

Case Studies

SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN URBAN GROWTH AREAS

PREPARED FOR CITY OF CHARLES STURT

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This project was a collaborative effort between the cities of Charles Sturt, Onkaparinga, Playford and Salisbury with the Local Government Association of South Australia. The following members of the project reference group played a key role in guiding and progressing the project:

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» Introduction

This case study research is one component of the overall Planning Social Infrastructure and Community Services for Urban Growth Areas project being undertaken for the City of Charles Sturt and jointly funded by Charles Sturt, City of Playford, City of Salisbury, City of Onkaparinga and the South Australian Local Government Association. While there is literature available around the subject of social infrastructure and community service provision, it is believed that a South Australian focused best practice guide drawing from the lessons of local, national and international examples, would assist councils in South Australia to respond to the changing needs and expectations of the community.

This project seeks to draw together national and international literature on urban infill development, with a focus on community development and community service provision. These will be used to identify best practice examples and collate a list of recommendations from past experiences. These examples will then be used as case studies for comparison with similar South Australian examples, to help illustrate transferable elements and a way forward. It is proposed that a set of principles, a model for service planning and a guide for implementation will be prepared.

For this project, social infrastructure has been defined as including three broad, interrelated categories:

- » **Community facilities**
the 'hard infrastructure' component that includes a variety of buildings used for community purposes
- » **Community development**
the processes that enable 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 case studies in this summary document represent a sample of those that provide some guidance for planning social infrastructure in urban growth areas in Adelaide. The list of case studies is not exhaustive but has been chosen to provide an array of learning that can inform social infrastructure planning for Charles Sturt and its project partners. As shown in the table, it is difficult to neatly categorise the case studies as either policies and plans, examples of renewal areas, facility models, or service delivery as most examples include more than one of these elements. This reinforces the integrated and multidimensional nature of many of these projects and perhaps suggests an early indicator of success.

Project	Policies and Plans	Renewal area	Facility models	Service delivery
City of Melbourne, Community Infrastructure Plan 2007-2017	✓		✓	✓
Docklands Community Infrastructure Plan 2008, Melbourne	✓	✓		
Brisbane Urban Development Areas	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bowen Hills Transit Oriented Development, Brisbane	✓	✓		
Northshore Hamilton Urban Development Area, Brisbane	✓	✓		
Green Square Town Centre, Sydney	✓	✓	✓	✓
False Creek North, Vancouver, Canada		✓		
Vinegar Hill Library and Community Centre, Rouse Hill Town Centre, New South Wales			✓	
Castle Grand Community Centre and Library, New South Wales			✓	
Idea Store, London Borough of Tower Hamlets	✓	✓	✓	✓
Caroline Springs Partnership				✓
Christie Walk		✓		
Mawson Centre			✓	✓
Salisbury North	✓	✓		✓
Playford Alive	✓	✓		✓

The case studies are not intended to provide precise blueprints for what Charles Sturt and its partner councils should be doing but rather provide some practical lessons that could be applied to the Adelaide context. Some of the case studies focus on the process of needs assessment, others on the role of community and stakeholder engagement, others on the development of innovative facility models and others on collaboration between different parts of government and the development industry. Through a consideration of these collective experiences, including some of the things that have not worked well, it is anticipated that the City of Charles Sturt and others may be able to adapt some of these lessons to suit the unique qualities of the Adelaide urban growth and infill development context and develop its own approach to social infrastructure provision that learns from, and builds on, the experience of others.

» City of Melbourne (2007)

Community Infrastructure Plan 2007-2017

Purpose

The purpose of the City of Melbourne's *Community Infrastructure Plan* is to provide "Council with the key principles to design community infrastructure for the future and the strategic direction for the work over the next decade." From 2007 the resident population of the City of Melbourne is projected to grow by 35% bringing an additional 350,000 people into the municipality.

To help to address the needs of this population and to guide the development of community infrastructure over a 10 year period, the plan aims to:

- » Establish aspirational outcomes for community infrastructure
- » Embrace neighbourhood, municipal and capital city needs
- » Articulate an integrated service scope
- » Identify council's role in responding to community needs
- » Model best practice/place based responses
- » Support the role of social sustainability across the municipality.

The plan is based firmly on a community hubs model of community infrastructure provision.

The *Community Infrastructure Plan* recognises the need for a collaborative and integrated approach to social infrastructure:

"This plan seeks to complement the social planning framework with a cross-municipal view of community infrastructure provision and provide a consistent, strategic approach to understanding the role of social infrastructure in supporting community wellbeing. Responsibility for community infrastructure planning and provision sits across all levels of government, and within most government agencies is likely to involve various departments. The need for a coordinated strategy is clear."

Needs Assessment

The plan is based upon community infrastructure audits that assessed the community infrastructure needs for the following seven neighbourhoods:

- » East Melbourne (population at 2001 some 4,700)
- » Carlton/Parkville (population 11,300)
- » North/West Melbourne (population 11,800)
- » Southbank/St Kilda Road (population 5,700)
- » Kensington (population 7,500)
- » CBD (population 7,700 and forecast to reach 23,200 by 2021)
- » Docklands (population 5,200 and expected to reach 15,000 by 2021).

Each of the neighbourhood audits identified the current supply of community infrastructure. Then using a series of research tools: consultation, surveys, databases, mapping and 'trigger assessments' (population thresholds that justify service or facility provision) the audits identified opportunities to address existing gaps and those that are likely to emerge over the next 10 years.

For each district, the neighbourhood audits were supplemented with a community profile that recognises the different geographies and communities within each district.

Current supply information on services was obtained through a telephone survey where each provider was asked:

- » What services were provided or offered to residents?
- » What is the capacity of each service/facility?
- » What waiting lists are experienced?
- » The satisfaction of operational costs and fitness for purpose?
- » The types of spaces that the service/facility may have to offer the public?

Approach to social infrastructure

The plan considers social infrastructure needs at the local, district and citywide levels.

Neighbourhood level hubs

The plan proposes that each of seven neighbourhoods (East Melbourne, Docklands, CBD, Carlton/Parkville, North/West Melbourne, Kensington, Southbank/St Kilda Road) have access to a neighbourhood hub.

Neighbourhood hubs are intended to support informal social interaction at the local level, provide the opportunity for services to be delivered locally and support community initiatives such as social support and play groups. Likely functions include access to community information, informal recreation/open space, community catering facilities, lifelong learning and preschool education. Also space for social interaction and local sessional service provision. May include early childhood or primary education services. The plan includes an indicative floor space for neighbourhood hubs of 585 square metres and outdoor space of approximately 400 square metres.

District level hubs

The plan identifies four districts (East Melbourne, CBD and Docklands; Kensington, North Melbourne, West Melbourne and Flemington; South Yarra, St Kilda Road and Southbank; and Carlton and Parkville) which were developed based on geographical connections, neighbouring municipal role in service provision, historical and emerging service patterns, transport routes and population numbers.

Four types of district hub models have been developed servicing multiple local neighbourhoods. The district hub models have been proposed to reflect the priorities identified through the research and needs analysis. Each of the hubs has a distinctive core function that can be complemented by other support functions. District hubs service a larger population base, contain functions that are not viable on their own at the local level and support the community and civic functions of activity centres and retail hubs.

These district hub models are:

- » **District and Aged Care Hub:** Intended to provide a base for the coordination of health and aged care services provided by the public, private and community sectors. Likely functions include access to informal open space, community catering facilities, social and health programs, aged services and health and wellbeing services. Also space for sessional services and support for health and wellbeing services. May include occasional childcare and/or may have a focus on the specific health and wellbeing needs of older people.
Indicative total floor space = 2,629m² and indicative outdoor space = 400m²
- » **District Social and Recreation Hub:** Intended to focus on social, recreational and cultural activity. Likely functions include access to indoor/outdoor recreation, community catering facilities, sessional services and a staffed information area. Also space for social interaction and a workshop space. May include district level outdoor recreation facilities, a youth specific space and/or childcare services.
Indicative total floor space = 3,031m² and indicative outdoor space = 1,000m²
- » **District Family and Children's Services Hub:** Intended to co-locate family and children's services provided by the public, private and community sectors. Likely functions include access to informal open space, community catering facilities, a meeting space, social programs and space for sessional services. Also childcare (designated as a 120 place centre) and preschool education.
Indicative total floor space = 2,621m² and indicative outdoor space = 800m²
- » **District Lifelong Learning Hub:** Intended to be anchored by a library or neighbourhood house to support lifelong learning and access to information. Other likely functions include access to informal open space, office space, civic functions, lifelong learning, meeting spaces and computer use. May have a civic function, such as customer service or civic gatherings. May include a middle school or secondary school.
Indicative total floor space = 2,489m² and indicative outdoor space = 0m²

Locational Features

It is intended that there will be seven **neighbourhood hubs** across the City of Melbourne, located:

- » Within 400m of a public transport stop
- » So that all residences are within 400m of a neighbourhood hub
- » With a street frontage
- » Around a central area of open space, whether hard or soft.

It is intended that each **district hub**:

- » Be co-located for multi modal transport, preferably as part of a principle public transport network
- » Be co-located functions provide the opportunity for cross referral amongst service providers
- » Be integrated into local retail and employment nodes
- » Have a visible street frontage.

Funding and delivery

The plan recognises that while Council owned and purpose built facilities may be ideal, capital funding and/or timing may not allow this. Therefore, the development of community infrastructure should consider all options including new build, leasing, upgrade/ redevelopment and refit.

The plan also recognises that:

- » The development of hubs over the next 10 years will require additional operational resources (e.g. additional child care places). However there are existing City services with recurrent operational budgets operating out of inappropriate facilities. This operational funding will be utilised and the move to a purpose built and adequately sized facility will lead to better cost per client ratios and expanded users within these services
- » There are opportunities to partner with funded community sector service organisations to provide appropriate services to operate out of the hubs. Best practice facilities can also attract service providers to the municipality
- » There are a number of financing mechanisms potentially available to offset Council costs including:
 - Negotiated contributions from developers
 - State and Commonwealth grant funding
 - Community sector capital contribution
 - Property swap/sale opportunities.

The final component of the plan is a list of ten priorities for the provision of neighbourhood and district hubs. It is intended that these be a guide only and that “projects will emerge and develop in a flexible and innovative manner” (p. 19). It is noted for four of the ten identified priority hubs that State Government should be approached to provide both major capital funding and recurrent funding. It is also noted that \$200,000 has been allocated in the Council budget for the design phase of the community hub identified as the highest priority.

Lessons learned

The City of Melbourne utilises a planning hierarchy framework to plan for community infrastructure. It considers social infrastructure requirements on a local, district and city wide level and its needs analysis and models for delivery reflect that hierarchy.

The use of a comprehensive needs assessment process that includes extensive audits of existing facilities, population projections and assessments of future needs, surveys of service providers to determine gaps, priorities, needs and community consultation.

The funding and delivery elements of the plan recognise that what may be ideal (Council owned and purpose built facilities) may be not be possible due to capital funding and other constraints and that a range of options including new build, leasing, upgrade/redevelopment and retrofit should all be considered.

The plan recognises that the creation of best practice facilities can attract service providers to the municipality and create opportunities to partner with funded community sector service organisations to provide appropriate services to operate out of the hubs.

» City of Melbourne and VicUrban (2008) Docklands Community Infrastructure Planning Final Report

Introduction

The plan has been prepared for Melbourne Docklands in Victoria, which is a 200 hectares inner city waterfront redevelopment of a former industrial port. In 2008, Docklands had a population of about 4,000 and it is expected this will increase to 17,000 by the time the area is fully developed in 2020. The area also provides for a working population of 12,000, which is expected to increase to 40,000 by 2020.

VicUrban, the Victorian equivalent to the Land Management Corporation, has formed a partnership with the private sector to develop Melbourne Docklands as an urban mixed use precinct with residential, commercial, retail and leisure activities.

The purpose of the plan is to:

- » Confirm and prioritise identified community infrastructure needs at Docklands
- » Present key recommendations for community infrastructure that will address identified needs and priorities at Docklands.

The plan is prepared within the framework of the City of Melbourne's *Community Infrastructure Plan 2007-17* and thus is based on a community hubs model of community infrastructure provision.

The plan contains:

- » An analysis of the existing and future demographics of the area
- » An overview of the policy context
- » A small number of best practice case studies
- » An overview of the key findings from consultation with agencies, community members and a Project Steering Group
- » An assessment of priorities for community infrastructure provision
- » A set of recommendations about priority community infrastructure provision, complete with floorspace estimations and indicative costings.

Social sustainability in Docklands

The VicUrban strategy, Place and Community, identifies the following attributes of social sustainability that have influenced the planning of community infrastructure in the Docklands:

- » Diversity
- » Creativity and vitality
- » Community wellbeing
- » Civic engagement
- » Access and integration
- » Viability and adaptability.

The report states that:

"VicUrban 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."

Needs Assessment

The *Docklands Community Infrastructure Planning Final Report* identifies the following tasks as part of its methodology:

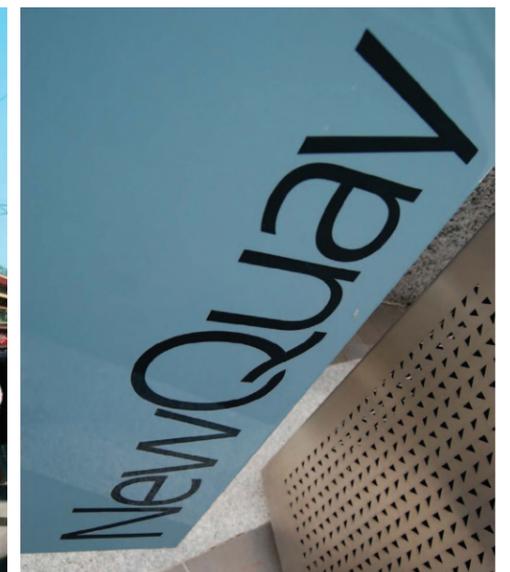
- » **Demographic analysis** – an assessment of the Docklands community profile and population forecasts
- » **Policy review** – to establish the priorities for community services and facilities delivery in Docklands
- » **Research into best practice examples of community service provision in high density developments** – in order to provide comparisons and benchmarks for Docklands
- » **Consultation with City of Melbourne and VicUrban** – a workshop to discuss community infrastructure priorities
- » **Community consultation** – findings from demographic analysis, policy review, best practice research and the workshop with City of Melbourne and VicUrban formed the basis of community consultation, the purpose of which was to confirm and prioritise the identified community infrastructure needs
- » **Community infrastructure priority assessment** – each infrastructure type was assessed against criteria including demographic profile, planning triggers, agency stakeholder priorities, community identified priorities, leading practice, development opportunities. (A Community Infrastructure Assessment Tool is included as an appendix).

The report also recognises that both the City of Melbourne and VicUrban have already undertaken "significant research into community infrastructure needs, identified gaps and priority areas for service provision in Docklands" including the needs assessment and auditing work described in this document under the City of Melbourne *Community Infrastructure Plan* case study.

Who lives at Docklands?

The demographic profile of Docklands is recognised as 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.



General social infrastructure needs

The report identifies the following “potential needs for generic services and facilities at Docklands”:

- » Facilities and services for young adults, including students – indoor and outdoor, recreation, learning and education, meeting and gathering places, cultural activities
- » Meeting places for the community – over a quarter of the population living alone creates the potential risk of social isolation
- » Facilities and services appropriate to a working population – indoor and outdoor recreation, cultural activities and meeting and gathering places
- » Multicultural services, in particular for the Chinese community
- » Health and wellbeing services and age specific services.

The report also notes that a large daily worker population of up to 50,000 people by 2018 will influence the level of services required.

Social infrastructure approach

The term ‘community infrastructure’ is defined in the report as “services and facilities necessary to realise a high quality social environment” (p. 3). This is broadly understood to include: education and learning, culture and arts, recreation and leisure, community meeting spaces, neighbourhood houses, community health and wellbeing services, community information and places of worship and spirituality. While open space and affordable housing are outside the scope of the report, they are both acknowledged as important community infrastructure issues, particularly in a high density environment.

The table below summarises what the report identifies as the community infrastructure priorities, floor areas and indicative costs:

Infrastructure priority	Area required – approx (square metres)	Indicative cost
Indoor recreation (minimum of 4 courts and associated facilities)	Single floor plate - 4,500	\$7 million
Community boating facility (providing storage for water craft, club rooms, change rooms, permanent water access points)	500 (plus storage area for watercraft)	\$3 million
Library	1,500	\$3 million
Student oriented study lounge	180	\$540,000
Flexible multipurpose community space – classroom and office space	2,000	\$6 million
Flexible multipurpose community space – community meeting space	400	\$1.2 million
Flexible, multipurpose arts and cultural space – exhibition and gallery space	200	\$600,000
Flexible, multipurpose arts and cultural space – studio and workshop space	300	\$900,000
Adaptable consulting rooms for allied health and wellness services	250	\$750,000
Functional outdoor community meeting space	300	TBC
Low cost community office space	1,000	\$3 million
Future primary school site	TBC	TBC

Sources: City of Melbourne and VicUrban (2008), Docklands Community Infrastructure Planning Final Report, Prepared by Coomes Consulting Group; City of Melbourne (2010), Docklands Community Infrastructure, Docklands Coordination Committee Report, June 2010

The report recommends that the provision of the priorities identified reflect the social infrastructure policy direction of community hubs and, therefore, be provided in the following co-located hub models “to maximise efficiency and create ‘true’ community hubs”:

- » **Lifelong Learning Hub:** This is to be co-located with a TAFE facility and include a library, student study lounge, community meeting and activity space, education related community office space and community gallery and display space.
- » **Social and Recreation Hub:** This is to include multipurpose indoor courts, consulting rooms for allied health and wellbeing services, a multipurpose community space and a gym and cafe, as well as related sporting retail and adjunct health and wellness facilities.
- » **Community Boating Hub:** This is to be at a waterfront location with a water access point and include permanent storage for watercraft and associated facilities such as club rooms, change rooms and a community kitchen.
- » **Neighbourhood Hub:** This is to include a mixture of community offices, meeting spaces, studio and workshop space and gallery and exhibition space to support local lifelong learning arts and cultural activities. As such, it contains many of the functions associated in the City of Melbourne’s *Community Infrastructure Plan* with a District Social and Recreation Hub and a District Lifelong Learning Hub.
- » **Outdoor Community Meeting Space:** This could be co-located with the Neighbourhood Hub or Community Boating Hub, or alternatively provided as part of another public space development in Docklands.
- » **Future Primary School site:** This is to be identified and confirmed, but potentially not developed for some years.
- » An interesting feature of the Docklands model is the inclusion of a Community Boating Hub, which is related to the geography of the urban renewal area as well as the interests and demographics of residents. This is a departure from the model of community hubs contained in the City of Melbourne’s *Community Infrastructure Plan 2007-17* and shows how a strong overarching framework can be adapted for the needs and characteristics of a specific community or place.

Funding and delivery

The Docklands Coordination Committee endorsed the identification of a library and community centre and a social and recreation hub as top priorities, to be progressed in the next 2-5 years. Further discussions between VicUrban and City of Melbourne have also recognised the need to progress the provision of a future primary school in Docklands.

The Docklands library and community centre and the recreation hub have been integrated into the municipal wide City of Melbourne *Community Infrastructure Implementation Framework* and related City of Melbourne budget processes. Docklands Developer Contributions (Human Services) are also being directed towards these priority projects by VicUrban.

VicUrban and City of Melbourne senior management have jointly agreed that the site on the corner of Bourke Street and Harbour Esplanade, known as the CLEC site, is the preferred site for the Docklands library and community centre. The Kangan Institute of TAFE remains interested in co-locating education facilities on this site.

The provision of \$1.25 million has been committed in the City of Melbourne Draft Budget 2010-11 for the first phase of project design and site preparation. VicUrban has also committed \$1.25 million to the first phase of the library, sourced from Developer Human Services contributions. VicUrban and City of Melbourne are exploring project delivery arrangements, which will be agreed and articulated in a heads of agreement between the project partners.

VicUrban and City of Melbourne have identified several potential sites for a primary school in Docklands. Further investigation of these options is currently being undertaken as part of VicUrban’s Urban Schools Innovation project. The Urban Schools innovation project is exploring vertical and other models of school design for potential application to sites with limited land area. The project integrates new models of primary education delivery and is being developed by VicUrban in consultation with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and other relevant State government agencies.

Lessons learned

Specific lessons from Docklands community infrastructure planning include:

- » The strong community infrastructure planning framework established by the City of Melbourne that provides guidance and direction for community infrastructure planning for areas like Docklands
- » The significantly different demographic profile emerging at Docklands compared to other residential areas of Melbourne and understanding what that means for social infrastructure provision
- » The importance to planning and delivery of the relationship between Council and VicUrban
- » The application of capital funds for social infrastructure from human services developer contributions
- » The establishment by VicUrban of projects such as the Urban Schools Innovation Project to explore different models of social infrastructure for urban growth areas.

» Brisbane Urban Development Areas

Urban Land Development Authority

Introduction

Bowen Hills TOD, Northshore Hamilton and Wooloongabba are three of the Urban Land Development Authority's (ULDA) [Queensland's equivalent of the Land Management Corporation (LMC)] more urban, higher density urban development areas. All three sites are within close proximity to the Brisbane CBD (Bowen Hills is 3 kilometres, Northshore Hamilton 6 kilometres and Wooloongabba 2 kilometres).

All urban development areas share similar visions with key common features being:

- » Transit oriented development creating vibrant mixed use communities within walking distance of public transport
- » The creation of connected places with good public transport, pedestrian and bicycle paths
- » Healthy communities where physical activity is incorporated into daily life
- » Improving public access to key amenities such as rivers and parks
- » Creating integrated open space and high quality public space
- » Provision of a range of housing choices to cater for a range of needs.

Planning guideline for Community Facilities

The ULDA Guideline, no. 11, Community Facilities identifies population thresholds or triggers identified in planning standards for community facilities that are used as a "starting point for community facilities and services planning". ULDA's intention is to "generally demonstrate early provision of key facilities to meet the needs of incoming residents" with "the provision of land or GFA by a developer for facilities" noted as an "acceptable outcome."

ULDA's experience to date has been that the main requirements for new social infrastructure has been for community centres and libraries, with the majority of other facilities in urban development areas serviced through existing services initially.

Social infrastructure planning in urban infill areas

The ULDA approach is based on the SEQ Implementation Guideline no. 5 (Social Infrastructure Planning). 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.

Needs Assessment

A sound understanding of the nature of the proposed development is an initial fundamental step in the needs assessment process for the urban development area projects. Identifying how many dwellings, of what type, occupancy ratios, timing and staging etc. is undertaken in order to provide a sound basis of information on which to base future social infrastructure planning.

In infill areas, a good understanding of existing nearby provision is essential. An analysis of what social infrastructure is already available in the area, how it is being used and any potential for enhancement, expansion or relocation is an important consideration in future community facilities planning.

Thresholds and standards for community facilities, such as those documented in the SEQ Implementation Guideline no. 5 (Social Infrastructure Planning), are used; although they are considered to be a starting point. It is recognised that social infrastructure planning in urban infill areas requires careful consideration of existing provision.

While thresholds are referenced, ULDA stresses the importance of engaging directly with human service providers such as Department of Education, Queensland Police and Brisbane City Council to identify what is required. Accurate estimates of future required social infrastructure depends on the provision of good quality population and demographic projections and a thorough engagement process that involves key providers in both the planning and implementation phases.

Locational Features

The ULDA Guideline, no. 11, Community Facilities states that “co-location and shared use of facilities is supported by the ULDA where it demonstrably enhances access, amenity and social outcomes” and that “the location of community facilities in a hierarchy of centres is supported.”

ULDA looks at opportunities both on site and off for the creation and/or enhancement of social infrastructure. For the North Shore Hamilton project Brisbane City Council had an existing library 3 kilometres from the site. However, this library was at capacity and there was limited scope for expansion due to its location in a heritage building. As a result a library space has been incorporated into the plans for North Shore Hamilton.

Funding and delivery

ULDA emphasises the importance of involving key service providers in the delivery stage in order to explore opportunities for greater efficiency in facility provision through co-location, shared space etc.

The importance of utilising a range of funding sources is stressed. The ULDA approach recognises that different situations may require different funding mechanisms ‘not one size fits all’. It is important to work with the relevant stakeholders for each project and explore opportunities that may include use of infrastructure charges, local government funding, State Government contributions and negotiations with developers.

Urban infill projects provide opportunities for innovative approaches to facility provision through consideration of how community facilities can be incorporated into higher density, mixed use buildings.

More urban models of facility provision need to be considered as land price and urban form drives the need for more efficient models of community facilities. Focus should be on gross floor area (GFA) required as opposed to site area. Thresholds for greenfield areas, such as those in the SEQ Guidelines, are still relevant in terms of the required GFA, however, the model of provision and the site area requirements need to be adapted to suit a more urban setting. This requires a ‘cultural shift’ for some organisations with the need to consider different models for the provision of schools, for example that are less land dependent than traditional greenfield models.

Lessons learned

While floor area recommendations for facility types from standards such as in the SEQ Implementation Guidelines are still relevant, land economics and a more urban form of development require the consideration of different models of facility provision in urban infill areas. These include negotiations with developers to provide facility space within mixed use buildings as sold or leased space for community use.

More diverse urban infill developments will not be created if these new areas only provide a limited range of housing types and amenities. If more child and family friendly infrastructure is provided (such as parks, playgrounds, schools, child care etc.) then more family households will likely be attracted. ‘What you provide influences who comes’.

The requirement for greater diversity highlights the important role of the state land development agencies such as ULDA and LMC in ‘leading the market’ in the provision of a greater diversity of housing product and the amenities and infrastructure required to support, and attract, a more diverse population. When ULDA acts as the developer they require a certain mix and diversity of housing.

The lack of good post occupancy information means there is some uncertainty about who is being attracted to live in higher density urban infill locations. Given this, the type of community facilities provided in urban infill areas should be flexible and capable of adapting as the community changes. Flexible multipurpose spaces that could be used for playgroups, Pilates classes, adult day care, after school care, evening classes etc. are important.

ULDA has a dedicated team for Community Development for their projects. This is an important resource that means that social planning including social infrastructure is considered as a key element of the urban development area planning.

» Bowen Hills Transit Oriented Development Brisbane

Introduction

Declared in March 2008 and located three kilometres from the Brisbane CBD, the Bowen Hills Urban Development Area (UDA) covers 108 hectares of land in the inner northern suburb of Bowen Hills. The Bowen Hills UDA is located east of the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, south of the inner city bypass and Enoggera Creek and north of Brunswick Street. Landmark places within the UDA include the RNA Showgrounds, the Old Museum, Perry Park and the Bowen Hills Railway Station.

Bowen Hills has been identified as a site for an inner-city transit-oriented development (TOD) demonstration project. TOD involves building high quality, medium-to-high density residential and commercial developments within walking distance of public transport. The Bowen Hills UDA is centred on the Bowen Hills Railway Station and has the potential to have an ultimate population of 10,000 residents and a worker population of approximately 22,000 people. Bowen Hills is envisaged as a significant inner northern centre in Brisbane and possibly as a smaller scale or 'second CBD'.



1. Royal Brisbane Hospital
2. Old Queensland Museum
3. RNA showgrounds
4. Bowen Hills railway station
5. Perry Park

Key features

The Bowen Hills UDA Social Planning Report: Liveability Strategy identifies the following critical elements to achieving good social outcomes in high density neighbourhoods:

- » **Quality** – quality of design in housing, design and maintenance of shared spaces, importance of detail “as it shapes how people experience home and neighbourhood”
- » **Public domain** – central importance in high density living, quality of public domain influenced by availability, diversity, built form, available activities, meaning to users, contact with nature, “spaces must be activated, interesting and inviting to use” and meet the diverse needs of the community
- » **Housing design and quality** – priority given to visual and noise privacy, adequate balcony size, storage space, bedroom size, room layout, attractive outlook, useable and well connected common outdoor space, planning for children and pets, “shared indoor and outdoor amenities help to create a sense of community within buildings”
- » **Social diversity and housing mix** – essential to plan for a wide range of households and user groups and their various activities, diversity extends to tenure and housing mix, “explicit provision of social and affordable housing is needed to achieve social diversity”, larger dwellings and alternate types also required for family and shared households, also need to cater for ageing population and increasing levels of disability
- » **Social infrastructure** – “critical role in ensuring diversity, equity and social capital and helping to build relationships between new and existing residents”, multipurpose community and cultural facility co-located with a main civic plaza “to create a vital community heart and support community events and performances”, timely provision
- » **Creating a sense of community** – respect for existing social and cultural values, design should reflect community traditions and cultures, collaboration with local communities can help define unique qualities, creation of a strong and vibrant civic space, plazas should make provision for community activities and events and be suitable for a range of different uses
- » **Health and safety** – convenient and adequate access to inviting and safe public space promotes physical activity, pet ownership reduces social isolation, safety and high levels of sociability encourage people to participate in community life
- » **Community engagement** – important to achieving successful and sustainable change, builds community support, helps to build shared sense of identity
- » **Flexibility and adaptation** – flexible, step by step approaches to development allow modification in response to changing circumstances.

Approach to social infrastructure

Goal: Social infrastructure will be provided at Bowen Hills in a timely way to support the development of a vibrant community hub, to facilitate the development of a socially inclusive and friendly environment and to meet community needs.

Master Plan Strategies for Social Infrastructure include:

- » Ensure the timely provision of social infrastructure to support the needs of the emerging community and to develop a local sense of belonging and identity
- » Location of a multipurpose community hub as part of the Market Square development to reinforce the site as the heart of the UDA, helping to create a strong civic presence and fostering a sense of local identity and community spirit
- » Locate facilities to enable convenient access to pedestrian and cycle networks and public transport stops
- » Facilitate the co-location and integration of facilities where appropriate (e.g. library and community centre)
- » Design community facilities to be flexible in use, to help foster a strong sense of local identity and to use design that is socially inclusive (across different ages, cultures and incomes)
- » Foster a culture of participation in community life through a community development strategy designed to support the establishment of social relationships, to integrate local cultural values into the new community (through programs, events and activities) and support the needs of new and existing residents.



Needs Assessment

Recommendations for social infrastructure for Bowen Hills were informed by:

- » Analysis of the projected population
- » Queensland State Government standards of service for social infrastructure as documented in the Implementation Guideline no. 5: Social Infrastructure Planning
- » Brisbane City Council's Desired Standards of Service for Community Facilities
- » Consultations with social infrastructure providers including Brisbane City Council and local community organisations.

Examples of standards used include:

- » One multipurpose community hub for every 10,000 people of 1,400 square metres (GFA)
- » One community meeting/activity space for every 3,000 people of 300 square metres (GFA) – for playgroups, recreation and fitness classes
- » One branch library for every 15,000 people of 550 square metres (GFA)
- » One community cultural facility for every 5,000 people of 300 square metres.

Locational Features

The multipurpose community facility is recommended to be located in the Market Square development which is recognised as the ‘heart’ of the UDA. The intention is to help to create a strong civic presence in this area, foster a sense of identity and community spirit.

The plan recommends the larger district level facility (the multipurpose community hub) to be located in the central Market Square area with the smaller community meeting spaces distributed throughout the UDA to provide more localised access.

Reflecting the TOD philosophy, community facilities are intended to be located with good access for pedestrians and cyclists and in close proximity to public transport. The plan also supports the co-location of community facilities where appropriate with other compatible facilities (such as the library and community centre together) and also co-locating community facilities with activity generators and amenities such as shops and schools.

Recommended social infrastructure

Based on a projected resident population of 10,000 people, a projected worker population of 22,000 and an understanding of existing social infrastructure provision, the Bowen Hills Social Planning Report recommends:

- » A multipurpose community hub incorporating a community centre, library and cultural facilities (1,400 square metres GFA for the community centre, 550 square metres for the library and 600 square metres for the cultural space- giving a total of 2,550 square metres)
- » A network of three community meeting/activity spaces located across the urban development area (300 square metres GFA for each space; planned to be integrated with general facilities at the school, showground and Perry Park)
- » Two child care centres (800 square metres GFA each with one located in the core residential area, in a mixed use building, close to the railway station and the other at Perry Park to be timed to coincide with residential development in that area)
- » Two accommodation support centres (800 square metres to provide accommodation services for homeless people who are currently frequent users of the area and risk displacement from the development)
- » One aged care facility (500 square metres to be provided later in the development when a population of at least 7,500 people are resident; to be located as part of the Royal Brisbane Hospital precinct)
- » Enhancement to the existing Fortitude Valley School
- » Community development strategies with a recommendation that ULDA implement a community development strategy at the onset of residential development “to facilitate capacity building and to help the emerging community establish itself” and that “the existing and emerging communities should be engaged in the process of managing community change and shaping the future identity of Bowen Hills.”

Funding and delivery

Funding for community centres in Queensland has traditionally been the responsibility of State Government. There has been limited growth in the development and recurrent funding of centres. The Social Planning Report identifies the following implementation issues for the multipurpose community hub:

- » Ownership and maintenance responsibility
- » Recurrent funding
- » Management framework
- » Timing of the development
- » Design to optimise the centre as an onsite evacuation facility.

The following considerations for future management are identified:

- » Consolidating and expanding current community development resources in the district (including existing neighbourhood centres and community centres) rather than developing a new community development organisation
- » The potential to diversify the role of Council staff, such as Library staff, to assist with management of community space including room bookings etc.
- » The potential for an outreach or centre based community development worker from an existing community organisation to develop and implement community development activities
- » The ULDA will need to work with prospective joint providers of the network of three community meetings spaces (YMCA at Perry Park, the showgrounds and the school) to explore the potential for joint venture or community use arrangements.

Lessons learned

The Social Planning Report included an analysis of similar higher density developments and identified an expected household mix that formed the basis of the needs analysis. The comprehensive and robust nature of this projected mix was important to confirm as it formed the basis for much of the later work on required infrastructure. The expected mix for Bowen Hills included:

- » Couples with children at home (11%)
- » Couples only (35%)
- » Single parent (5%)
- » Lone person households (32%)
- » Group households (13%)
- » Other family (4%).

Using this expected mix analysis, combined with dwelling projections and staging information, the ULDA was able to engage with human service providers and work collaboratively to understand the extent to which the existing social infrastructure could meet the projected demands and, if not, what additional social infrastructure was required and where.

The potential social impacts of the redevelopment of the Bowen Hills UDA were a key part of the planning process. Those potential impacts included displacement of existing communities, loss of affordable accommodation, changing identity of Bowen Hills residents, management of the interface between commercial and residential uses in dense urban environments, flow on effects of gentrification on nearby social infrastructure such as leasing costs for service providers in nearby areas, competition for limited open space and construction impacts.

The Social Planning Report recognises the importance of post occupancy evaluation information and recommends that ULDA incorporate post occupancy evaluation into their planning process to ensure there is good information available on how residents and workers are experiencing TOD development and what lessons can be gained for future developments.

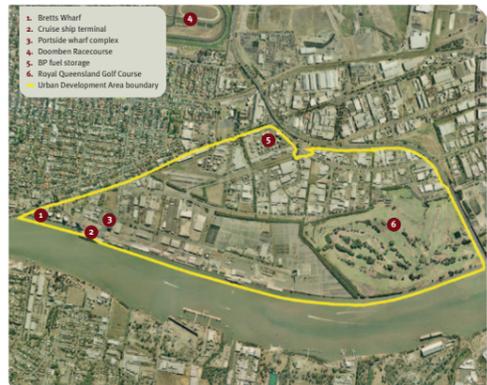


» Northshore Hamilton Urban Development Area, Brisbane

Introduction

Northshore Hamilton Urban Development Area (UDA) is located six kilometres from the Brisbane CBD. It covers 304 hectares of land and has a two kilometre river frontage. It is proposed that at ultimate development Northshore Hamilton could house more than 12,000 residents and accommodate some 20,000 workers.

An overarching guiding principle for Northshore Hamilton UDA is to achieve a socially cohesive and vibrant community that promotes social, cultural, economic and environmental sustainability.



Approach to social infrastructure

The rationale for social infrastructure provision at Northshore Hamilton is: “Well planned and coordinated social infrastructure is fundamental to the economic and social wellbeing of a community and plays a critical role in helping to build social relationships between residents in newly establishing communities.”

The following ‘sub strategies’ for social infrastructure have been identified for Northshore Hamilton:

- » Develop a multipurpose community hub (preferably in Stage One of residential development) to provide a positive focus for community building, welcoming new residents and providing a space for social interaction as the community emerges
- » The preferred location of the hub is within the civic plaza (mixed use area) adjacent to the transit node. A facility in this location will help to create an iconic community node and activate the civic plaza
- » The community hub will include a combination of flexible spaces to support formal and informal learning, cultural production and exchange, social interaction and support, including spaces for group activities, art and cultural activities and a branch library
- » The location of the centre at the transit node adjacent to the civic plaza will reinforce this site as the civic space, accessible by public transport and within walking distance of residents, helping to foster a strong sense of local identity and community spirit
- » The community hub will be designed to be multi-functional, integrating general community uses, cultural activities and a library and can be developed over one or more levels as an integrated, vibrant centre
- » The community hub will be designed and developed (including built form, programs and activities) in consultation with existing residents as part of the community development strategies
- » Land uses in proximity to the multipurpose community hub should be compatible with the operation of the centre.

Achieving social sustainability

The *Northshore Hamilton Social Planning Report: Liveability Strategy* identifies the following aims and objectives for achieving social sustainability:

Aims	Objectives
The Northshore Hamilton UDA supports a socially diverse and inclusive community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Land use, housing mix and public domain support diverse user groups » Scope and scale of economic development promotes employment diversity
A vibrant and centrally located community hub is developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Activation of a community hub through the co-location of community infrastructure, the transit node and a meaningful civic space (plaza) to generate public life capable of supporting a wide range of activities (including markets, festivals, events) » Pedestrian use of the civic space has dominance over cars
Strong physical, social and cultural connections are established between new and existing communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Visual and physical links are provided between new and existing communities » Urban design respects community traditions and values » Integrated access to community infrastructure » Impacts are identified and reduced/enhanced
Housing supply is enhanced and diversified and offers high amenity for all households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Affected communities are engaged in planning and implementation » Housing is well located to promote residential amenity and accessibility » Housing provides a mix of size, tenure and type to meet diverse needs (e.g. singles, couples, families, seniors and pet keeping) » Housing diversity, including social housing, is distributed throughout the UDA, avoiding concentrations of any one particular type of housing » Housing is affordable across the spectrum of households and includes a proportion of affordable housing for a range of household types and formations
The public domain plays a key role in place making and connects people with the place, each other and nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Negative impacts on existing stock (including social housing) are ameliorated » An adequate supply of public open space is provided in a high quality public domain » A diversity of well distributed and finely grained spaces is provided (from widened streets to plazas, pocket parks and larger active spaces) supporting a wide range of activities and users » A dominant pedestrian/cycle access network is provided » Brisbane River frontage is integrated with the open space network and made accessible to the public
Community infrastructure (services, facilities and networks) is provided in a timely manner to promote community and cultural development and quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The public domain is held in public ownership and not as privately owned ‘common’ space » A base level of infrastructure (such as a community hub, information and welcoming program) is provided at the outset to support early stages of development » Flexible and integrated models of infrastructure provision are adopted » Infrastructure is located to help activate the public domain and maximise accessibility (e.g. within activity centres, close to public transport, adjacent to public open space, etc.)
Provide a healthy and safe environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » A dominant and safe after hours pedestrian route is developed between the transit hub and key destinations » Noise, air pollution and privacy impacts on health for residents, workers and visitors are avoided » CPTED principles are applied to the creation of spaces and places » Design that promotes an active and healthy lifestyle

Needs Assessment

Recommendations for social infrastructure for Northshore Hamilton were based on:

- » Analysis of the projected population
- » Queensland State Government standards of service for social infrastructure as documented in the Implementation Guideline no. 5: Social Infrastructure Planning
- » Brisbane City Council’s Desired Standards of Service for Community Facilities
- » Consultations with social infrastructure providers.

Examples of standards used include:

- » One local community hub for every 30,000 people of 1,000 square metres (GFA) in redeveloping areas such as Northshore Hamilton (based on Brisbane City Council standards)
- » One community meeting/activity space for every 5,000 people of 300 square metres (GFA) – for playgroups, recreation and fitness classes
- » One district library for every 30,000 people of 1,000 square metres (GFA).



Locational Features

The community hub is recommended to be located in a central location and is seen to be a key feature of the main activity centre and civic space. The precise location for the hub is within the civic plaza (mixed use area) adjacent to the transit node. A facility in this location will help to create an iconic community node and activate the civic plaza. The location of the centre at the transit node adjacent to the civic plaza will reinforce this site as the civic space, accessible by public transport and within walking distance of residents, helping to foster a strong sense of local identity and community spirit.

Reflecting the TOD philosophy community facilities are intended to be located with good access for pedestrians and cyclists and in close proximity to public transport. The plan also supports the co-location of community facilities where appropriate with other compatible facilities (such as the library and community centre together) and also co-locating community facilities with activity generators and amenities such as shops and schools.

Funding and delivery

Funding for community centres in Queensland has traditionally been the responsibility of State Government. There has been limited growth in the development and recurrent funding of centres. The Social Planning Report identifies the following implantation issues for the multipurpose community hub:

- » Ownership and maintenance responsibility
- » Recurrent funding
- » Management framework
- » Timing of the development
- » Relationships between the Northshore Hamilton community hub and Hamilton Community Centre
- » Design to optimise the centre as an onsite evacuation facility.

In consultation with Brisbane City Council, private developers and the Department of Communities, the ULDA will be required to negotiate:

- » An agreeable funding model for the community hub
- » Management, ownership, operation and maintenance responsibilities
- » Protocols for determining the ultimate design of the community hub.

The timing of the development of the community hub will require monitoring to determine if an interim facility is required to support the community. Such an interim facility could be developed at the existing park in Area 3 or in the existing (to be vacated) Hamilton Community Centre.

Recommended social infrastructure

Based on a projected resident population of 12,000 people, a projected worker population of 20,000 and an understanding of existing social infrastructure provision, the Northshore Hamilton Social Planning Report recommends:

- » A primary school (staged provision of up to 3,250 square metres GFA to meet ultimate demand)
- » A multipurpose community hub incorporating a community meeting/activity space (800 square metres), library (600 square metres) and child care centre (800 square metres)- giving a total of 2,200 square metres GFA
- » An additional child care centre (800 square metres)
- » A community development strategy to be prepared by ULDA “to facilitate capacity building and to help the emerging community establish itself” and that “the existing and emerging communities should be engaged in the process of managing community change and shaping the future identity of Northshore Hamilton.”

Functions to be accommodated within the community hub include:

- » Meeting spaces with room size and configuration flexibility (movable petitions etc.) incorporating a hall for exhibitions and performances
- » Office and administration areas
- » Kitchen facilities
- » Library with informal meeting and reading areas and computer access areas
- » Co-located with the civic plaza (district urban common) offering interactive public art and public seating and providing a venue for street performances and informal social interaction
- » Designed to support equitable access
- » Extended opening and access hours.

Community facilities planning has had to consider the relocation of the existing Hamilton Community Centre. This facility is an unfunded community centre that has limited capacity to service the new community at Northshore Hamilton. Planning for Northshore Hamilton has sought to ensure that the relationship between the Hamilton Community Centre and the new multipurpose community hub at Northshore Hamilton are complementary.

Similarly, Brisbane City Council also has an existing library at Hamilton. This facility is small and cannot be expanded (due to the heritage status of the building) to the 1,000 square metres that is required for a district library that could also support Northshore Hamilton. Council has determined that a second library at Northshore Hamilton could complement the current library and provide the additional floor space required to service the district.

Lessons learned

Standards for social infrastructure originally designed for greenfield areas are used in planning social infrastructure for the UDA projects (such as the Queensland Government’s Implementation Guideline no. 5). However, it is stressed that these are used to provide an initial indication that are then tested thoroughly with service providers. Social infrastructure planning for the UDAs are guided by floor space recommendations from the planning standards but promote more compact urban models of facility provision that are more suited to the urban form and land economics of these higher density infill locations.

Working with existing facilities and infrastructure and carefully planning how the relationships between new and existing facilities will work to ensure new facilities complement rather than compete with existing ones. The Social Planning Report recommends ULDA working with Brisbane City Council “to ensure the role and purpose for the community hub at Northshore is clearly differentiated from the Hamilton Community Centre.”

Northshore also demonstrates how a significant urban renewal project like this one can provide opportunities for facility expansion and enhancement. Brisbane City Council’s existing library at Hamilton is too small to provide the required level of service to the district. Heritage constraints prevent expansion on this site. The development of the Northshore Hamilton UDA has provided the opportunity for Council to provide the additional 600 square metres of library floor space in a new facility close to the expanding residential community Northshore Hamilton, effectively providing two small libraries (that will share administration and programming) for the Hamilton catchment. A challenge that does come with this opportunity is funding as a new full library would serve a broader service catchment than just the Northshore Hamilton UDA. This requires further negotiation between the ULDA and Brisbane City Council.



» Green Square Town Centre City of Sydney

Introduction

Green Square is a major urban renewal area approximately 4 kilometres south of Sydney's centre. Green Square is projected to be home to a resident population of more than 40,000 and more than 22,000 people are expected to work in the area by 2031. The City of Sydney is the planning authority for the area, and is working closely with the NSW State Government on infrastructure and development.

The vision for Green Square is to transform the area into an attractive, vibrant and sustainable urban place, with a diverse mix of housing, open spaces, offices, shops and facilities. Central to this vision is design excellence in both buildings and the public domain, greater accessibility for residents, workers and visitors by public transport, bike and on foot and social diversity.

At the heart of Green Square is 14 hectares of land to be developed as the Green Square Town Centre – a new major centre around the Green Square railway station. The vision for the Town Centre is of a new and vibrant place where people live, work, shop, dine out and enjoy a range of entertainment options, cultural and community activities. Around 5,500 residents will call Green Square Town Centre home and a further 7,000 people are expected to work in the precinct.

Vision for the identity of Green Square Town Centre

Characteristic	Description	Implications for social infrastructure
Forward looking	Optimistic, embedded in local character, the new development will have freshness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Community facilities designed to permit flexible uses and adaptive reuse for future decades. » Future provision for children and youth.
Learning	Social, individual, scientific, cultural, vocational and personal learning fostered. The town centre will support lifelong learning in creative and innovative ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Public spaces incorporate art works that stimulate various aspects of learning: curiosity, enquiry, synthesis, reflection, etc. » Community facilities support learning opportunities across a wide range of domains, including academic, vocational, recreational, lifelong learning » Library, arts workshops and community facilities will be prominent features of the town centre » Partnerships with learning organisations e.g. TAFE
Sustainable	A showcase project for the city's vision for sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Plaza incorporates all services to support a wide range of public programs to support community cohesion » Community facilities designed for efficient staffing
Generous	Ensuring the town centre goes beyond functional minimums to foster creative possibilities for participation in civic life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Art works evident in public domain » Ground level frontages are designed to support a variety of types of engagement » Generous proportions to internal spaces in community facilities
Quality	'Built to last' quality. Excellence in built form will provide a longevity and allow it to adapt to changing needs of future generations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Design of public domain and community facilities based on best practice knowledge
Welcoming and safe	Inclusive and welcoming for all members of the community. A safe place that attracts many different kinds of use. A happy place that the community enjoys and chooses to linger in.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Proportion and scale designed to give a sense of comfort and welcome » Design style that is sympathetic to the aspirations of diverse community members » Safety will be a starting point in design and best practice principles will be incorporated
Productive	An active and productive town centre that caters for a variety of functional, social and recreational needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Community facilities will support a variety of learning opportunities and will support partnerships with other organisations, such as: farmers and craft markets, art and craft workshops, homework help, volunteer participation programs, interactive art installations
Community strength	A home to a resilient community with strong connecting networks. Will feature a variety of events (ceremonial, celebratory, social, recreational) that support the development of a cohesive community that participates in civic life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Community facilities that will attract partnerships with a variety of cultural and community service organisations » Management that provides adequate resources for a program of large and small events for diverse community groups » Planning and development of facilities will engage local community members and encourage civic participation » Public programming in the plaza should be actively managed with the involvement of local community groups from the beginning

Approach to social infrastructure

Social infrastructure is considered 'up front' as an essential part of the urban renewal planning process and is recognised as a key contributor to sustainable urban renewal. For large renewal projects like Green Square Town Centre, the City of Sydney has employed a Social Planner (with skills and experience in both urban and social planning) – that position has now expanded to provide social planning advice and input on all of the city's urban renewal projects.

The provision of social infrastructure, including community facilities, is an integral and essential component of the planning and implementation of the renewal of Green Square. The City's vision for community facilities in Green Square includes the timely provision of multipurpose facilities that are accessible, equitable, sustainable, vibrant, safe, inclusive of all people and integrated within a network of social infrastructure that is flexible and adaptable to the needs of Green Square communities.

Community facilities

The City currently provides a community venue in Green Square, the Green Square Community Facility on Joynton Ave, within the former South Sydney Hospital site. The venue is used by groups and individuals for a range of programs, activities and small and large meetings.

From December 2010 a new library link and customer service centre operate in the Green Square Library and Community Service Centre located in the existing adjoining suburb of Zetland.

Two major community facilities are also planned for Green Square:

- » A multipurpose library, cultural and community centre in the Green Square Town Centre, fronting the major plaza and Botany Road;
- » A Health and Recreation Centre (including aquatic facilities), as part of the Epsom Park Precinct, on Joynton Avenue, south of Victoria Park.



Needs Assessment

City of Sydney has used available standards and benchmarks gathered from a variety of sources but have found “they are not really relevant”. Standards are seen as “one indicator of need” but have relied more on comparative analysis (looking at what has worked in similar areas (City of Melbourne and Brisbane City Council) and undertaking extensive consultation with services and local communities.

Good demographic projections are recognised by the City of Sydney as a key component of needs analysis.

Social infrastructure planning for Green Square Town Centre has operated on the premise that community facilities will serve the needs of the resident and workforce populations in the Green Square Town Centre, the Green Square Urban Renewal Area and the broader South Sydney area. A needs analysis conducted in 2002 identified that a multipurpose library, cultural and community facility is required that will include:

- » Library of 2,190 square metres (including study, research and learning centre, IT access and information services, books and media, toy library, local history area, areas for relaxation, play and leisure, central library functions and commercial/retail space
- » Arts and cultural space of 1,418 square metres (including workshops, studios and activity spaces, performance lessons/rehearsals/presentations, gallery, commercial/retail space
- » General community spaces of 1,250 square metres including multifunction community hall/spaces, office space for community organisations, child minding/crèche, older persons activity space, kitchen, toilets, storage.

Funding and delivery

With a project the scale of Green Square Town Centre (5,500 new residents and 7,000 workers), the City of Sydney strongly promoted the need for a ‘whole of government’ approach to the planning and provision of social infrastructure.

In 2009 the State Government agreed and established a Social Infrastructure Working Group through the Department of Premier and Cabinet. The group includes:

- » City of Sydney
- » NSW Department of Education
- » NSW Health
- » NSW Ageing, Disability and Home Care
- » NSW Police
- » NSW Department of Planning
- » Federal Department of Health and Ageing.

The working group required agencies to look beyond normal planning timelines and adopt a more strategic approach to social infrastructure planning and provision including working collaboratively and exploring opportunities for partnerships such as co-located services.

The City of Sydney is currently exploring funding opportunities to engage a Community Development Worker for urban renewal areas who will work across the various renewal sites in the City to focus on community development including integration between new and existing communities.

Location and Design Features

The *Green Square Town Centre Community Facilities Report* identified three criteria that guide the location of community facilities:

- » **Prominent** – a prominent position in the main activity centre will give high visibility and encourage usage
- » **Bus route** – Location on a bus route to assist accessibility, add activity to the location, provide safe transport options out of hours
- » **Plaza** – Location on a community plaza enables outdoor programs that involve the wider community and establishes the plaza as an inclusive public space.

Following from this, the *Community Facilities Report* also offers more specific location and design principles for the library, cultural and community centre:

- » **Access** – central and convenient location, highly visible, within 500 metres of train station, at a bus stop, bicycle and pedestrian friendly, universally accessible
- » **Identity and presence** – visible and positive presence, sense of pride, optimism and social cohesion, symbolic and functional value, reflects historic fabric
- » **Equity and diversity** – range of facilities for mixed use by diverse user groups, co-location to support appropriate interaction, affordable fees
- » **Consultation and collaboration** – engagement with potential users, spaces that enable places for consultation and collaboration
- » **Safety** – legible, well-lit entries, good sight lines and visibility, foster activity by location in town centre and with bus stops, shops etc., effective lighting, multiple uses and users through various times of day
- » **Flexibility and innovation** – Design that permits flexible range of uses and can be adapted over time, design that can accommodate low cost internal reconfiguration, outside access to power, water etc for outdoor events, large enough area to accommodate future expansion
- » **Sustainability** – low environmental impacts, maximise efficiency of staffing, community ownership and responsibility to encourage involvement in programming, managing and caring for spaces
- » **Amenity and compatibility** – useful and attractive facilities, design consistent with needs and expectations of user groups, appropriate storage
- » **Integration** – relevant functions integrated in multipurpose facilities, community facilities logically integrated with other facilities in the centre, facility opens directly onto plaza.

Lessons learned

Many of the areas containing urban renewal locations in the City of Sydney contained numerous community facilities but these were often small, separate facilities that were not well located and were becoming a maintenance and management burden for the city. Urban renewal is seen as an opportunity to consolidate facilities, provide better levels of service to more community members and look for opportunities to apply leading practice in community facilities planning and provision. The City is interested in models that are ‘main street’, highly usable and accessible. Urban renewal is seen as a vehicle to help provide space or funding, or both.

Some of the key lessons from the Green Square Town Centre project include:

- » Social infrastructure considered early as an essential part of planning for sustainable urban renewal with the City of Sydney allocating specialist staff to act as a social planning resource
- » For infill areas, it is critical to understand the existing level of service to understand both what unmet needs exist (that could be addressed by new social infrastructure) and also what capacity currently exists (that could assist with meeting needs generated by the new development)
- » Importance of looking long term and strategically particularly encouraging human service agencies to plan ahead to provide facilities for the anticipated population
- » Sound and tested population and demographic projections are essential as a robust basis for future planning
- » Inter governmental, cross agency collaboration is essential. Local Government is one stakeholder but a multi-agency approach is required.



» False Creek North, Vancouver, Canada

Introduction

False Creek North is an inner urban area of the City of Vancouver and occupies a former industrial area previously dominated by heavy industry and railway infrastructure. To accommodate the Expo 86 World's Fair the existing industrial and transportation uses were relocated. After the World's Fair the site of 80 hectares was sold to private developers – 67 hectares of this site is what is now known as False Creek North. The site was rezoned to accommodate mixed use, predominantly residential development.

False Creek North has become one of the largest urban redevelopment projects in North America. Its population has grown to over 10,000 people over the last decade. Statistics Canada reports that in 2007 there were 5,450 households living in False Creek North. False Creek North is a rapidly growing and dense urban neighbourhood, compared to the rest of Vancouver. In 2006, the population density for False Creek North was approximately 18,857 people per square kilometre, making it about 25 times denser than the rest of Vancouver.

The development company Concord Pacific was created to develop a significant part of False Creek North. Both Concord Pacific and the City of Vancouver were committed to a collaborative and cooperative planning process for False Creek North. This collaborative approach extended beyond the developer and the City and, reflecting the cooperative model of planning encouraged by the City of Vancouver, also involved the general public. “Embracing a philosophy that the public should be involved in an ongoing, open, inclusive planning process to consider both the megaproject and the surrounding areas and that wealth created by public decision should be shared with the public” (University of British Columbia, 2008). The Vancouver community was widely consulted about their vision for the site and surrounding areas. This engagement contributed to its acceptance as it was considered that the False Creek neighbourhood was being designed to meet the needs of the community.

From the project's inception, the City of Vancouver has been committed to making False Creek North an example of demonstrating how families and children, including those living in social housing, can have their needs met in a high density living environment. False Creek North has been recognised for its success in attracting families to the Vancouver downtown area and for bringing people closer to their place of work.

Encouraging diversity

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 requires that developers contribute to public amenities such as child care facilities, parks and community centres. The guidelines include the following objectives:

- » Families with children should have reasonable and effective access to essential community services and recreational amenities
- » Housing for families with children should be protected from conflicts with adjacent land uses
- » To encourage new high density family developments to fit into their surrounding neighbourhoods
- » There should be a sufficient number of family units in a project in order to give children peers to play with, encourage a sense of community, and to support adequate provision of adequate outdoor and indoor amenities for families with children (20 family units in a single project is a suggested minimum)
- » There should be appropriate open space to meet the on-site needs of children and adults
- » Children of all ages should have easy access to appropriately located, designed and landscaped outdoor play areas suited to their developmental and play needs
- » Ensure that each household has a private outdoor space adjacent to its unit for its exclusive use
- » The size and layout of units should be appropriate to meet the needs of families with children (family units require a minimum of two bedrooms).

The *Official Development Plan for False Creek North* identifies the following organising principles:

- » Integrate with the city
- » Build on the setting
- » Maintain the sense of a substantial water basin
- » Use streets as an organising device
- » Create lively places having strong imageability
- » Create neighbourhoods
- » Plan for all age groups with a particular emphasis on children.

Diversity in family composition and socio economic groupings are key elements of community diversity as identified in the False Creek North *Official Development Plan*. The 2006 Census showed that 13% of the population is aged under 19 years, there are a broad range of cultural and linguistic groups represented and there is variety in household income. Concord Pacific, one of the major developers of False Creek North, report that in order to better meet demand from families for housing, they are increasing the number of units with two bedrooms or more from 30% to 60% in recent developments (American Planning Association, 2007).

An important feature of the planned diversity at False Creek North is affordable housing. The *Official Development Plan* includes the requirement that 12.94% of the total number of dwelling units shall be designated for affordable housing, with 50% of the affordable units to be suitable for households with children. The affordable units shall be integrated into each residential area, except that Council may permit alternate arrangements to provide some affordable units off-site. Council may also permit affordable housing programs or initiatives to include subsidized and market rental units or subsidized and market co-operative units.

Social infrastructure provision

The *Official Development Plan for False Creek North* states that cultural, recreational, and institutional uses be incorporated throughout the area, where they best serve the projected population and complement adjacent land uses. The plan makes provision for the following uses:

- » One K-7 community school with 370 square metres of community space and a 560 square metre school/community gymnasium
- » One K-7 school
- » One community centre plus gymnasium, having a combined minimum area of 4 180 square metres
- » Eight day care facilities, having a combined indoor area of between 3 000 and 3 500 square metres and a combined minimum outdoor area of between 2 700 and 4 400 square metres, depending upon location configuration, and meeting Community Care Facilities Licensing requirements
- » One multi-purpose room to accommodate family place and out of school care programs, having a minimum floor area of 190 square metres, with washrooms designed to be shared with adjacent community facilities and meeting Community Care Facilities Licensing requirements
- » One branch library facility, having a floor area of approximately 460 square metres, if required by the Library Board One field house, having a floor area of approximately 200 square metres.

The *False Creek North Post Occupancy Evaluation* undertaken by the University of British Columbia School of Community and Regional Planning (2008) highlighted some of the demand issues for social infrastructure in higher density environments that are popular with families. The evaluation found that:

- » The Elise Roy Elementary School, which opened in Yaletown in 2004, has operated at capacity since opening
- » The City of Vancouver report that the waiting list for child care in the area (in 2007-2008) is around 1,800 or one a half to two years long
- » The Roundhouse Community Arts and Recreation Centre although, and perhaps because of, being highly valued by local residents cannot adequately meet demand for its facilities and services.

Key social infrastructure – the Roundhouse Community Arts and Recreation Centre

The Roundhouse Community Arts and Recreation Centre is a 4,580 square metre multipurpose community facility that provides the False Creek North neighbourhood with a focal point for community activities and provides a wide range of programs including aerobics, dance, gymnasium, woodworking and other activities. The \$9 million facility, owned and operated by the Vancouver Board of Parks, includes a performance centre, an exhibition hall, woodworking, pottery and dance studios, a full size gymnasium, a cafe area, and various multi-purpose spaces.

The Vancouver Board of Parks planned the Roundhouse to be an arts oriented community centre that would serve not only the residents of the area but all citizens of Vancouver. In 1994 design began and the Park Board created the Roundhouse Advisory Committee to guide the development of the new community centre. The advisory committee is composed of neighbourhood representatives, heritage supporters, members of the arts community and Park Board staff.

The advisory committee has identified the mission of the Roundhouse as “to celebrate diversity... of people, values, ideas and activities”. The mission has three key elements:

- » The Roundhouse as a project - All of us who work or play or socialize at the Roundhouse will be active participants in an evolving project to find new and creative ways to integrate the arts, community, culture and sports.
- » The Roundhouse as an oasis - The Roundhouse is located in the centre of one of the largest urban experiments in history, transforming a few hundred acres of mostly vacant lots into one of North America’s densest and most diverse urban sites. The Roundhouse will be an oasis in the centre of this dynamic mix, enabling people to use their creativity and energy (at whatever level) to rejuvenate themselves and to be better equipped to face a blizzard of challenges and opportunities around them.
- » The Roundhouse as connection - The Roundhouse exists to identify and serve the needs of widely divergent communities. To do this the Roundhouse must reach out to the places and situations where those communities feel comfortable. These relationships will grow into Roundhouse programs through sponsorships, partnerships, and our own productions.

The *False Creek North Post Occupancy Evaluation* found that residents of the neighbourhood valued the Roundhouse very highly, describing it as a ‘well loved community hub’ that provides a wide range of services to the community. However, like the other social infrastructure in False Creek North, it appears that the Roundhouse cannot adequately meet the demand for its facilities and services, with the post occupancy evaluation suggesting that this was particularly the case for seniors and youth.

Post Occupancy Evaluation

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.

Sense of community

The Post Occupancy Evaluation highlighted the following social outcomes for the False Creek North neighbourhood based on resident feedback:

- » Residents perceive a sense of place and ownership from having access to local amenities and seeing the same people regularly on the streets, in the parks and at cafes
- » Some residents report a strong community attachment to their neighbours while others feel that the community has room to grow in this respect perhaps because it is a relatively new community
- » Strong sense of community is felt by residents who are used to the suburbs and are surprised by the vibrancy of False Creek North. Parents with young children, dog owners and members of the strata bodies especially felt a strong sense of community
- » Feedback suggests that the presence of larger numbers of children helps to build a sense of community
- » Community events and locations for community activity are identified as important to creating an atmosphere of inclusion. These include the Roundhouse Community Centre, schools, day care, cafes, paddling and walking groups and community celebrations.

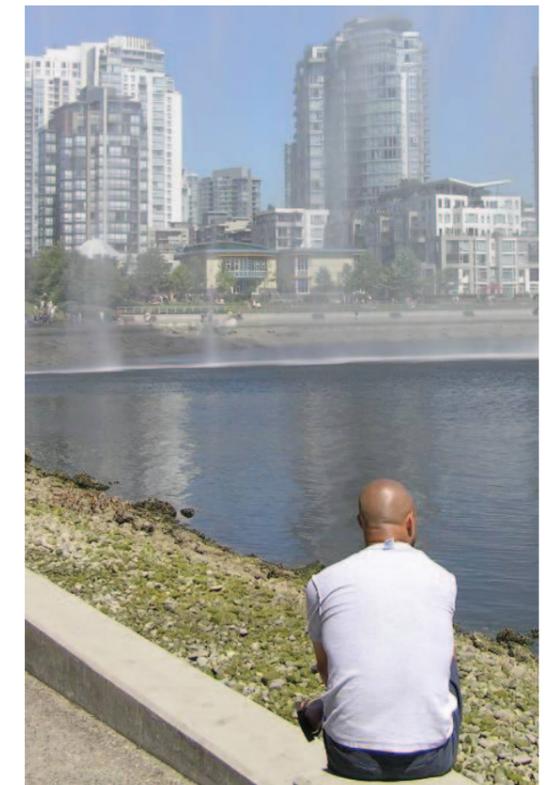
The Post Occupancy Evaluation included feedback that more opportunities for informal meetings needed to be available in the neighbourhood and that design could be adapted to promote more informal interaction. The majority of residents reported that they would like to see more areas where people could get together. Many residents would like to see more organised events.

Although recognised as a valued community asset, there was a sense that the community centre may be able to do more to reach out to seniors and make better use of the adjacent Roundhouse plaza space. Residents also believed that community could be promoted by more affordable stores and by a broader diversity of activity centres such as informal theatres and small local libraries.

Lessons learned

To some extent False Creek North may be considered to be something of a victim of its own success. The explicit policies to encourage diversity, particularly with the focus on attracting greater number of family households to high density urban living, have proven successful but the social infrastructure has not been planned in anticipation of this demand and appears to be currently struggling to address community needs.

This project also highlights the value of comprehensive post occupancy evaluation and the important insights that can be gained by seeking systematic feedback from residents and how this can be used to adapt existing plans and inform new ones.



» Vinegar Hill Library and Community Centre Rouse Hill Town Centre, Hills Shire Council, Sydney

Introduction

Rouse Hill Town Centre is a major centre located in the north west of Sydney approximately 39 kilometres north west of the Sydney CBD. While not an urban location in the inner city sense, Rouse Hill does provide a good example of the provision of community facilities within a town centre setting and the use of quite urban models in the provision and location of community facilities.

Rouse Hill Town Centre is projected to house 4,500 residents in around 1,800 dwellings ranging including higher density apartments in the central core of the town centre. It is a joint venture between Landcom (the Land Management Corporation equivalent in New South Wales), the New South Wales Department of Planning, the GPT Group and Lend Lease.

Key planning principles for the Rouse Hill Town Centre include:

- » Creation of a genuine 'main street' town centre
- » Integration of residential and civic uses into the town centre
- » Set a new benchmark for residential and mixed use development.

Social infrastructure

Community facilities include a new library and community centre, new public and secondary schools, an 80 place child care centre and 32 hectares of open space.

The Vinegar Hill Memorial Library and Community Centre is a key community facility for the town centre. It is based on a multistorey, town centre, multipurpose, integrated community facility model, occupying three levels of centrally located mixed use space right on the town centre's main plaza. The facility includes:

- » A ground floor entry/exhibition area that also includes commercial space (currently used for a cafe)
- » A first floor library of 1,300 square metres
- » A second floor community centre of 1,100 square metres.

Learn 2 Learning Hub at Rouse Hill

The Learn2 Learning Hub is a shared learning space for a range of organisations including TAFE NSW – Western Sydney Institute, Australian Business Limited Apprenticeship Centre, JobQuest, Sydney Hills Business Chamber, NorthWest Community College, KUMON Rouse Hill and many more.

Learn2 focuses on incubating learning and promoting opportunities within the Rouse Hill region and seeks to determine how both public and private service providers can be brought together to achieve better learning outcomes for the community. The intent of Learn2 is to facilitate existing programs and services operating out of the 'shared' Learn2 Learning Hub at the Vinegar Memorial Hill Library and Community Centre in Rouse Hill Town Centre.

The Learn2 hub provides access to learning facilities and programs for people of all ages and:

- » Provides a new and different learning environment for all ages
- » Enables learning service providers and learning partners to book the facilities to deliver programs
- » Helps to build a strong relationship with the Vinegar Hill Memorial Library and Community Centre
- » Creates a learning centre that responds to the needs of Rouse Hill and the surrounding area's requirements
- » Makes referrals to other learning services and agencies – e.g. children's programs in the centre
- » Acts as a conduit between local schools, businesses and the community
- » Offers a convenient access point for advice on training and employment needs of the community.

Needs Assessment

The Hills Shire Council worked with Landcom and the Department of Planning to identify the community facility needs for Rouse Hill. The Rouse Hill Town Centre had been identified by the NSW Government as a key regional centre for north west Sydney. The Government had purchased the land 20-30 years previously. Prior to releasing a tender for the joint venture development of Rouse Hill, Landcom and Department of Planning worked with Hills Shire to identify the community facility needs of the area, taking into consideration the existing community needs as well as those likely to be generated from the new development.

These community facilities identified for Rouse Hill are intended to serve an area population of 15-20,000 people (a larger regional population than just Rouse Hill Town Centre). Council has an option to expand the facility by an additional 1,300 square metres when the population of the area grows to around 25,000 people. Hills Shire utilised its experience with recent multipurpose community facility projects, such as Castle Grand, to understand the uses and space requirements that would best serve community needs. The flexibility to expand to meet growing and changing population needs was a key issue.

Beyond the initial facility (space and location) requirements that were incorporated into the tender requirements, once the successful tenderers were identified (the GPT Group and Lend Lease joint venture) as the developers, began a process of needs assessment to better understand what type of uses, programs and activities are most needed in the area and would work best in the Rouse Hill Town Centre.

The joint venture had identified 'lifelong learning' as key element of creating a sustainable community at Rouse Hill. In 2005 a not-for-profit organisation (Rouse Hill Learning and Community Partnership) was established to ensure that learning and community initiatives implemented at Rouse Hill were aimed at equipping residents, businesses, workers and visitors to the North West with the necessary skills, information and opportunities to create a thriving community that can respond to the rapid urban growth occurring in the region.

The joint venture conducted extensive research into the learning and community requirements of the Rouse Hill region. This found that for a successful learning culture to be established a broad range of learning opportunities, strategically targeted to interested learner groups within the community, must be provided. This research formed the base platform for learning activities within Rouse Hill and was the genesis of the Learn2 initiative that operates from the community centre.



Locational Features

The Vinegar Hill Memorial Library and Community Centre is located directly on the main Rouse Hill Town Centre town square. The ground floor includes a foyer and exhibition space. Stair and lift access then lead to the first floor where the library is located. The second floor is occupied by the community centre.

The facility is a truly central town centre location. Its location on the main plaza places the library and community centre at the heart of the Rouse Hill Town Centre. Although occupying three levels, with key community spaces on the second and third storeys, the entrance and exhibition space on the ground floor, directly on the plaza, reinforce the centre as a key town centre space. The co-location with the commercial cafe on the ground floor contributes to the social activity of the centre providing people with a comfortable, convivial space to spend time and be part of the life of the community.

Community preferences

In recently conducted market research related to the Vinegar Hill Memorial Library and Community Centre, the Hills Shire Council found that:

- » Of the activities most likely to be undertaken in conjunction with a library visit, 'shopping' and 'visit a Coffee Shop' were the most popular (66% and 67% respectively)."
- » Of those respondents aged 18-24 years (10% of the total sample), the majority (74%) indicated that they would like to 'meet friends' at a library
- » Within the 25-34 year old age group (28% of the total sample), the most popular option was to 'visit a coffee shop'
- » 'Shopping' was the most common activity to be undertaken in conjunction with a library visit among both those respondents aged 35-49 years (39% of the total sample) and those aged 64-75+ years (4% of the total sample)
- » Access to health services was significantly more important to do as an activity in conjunction with a library visit for those aged 64-75+ years (17% of the total sample).

Funding and delivery

Rouse Hill Town Centre was a unique community facilities project for Hills Shire Council in that the library and community centre were identified as a requirement by Landcom and the Department of Planning through discussion with Council and was included as part of their tender requirements for the development of the Rouse Hill Town Centre. As a result the Lend Lease/GPT consortium contributed \$4.85 million to the project as part of their bid to Landcom. Council paid \$5.2 million for the building and an additional \$2.3 million for fit out. A nominal sum was also paid to the New South Wales State Government for the land.

The developers of The New Rouse Hill (Lend Lease and GPT Group) invested \$2 million to establish the Rouse Hill Learning and Community Partnership to research, identify and take steps to meet community needs and provide physical space within the town centre to conduct learning and community events and activities. The ultimate goal is that community and learning development becomes independent of the developers initial seed funding. The Learning and Community Partnership seeks to work with complimentary service providers to apply for funding from various sources.

While the establishment of programs like Learn2 has the potential to deliver significant community benefits, the long term sustainability of the funding arrangements is an important consideration. While seed funding acts as a critical catalyst to program development and delivery, project partners need to carefully consider long term viability and program sustainability once the initial seed funds are depleted.

Lessons learned

Projects like Rouse Hill, where Government agencies, including land development agencies like Landcom and LMC play a central role, highlight the potential for leverage to be gained to deliver community benefits by incorporating requirements for social infrastructure provision in the conditions of tender. This project also showcases the importance of cooperation between Landcom, Department of Planning and Hills Shire Council in the initial social infrastructure planning and needs assessment that informed the tender specifications.

Hills Shire Council, based on its experience with others facilities, planned in the flexibility for facility expansion to enable the needs of a growing population to continue to be met over time. This planned capacity for expansion was incorporated even in this town centre, multistorey location.

Hills Shire Council staff report that the town square location works well for the community facility and that the first and second floor location of the library and community centre has not been an issue. This is believed to be due in part to the prominent entry and foyer area located directly on the town square. Council staff also report that access to easy and adequate parking in the town centre has been an advantage for the community facility.

While the establishment of community building and economic development programs have the potential to deliver significant community benefits, the long term funding arrangements is an important consideration. While seed funding is critical to getting projects started, there does need to be careful consideration of long term viability and program sustainability once the initial seed funds are expended.



Sources: Interviews with Hills Shire Council Community Facilities staff (March 2011); Interview with Jenny Rudolph, former Senior Development Manager for Landcom for the Rouse Hill Town Centre project; Site visit to library and community centre and interview with Learn2 staff

» Castle Grand Library and Community Centre Castle Hill, Hills Shire Council, Sydney

Introduction

Baulkham Hills (now the Hills) Shire Council recognised the need to replace a dated existing community centre in Castle Hill. A nearby site was purchased for a new library and community centre. The initial conception of the facility was as a function centre. During planning for the new Castle Grand facility, discussions with the Area Health Service took place regarding the need for a better located early childhood centre and health service.

Based on these discussions the original conception of the facility grew. The focus turned to a multipurpose community centre and library. The centre (built in 2004) has been designed and purpose built for functions, conferences and events as well as for use by community groups and hirers.

Key features of the facility

The key community facilities provided at Castle Grand include:

- » A community centre (2,000 square metres) with a 500 seat auditorium, four meeting rooms accommodating 20, 40, 90 and 180 respectively
- » A library (1,900 square metres) incorporating a café (leased to a private operator), Council customer service centre and internet facilities
- » An early childhood health centre.

There is an eight storey residential apartment building above the library and community centre as well as community and residential car parking (262 spaces beneath).

Key points

Key points about Castle Grand include:

- » The original proposal included an additional four storeys of residential units. This would have meant the facility was entirely self-funded. However, the additional height was not approved and Council had to locate other finances to assist with the capital funding
- » Council acted as developer and went to tender for construction and sales. Taking apartments to the market proved challenging and an alternative arrangement (such as a Public Private Partnership) would likely be considered for future projects
- » The café component has been very successful and is seen to add significantly to the use and vibrancy of the facility, as well as providing an income stream
- » A lease has been negotiated with the Area Health Service where it pays a below market rate for the space
- » While co-locating libraries and community centres works well in theory, in practice it can prove difficult to realise the potential synergies. The level of interaction between facilities in Castle Grand is not as high as was anticipated. Design can help to lay a foundation but it is not enough to fully realise the potential of co-location.

Locational Features

The Castle Grand facility is located on the edge of Castle Hill Town Centre adjacent to the main Castle Grand shopping centre, cinema complex and large car parking facilities. Within the precinct is a police station, local park, high school and primary school. A train station has been proposed approximately 200 metres from the centre. The centre is accessible by bus, bike and foot.



Funding and delivery

Council sold assets to fund the total development of the community centre and library and is recovering its outlay through the sale of the residential apartments on the site.

Council adopted an entrepreneurial approach to the facility as it was evident in the early stages that Council would not be solely able to fund up front the costs of the facility. Acting as a developer and owner, Council commissioned a private developer to deliver 62 residential units at an agreed rate of return. The profits from the development were then invested in community facilities.

Council staff report that what is essentially a \$24 million facility, cost Council in the vicinity of \$8-10 million due to the cross subsidy achieved by the inclusion of the residential units as part of the development.

The library and community centre are managed by Council staff. The community centre is managed as a hall for hire and 75% of the activities at the centre are provided by regular hirers running regular programs. Approximately 25% of meeting and function room use is through casual hire.

Lessons learned

Key lessons to emerge from this case study include:

- » The challenges of Council acting as a developer, particularly in a higher density market. Baulkham Hills is in the preliminary stages of planning another community facility nearby. Council would consider a residential/community mix for that project as well but is likely to investigate alternative options for funding. Rather than act as developer other options include Public Private Partnership arrangements or developing a site specific town planning framework and allowing the market to realise the site's potential (and take the associated risks)
- » Other variations of this model could include the retention of some apartments by Council as a source of rental income to support the management of the centre
- » Realising the full potential of co-location. Co-location can be significantly enhanced through careful planning and design. However, for synergies to be fully realised it has been Baulkham Hills Shire Council's experience that a more proactive programming and management approach is required. At its Rouse Hill facility Council is employing staff to generate synergies and more actively manage facilities in an attempt to achieve 'more meaningful social, cultural and leisure outcomes'
- » Although a clear financial model for Castle Grand was developed, the intended community development outcomes were never as clearly articulated. This suggests that a common understanding of the project vision that encompasses clear social, economic and environmental objectives is important
- » The original intention was that the centre would operate at no cost to Council through revenue from functions and events; however, availability of facilities to host large events has been limited due to high levels of usage by regular hirers
- » Due to the design of the building, the community centre requires staffing whenever it is open resulting in high operational costs.



» Caroline Springs Partnership, Shire of Melton, Victoria

Introduction

Caroline Springs is a new township in the Shire of Melton which is the fastest growing municipality in Victoria. Caroline Springs is expected to be home to 24,000 residents by 2013.

The Caroline Springs Partnership was established in 2005 between the Shire of Melton, Delfin Lend Lease and Department of Victorian Communities (DVC) to trial a new way of planning and delivering infrastructure and services in Caroline Springs. The partnership was a place based initiative that focussed on bringing government, business and community groups together to plan the provision of community infrastructure including community centres, education and health facilities.

Key objectives of the partnership were to:

- » Create a model for collaborative government in local areas
- » Increase the capacity of local government to plan and deliver community infrastructure
- » Deliver better quality, timely and sequenced community infrastructure.

State Government involvement through the DVC was critical. DVC was interested in:

- » Trialling new forms of governance
- » Investigating how to make government less remote from communities
- » Exploring the role of social capital in building new communities
- » Better ways to engage communities in social, recreational, sporting, cultural and civic life

Exploring the potential of governments working in partnership with business and local communities in the planning and delivery of services.

Approach to social infrastructure

In terms of planning for social infrastructure, joint funding and joint use were emphasised as a priority.

A range of new facilities and services have been established around three distinct precincts:

- » The town centre includes four schools, a community bank, a library, council offices, a youth activity node, sport and recreational facilities, integrated public and private health services and shops
- » The Brookside Centre precinct includes three primary schools, a childcare centre, sport and recreational facilities, a youth and community house, child and family services, a library and shops
- » The North Lake Centre includes schools, child care, council and community services and health services.

A feature of most of the new facilities is that agreements have been negotiated for joint use. For example, joint use agreements have been established between the Shire of Melton and local schools to share the library, auditorium, child maternal health services, sport and recreation facilities and an after school program. The evaluation report reports that "this has cut the costs associated with organisations having to build and manage a range of their own single use facilities, both in terms of building those facilities and in the ongoing operation".

The town centre library reflected the importance of partnership and integrated service within the community. The 2,500 square metre facility delivered Victoria's largest and most integrated public library, combining a school library, Council service, community program space and a kiosk in the one building.

The partnership model

The partnership model was focused on developing new systems for the integrated planning and delivery of services and infrastructure at Caroline Springs. It is an example of a place based initiative and represents a different, more collaborative and integrated approach to planning and delivering social infrastructure.

The partnership model involved employing a 'broker' whose job included:

- » Building and mediating relationships between partners and other organisations and to act as a conduit of information between parties
- » Setting up and running working groups to focus on the development of community, education and health infrastructure.

Community outcomes

In addition to the more expeditious delivery of key community infrastructure (and in more innovative and efficient forms), more Caroline Springs residents reported in 2007 (compared to 2005) that their area has:

- » Good services and facilities like shops, child care, schools and libraries
- » A wide range of community and support groups
- » Opportunities to volunteer
- » An active community where people do things and get involved in local issues and activities
- » People who are friendly, good neighbours and help each /other
- » A distinct character and a special sense of place.



Funding and delivery

Funding and delivery responsibilities were shared among the key project partners – local government, state government and developer. All new facilities have been joint funded. Funding has been provided by Shire of Melton, Department of Education, Delfin (the developer) and other community organisations. Additional funding has been sought through applications to DVC and other public grants programs.

The partnership model provided a forum for open discussion and negotiation and kept parties focused on the desired community outcomes. In the project evaluation, all parties reported that the planning model had led to more timely, coordinated delivery of services and infrastructure. Partnerships also led to greater efficiencies, innovation and opportunities that would not have otherwise been realised including joint use of facilities and integrating health, education and community services in the one precinct.

A Caroline Springs Community Development Association (CSCDA) has been formed and is investigating options to generate funds for infrastructure and services into the future. The CSCDA was formed with seed funding from Delfin and Bendigo Bank. The role of the CSCDA includes:

- » Providing assistance to community groups
- » Examining ways to develop community enterprises
- » Assisting with the formation of a community bank.

A Bendigo Bank branch has been established and the intention is for it to be converted into a community bank. The community bank will then return some of its earnings to the community to revitalise infrastructure and services.

Lessons learned

Although Melton is a metropolitan fringe council and, therefore is set in a different context than the urban infill projects that are the focus of this study, the Caroline Springs Partnership still provides some important lessons regarding the role and potential of collaborative planning across government.

The evaluation report identifies the following four success factors for the Caroline Springs Partnership:

- » A good broker – a highly skilled, independent broker who helped groups navigate State bureaucracy
- » The right decision makers at the table with a commitment and willingness to contribute – people that attended meetings were not ‘seat warmers’ but had the authority to make decisions and contributions including regarding financial commitments
- » A shared vision, clear objectives and good process
- » Champions and early results – with scepticism from organisations subsiding with early successes with funding applications and projects on the ground.

The key project partners reported in the evaluation that “it was important that their experience was seen as a framework that could be applied to different settings but that the detail would always need to be localised to accommodate different needs.”

In interviews with the key project partners, the Evaluation Report also identified the following benefits and lessons:

- » All reported that the planning model led to more timely and coordinated delivery of services and infrastructure
- » All organisations reported they had learned through the partnerships and that they now had greater capacity for planning social infrastructure
- » All reported the partnership had led to innovation and opportunities that would not have been realised otherwise
- » All organisations involved felt the increased understanding and willingness to collaborate led to better decision making because it enabled:
 - More efficient planning processes particularly because communication reduced duplication and maximised knowledge of opportunities
 - Greater transparency with all parties gaining a better understanding for the rationale behind decisions
 - Greater ownership of the planning process and its outcomes
- » Organisations agreed that partnership work was hard – the process can be difficult and time consuming.



» Idea Store, Tower Hamlets Borough, London

Idea Store Strategy 1999 and Idea Store Strategy 2009 revision

Introduction

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets is the location of a major urban renewal project at the London Docklands which includes Canary Wharf. As well as this rejuvenating area, which includes a significant media and financial services industry presence, Tower Hamlets is also home to some of the most disadvantaged communities in Britain with high unemployment, low levels of formal education and low levels of employment skills.

Tower Hamlets is central to Greater London's plans for accommodating population growth. In response to the London Plan, the Tower Hamlets Local Development Framework seeks to accommodate 31,500 new homes to 2016, an increase in the provision of affordable housing, an increase in family sized accommodation and the appropriate provision of social and physical infrastructure to be accessibly located in town centres. Tower Hamlets has recognised that a key element of that supporting social infrastructure is its network of libraries and that a new approach was needed.

Local people had become disengaged with Tower Hamlet's libraries, which were often in inconvenient locations, inaccessible for people with disabilities and in need of modernisation. Following an extensive public consultation and research effort, Tower Hamlet developed plans to invest £30 million in a series of Idea Stores that would bring their libraries up to date with modern lifestyles and contemporary community needs.

The Idea Stores are a rethinking of the traditional library concept. Reflecting the identified needs of the Tower Hamlet community, Idea Stores offer a traditional public library service, a wide range of adult education classes, along with other career support, training, meeting areas, cafes and arts and leisure pursuits – all brought together in easily accessible spaces which are modelled on retail environments (Tower Hamlets, Idea Store Strategy, 2009). They are intended to meet a variety of individual and group needs of the local community. They are places where individuals and families come together to socialise and they act as venues for community groups.

The Academy for Sustainable Communities writes:

Located at the heart of communities, amongst supermarkets and other shops, Idea Stores make library and learning facilities available where people want to use them. They address the needs of diverse community groups, widening participation in lifelong learning and helping to strengthen community cohesion. Each one offers a convenient and accessible one-stop location for library, learning and information services.

The Idea Store concept

The original Idea Store strategy described the concept as a 'street university' approach where:

The Idea Stores will be the first place that people go to for information about any aspect of their lives and to gain new skills. They will offer library and lifelong learning facilities in an integrated and attractive way. They will become a focus for the local community, a place where people can come for coffee, to meet friends, to take a break from shopping and to enjoy the many facilities. They will be designed to be attractive to look at and pleasant to be in, using the best of modern architectural and graphic design. They will incorporate the best ideas from other councils and education bodies as well as the retail and leisure industry. They will also maintain the best traditions of the library movement and education sector.

As well as the lending library, reference, DVD and CD collection Idea Stores include adult learning and education classrooms, open learning centres, public access IT and internet terminals, homework clubs, study space and crèche. There is also entertainment with performances and art exhibitions, video walls, shops and cafes. Health advice is available in an accessible, relaxed and informal setting and community groups have access to prime space.

Idea Stores are seen as an essential component of social infrastructure because of their contribution to building strong, sustainable and cohesive communities. They offer a neutral and welcoming space that is open and accessible to people of all ages and backgrounds. They provide opportunities for a wide range of people to participate in positive social, leisure and learning activities and help to foster stronger community networks (Idea Store Strategy, 2009).

The original strategy described the primary objective of Idea Stores as empowering individuals to help themselves and to also act as feeders to colleges and vocational training. Importantly, the original strategy also stressed that Idea Stores are also intended to be:

Places where people go to have fun, participate in cultural activities, meet friends and relax. Idea is about the whole person. As much emphasis will be placed on bringing the community together in a stimulating environment as on information and learning. Idea is about getting people off estates and out of their houses to meet others and experience a wide range of activities. They will be an essential and integral part of everyone's lives.

Strategic objectives

The Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020 identifies the following key objectives for the Borough:

- » Planning new neighbourhoods with supportive services like primary schools, health care facilities and local parks
- » Bring together communities to foster mutual understanding, a collective sense of wellbeing and avoid people being isolated
- » Ensure communities have good access to a full range of facilities – including health services, schools and leisure
- » Provide first class and well managed centres where people come together for business, shopping, leisure and recreation.

Responding to these broader borough wide objectives, the Idea Store Strategy 2009 identifies the following objectives:

- » Improve the quality and scope of core library and information services
- » Improve the quality and scope of core adult learning services
- » Expand the provision of high quality health information, advice and support
- » Expand provision of high quality employment information, advice and support
- » Improve the provision of high quality, accessible ICT/ILT infrastructure, services, training and support
- » Strengthen inclusion and accessibility
- » Co-locate cultural, leisure and other council services where this will increase efficiency, effectiveness and value for money.

Approach to Social Infrastructure

The UK Government has defined a sustainable community as "a place where people want to live and work now and in the future." Government policies consistently acknowledge the contribution of social and cultural infrastructure, such as libraries, learning and information facilities, to achieving this objective. Cross government initiatives aim to ensure that all communities, particularly those experiencing housing-led growth and regeneration, can benefit from community, cultural and sporting opportunities by ensuring that social infrastructure is embedded in the spatial development of towns and cities.

Reflecting the broader national policy agenda, the Idea Store Strategy recognises social infrastructure as an important component in the reinvigoration of Tower Hamlets' town centres. The strategy (2009) quotes evidence from the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries, that a "flagship, high profile, large scale cultural project such as a new library can generate urban regeneration and economic growth by attracting new people, jobs and investment to an area."

The Idea Store Strategy recognises that social infrastructure has an important role to play in creating a sustainable community and building community cohesion by:

- » Creating opportunities for social engagement that bring people from different backgrounds together
- » Providing a safe, equitable and neutral social space that is open to everyone
- » Helping to create a shared understanding of different ways of life thereby breaking down barriers and fostering stronger social networks
- » Acting as a community resource, a meeting place where people can come together and share interests
- » Operating as a centre of community development activity
- » Providing a space for the delivery of shared services with 'joined up' services creating the potential for 'value chains' where one community service can build on another.

Needs Assessment

For the original strategy, Tower Hamlets used digital mapping technology to better understand the existing library network and the relative catchments. The results showed that almost every resident lived in the catchments for at least two libraries, yet usage was still low. This data combined with user consultation feedback highlighted that “time is precious” and that people often cannot, or do not want to, make special trips to the library. Tower Hamlets recognised that they needed an approach that enabled libraries to become more a part of everyday life and to be in a position where it is easier to compete for people’s time and attention.

For the development of the original strategy, Tower Hamlets undertook a survey of 2,822 Borough residents as well as conducting consultation roadshows and exhibitions. Although the overwhelming majority of participants in this process considered the library service to be an important part of the community, they also considered the service to be outdated, run down and “tired”. The consultation process demonstrated that Tower Hamlets residents would use the service in much larger numbers provided “location, opening times, the quality of the environment and service specification were dramatically improved” (Idea Store Strategy, 1999).

Tower Hamlets also undertook extensive market research and community consultation processes for the development of the revised 2009 strategy. The 2009 strategy included analysis of use data, a face to face interview/survey of 1,200 users and non-users, engagement with young people through the establishment of a Youth Partnership, and a review of relevant recent consultation in the Borough for the Local Development Framework, Community Plan and Children and Young People’s Plan.

In the survey for the 2009 strategy, non-users were asked what would encourage them to use the library. The top three responses were: longer opening hours, being able to shop at the same time and also having access to council information and services. This process found that people wanted a quality library service and would use it more often if they could combine a visit to the library with a shopping trip with respondents indicating that they considered shopping and a visit to the library to be complementary. The 2009 strategy also had the benefit of an extensive array of user data for the existing Idea Stores that clearly demonstrated the increased usage patterns delivered by the new facilities with visits increasing from 568,464 in 1999/2000 to 2,066,436 in 2007/2008 (264%).

The infrastructure planning component of the Idea Stores Strategy builds on the standard charge approach developed by Museums, Libraries and Archives in *Public Libraries, Archives and New Development: A standard charge approach* which suggests that a space standard of 6 square metres per 1,000 residents should be adopted for sustainable community planning and developer contribution purposes.

Funding and delivery

The UK Government has introduced a Community Infrastructure Levy to support local authorities to better deliver community infrastructure. The Community Infrastructure Levy represents a new tariff-based funding stream that can be used to finance a broad range of social infrastructure including community facilities that are needed to support housing or commercial developments. The Idea Store Strategy feeds into the infrastructure levy design and will allow Tower Hamlets to secure contributions for community purposes.

However, the levy alone is not sufficient to cover the costs of fully implementing the Idea Store Strategy. As such, since its inception, Tower Hamlets have actively pursued a partnership approach to planning and delivery. The development of the Idea Store network has benefitted from a considerable amount of external funding and the Council and its key partners have invested heavily to build new facilities. Bringing together library, information and learning services was strongly supported by the Learning and Skills Council who invested in the new facilities. Tower Hamlets College (a community college, adult learning provider) was a key partner in the original Idea Store Strategy and continues to contribute to the service both financially and in terms of learning provision. The range of funding partners involved in the various Idea Store projects include:

- » London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- » Learning and Skills Council
- » Tower Hamlets College
- » Canary Wharf Group (Canary Wharf Idea Store)
- » London Metropolitan University (Canary Wharf Idea Store)
- » Barclays (Canary Wharf Idea Store)
- » European Regional Development Fund (Whitechapel Idea Store)
- » Sure Start Partnership (Whitechapel Idea Store)
- » UK Online (Whitechapel and Chrisp Street Idea Stores)
- » London Development Agency (Whitechapel Idea Store)
- » Cityside Regeneration (Whitechapel Idea Store)
- » Sainsburys Families Charitable Trusts (Whitechapel Idea Store)
- » Leaside Regeneration (Chrisp Street Idea Store)
- » Lloyds of London Charities Trust (Chrisp Street Idea Store)
- » Bow People’s Trust (Bow Idea Store).

The introduction of the Idea Store concept is viewed by Council as part of its overall asset management approach. Key features of this include:

- » A commitment to no longer persist with provision of services in locations that are unable to provide a satisfactory standard of service or are duplicating services for the same catchment population
- » A reduction of library service points from twelve to seven on a programmed basis over five years
- » No library will be merged until the new or improved facilities covering the local area are ready for use
- » Capital receipts from the sale of library and adult education buildings freed up by the introduction of Idea Stores will be reinvested in the community to fund the improved Idea Store facilities.

Locational Features

The 2009 Idea Store Strategy supports the Tower Hamlets Local Development Framework’s direction to focus community and cultural facilities in town centre locations “to ensure the sustainability of those centres and make facilities accessible to the widest number of people.” The Idea Store model is also strongly influenced by retail strategy that supports highly visible, accessible, central, town centre locations with this approach validated by the market research conducted as part of developing the revised 2009 Idea Store Strategy. This research showed that residents want to combine using the service with other day to day activities, thus avoiding the need for special journeys to the Idea Store or library. Overwhelmingly, town centre activities were those that residents wanted to combine with their use of library and information services.

This market research, and its emphasis on convenience and combination of trips, also supports the focus of the strategy on co-location with other community services and facility types. Idea Stores offer advantages as key delivery partners for a wide range of community services such as health and employment. The 2009 Idea Store Strategy states “They offer neutral, non-judgemental community spaces that help to overcome some of the stigma attached with accessing certain services. They offer high quality information and resources and access to the Internet and they are open to people of all ages, ethnicities and backgrounds.”



Lessons learned

Key lessons from the Idea Store experience to date include:

- » The importance of developing (and revisiting) a comprehensive, strategic approach to Idea Stores that is based on a thorough needs assessment with significant community focussed market research
- » The development and refinement of the strategy based on a comprehensive consultation process with the model for Idea Stores based on key community needs for library services, adult education and employment skills development
- » Recognition of the need for a new model for a new environment. The Borough understood it needed to make libraries interesting and appealing to the community. The 'rebranding' of the traditional library so as to not only better meet community needs but to consciously make them more attractive, appealing environments that are key facilities and meeting places in Tower Hamlet's key town centres
- » Maximisation of private investment and the development of strategic funding partnerships with a range of government, non-government and private sector organisations
- » Setting up income streams so that the assets are income generating through the provision of leasable space
- » Sound asset management that involved asset rationalisation with the overall reduction of library facilities from twelve to seven but with new facilities being more centrally located, accessible to more people and providing superior services and amenities. Asset rationalisation was also based on the key premise that no existing facilities would be closed until replacement facility was operational
- » Affirmative rather than deficit model of community facilities. With the Idea Store model focussing on creating places where people go to have fun, participate in cultural activities, meet friends and relax
- » The importance of occupying prime locations in town centres with these central, high profile locations reinforcing the Idea Stores as key places in the town centre and important civic and community places.

Future Directions

The 2009 Idea Store Strategy identified the need for a smaller, more flexible and less costly generation of Idea Stores. The impact of the global economic downturn is anticipated to have a significant impact on the availability of public funds for similar projects in the future. In response, Tower Hamlets is exploring the concept of 'Idea Store Local', a concept that builds on the convenience store or urban grocery store model. Idea Store Local would be smaller in size and focus on high quality core services and high quality presentation. This 'local' version "can be easily located within existing town centres as the space requirement would be significantly smaller. They do not have to be purpose built facilities but could be located in existing retail units on high street frontages, thus contributing to the revitalisation of town centres in economically challenging times." The 2009 Strategy proposes to reconfigure the originally proposed network to consist of anchor stores and satellite Idea Store Local sites.

On the Ground Examples

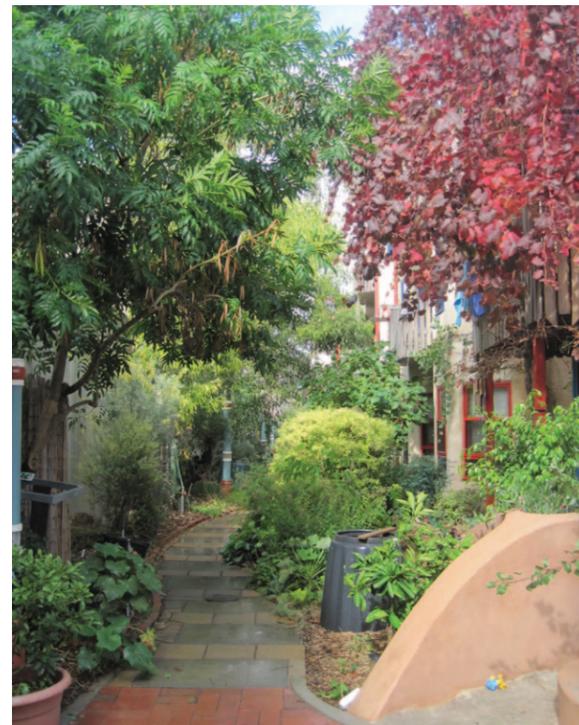
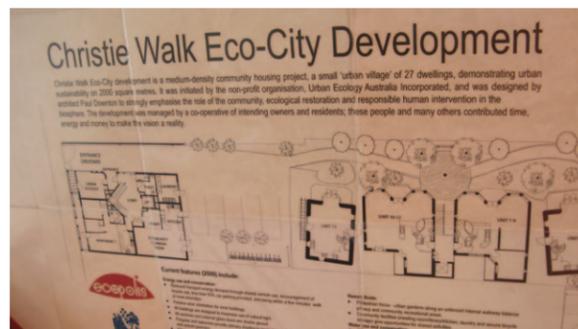
Facility	Description	Category	Nature of Project	Size (sq m)	Year of completion	Overall cost (£)	Fit out cost (£)	Funding sources
Bow	Idea brand seeks a retail image in a non-stereotypical or municipal environment. Conversion plus use of Passmore Edwards Library places some limitations on identity. Emphasis on education. Facilities include learning labs, children's library, sight and sound space, videowall, plasma screens, internet access, self service terminals	Medium sized town library (intended to serve population of 24,000)	Conversion	1,125	2002	2 million	1.5 million	UK Online, Borough of Tower Hamlets, Bow People's Trust
Chrip Street	New build installed on top and in front of an existing podium, running along a parade of shops within Chrip Street Market. Facilities include learning labs, surfing space, plasma screens, internet access, self service terminals, baby changing facilities	Medium sized town library	New build	1,033	2004	5 million	3 million	UK Online, Borough of Tower Hamlets, Leaside Regeneration, Lloyds of London Charities Trust
Whitechapel	The Borough's flagship library. A 5 storey, highly accessible in front of Sainsburys in the Whitechapel Market. Facilities include state of the art learning spaces and classrooms, crèche, dedicated reference and information library, dance studio, therapy room, baby changing facilities.	Central/main library	New build	3,400	2005	16 million	13 million	European Regional Development Fund, Sure Start Partnership, UK Online, Borough of Tower Hamlets, Tower Hamlets College, London Development Agency, Cityside Regeneration, Sainsburys Families Charitable Trusts
Canary Wharf	Conversion and refurbishment of a car park within Churchill Mall. Facilities include state of the art learning spaces and classrooms, quick access terminals, baby changing facilities	Small community library	Conversion	960	2006	3 million	1.2 million	Borough of Tower Hamlets, Learning and Skills Council, Tower Hamlets College, Canary Wharf Group, London Metropolitan University, Barclays

» Adelaide Case Studies

Christie Walk Eco-City, Adelaide, South Australia

1. Project overview: Christie Walk Eco-City is a medium density communal housing project located in central Adelaide. It comprises 27 dwellings including a mix of houses, townhouses and apartments, ranging from one to five storeys. Urban Ecology Australia initiated this demonstration project to promote people-friendly, nature based urban development. Christie Walk showcases a range of social and environmental sustainability initiatives. It has a pedestrian focus and includes a range of community facilities which provide opportunities for social interaction including a meeting room/library/kitchen, laundry and secure bicycle storage. The development incorporates a range of environmental sustainability features (such as energy and water efficiency measures, sustainable materials selection and passive solar / climate responsive design) which provide benefits for residents through healthy lifestyles and cost savings.

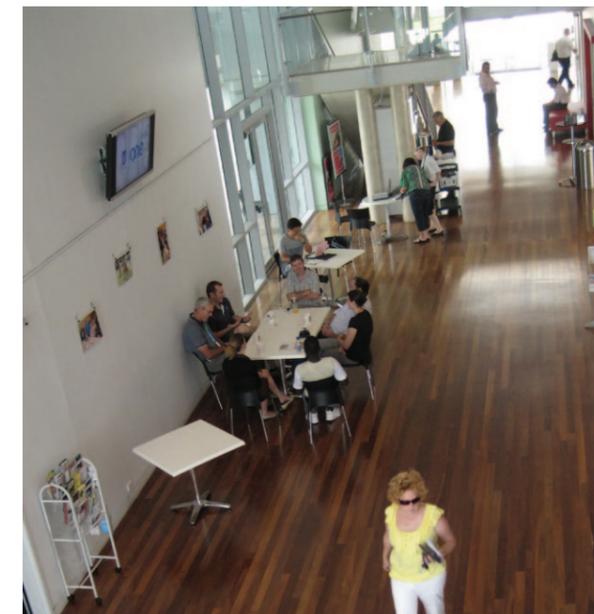
2. Key social infrastructure initiative/s: Christie Walk demonstrates how a range of social and environmental sustainability initiatives can be successfully incorporated into medium density developments with a mix of dwelling types. It demonstrates how usable shared outdoor spaces, such as community food gardens and roof gardens, and shared indoor spaces, such as meeting rooms and libraries, can be incorporated into urban infill projects; with these shared spaces contributing at the site level to community building and social interaction.



The Mawson Centre, Mawson Lakes, South Australia

1. Project overview: The Mawson Centre is a learning, cultural and community centre situated in Mawson Lakes, a residential community developed by Delfin Lend Lease in 2005 approximately 12 kilometres north of the City of Adelaide in the City of Salisbury. Mawson Lakes will be a community of approximately 10,000 residents, 6,000 workers and 5,000 students. An important feature of the vision for the Mawson Lakes Town Centre was the Mawson Centre, a shared facility which has become a key focal point and hub for the Mawson Lakes community. The Centre provides for students, local schools, residents, workers and visitors to Mawson Lakes.

2. Key social infrastructure initiative/s: The Mawson Centre was developed on the basis of an innovative partnership approach to planning and funding of social infrastructure. The Centre was developed using land contributed by the developer, and was delivered through the Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) on the basis of a partnership arrangement between the University of South Australia (UniSA), the City of Salisbury and the State Government. This project demonstrates the value of establishing a shared vision and using an innovative partnership approach in the delivery of community facilities. An important consideration, however, is the intensive and lengthy process of negotiations between the various parties which involved a significant commitment on the part of the developer. This project also highlights some of the challenges of integrating new developments with existing communities. Despite the successful delivery of the Mawson Centre for the Mawson Lakes community, the challenge of ensuring the benefits of the facility are available to the wider City of Salisbury are recognised. The City of Salisbury has been working to develop a range of programs and activities with the aim of promoting wider access to the facility for wider Salisbury community.



Salisbury North Urban Improvement Project, Adelaide, South Australia

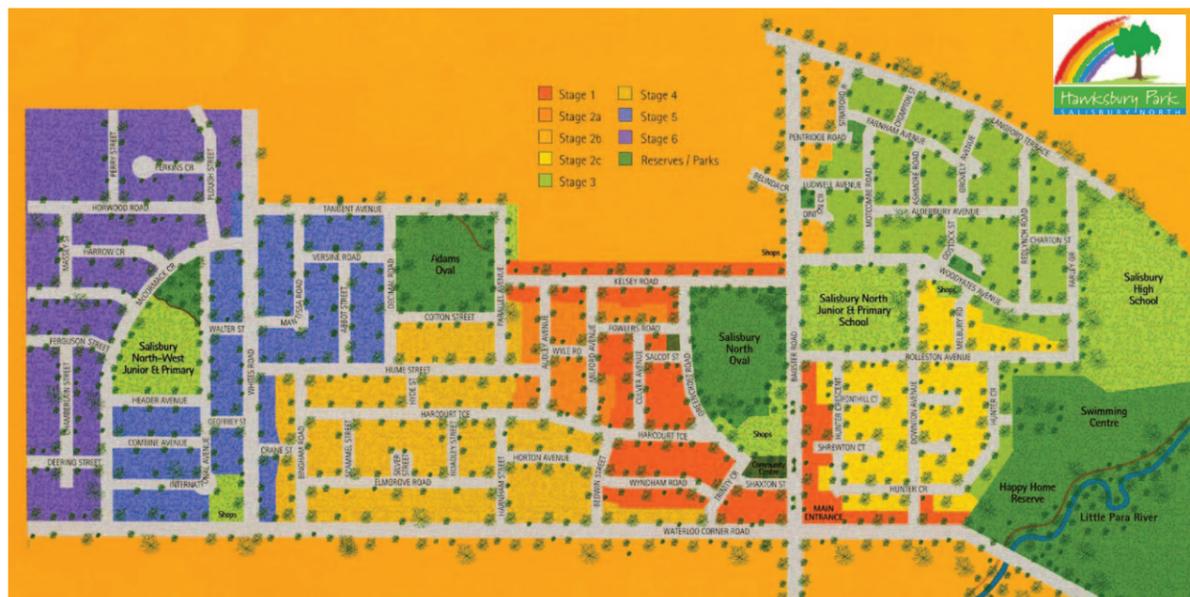
1. Project overview: The Salisbury North Urban Improvement Project (SNUIP) involved a total investment of \$100 million over a period of 10 years. The project commenced in 1998 as an initiative of Housing SA and the City of Salisbury. Salisbury North, with a population of approximately 10,000, is an established suburb located 23 kilometres north of the City of Adelaide. Prior to its renewal, some areas within Salisbury North were characterised by up to 80% public housing; this housing was outdated and inadequate, with complex social issues arising. The City of Salisbury undertook a complete renewal of the Salisbury North area including redeveloping and allocating housing, upgrading infrastructure and services and addressing the social dimension, through initiatives focusing on community development and fostering community pride. This project involved renovation of 500 Housing SA houses, demolition of 500 others and development of 800 new homes for private ownership. Service infrastructure was upgraded and new community facilities and open space were developed, all in collaboration with the community through the established Community Reference Group.

To create a sustainable integrated community, a number of strategies have been developed in conjunction with residents and stakeholders, such as:

- » Developing skills and knowledge through training courses, workshops and seminars

- » Providing infrastructure and resources, including Bagster Road Community Centre which encourages residents from all over the area to take part in activities
- » Motivating and encouraging members of the community to identify needs for other services and community activities
- » Engaging with the community to identify projects which address community needs and concerns
- » The formation of the Community Reference Group (CRG) which acts as the voice for the community and disseminates information they receive from the major stakeholders, back to the community.

2. Key social infrastructure initiative/s: This project is a practical example of contemporary approaches to community renewal. The project has been widely recognised for its holistic approach to renewal and its success in achieving outstanding positive physical, social and economic outcomes in what was an area of extremely high need with limited available funding. The improvements at Salisbury North can be largely contributed to the efforts and commitment of the City of Salisbury, Housing SA and the Community Reference Group. The project is an example of the benefits of the community involvement in decision making and the maximisation of community benefit on a limited budget, through the identification of community determined priorities.



Playford Alive, City of Playford, South Australia

1. Project overview: Playford Alive involves the physical and community renewal of the suburbs of Davoren Park and Smithfield Plains in northern Adelaide, approximately 30km from the CBD. The Playford Alive urban renewal project will create just under 5,000 new homes, two new public schools, opportunities for private schools, new and improved retail facilities, community and recreation facilities, improved public transport and training and community development programs. The project area will accommodate a population of more than 40,000 residents, from an existing base of 13,000. Playford Alive is being planned and delivered in a partnership between the South Australian Government (represented by the Land Management Corporation and the Department for Families and Communities), the City of Playford and the local community. The Playford Initiatives Fund has been developed to assist initiatives in the project area which meet the community's aspirations to be: modern, attractive and connected; sustainable; and safe and attractive.

2. Key social infrastructure initiative/s: This project involved redevelopment and urban renewal of a public housing estate, in which community engagement played an important part of the process. The Initiatives Fund was established through a development agreement to provide funding and sponsorship for local initiatives that support community and economic development for community initiatives over the life of the project, to the value of \$4-5 million. The fund has utilised 1% of gross revenue from land sales in the renewal area with fund proceeds to support activities that increase community wellbeing through the project area. The first two rounds of funding in 2009 and 2010 provided more than \$350,000 to organisations for place making initiatives, providing community benefits within the project area.



» Key Lessons

The intention of these case studies is to identify some practical lessons that the City of Charles Sturt and its partner councils in Adelaide can consider in developing their own approach to the planning and provision of social infrastructure in urban growth areas. As a summary, some of the key lessons identified in this collection of case studies include:

Policy and planning

Local governments such as the City of Melbourne and City of Vancouver have developed a strong policy framework for social infrastructure planning and urban infill development that provides guidance and direction for community infrastructure planning.

Needs assessment

Good information on the proposed development is required as a basis for sound planning of social infrastructure. Robust population projections that include household composition and age profiles over time are an important input into social infrastructure planning. The case studies show that urban infill areas can attract different demographic profiles compared to other residential areas in their cities and this has implications for social infrastructure planning.

Social infrastructure planning in urban infill areas requires careful consideration of existing provision. A good understanding of existing nearby social infrastructure capacity is essential. An analysis of what social infrastructure is already available, how it is being used and any potential for enhancement, expansion or relocation is an important consideration.

Planning social infrastructure

The existing planning thresholds and facility benchmarks that exist (such as the SEQ Implementation Guidelines for Social Infrastructure) are still relevant as a guide and starting point but higher density infill areas, with its accompanying land economics, requires consideration of a more urban, compact form of social infrastructure and the consideration of options such as community space within mixed use buildings or leasing space for community use. Case studies like the Idea Stores highlight the development of new models of facility provision to better address changing community needs and environments.

While planning standards may be used as a starting point, case studies highlight the value of engaging directly with key human service providers. Accurate assessment of future social infrastructure provision depends on the provision of good quality demographic projections and a thorough engagement process that involves key human services providers.

Comparative analysis (looking at what has worked and not worked in other similar areas) is also identified in case studies as an important input into planning social infrastructure in urban growth areas.

Process and partnerships

Case studies like Green Square Town Centre and the Caroline Springs Partnership highlight the importance of cross agency collaboration in planning and delivering social infrastructure. A multi-agency approach is suggested to maximise opportunities for integrated planning that encourages efficiencies and promotes co-location and joint use models of facility provision.

The state land development agencies play an important role in many of the Australian case studies. As an example, Rouse Hill Town Centre highlights how a state land development agency can leverage its role to ensure that social infrastructure is recognised as an essential component of major land development projects.

Social infrastructure provision

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 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 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 facility in Rouse Hill Town Centre 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.

Social infrastructure and diversity

Much of the social planning work that supports the case studies recognise the importance of community diversity. A common theme to emerge from the case study research is that more diverse urban infill developments are unlikely to be created if these new areas provide a limited range of housing options and lack the amenities and social infrastructure that support more diverse communities.

The case studies highlight the role of governments, including local government and state government land development agencies, in 'leading the market' and driving policies that require the provision of a greater diversity of housing product and the accompanying infrastructure required to support a more diverse population.

Funding and delivery

Case studies show the importance of an implementation framework, such as in the City of Melbourne, that links social infrastructure priorities into the City's budget planning process.

Most case studies utilise a range of funding sources for social infrastructure projects including some form of developer contributions for social infrastructure (human services developer contributions in Melbourne and Community Infrastructure Levy in London), local government funding (including leveraging existing assets), state government contributions and negotiations with developers. Case studies such as the Idea Stores highlight the increasing involvement of private investment and the development of funding partnerships with a range of organisations.

Collaborative projects, like the Caroline Springs Partnership, also demonstrate how that collaboration extends to funding and delivery responsibilities with these partnerships critical in achieving objectives for joint use and joint funding of community facilities.

Higher density urban infill projects provide opportunities for mixed use building facility models where some degree of cross subsidy could be achieved through the addition of residential and commercial space within, or on top of, a community facility building. Facility design should also include the potential for income generating space as another contributor to social infrastructure funding.

Dedicated resources including Community Development and Social Planning staff are required to support and 'drive' the social infrastructure planning process especially in agencies whose main focus is on physical planning and land development. 'Driving' the process involves facilitating cross agency cooperation and collaboration with the non-government and private sectors.