies of higher density mixed use development projects. Those lessons include:

- » Effective higher density infill developments should include community centres, cultural and leisure facilities and public art, recreation and leisure facilities, health care (clinics, primary care, GP services), lifelong learning (school, adult education, neighbourhood house), provision of generous open space and park systems linked by pedestrian and cycle paths, quality affordable child care, affordable housing, mixed land use and social mix
- » Neighbourhood level facilities should be co-located at activity nodes and on main streets, providing good access to residential populations and contributing to a vibrant and safe street life
- » A strong focus on mixed use development and clustering of facilities. Integration with commercial development should be considered
- » There is an emphasis on planning controls that promote local connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists, giving access to open spaces, community facilities and local services
- » Special attention is given to the treatment of shared outdoor or public spaces to ensure they function well as gathering places and contribute well to social life of the precinct by promoting community networks and organisations
- » Special provisions are made for above ground and rooftop locations e.g. open play areas adjacent to indoor facilities, living landscape with trees and grass
- » Emphasis is placed on free public access to the waterfront, with extensive open space along the water's edge. These areas should be fully developed for recreational use
- » A library facility can contain a number of facilities e.g. meeting rooms, training facilities, exhibition space and active training and outreach programs. Neighbourhood level facilities should be co-located at activity nodes and on main streets.

## QUT Dimensions of Liveability: A Tool for Sustainable Cities / QUT High Density Liveability Study

The QUT *High-Density Liveability Guide* has been developed to provide residents, building managers, local authorities, designers and developers with a practical tool to assess the liveability of a dwelling, building and surrounding community. Topics investigated in the QUT *High Density Liveability Study* (Kennedy and Buys 2011) included residential satisfaction, dwelling design features, climate, sustainability practices, noise, community, access and linkages to services, walkability and transport.

Findings from the study relate specifically to inner urban high density dwellings located in subtropical Queensland. However, many of the results can be applied to the establishment of higher density inner urban development projects around Australia, including those planned for the City of Charles Sturt and other inner urban areas within Adelaide. The purpose of the tool is to engender community wellbeing and to ensure future urban developments include the characteristics that make a place where people want to live now and in the future (Kennedy and Buys 2011).

The key attributes of attractive higher density neighbourhoods identified in the QUT research were:

- » Privacy at home – Communal open spaces within high density developments were generally regarded as being well made and attractive, but were likely to be dominated by a few residents due to spatial design.
- » Sociability in the local community – While residents may not talk to their immediate neighbours, they valued the sense of community offered by their broader neighbourhood e.g. access to goods and services and being familiar with the area and local residents and workers. Interconnections and relationships between all aspects of the proposed development projects (e.g. walkability and access to services, social spaces and social isolation) is an important consideration.
- » Proximity to work and services – People wanted work and services (including amenities and recreational facilities) that are accessible by walking or bike, with residents expressing a preference for public, community facilities rather than privatised facilities. Parks, libraries, shops,

cafes and places to meet were identified as important elements of local infrastructure.

- » Being able to take advantage of the natural attributes of the climate – for both lifestyle satisfaction and environmental reasons (Kennedy and Buys 2011).

### Study implications

The QUT tool and study identify the importance of privacy at home, sociability in the community, proximity to work and services and being able to take advantage of the natural climate, in higher density neighbourhoods. They identify the important role of local authorities in helping to create a sense of community and provision of amenities and services. Strong emphasis is placed on beginning the planning process with consideration of the people, prior to the buildings.

### Sustainability versus liveability: An investigation of neighbourhood satisfaction (Howley et al 2009)

In this study residents living in newly developed relatively compact residential environments reported a greater degree of neighbourhood dissatisfaction than those who participated in a national study. They also perceived 'rural areas' as having a much higher quality of life than urban areas. However, this study found that in many instances it is not density per se that is the source of resident dissatisfaction, but rather other related factors such as environmental quality, noise, lack of community life, traffic and lack of services and facilities.

Howley et al (2009) argue that urban quality of life is critical in developing liveable, stable and vibrant communities. This involves providing well designed neighbourhoods in urban areas that offer the same (perceived) quality of life as alternative locations, to create attractive living environments that deliver both environmental sustainability and liveability.

The researchers tested resident satisfaction with their local area, using a number of demographic variables and five additional factors: accessibility (access to employment and social and leisure facilities); perception of safety; satisfaction with apartment; perception of the level of litter in the area (as a proxy for overall environmental quality); and whether respondents felt neighbours 'look out' for one another (as a proxy for community spirit).

The results of the study suggest that both dwelling and neighbourhood type features are important determinants of resident satisfaction with their neighbourhood, and that perceptions of various neighbourhood attributes far outweigh the importance of personal characteristics when explaining the reasons behind resident dissatisfaction.

Satisfaction levels with the neighbourhood were highest among respondents who:

- » Were 'very satisfied' with their apartment (this group was found to be over five times more likely to be satisfied with their area, than those who were 'less than very satisfied' with their apartment).
- » Perceived access to employment in their area as not being a problem (this group was four times more likely to be satisfied/very satisfied with their area than those who perceived access to employment as a problem in their area).

Satisfaction levels with the neighbourhood were also higher among respondents who:

- » Thought litter was not a very big problem in their area
- » Those who thought their neighbours looked out for one another
- » Those who thought it was very safe to walk alone in their area at night.

In qualitative responses, residents identified the most important issues of concern in their areas as:

- » Standards of management in the physical environment such as litter, pollution and lack of greenery
- » Noise and traffic congestion
- » Lack of certain services and facilities such as open space, secure parking, good quality food shops and facilities for children.

## Centre for the Built Environment (2007), *A Sense of Place: What residents think of their new homes, London, UK*

In a survey of 643 residents living in 33 new developments across the United Kingdom, the Centre for Architecture and the Built Environment (2006) found that residents' experience of living in a place 'is adversely affected by a lack of local amenities, public transport or public open space and, especially where sense of community is important to residents, by a lack of community facilities. They also miss out on the positive experience of living in a development that provides a strong sense of place.'

### Study implications

This study emphasises the importance of local amenities, public transport, open space and community facilities, noting that social infrastructure elements have the potential to contribute to sense of community / sense of place.

## Addressing concerns

In a South Australian study for the Land Management Corporation, Sarkissian et al identified a number of elements that they suggest can help to address some of the concerns of residents regarding medium and higher density development projects. In the *Social Issues and Trends associated with Medium to High Density Urban Living* report (2004) Sarkissian et al acknowledge negative perceptions relating to medium density housing, but comment on the potential for higher density housing to be both socially and ecologically desirable.

Higher density housing forms may offer residents greater convenience and lower maintenance. They provide greater proximity to a larger pool of neighbours, with potential benefits in terms of increased opportunities for social interaction and community safety. And they may offer cost-savings for residents in terms of home heating and cooling. The study identifies a range of social and environmental benefits relating to medium density housing including:

- » Reduced travel time for journeys to work, facilities and services
- » Reduced emissions and improved air quality
- » More opportunities for social interaction and support

- » More opportunities for provision of social infrastructure
- » Opportunities to revitalise declining inner city areas
- » Opportunities to address problems commonly associated with geographic isolation and or urban sprawl (such as greater energy efficiency relating to higher density dwellings) (Sarkissian et al 2004, page 14).

Sarkissian et al (2004) identify a number of essential components for medium density housing product. These include appropriate location, adequate on site facilities, shared and private open space, and aesthetically pleasing and integrated design that complement the existing community (Sarkissian et al 2004, page 21-2).

The authors identify a range of leading practice elements of existing medium density housing projects. Social elements of leading practice medium density housing applicable to the Adelaide context identified in the report include:

- » Location in a setting that provides a “sweetener” to offset the disadvantages of a smaller unit and smaller yard
- » Clear connections to the neighbouring community and facilities and services, particularly high quality public transport
- » An image and building form which is appropriate to the character of the neighbourhood and has an appropriate bulk and scale in relation to neighbouring buildings and structures
- » Universal Design principles (i.e. to provide accessibility for all) applied throughout to enable visitability and ageing in place
- » Opportunities to express a sense of individuality and personalisation to make the dwelling “look and feel like home” at street level or within a high rise building
- » Mechanisms that protect the safety and security of residents and the development.
- » Housing forms which acknowledge ethnic diversity and changes in the life cycle and maximise opportunities for adaptability
- » Private, shared and public spaces are clearly differentiated and clearly communicated
- » Pedestrian circulation systems foster informal social encounters near home, support incidental physical activity and protect the privacy of individual dwellings

- » Resident and visitor parking areas are sensitively designed to ensure they do not dominate the site or create access problems
- » Provision of onsite recreation facilities for adults and children, including opportunities for supervised children’s play
- » Location and design of recreational facilities and shared open space to ensure its use does not intrude on the privacy of neighbouring dwellings
- » Applicability of sustainability principles, such as provision for outdoor clothes drying, on grass car washing, natural ventilation, on site composting, etc.
- » Interior design of units that supports predictable behaviours, promotes socialising, ensures ease of maintenance and allows for personalisation (Sarkissian et al 2004, page 24-5).

## Study implications

This study highlights the benefits of medium density housing and identifies essential elements and leading practice measures, to support medium density housing as a preferred form of housing in terms of social and environmental outcomes. Essential components for medium density housing product include appropriate location, adequate on site facilities, shared and private open space, and aesthetically pleasing and integrated design that complement the existing community.

## In summary

Key considerations for medium and higher density housing in the City of Charles Sturt include:

- » The importance of retaining the key aspects of Adelaide’s Western Suburbs which are valued by residents of the City of Charles Sturt and its partners in the planning and development of TODs.
- » The need to clearly communicate the positive attributes of TODs (including their positive contribution to sense of community / sense of place), and to address existing misperceptions.
- » The importance of identifying and understanding the demographic profile and social needs of target communities, prior to planning of built form and social infrastructure.

# Liveability in urban growth areas

Local and international literature has identified a wide range of attributes of urban environments with a high level of 'liveability' (QUT, 2011; Infrastructure Australia, 2010). Liveable cities are generally regarded as 'healthy, attractive and enjoyable places for people of all ages, physical abilities and backgrounds' (Infrastructure Australia, 2010).

The Major Cities Unit's *State of Australian Cities* report (Infrastructure Australia, 2010) discusses the importance of 'productivity, liveability and sustainability' in Australia's cities. It describes liveability as involving a high level of amenity – incorporating social, environmental, public health, cultural values, specific built environment characteristics, infrastructure provision, walkability, and access to goods and services and high quality communications technology.

The QUT *High Density Liveability Study* (QUT, 2011) which explored the experiences and perspectives of apartment dwellers in inner Brisbane, described liveability as 'the wellbeing of a community and [that which] represents the characteristics that make a place where people want to live now and in the future.' The study's authors link the concept of liveability to a range of factors including quality of life, health, sense of safety, access to services, cost of living, comfortable living standards, mobility and transport, air quality and social participation.

The various dimensions of liveability are important objectives for consideration in the establishment of planned medium and higher density infill projects whose objectives include enhancing liveability and enabling sustainable lifestyles for all residents. These dimensions are identified below and discussed further in this section of the document:

- » Community diversity
- » Sense of community
- » Housing choice and affordability
- » Access, amenity and lifestyle
- » Integration of new and existing communities.

## Community diversity

In the specific context of Transit Oriented Development (TOD), the Queensland Government *TOD Guide* describes community diversity as:

The presence and degree of representation of a diverse range of different demographic, socioeconomic, cultural, employment and visitor characteristics within a transit oriented development community, with people living in an inclusive, interactive and harmonious manner (Queensland Government, 2010a).

The *TOD Guide* identifies the following characteristics of diversity among TOD communities:

- » Age (children, young people, retirees, older people)
- » Gender
- » Family structure (singles, couples with and without children, single parent families, large families)
- » Occupation (students, key workers)
- » Income
- » Cultural and linguistic background, practices, traditions and values
- » Employment (status and type).

Adelaide City Council (2002) advises against trying to find a 'precise formula' for diversity or social mix:

The characteristics that go to make up a desirable social mix are not available in a fixed formula since desirably diverse communities are antithetical to uniform communities. Various features can be present as aspects of social mix in real communities, but it should be understood that the organic nature of any community is such that the potential list of indicators is open. This is the essence of diversity.

## Why is it important?

Achieving community diversity is widely regarded as a fundamental principle of urban planning whereby communities function best when they contain a broad social mix:

...communities function best when quality of life and access to the community's resources are enjoyed by all its members. It also makes good planning sense to integrate different social groups if it can be achieved, rather than isolate them, with the collective urban experience being that concentrated social disadvantage does not work (Queensland Government, 2010a).

The argument that diversity is a desirable community characteristic is based on evidence that lack of diversity (social homogeneity particularly in relation to the concentration of disadvantage) has negative social and economic consequences. Key aspects of diversity include social diversity, socio economic diversity, housing diversity, cultural diversity, employment diversity and retail diversity.

The *TOD Guide* suggests that over time TOD precincts will be more representative of the general population:

It is anticipated that as transit systems expand and demographics and household preferences change, transit zones will begin to look more and more like today's regions, with a higher proportion of married-couple households and a lower proportion of single and non-family households (Queensland Government, 2010a).

The lack of recent Census data (post 2006) and limited available post occupancy data means it is difficult to confirm whether the demographic profile of higher density areas has already begun to change. However, anecdotally this appears to be the trend, with some municipalities observing an increase in family households in higher density living areas. Housing affordability has been identified as a critical factor in this trend.

## Achieving community diversity

Key principles for achieving community diversity and inclusion are:

- » Ensure development creates an environment that supports social inclusion and diversity, including different age, cultural, employment and income groups
- » Provide a mix of housing types, tenures<sup>1</sup> and affordability to support social diversity
- » Promote physical and social connections between new and existing communities
- » Ensure community development initiatives are carried out as an integral part of community building (Queensland Government, 2010b).

The following elements of 'good practice' are identified to promote social diversity and inclusion in TOD environments:

- » Provide community services and facilities that respond to community needs and comply with precinct design and density principles
- » Forecast population growth and work with human services and emergency agencies to plan for future community services and facilities
- » Design compact community services and facilities for a range of uses
- » Encourage community and cultural development
- » Design community services and facilities to be inclusive and flexible in use (Queensland Government, 2010b).

The QUT *Higher Density Liveability* project (QUT, 2011) has shown that people living in the higher density infill areas are predominantly singles and couple only households including some empty nesters. This QUT project found that price and product offering are the key determinants of who is living in these higher density developments. These findings suggest that if you only produce 1-2 bedroom units you are less likely to get larger or family households and that if you want to attract more families there is need to provide greater housing choice including dwellings with more bedrooms, a greater range of prices and social infrastructure and amenities that support a wide range of lifestyles.

<sup>1</sup> However, the literature suggests that sustainable renewal is more likely to be achieved by complementing tenure diversification with community building initiatives, which can contribute to a sense of community and belonging and help to sustain diversity (TOD Guide, page 17).

The QUT research has shown that people want services that are accessible and walkable and prefer public, community facilities (libraries, places to meet etc.) rather than privatised ones. Parks, libraries, shops/cafes and places to meet have been identified as important elements of 'infrastructure'. Laurie Buys suggests that there is an opportunity to work with Government through the land development agencies such as Land Management Corporation (SA) and Urban Land Development Authority (Queensland) to set some policy objectives about encouraging more mixed communities in urban infill. This includes focus on social infrastructure provision, housing product, affordability, universal design and consideration of issues like social isolation in the physical design process.

## Sense of community

Sense of community can be described as the degree to which a person feels they belong to a readily available, supportive and dependable social structure (QUT, 2011). Sense of community can be associated with connections to the physical characteristics of the built environment and the social characteristics of a place.

### Why is it important?

Feeling connected to the community you live in has been identified as a critical factor in Australians' sense of wellbeing (Australian Centre for Quality of Life, 2008). Social interaction within a community has been shown to reduce social isolation and enhance community connectedness, with interactions potentially positively or negatively influenced through neighbourhood design (QUT 2011).

Liveability benefits of encouraging a sense of community include:

- » Psychological benefits of social interaction for community members
- » Community benefits of improved social capital (relating to increased quality and quantity of social networks and connections)
- » Commercial benefits of improved perceptions of the local area, increasing demand for local goods and services (QUT 2011).

## Achieving sense of community

While direct relationships between the urban environment and sense of community can be difficult to establish, a number of key associations have been made (Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils, 2007). These include:

- » Designing walkable neighbourhoods – walking to and from local destinations creates opportunities for informal contact and casual encounters with other local residents
- » Providing accessible community facilities and attractive public spaces that create opportunities for people to meet and connect with one another or participate in community events
- » Proximity to employment as long commute times between home and employment mean people have less time and energy for participation in social networks and community activities
- » Sequential development patterns enable new residents to link with existing communities through using established facilities and services such as shops, cafes, neighbourhood centres, schools, libraries, sporting facilities and clubs
- » Dissecting communities with busy arterial roads, railway lines or other substantial barriers can sever community networks and access to facilities.

The *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide* (p.89) emphasises the importance of:

Shared spaces that can be used for activities and cultural events to help build community cohesion. Walkable neighbourhoods, active street frontages and the establishment of community gardens, particularly in higher density housing precincts, will help facilitate social interaction.

The *QUT High Density Liveability Study* offers a number of key suggestions for local authorities to encourage a greater sense of community in higher density developments. These include:

- » Develop locally relevant urban design guidelines to facilitate walkable neighbourhoods/precincts; Ensure high density dwellings are located within areas designed with accessible and desirable community spaces
- » Provide opportunities for interaction and observation / informality
- » Create sheltered, shady and direct routes to popular, high frequency destinations and services

- » Ensure adequate lighting at night on major paths
- » Integrate Crime Prevention Through Design (CPTED) principles:
  - Casual surveillance
  - Land use mix and activity generators
  - Definition of use and ownership
  - Lighting
  - Way finding
- » Implement Neighbourhood Watch initiatives in the local area
- » Provide rate relief for residents who forgo private vehicle
- » Provide discounts for use of local services

## More than physical planning

While the physical (urban planning and urban design) foundations are important to creating places that foster social interaction and connection, it is becoming more widely recognised that achieving social goals such as sense of community and social cohesion requires more than a purely physical approach to planning. Emily Talen, a US academic who has written extensively about New Urbanism, argues that although planning and design can create situations where people come into contact with each other, this is not sufficient to ensure that this contact develops into community relationships (Talen, 1999). While physical planning and design can create places where people come into close proximity with each other, this does not necessarily mean that any form of actual social interaction occurs. So while design can provide a physical foundation for addressing social issues, it cannot, in itself, enhance social resources and capital.

Leading practice recognises the need to stimulate and support 'community building' in new neighbourhoods, by providing resources for community development workers and programs, in addition to providing facilities and public spaces for social interaction and community activities. Community development programs commonly provide welcome initiatives for new residents, set up community activities and support groups, establish local organisations and support community events that draw a range of people together. Resources for community development may be provided by developers, local councils, State Government, or government funding programs, or a combination of all.

## Housing choice and affordability

Housing affordability is a critical consideration in choice of housing for both owner occupiers and people renting their homes. The 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide describes affordable housing as "housing that is appropriate to the needs of households with low and moderate incomes (that is, up to 120 per cent of gross annual median income)" and identifies the indicative affordable house purchase price for these groups as \$255,000 (at the time of writing the 30 Year Plan).

Research suggests that while some households may choose to live in apartments for lifestyle and amenity reasons, others may choose higher density housing as a trade off for location and or affordability. Higher density housing in the private sector is highly segmented with a number of dominant sub markets, each reflecting the various choices and constraints relevant to higher density residents.

### Why is it important?

The *30 Year Plan* seeks to provide a diversity of dwelling types to enable housing choice for people who are at various stages of their lives, with higher densities concentrated around transport hubs. The plan sets out two key strategies for increasing access to housing that is affordable:

- » Increasing the volume of supply and matching this with population growth and change
- » Policies to establish affordable housing which targets low-income and vulnerable households.

The *Social Planning Report for Bowen Hills TOD* (Andrea Young Planning Consultants, 2008), prepared for the Urban Land Development Authority in Brisbane, identifies "social mix as essential to developing cohesive and socially sustainable communities" with a socially mixed community expected "to house families of different sizes and types, couples, single people, people who work at home, retirees, ageing people and students, and households with a diversity of income levels and cultural backgrounds". The report continues that an urban environment that offers diverse housing types and tenure options, across a range of prices, can accommodate people from a variety of backgrounds and can also cater for lifestyle changes with people not having to move from an area in order to access a different form of housing.

However, based on a review of near city higher density residential developments in Australia, the Bowen Hills report found that they “exhibit a fairly homogenous (25-55 year old singles and couples with no children) and mobile resident population, with a low representation of families with children, young people and older people” with a “majority of properties sold as investments with a corresponding high rate of rental occupancy and high turnover rates and low levels of affordability.”

These findings reinforce the need to consider a wide range of measures to promote greater diversity in new urban infill developments. This includes exploring the role of government in identifying ‘targets’ for housing diversity, perhaps accompanied with some form of incentive. As case studies from places like False Creek North in Vancouver have shown policies for increasing diversity in high density urban development can be successful but must also be accompanied by commensurate strategies for the appropriate provision of social infrastructure to support a more diverse community.

### Achieving housing choice and affordability

The *Docklands Community Infrastructure Planning Final Report for Melbourne Docklands* (City of Melbourne and VicUrban, 2008) comments on the importance of diversity in referring to VicUrban’s approach to social sustainability:

VicUrban<sup>2</sup> have identified the importance of achieving a mix of people, housing and activity that strengthens the social, cultural and economic vitality of the area and its connections to the broader community. Increased diversity assists in achieving inclusive and socially equitable community. Housing mix is a vital component to achieving diversity.

The *Social Planning Report for Bowen Hills TOD* identifies a number of strategies to achieve greater housing diversity including:

- » Provide a range of dwelling types with an emphasis on high density housing
- » Achieve a mix in the size and type of dwellings suitable for family households, group households, older households and for the operation of home based businesses
- » Achieve a proportion of affordable housing, including social housing and housing for people on low to medium incomes
- » Support ageing in place by promoting adaptable housing

2 The Victorian equivalent of the Land Management Corporation

for older people and other people with disabilities

- » Promote high quality residential amenity with attention to visual and noise privacy, accessibility to private and common outdoor space, visual outlook, unit layout, design and storage and sociability within apartments
- » Achieve housing developments that address the street, create a human scale, connecting with and activating street frontages (avoiding separated or clustered developments fenced from the street)
- » Ensure design promotes a comfortable micro-climate in outdoor areas and manages the visual and noise impacts associated with mixed land use environments.

The *Social Planning Report for Bowen Hills TOD* goes on to identify the following option to ensure greater dwelling mix:

Residential developments that provide 20 or more dwellings should achieve a minimum of 15% to be provided as 3 bedroom dwellings and 2.5% of the total number of dwellings are to be provided as dwellings with 4 or more bedrooms. These dwellings should consider design to suit a range of households, such as families with children, work at home occupiers, or shared ‘group’ accommodation households.

These policy interventions are important as, from the post occupancy information that is available, and from the analysis of Census data highlighted in section 2, it is evident that higher density urban infill locations exhibit a lack of diversity with socio-economic and demographic homogeneity being a key characteristic. This suggests that some form of intervention whether through targets for affordable housing and/or by ensuring that the dwelling stock, amenities and infrastructure that attract a more diverse population are evident.

While affordability is a key element of promoting diversity, dwelling type and variety is widely recognised as important. Professor Laurie Buys<sup>3</sup> of the Queensland University of *Technology’s High Density Liveability Study* (QUT, 2011 and Kennedy and Buys, 2011) suggests that a key reason for the homogenous population profile of higher density developments is the uniformity of product and price offering which are the key determinants of who lives in urban growth area developments.

3 Personal communication with Professor Buys for this project March 2011

## Access, amenity and lifestyle

In highly liveable communities, provision of social infrastructure (including community facilities, community development initiatives and human services) in the neighbourhood is complemented by access to a range of other amenities and lifestyle factors such as employment, public transport, walking and cycle paths, a range of restaurants, cafes and shops, recreational facilities, open space areas, and other natural environmental attributes. High amenity communities may be located in close proximity to key attractions, such as established urban villages/heritage precincts, parks, and beaches.

### Why is it important?

Liveability within communities is enhanced by amenities, services and recreational facilities which are accessible and socially inclusive. The liveability benefits of providing accessible amenities and services in the local area include:

- » Reduced car use and physical health benefits for community members
- » Psychological benefits from increased social interaction through accessing local goods and services for community members (QUT, 2011).

### Achieving access, amenity and lifestyle

The *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide* seeks to create vibrant mixed use precincts, for instance, locating shops and services under residential apartments around railway stations, providing walkable neighbourhoods and easy access to services.

Accessibility is recognised as a fundamental feature of TODs and similar medium to higher density urban infill environments. Convenient access to a range of community facilities and services, jobs, shopping, leisure, and housing options is an essential and defining feature of TODs and similar urban environments.

The QUT *High Density Liveability Study* (QUT, 2011) offers a number of suggestions for greater levels of amenities and services. These include:

- » Develop locally relevant urban design guidelines to facilitate development of neighbourhoods / precincts with a good mix of use including a range of amenities
- » Ensure high density dwellings are located near a range of readily accessible high quality amenities such as playgrounds and parks, diverse range of shops and businesses providing a range of goods and services
- » Create sheltered and shady direct routes to popular, frequent destinations and services.
- » Ensure high quality walking and cycling infrastructure for good accessibility to local amenities
- » Ensure adequate lighting at night on major paths
- » Provide discounts to residents using local services
- » Ensure public community spaces and services are accessible and socially inclusive

The *Social Planning Report for Bowen Hills TOD* (Andrea Young Planning Consultants, 2008) in Brisbane suggests that to create amenity in high density neighbourhoods “it is essential to achieve quality in the detail of residential design” and that it is “such detail that influences resident satisfaction.” The report identifies the following elements:

- » Balcony size and privacy
- » Visual and acoustic privacy
- » Quality common outdoor open space and children’s play on site
- » Ability to furnish rooms
- » Adequacy of storage
- » Keeping of pets
- » Promotion of sociability within buildings.

## Integration of new and existing communities

Urban planning alone cannot create cohesive local communities with strong social networks and high levels of community involvement. However, social cohesion can be facilitated and encouraged by some aspects of the built environment, such as walkable neighbourhoods and appealing places, where people can meet and gather formally or informally. At the same time, social cohesion can be undermined by some forms of development, such as housing projects which segregate disadvantaged groups, and transport corridors which sever community links or create barriers to connectivity.

The *TOD Guide: Research Report* (Queensland Government, 2010c:7) states:

The creation of physical and social connections with the surrounding community will contribute to cohesion between new and old communities. This connectivity and integration can be further enhanced through community and cultural development in collaboration efforts with residents and workers, to embed meaningful local cultural values in place, enrich their sense of belonging, and support the formation of social relationships.

## Why is it important?

The *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide* (p.89) recognises that the development of new communities alongside established neighbourhoods will necessarily involve the design of infill developments to enable easy movement between neighbourhoods, ensuring facilities and services can be shared by all residents. New infill projects may provide improved amenity for residents of established areas, and shared spaces will be used to encourage social interaction and encourage social cohesion among new and existing communities.

It is important to recognise that urban infill projects, by their very nature, occur within a physical and social context. These are developments that take place in, and have the potential to change, surrounding, existing neighbourhoods. The review of demographic characteristics and post occupancy information in earlier sections of this report indicate that many of these urban infill projects are appealing to a particular demographic that includes younger, smaller households with professional occupations and higher incomes. While, the themes identified

in this document support proactive measures being taken to ensure greater diversity in new development, the potential for 'enclaves' (whether based on income, status, or some other variable) must be considered.

## Achieving integration between new and existing communities

The focus of planning should not only be on what occurs within that particular urban infill development site, but how the creation of a new community there will impact on its existing, surrounding community. The research cited here suggests that there are potential benefits as well as possible costs that need to be considered and planned for. In a presentation to the Landcom Sustainability Forum in 2005, Alison Ziller (Ziller, 2005), suggested that planners:

Ask how the new area can be merged with the old, how the new area can be a benefit to the existing, how the new residents can mingle easily with existing residents for example by sharing facilities and services which cater for both. Starting from these questions, it is clear that not all facilities and services for new residents should be 'on site', some should sit strategically between old and new and some should be off site.

The role of social infrastructure in integrating new and existing communities is a critical one. Social infrastructure can provide focal points for community activity and places for people to meet and connect. These focal points are particularly important in new communities where links between neighbours have not yet been forged. The NHS Healthy Urban Development Unit states that 'Social infrastructure has a key role to play in promoting social cohesion, bringing different socio-economic and ethnic groups together, and creating a true sense of community belongingness' (NHS Healthy Urban Development Unit, 2006). While research suggests that it is very difficult to create a sense of community (Rosenblatt et al 2008) providing some of the places where friendships and neighbourhood networks can be formed is an important catalyst in enabling community to develop. The *TOD Guide* (Queensland Government, 2010c:7) also suggests thinking beyond the physical facilities to consider the role of community and cultural development in promoting integration between new and existing communities:

The creation of physical and social connections between new and existing communities will contribute to cohesion between new and old communities. This connectivity and integration can be further enhanced through community and cultural development in collaborative efforts with residents and workers, to embed meaningful local cultural values in place, enrich their sense of belonging, and support the formation of social relationships.

The relative proximity of new and existing communities in urban infill settings can be advantageous as it does mean that new and existing communities will be required to share the same facilities and spaces in many cases. This can be utilised as an opportunity for building relationships, however, if those facilities, spaces and associated infrastructure are not sufficiently funded then the extra demand created by new users may well manifest as a potentially divisive source of tension. The role of social infrastructure in higher density urban development is explored further in the next section of the report.

## Landcom's Social Sustainability Policy

Landcom's approach to social sustainability recognises the critical importance of integrating new and existing communities. Landcom defines socially sustainable places as "connected places where relative inequalities are minimised, and where the population is diverse and supported, and has access to appropriate opportunities".

Landcom's approach to social sustainability is based on the internationally recognised 'social determinants of health' and their application to land use. A key objective is to ensure that new development minimises inequality and does not have a negative social impact on existing and future communities.

Socially sustainable developments are considered to be those which:

- » Provide opportunity for mixed communities with diversity in housing and land use
- » Provide homes that will enable ageing in place
- » Provide homes for moderate income households
- » Integrate socially, culturally and physically with the existing community
- » Ensure access between new and existing areas
- » Contribute towards community infrastructure which addresses community needs
- » Benefit the existing community members as well as the new.

## In summary

The concept of 'liveability' is central to creating sustainable new urban infill communities. 'Liveability' is described here as "the wellbeing of a community and that which represents the characteristics that make a place where people want to live now and in the future" (QUT, 2011).

The themes under that 'liveability' heading that have been found to be particularly relevant to planning for urban growth areas are:

- » Community diversity
- » Sense of community
- » Housing choice and affordability
- » Access, amenity and lifestyle
- » Integration of new and existing communities.

# The role of social infrastructure in urban growth areas

Many of the themes identified in the previous section relate to broad social issues such as diversity, inclusion, access, amenity and integration. Social infrastructure has an important role in helping to address these issues. The role of social infrastructure in TOD environments has been recognised (Queensland Government, 2010b) including the importance of:

- » Providing a range of community services and facilities that respond to community need
- » Working with human service agencies to plan for future community services and facilities based on forecast population growth
- » Investigating innovative models of compact community services and facilities that are appropriate to, and well integrated with, the TOD environment
- » Designing community services and facilities to be inclusive, flexible and accessible
- » Encouraging community and cultural development through the design of appropriate community spaces but also through resourcing and programming.

Leading practice recognises the need to stimulate and support 'community building' in new neighbourhoods, by providing resources for community development workers and programs, in addition to providing facilities and public spaces for social interaction and community activities. Community development programs commonly provide welcome initiatives for new residents, set up community activities and support groups, establish local organisations and support community events that draw a range of people together. Resources for community development may be provided by developers, local councils, State Government, or government funding programs, or a combination of all.

In focus group research conducted with residents of two master planned communities in Victoria and Adelaide, Williams and Pocock (2009) found that "physical and social infrastructure can facilitate or impede the development of community and social capital by the way it enables people to come together" and that 'familiarity' among residents led to greater feelings of safety, trust and a sense of belonging. Williams and Pocock also found that "this familiarity was facilitated by centralised facilities and recreation areas as well as community groups and events that brought people together."

## What do we mean by social infrastructure?

Social infrastructure includes a wide range of services and facilities that meet community needs for education, health, social support, recreation, cultural expression, social interaction and community development. Social infrastructure (including schools, community centres, libraries, community health centres and recreation facilities) are essential features of holistically planned communities and contribute to overall community wellbeing.

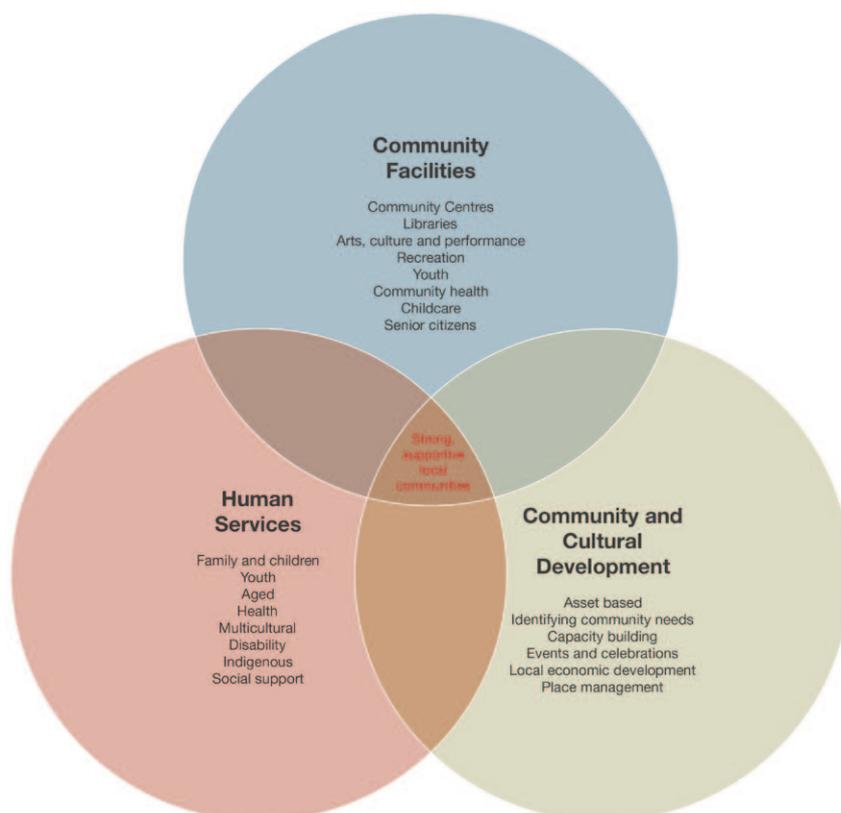
Also considered to be social infrastructure are some of the basic services that are essential to the functioning of a community. These include local shops, pharmacies, post offices, banking facilities and other services.

For the purposes of the Planning Social Infrastructure for Urban Growth Areas project, social infrastructure includes three broad, interrelated categories:

- » Community facilities – the 'hard infrastructure' component that includes a variety of buildings and associated grounds used for community purposes
- » Community development – the processes that assists community members to identify and address their needs
- » Human services – the formal services that provide support, advice, education and information to a wide range of groups within a community.

The diagram on the following page shows these key elements of social infrastructure and emphasises the importance of the interrelationships between them and how they all play an important role in creating strong and supportive local communities.

## SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE



### Why is it important?

Provision of social infrastructure is a key element of liveability, which is critical in delivering quality and socially sustainable urban outcomes in newly developed areas. The planning and provision of appropriate social infrastructure is therefore a key consideration in the planning of the new higher density infill developments proposed for Adelaide.

Social infrastructure planning and provision contributes to the development of healthy and sustainable communities by ensuring that population growth is supported by a network of facilities and services that are accessible, affordable and responsive to local community needs. Investment in social infrastructure is considered to be “essential for the health, well-being and economic prosperity of communities. It plays an important role in bringing people together, developing

social capital, maintaining quality of life, and developing the skills and resilience essential to strong communities” (Queensland Government, 2007).

The Greater Sydney Metropolitan Strategy Health Impact Assessment describes social infrastructure as playing a key role in meeting basic community needs, the development of social capital and community capacity. Social services and facilities are believed to “provide resources and the opportunity for social interaction, cooperation and the development of ownership of place or sense of community” (Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils, 2007). Social infrastructure has been described as the “glue” that can bring together and strengthen local communities (NHS London Healthy Urban Development Unit, 2006).

## Achieving good social infrastructure provision

Social infrastructure can provide focal points for community activity and places for people to meet and connect. These focal points are particularly important in new communities where links between neighbours have not yet been forged. The NHS Healthy Urban Development Unit (2006) states that “Social infrastructure has a key role to play in promoting social cohesion, bringing different socio-economic and ethnic groups together, and creating a true sense of community belongingness”. While research suggests that it is very difficult to create a sense of community (Rosenblatt et al, 2008) providing some of the places where friendships and neighbourhood networks can be formed is an important catalyst in enabling community to develop.

Social infrastructure can act as an ‘attractor’ which encourages people to live in or visit a particular area. Given that a key component of a sustainable community is diversity, providing a range of quality social infrastructure can help to attract a diverse population – of different ages, cultures and socio-economic backgrounds. The NHS London Healthy Urban Development Unit (2006) suggest that “People want to live in areas that are served by good schools, good health services, high quality open spaces and recreational activities, all in accessible and convenient locations”.

Social infrastructure can provide a mechanism (along with a range of physical planning, design and policy approaches) for establishing links between new and existing communities. Research on master planned communities has expressed some concern about ‘elite’ developments which may exacerbate social divisions and inequity across the region (Gwyther, 2005). Planning for social infrastructure should give consideration to the needs of the wider area and provision should attempt to address existing as well as projected needs. New facilities can encourage existing, surrounding residents into a new area, assisting with integration and the breakdown of physical and social barriers. Similarly, social infrastructure can also be located outside the new areas, encouraging new residents to use and become familiar with the existing, surrounding community.

## Social infrastructure in urban growth areas

The policy trend, as captured by the *30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide*, towards significant proportions of new development being in the form of higher density urban infill locations requires a rethinking of social infrastructure planning and provision. New approaches that consider how denser, infill projects will affect demand for social infrastructure and how they will integrate with existing communities. Solutions will need to take account of the different land economics with more compact forms of development likely to require different models of social infrastructure to not only fit the more dense urban form but to allow for increased land value and an emphasis on land efficiency. Land area allocations, that have become standard practice in greenfield areas, are inappropriate and impractical in more urban settings. All of these considerations occur within the physical and social context of existing communities that have their own social demands and their own existing, varying levels of social infrastructure provision.

In a study for Brisbane City Council, Andrea Young et al (2008) found the following service, facilities and community engagement issues important in supporting diverse communities in TOD environments:

- » The capacity to retrofit existing community facilities to address changing demographics (e.g. fewer seniors, higher proportions of small households, more young adults, more shared households)
- » Amenity and compatibility of social infrastructure must be functional, people oriented, user friendly, welcoming and attractive
- » Provision of well located on site space and facilities suited to the demographics of residents
- » Integrated facilities which are multipurpose and provide services, opportunities and spaces for multiple activities and programs for all groups
- » The provision of physical and interactive opportunities for old and new communities and representatives of diverse submarkets to meet and interact

- » Transitional engagement, capacity building and planning with existing residents and groups will be key to achieving equity and other social outcomes
- » Nurturing and strengthening the social networks and social capital which will sustain social infrastructure
- » Recognition that intensification and transit orientation does not necessarily result in increased contact with neighbours nor a sense of community
- » Development of a unique identity that makes the area special and instils a sense of community pride
- » The opportunity to participate in civic life has been identified as a core human need, and essential to the psychological health of individuals and communities.

Trends in social infrastructure provision in higher density infill areas are for flexible, multipurpose, community hubs which are centrally located with good access to transport and well integrated with other activity generators such as shops and co-located with other community uses including libraries, schools and child care.

Given a current lack of good quality post occupancy information and some uncertainty regarding exactly who is going to live in these developments, social infrastructure in urban infill areas should be planned to be multipurpose, flexible and capable of adapting to changing community needs. Flexible, multipurpose spaces that can be used for a wide range of uses throughout various times of the day including morning exercise classes, playgroups, Pilates and yoga, adult day care, English language classes, after school care, afternoon sport and cultural activities, evening classes and meetings for community groups are important.

Urban infill areas provide opportunities for social infrastructure to be included as key elements of town centre type development in locations that are highly visible, accessible and central. Research for projects like the Idea Stores and Vinegar Hill Library and Community Centre (see the Case Study document prepared as part of this project) suggests people want to combine trips to community facilities with other activities such as shopping. The Idea Stores have been influenced by retail models that create interesting and attractive environments that are easily accessible and enjoyable to use.

The Vinegar Hill Library and Community Centre in Rouse Hill Town Centre (New South Wales) also demonstrates how multipurpose community facilities can be successfully included in central town centre areas and designed in a way that balances good community facility access and presence while still preserving valuable, high profile town centre space for retail uses.

Much of the social infrastructure planning in South East Queensland relies on the Queensland Government (2007) *Implementation Guidelines no. 5: Social Infrastructure* prepared by the then Office of Urban Management. While those guidelines are designed more for greenfield development, interviews with Queensland's Urban Land Development Authority (Queensland equivalent of the Land Management Corporation), indicate that they are also adapted for use in higher density urban infill, and TOD, projects. The guidelines do include a section of providing social infrastructure in urban infill areas as shown on the following page.

## Social infrastructure in higher density infill areas

Queensland's Urban Land Development Authority bases its approach to providing social infrastructure in higher density infill areas on the SEQ Implementation Guideline no. 5: Social Infrastructure Planning (Queensland Government, 2007). The guideline emphasises that **the provision of social infrastructure in infill areas will be heavily influenced by the infrastructure that already exists around them**. The guideline identifies the following unique considerations for social infrastructure planning in higher density infill areas:

### Utilising existing infrastructure

- » The comparative rates of provision applied to the new community should take into account the availability of any spare capacity in existing social infrastructure
- » Sharing existing community facilities will help to integrate new and existing residents, and can enliven a declining or ageing community
- » There may be a need to upgrade or modify existing social infrastructure to accommodate the particular needs of the new community, which may differ from existing residents
- » It will be important to involve both existing and new users of facilities in their planning and design. This will also assist community development and integration of new residents into an existing community
- » Good access to higher-level facilities, particularly libraries and cultural facilities, will be important in meeting the needs of the incoming population
- » Generally, infill areas should be able to make use of existing school infrastructure, especially as relatively low proportions of young people are expected to be generated by this form of development

### Creating new facilities

- » Where infill populations are high enough or large brownfield sites are developed, it may be appropriate to provide some items of social infrastructure to specifically serve the new population. This provision will tend to be at the neighbourhood level, and will promote a sense of community among new residents
- » Where possible, new social infrastructure should be connected and integrated with the surrounding area
- » As for an activity centre or transit oriented community (TOC), medium to high density living will create a need for more public spaces for social and recreational activities. This will be important in encouraging casual interaction between neighbours and other community members
- » Facilities for young people may still be important in infill areas, although these may take the form of cultural or

leisure-based centres, and could be expected to cater for existing residents as well as new residents

- » Local level meeting rooms may be appropriate in opportunistic, dispersed locations, some in the private sector. These will need to be available after hours
- » As with a TOC, fewer services will be required for children, however open spaces will need to be provided for children and young people
- » Facilities and services for the aged may be important for existing and some new residents. Empty nesters may look more to recreational and learning opportunities in the private sector.

### Using the public domain

- » Walking/cycling to facilities will be important in enlivening the urban domain and increasing the feeling of public safety and wellbeing
- » Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles should be used to ensure the development of the urban domain and community facilities is safe and to encourage the use of outdoor space for social interaction
- » Public art, including interactive public art for children, will be important in improving the quality of the urban domain, as will affordable art and performance opportunities for young people

### Integration

- » Where new facilities are required, they should be grouped together in a central location to reinforce the identity of community foci or neighbourhoods and increase the opportunity for access by public transport
- » Land prices will be moderately high, so co-location and creative use of public space will also be important. Some facilities, such as meeting rooms, could be expected to be located in multi-storey buildings
- » Opportunities will need to be taken for developing social infrastructure in private developments and commercial locations.

## Planning for more diverse populations

The *Northshore Hamilton UDA Social Planning Report* (Andrea Young, 2008b) notes that there are indications of a transitioning over time in TODs from adult only households to greater proportions of family households. The *TOD Guide* (Queensland Government, 2010a) states that “more and more people of all types of backgrounds, income levels, occupation and so forth want to live near public transport”. Additional anecdotal evidence from Australia suggests an increasing number of family households beginning to live in higher density areas with affordability pressures in many of Australia’s capital cities thought to be a driving force behind this trend. In community facilities planning projects for town centre areas (Elton Consulting, 2011) some of the different forms of community facility needs generated in higher density areas include:

- » Demand for affordable venues for children’s birthday parties and similar functions that are difficult to accommodate in smaller living spaces with restricted private open space
- » Meeting space for a range of activities including for strata and body corporate groups.

The *TOD Guide: Research Report* (Queensland Government, 2010c) notes that service and facility needs vary significantly between the different population groups that may occupy a TOD precinct:

- » Families with children will require access to child care, primary schools, health services and community facilities like libraries
- » Younger people will need secondary schools, entertainment and leisure facilities and access to a range of education and training facilities
- » Students will need access to health services, education and training facilities
- » People in older age groups will need access to suitable support services, health care and a range of community and cultural facilities particularly places to meet and the type of leisure and recreational facilities that support healthy ageing
- » Culturally diverse groups will need access to places of worship, support networks and support services.

## In summary

Social infrastructure is a critical component of planning for urban infill areas. Social infrastructure has the potential to play an important role in integrating new and existing communities which is likely to be a key issue in the projected growth for the City of Charles Sturt and other Adelaide councils.

Planning social infrastructure in urban infill areas starts with understanding the projected population and developing a thorough understanding of existing provision and any gaps, unmet needs or oversupply.

The infill setting also requires consideration of a balance between development of new social infrastructure in new areas and the enhancement of established facilities in existing areas.

Trends in social infrastructure provision in higher density infill areas are for flexible, multipurpose, community hubs which are centrally located with good access to transport and well integrated with other activity generators such as shops and co-located with other community uses including libraries, schools and child care

Social infrastructure in urban infill areas should be planned to be multipurpose, flexible and capable of adapting to changing community needs. Flexible, multipurpose spaces that can be used for a wide range of uses throughout various times of the day.

Urban infill areas provide opportunities for social infrastructure to be included as key elements of town centre type development in locations that are highly visible, accessible and central. Research suggests people want to combine trips to community facilities with other activities such as shopping. New facility models are influenced by retail models that create interesting and attractive environments that are easily accessible and enjoyable to use

Multipurpose community facilities can be successfully included in central town centre areas and designed in a way that balances good community facility access and presence while still preserving valuable, high profile town centre space for retail uses.

# Planning for future urban growth areas

Based on the research undertaken for this project a number of key themes have emerged that can help to guide future planning for urban growth areas for the City of Charles Sturt and other Adelaide councils. These themes have been grouped under the 'liveability' banner here, with 'liveability' described as "the wellbeing of a community and that which represents the characteristics that make a place where people want to live now and in the future" (QUT, 2011).

The themes under that 'liveability' heading that have been found to be particularly relevant to planning for urban growth areas are:

- » Community diversity
- » Sense of community
- » Housing choice and affordability
- » Access, amenity and lifestyle
- » Integration of new and existing communities.

Social infrastructure has been found to play a role in achieving each of these themes.

One of the key observations is that there appears to be a mismatch between what the academic and policy literature say is desirable (higher density communities that are mixed and contain a diverse range of household types) and what the Census data and some of the post occupancy research suggests about who is actually living in these higher density urban infill locations (couple only, higher income households with professional occupations with few older people and fewer children). It is also interesting to note that an exception to this is False Creek North in Vancouver where the City of Vancouver has taken a deliberate and long term policy stance to create more diverse, mixed income higher density urban communities (as enshrined by their 1992 policy on *High Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines*).

Research undertaken in Queensland (QUT, 2011 and Queensland Government, 2010), where the level of growth has seen the allocation of significant resources to understanding this issue, has suggested that governments, working in partnership with others, need to be proactive to ensure that higher density urban infill developments become more diverse, and sustainable, communities. This includes a focus on affordability, universal design, access to services and facilities and consideration of issues such as social isolation in the physical design process.

Housing product diversity, amenity and social infrastructure have been identified as playing a critical role in attracting a more diverse population to higher density areas. Laurie Buys, from QUT's *Higher Density Liveability Study*, has suggested<sup>4</sup> starting the planning process with a focus on the people – "start with the people and then go to the buildings" - reinforcing the importance of understanding community needs before developing design and planning solutions. This reflects the Jan Gehl philosophy of 'life, space, buildings', as a useful order for thinking about planning for higher density urban infill and renewal areas and provides some useful guidance that will be carried through to the next stages of this project.

It is recognised that although the spatial planning dimension is obviously critical, an approach that goes beyond a purely physical planning outlook is essential. *The TOD Guide: Research Report* (Queensland Government, 2010c) concludes with some further important guidance for consideration by Adelaide councils and the South Australian Government:

What is clear is that for community diversity to be achieved, and for TOD precincts to reach their full potential in achieving strong communities, these developments must be conceptualised as more than a land use concept, be supported by a range of mechanisms, and be embedded in community engagement and collaboration between stakeholders. Holistic management of implementation processes and community development initiatives must also be put in place and actively pursued and monitored throughout the life of the development.

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In a personal interview conducted for this project (March 2011)

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# Appendix A

## Summary population profile

Table 4. Selection of inner urban areas characterised by recent infill development – Resident profile

Indicator	Zetland (State Suburb), Sydney	Rhodes (State Suburb), Sydney	Subiaco (State Suburb), Perth	Kelvin Grove (State Suburb), Brisbane	Kangaroo Point (State Suburb), Brisbane	Docklands (State Suburb), Melbourne	Charles Sturt (LGA)	Australia
<b>Population</b>	2,614	1,668	7,629	4,246	6,868	3,939	100,529	19,855,288
<b>Age groups (%)</b>								
0-4	4.9	6.2	4.7	4.7	2.2	1.7	5.1	6.3
5-14	4.5	6.8	7.5	6.1	3.7	2.3	11.1	13.5
15-24	17.9	15.5	13.1	28.2	17.6	23.9	12.2	13.6
25-54	64.7	54.1	48.0	45.2	53.0	60.4	41.0	42.2
55-64	5.5	7.2	13.0	6.6	12.5	8.9	11.7	11.0
65+	2.6	10.2	13.8	9.2	10.9	2.7	19.0	13.3
<b>Median age (years)</b>	31	32	39	28	34	30	41	34
<b>Family structure (%)</b>								
Couples with children	27.5	38.9	33.2	32.7	19.7	14.2	41.1	45.3
Couples without children	56.9	48.6	52.7	46.7	64.2	72.0	39.4	37.2
One parent families	9.2	9.2	11.3	13.3	10.7	5.0	17.4	15.8
Other families	6.4	3.3	2.9	7.2	5.3	8.8	2.1	1.7
<b>Household type (%)</b>								
Family household	50.7	61.8	47.4	45.7	36.0	41.3	63.1	67.4
Lone person household	21.6	20.1	35.0	26.3	30.3	26.9	29.7	22.9
Group household	14.1	4.6	6.5	19.0	10.7	10.2	3.4	3.7
<b>Average household size (no. people)</b>	2.2	2.4	2.0	2.2	1.9	1.9	2.3	2.6
<b>Income (\$)</b>								
High income households (i.e. earning \$2,500+ per week) (%)	25.0	22.4	27.6	16.4	20.2	28.9	5.9	10.0
Median household income (weekly)	1,721	1,565	1,502	1,136	1,264	1,661	1,027	1,264
<b>Highest education qualification achieved (%)<sup>1</sup></b>								
Bachelor or Higher degree	44.0	44.0	49.0	46.0	25.6	41.0	11.3	14.0
<b>Employment (%)<sup>2</sup></b>								
Unemployed	4.3	6.4	3.2	5.6	4.3	3.0	5.3	5.2
Labour force participation	71.0	62.3	64.3	68.4	61.9	67.0	55.4	60.4

Indicator	Zetland (State Suburb), Sydney	Rhodes (State Suburb), Sydney	Subiaco (State Suburb), Perth	Kelvin Grove (State Suburb), Brisbane	Kangaroo Point (State Suburb), Brisbane	Docklands (State Suburb), Melbourne	Charles Sturt (LGA)	Australia
<b>Private occupied dwellings (%)</b>								
Low density (Separate house)	0.6	24.5	46.1	53.6	14.0	0.0	72.5	8.4
Medium density (Semi/Townhouse)	22.8	14.6	20.9	9.6	3.8	0.0	15.3	28.2
Higher density (Apartment)	76.6	60.9	32.7	35.7	80.7	99.9	11.7	62.3
<b>Housing tenure (%)</b>								
Fully owned	10.8	16.7	24.8	17.0	14.9	5.6	36.8	32.6
Being purchased	29.2	28.5	22.9	22.2	15.0	11.9	26.4	32.2
Rented	46.5	41.9	38.9	51.5	51.1	64.5	29.0	27.2
<b>Cultural diversity (%)</b>								
Indigenous population	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	1.0	0.2	1.2	2.3
Overseas born	41.4	38.6	30.9	23.2	29.1	36.1	25.5	22.2
English only spoken at home	54.9	50.9	80.0	75.6	69.4	56.1	70.4	78.5
Main languages spoken other than English	Mandarin, Cantonese, Indonesian, Korean, Spanish	Korean, Cantonese, Mandarin, Arabic, Italian	Italian, Cantonese, Mandarin, French, German	Mandarin, Cantonese, Italian, Korean, German	Mandarin, Korean, Cantonese, Japanese, Spanish	Mandarin, Cantonese, Indonesian, Korean, Italian	Italian, Greek, Vietnamese, Serbian, Polish	Italian, Greek, Cantonese, Arabic, Mandarin

## (Footnotes)

- 1 Persons aged 15 years and over.
- 2 Persons aged 15 years and over.