The Built Environment Plan, which is primarily designed to stimulate economic and social progress, has been finalised in August 2006 following an extensive period of community consultation. The Plan has been developed in the context of some significant advances having been made over the past one and half years, with the RWA's urban renewal program now well underway.

Since the RWA's commencement, the Government has directly facilitated the investment of nearly $300 million towards infrastructure development in Redfern-Waterloo. Of this amount, more than $76 million has been directly committed by the RWA itself. Some of the major infrastructure investment already committed includes:

- $120 million to be invested by Sydney Broadcast Property in constructing a new 43,500 square metre state-of-the-art media centre at the Australian Technology Park (ATP) – in a deal negotiated by the RWA which will create 2000 permanent jobs.
- $47.5 million being invested by the RWA in a new building currently under construction at the ATP to house National ICT Australia and the Defence, Science and Technology Organisation, with 600 permanent jobs being created.
- $40 million being invested by Arts NSW to construct a new Contemporary Performing Arts Centre through adaptive reuse of heritage buildings at North Eveleigh – in conjunction with the RWA and RailCorp.
- $35 million being invested by the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) in purchasing and transforming the former Redfern Public School into a new National Indigenous Development Centre – in a deal brokered by the RWA with the ILC and the NSW Department of Education and Training.
- $16 million to be invested by RWA towards the provision of affordable housing for Aboriginal residents of Redfern-Waterloo.
- $10 million to be invested by NSW Health in transforming the former Local Redfern Court House and Police Station into a major new community health facility – in an arrangement facilitated and supported by the RWA.
- $6 million to be invested by the RWA and its subsidiary company ATP in constructing a new pedestrian and cycle link between North Eveleigh and the ATP.
- $6 million being invested by RWA and ATP in new roads and infrastructure to facilitate the ATP's future development.
- $4.2 million invested by NSW Police in 2005 in establishing the new Redfern Police Station in the towers on Lawson Square, opposite Redfern Railway Station.
- $0.75 million being invested by the RWA in developing a new education and training centre at North Eveleigh, which includes the Yaama Dhinawan Indigenous cuisine training enterprise.
- $0.25 million being invested by the RWA and RailCorp in a concept design study for the redevelopment of Redfern Railway Station.

The list does not include some significant private sector investment which is occurring in Redfern-Waterloo as a result of the enhanced commercial environment generated by the Government’s urban renewal initiatives and the release of the RWA’s draft Built Environment Plan in February this year; nor does it include the $52 million committed by the City of Sydney for infrastructure upgrades following the establishment of the RWA.

Redfern-Waterloo is on the road to social and economic revitalisation and the Built Environment Plan is a key driver in this most important process.

It is imperative that the local community is a major beneficiary of the urban renewal program and all of the RWA’s planning is being directed to this end. This is particularly the case with the more disadvantaged sections of the community, where unemployment and welfare dependency are major factors. As the Employment and Enterprise Plan states: “The RWA’s employment and enterprise development strategy aims to directly challenge the area’s social and economic disadvantage by fostering jobs, educational and life opportunities and a higher standard of living. Wealth creation is seen as an antidote to welfare dependency.”

The Redfern-Waterloo Plan is being implemented in 2006 as part of the Government’s ten year strategy. The Plan is being developed in stages as it is intended to be a living document, which builds upon its earlier priorities and strategies, with community input as an ongoing feature. The Built Environment Plan component of the overall Redfern-Waterloo Plan represents part of Stage One of this process.
Redfern-Waterloo is a unique inner city area sited at the southern gateway of the Sydney Central Business District (CBD) with significant potential for revitalisation. Its physical attributes include its accessibility and infrastructure, proximity to educational and health facilities; central location within the Sydney CBD to Airport corridor; and the availability of under-utilised government land.

The revitalisation of the area through job growth is not inconsistent with the objectives of the NSW Government’s Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney because the Strategy does not identify Redfern as a population centre. The Strategy does however advocate the concentration of jobs and activity, as well as the provision of sufficiently zoned land for businesses in centres such as Redfern which are within the Sydney CBD to Airport corridor and in locations with high quality transport. This is reflected in the Built Environment Plan.

The area is characterised by cultural and ethnic diversity. As the traditional home of the Gadigal Clan of the Eora nation, Redfern is a centre of major significance to the Aboriginal community with a strong association to the area.

Despite some gentrification over the past decade, Redfern-Waterloo is less socio-economically diverse than the rest of Sydney and is characterised by a disproportionately high level of unemployment, public housing and social welfare dependency. Job growth and investment in the area offers opportunities to redress imbalances evidenced by the local community.

This Built Environment Plan (Stage One) proposes a strategic planning framework to facilitate revitalisation of the Redfern-Waterloo area and guide future development on strategic sites by setting the parameters for future development. It is intended to provide a holistic response to redevelopment opportunities, deliver sustainable outcomes and support a State Environmental Planning Policy that will provide a consolidated and consistent planning approach to the area which meets the objectives of the Redfern-Waterloo Authority Act.

The underlying concept for the Plan revolves around the creation of a town centre with an economic and civic heart focused around Redfern Railway Station and which is connected through pedestrian linkages to residential and business hubs at the Australian Technology Park, North Eveleigh, and Redfern and Regent Streets.

Fundamentally the Plan is aimed at ensuring that benefits gained from redevelopment and economic prosperity are shared by the whole community, especially local residents and businesses, by facilitating:

- the provision of around 18,000 jobs
- the construction of around 2,000 new dwellings that will provide greater housing choice, demographic and socio-economic mix and is supported by an affordable housing program
- an upgraded Redfern Railway Station, civic square and public domain improvements promoting better amenity, safety and surveillance
- the establishment of cultural and community facilities
- improved opportunities for the establishment of Aboriginal enterprises and cultural facilities
- high quality urban design and architecture.
1. Introduction

1.1 The Redfern-Waterloo Plan

The Redfern-Waterloo Authority’s (RWA) operational area includes the suburbs of Darlington, Redfern, Waterloo and Eveleigh (Diagram 1.1 RWA’s Operational Area and RWA’s Strategic Sites). Under the Redfern-Waterloo Act 2004, the Minister for Redfern-Waterloo is required to prepare a Redfern-Waterloo Plan to provide an overall framework for the revitalisation of the operational area through urban renewal, job creation, improvements to the physical environment and improvements to the provision of human services.

The Redfern-Waterloo Plan is an evolving document that will be updated over time and in stages. The Redfern-Waterloo Plan will comprise three major components - the Built Environment Plan, Human Services Plan and Employment and Enterprise Plan.

This Built Environment Plan (Stage One) relates to the planning and design of RWA’s strategic sites in Redfern-Waterloo (Diagram 1.1 RWA’s Operational Area and RWA’s Strategic Sites).

Under the Redfern-Waterloo Authority Act, the Minister for Planning may prepare an environmental planning instrument to give effect to the planning aspects contained within the Redfern-Waterloo Plan. Over the next decade it is likely that the Built Environment Plan will be extended to incorporate other sites in the RWA’s operational area.

The Human Services Plan establishes a framework for improving access to health, education, employment and other essential services in Redfern-Waterloo. It identifies actions to improve the delivery of services to ensure positive results for individuals and the community as a whole.

The Employment and Enterprise Plan aims to address the area’s social and economic disadvantage by fostering jobs, business and educational/training opportunities. Strategies have been developed to support the development of employment and enterprise opportunities for local residents, as well as the broader Sydney metropolitan community.

1.2 Purpose of the Built Environment Plan (Stage One)

This Built Environment Plan (Stage One) (referred to as the Plan) has been prepared to provide a planning framework for the redevelopment of the RWA’s strategic sites.

The Plan has considered comments and ideas provided by residents, land owners, business operators, peak organisations and government agencies during the two month exhibition period of the draft Plan in early 2006.

The State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005 (as amended) provides the statutory basis to guide future development on the RWA’s strategic sites.

The Plan has been prepared taking into consideration the area’s regional, metropolitan and local context and issues.

It also draws on earlier work and community consultation undertaken by the former Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project and the former Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, as part of the Redfern, Eveleigh, Darlington and Waterloo (RED) Strategy in 2003.

The land use and design strategies in the Plan have been developed through an urban design analysis of the existing context and site specific conditions of each strategic site. This process has generated potential development yields, and indicative employment and residential projections.

1.3 Area Covered by the Plan

The Plan applies to the eight RWA’s strategic sites within the RWA’s operational area as shown in Diagram 1.1. The RWA’s strategic sites are identified in the State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005. They are mostly State Government owned and are strategically located near Redfern Railway Station and the Redfern Town Centre. They have a total area of around 35 hectares.

The eight RWA’s strategic sites covered in this Plan are:

- Australian Technology Park (ATP)
- North Eveleigh
- South Eveleigh
- Eveleigh Street
- Redfern Railway Station, Gibbons and Regent Streets
- Former Rachel Forster Hospital
- Former Local Court House and Redfern Police Station
- Former Redfern Public School.
1.1 RWA's OPERATIONAL AREA & RWA's STRATEGIC SITES

RWA's OPERATIONAL AREA

RWA's STRATEGIC SITES

A
AUSTRALIAN TECHNOLOGY PARK (ATP)

B
NORTH EVELEIGH

C
SOUTH EVELEIGH

D
EVELEIGH STREET

E
REDFERN RAILWAY STATION, GIBBONS & REGENT STREETS

F
FORMER RACHEL FORSTER HOSPITAL

G
FORMER LOCAL COURT HOUSE & REDFERN POLICE STATION

H
FORMER REDFERN PUBLIC SCHOOL
1. Introduction

1.4 Implementation of the Plan

The intent and direction of this Plan is reflected in the State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005 (SEPP (Major Projects)). The SEPP replaces existing statutory plans and policies that currently apply to the RWA’s strategic sites.

A Development Control Plan (DCP) for the RWA’s strategic sites will be prepared to complement the SEPP and provide more detailed site specific guidelines for future development. The DCP will include general planning guidelines and controls that will apply to all sites. Site specific requirements will be prepared where necessary as parts of a DCP or Concept Plan.

Under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act the Minister for Planning is the consent authority for the carrying out of development on RWA’s strategic sites. A proposal for the carrying out of development will be assessed under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act if it has a capital investment value of more than $5 million. A proposal for development under $5 million may be assessed under Part 4 of the Act. The Minister for Planning has the discretion to decide whether a development should be determined under Part 4.

The Minister may require a Concept Plan to be prepared for a development site in accordance with Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act.

1.5 Community Consultation

The draft Plan and amendment to SEPP (Major Projects) were publicly exhibited for two months between February and April 2006. During this period the RWA undertook extensive community consultation including: the distribution of 15,000 newsletters and around 2,000 copies of the draft Plan; briefings to key stakeholders; presentations; a public meeting; feedback and information sessions over a three week period; focus group sessions; and replying to individual enquiries. The consultation process raised many issues, which were considered and assisted in finalising this Plan.

1.6 Structure of the Plan

The Plan is divided into the following sections.

Section 2
The Redfern-Waterloo Area

This section provides a snapshot of the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the Redfern-Waterloo area and issues facing the area now and in coming years.

Section 3
Strategies for Revitalising Redfern-Waterloo

This section outlines the key strategies needed to achieve the vision for Redfern-Waterloo including land use, urban design, open space and public domain, infrastructure, heritage, transport and ecologically sustainable development.

Section 4
Land Use and Design Concepts for RWA’s Strategic Sites

This section details the proposed land uses and design concepts for each of the RWA’s strategic sites.

Section 5
Future Key Tasks

This section summarises the key tasks to be undertaken to progress the planning for the RWA’s strategic sites.

Section 6
Proposed Stage Two of Built Environment Plan

The section gives an outline of the major issues currently anticipated to form the basis of the future Stage Two of the Built Environment Plan.
1. Aerial view of Redfern, Darlington and Eveleigh with Sydney CBD (and inclusion of future development at the ATP). Image by PTW.