

## Chapter 5 Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project

The Government has made a number of major announcements relating to Redfern and Waterloo in recent months. Several of these announcements, including the soon to be established community health facility, are discussed in earlier chapters. This chapter deals with arguably the most significant announcements: those regarding the establishment of the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Plan (2004-2014) and the extension of the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project. Given that the announcements were made in late October and early November, only limited detail has been available to the Committee and we have had limited opportunity to take evidence on these matters. Despite this, we have attempted to gather as much information as possible and to provide an overview in the sections below. In particular, we consider the announcement of the new Authority and Parliamentary debate and public comment on the proposed legislation establishing the Authority. We look at the role of the Authority in relation to infrastructure planning, affordable housing and employment. We briefly overview the information provided in our Interim Report on the redevelopment of the Block, and consider the impact of the Authority on the future of the Aboriginal Housing Company and the Block. The Committee then examines the new role for the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project and some of the major issues including consultation and communication processes, partnership planning and the need for performance accountability.

### The establishment of the Redfern Waterloo Authority

#### The announcement of the new Authority

- 5.1** On 26 October 2004 the Premier announced the establishment of the Redfern Waterloo Authority (RWA) as part of a ten year plan for ‘community renewal and to upgrade infrastructure in the area.’<sup>464</sup> The Premier’s media release states that the plan is designed to ‘shake-up’ the area and provide a framework to renew the last part of the city fringe. The Government announced that the Redfern Waterloo Authority would be established through legislation as a statutory authority. The Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill 2004 passed by both Houses on 9 December 2004, after considerable debate and with a number of amendments.
- 5.2** The Government also announced that the Hon Frank Sartor, Minister for Energy and Utilities, Minister for Science and Medical Research, Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer), and Minister Assisting the Premier on the Arts, will have responsibility for the new Authority. Minister Sartor was thus established as the single spokesperson for the NSW Government on all matters and issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo.<sup>465</sup> According to a Government fact sheet, this new Ministerial position will provide ‘greater accountability to the community and ensure that the NSW Government can respond to issues as they emerge.’<sup>466</sup>

<sup>464</sup> Hon Bob Carr MP, Premier, ‘Premier announces 10-year Redfern-Waterloo Plan’, *Media Release*, 26 October 2004

<sup>465</sup> Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, *The Redfern-Waterloo Plan #1*, November 2004, p2

<sup>466</sup> Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, *The Redfern-Waterloo Plan #1*, November 2004, p2

The Minister will have final approval on all NSW Government funding allocated within Redfern and Waterloo under the ten year plan.<sup>467</sup>

**5.3** The Premier expanded on the intended focus of the RWA during Question Time on 28 October 2004:

I believe that the urban renewal that this area needs presents many opportunities to achieve private-public partnerships that offer clear benefits to the community. The focus of this exercise – establishing a distinct Redfern Waterloo Authority – is to achieve community renewal as much as physical regeneration of this area.<sup>468</sup>

**5.4** In relation to the projects to be undertaken by the RWA, the Premier noted the upgrade of the Redfern railway station, including the development of the town centre, the redevelopment of the Block in consultation with the Aboriginal Housing Company, access to private and public housing and establishing a bridge to link the Australian Technology Park with North Eveleigh. In relation to the broad focus of the RWA, the Premier noted that:

While the model used is similar in design to the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, I make it clear that the Redfern Waterloo Authority will not be a development corporation. The Minister for Energy and Utilities has been charged with leading the renewal process and has already commenced discussions with some leading stakeholders.<sup>469</sup>

**5.5** The RWPP fact sheet provides this summary of why the Redfern Waterloo Authority has been established:

- to develop and manage infrastructure, land and properties in parts of the Redfern and Waterloo area
- to provide and promote housing choices in its operational areas (including for Aboriginal residents)
- to promote the local community, cultural development, and local employment
- skill development.<sup>470</sup>

**5.6** In evidence to the Committee on the genesis of the Authority, the Director General of the Premier's Department, Dr Col Gellatly, explained that 'Governments make decisions about policy and then introduce legislation to drive it along.'<sup>471</sup> In response to questioning on where such policy decisions come from, Dr Gellatly explained it is a 'Cabinet process':

Government response to the Redfern/Waterloo situation is evolving. It is another step down the path of human services, as was the initial establishment a couple of years ago of the Partnership, and for the first time we have concentrated resources there. My own personal view is that we are not making it up on the run. It has been

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<sup>467</sup> Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, *The Redfern-Waterloo Plan #1*, November 2004, p2

<sup>468</sup> Hon Bob Carr MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 28 October 2004, p12271

<sup>469</sup> Hon Bob Carr MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 28 October 2004, p12271

<sup>470</sup> Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, *The Redfern-Waterloo Plan #1*, November 2004, p2

<sup>471</sup> Dr Col Gellatly, Director General, Premier's Department, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p3

an evolving process where there has been input obviously from the community, from this Committee, from everyone, from Government when Cabinet makes the decision, and that is the way forward.<sup>472</sup>

### Debate on the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill 2004

**5.7** On 11 November 2004, Minister Sartor introduced the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill 2004 to the Legislative Assembly. Minister Sartor provided further detail on the Bill in his Second Reading speech. Various Lower House members spoke during the debate and then in Committee proposing amendments. The debate continued on 17 and 19 November. To view the full debate and the amendments made to the Bill by the Government, the Opposition and Ms Clover Moore MP go to [www.parliament.nsw.gov.au](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au) and view the Hansard records for these dates.

**5.8** On 16 November 2004, the Parliament's Legislation Review Committee produced its Legislation Review Digest, No.16, which included discussion on the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill. The Legislation Review Committee, a joint statutory committee, has two broad functions set out in sections 8A and 9 of the *Legislation Review Act 1987*: to scrutinise all bills introduced to Parliament and all regulations subject to disallowance according to the criteria set out in those sections. It is not the function of the Committee to conduct a policy review with analysis and recommendations. The Committee produces a Digest which runs through the major features of the Bill and then raises issues considered important to the Committee. In relation to the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill, the Legislation Review Committee made comment on Section 45, which provides that regulations may amend, omit, alter or entirely replace Schedule 1 of the Act, which describes the boundaries of the operation area:

The Committee refers to Parliament the question as to whether allowing the Regulations to amend, omit, alter or replace any matter in Schedule 1 of the Act, is an appropriate delegation of legislative power.<sup>473</sup>

**5.9** The Bill came before the Legislative Council on 7 December 2004, and debate continued on 8 and 9 December. The Bill was finally passed in the Upper House on 9 December and then in the Lower House later that day. The Hon Tony Kelly MLC led the debate for the Government in the Legislative Council and numerous members spoke and proposed amendments. This debate can also be viewed at the above web address.

**5.10** It is fair to say that the announcement of the RWA met with some controversy among both Parliamentarians and the broader community. In the Legislative Assembly, the Opposition expressed concern about the preparation of the Bill, and in particular the lack of consultation with the community. Opposition shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Brad Hazzard MP, raised concerns about the lack of detail in the Bill, stating that:

Much of the detail of its implementation has been left to the regulations, and at this stage members of this House have no way of knowing what will be covered by the regulations.<sup>474</sup>

<sup>472</sup> Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p4

<sup>473</sup> Legislation Review Committee, *Legislation Review Digest*, No 16, 16 November 2004, p54. To view the full Digest, go to [www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/legislationreview](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/legislationreview)

- 5.11** The Member for Bligh, Ms Clover Moore MP, was particularly critical of the Bill, stating that she was not convinced of the need for it. Ms Moore expressed her disappointment with the Bill:

We now have the Bill, and I am rather surprised and disappointed that there seems to be a big gap between the Government's stated intention and what appears in the Bill. While the Minister's second reading speech talked about the social challenges faced by disadvantaged communities, which appears to be the primary justification for the establishment of the authority, the human services issues are not addressed in the Bill.<sup>475</sup>

- 5.12** During debate in the Upper House on Tuesday 7 December 2004, the Hon Don Harwin MLC, leading the debate for the Opposition, said the Coalition were not opposing the Bill, but did propose an amendment in relation to Section 45 governing the operational area. On the day the Bill was debated in the Upper House, the Opposition Leader, Mr John Brogden MP, was quoted in the media as providing tentative support for the Authority and the plans for Redfern and Waterloo. While concerned about the extent of the powers given to Minister Sartor, Mr Brogden was quoted in the *Herald* as saying:

I said the day after the riot at Redfern that the real solution to this was to bulldoze the Block ... I can hardly argue when the Government comes forward to do that and so much more.<sup>476</sup>

- 5.13** The Greens and Democrats were critical of the Bill and proposed numerous amendments. In her comments during the Second Reading speech in the Legislative Council, Ms Sylvia Hale MLC said the Greens were of the opinion that the Bill will not fix the serious social disadvantage in Redfern and Waterloo.<sup>477</sup> In addition, the Greens expressed concern about the lack of consultation on the plans for the area. Mr Ian Cohen MLC said:

While I acknowledge the printed material that has been part of the debate on this issue so far, it is important to point out that there has been a total lack of consultation with not only the Aboriginal community but also the wider Redfern-Waterloo community regarding the Government's proposed redevelopment of the area.<sup>478</sup>

- 5.14** On 8 December the Greens were also successful in calling for the Government to table documents in relation to plans for Redfern and Waterloo. The Government must provide any documents to the Parliament within 14 days of the date of passing of the resolution.<sup>479</sup>

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<sup>474</sup> Mr Brad Hazzard MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 17 November 2004, p13036

<sup>475</sup> Ms Clover Moore MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 17 November 2004, p13036

<sup>476</sup> Mr John Brogden MP, NSW Opposition Leader, quoted in Lisa Pryor, 'Labor councillors want to limit Sartor power', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 December 2004, p4

<sup>477</sup> Ms Sylvia Hale MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 7 December 2004, Daily Galleys, p59

<sup>478</sup> Mr Ian Cohen MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 8 December 2004, Daily Galleys, p2

<sup>479</sup> Ms Sylvia Hale MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 9 December 2004, Daily Galleys, p2

- 5.15** In his speech during the Second Reading, the Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC of the Australian Democrats expressed his concern about the extension of power given to the Minister under the proposed legislation:

The Minister is given enormous and unqualified discretions under the Act, for example, regarding appointment to the board, expanding the operational area, trumping planning laws and so on. The Bill overrides other State laws, including heritage and planning laws, with potentially significant consequences for public participation and buy-in of any solutions flowing from the work of the authority in the plan.<sup>480</sup>

- 5.16** There has also been considerable concern expressed by groups and individuals in Redfern and Waterloo. REDWatch<sup>481</sup> prepared a briefing paper on their views on the Bill. In summary they made this key recommendation:

We have concerns that the Authority's goals are not properly defined, too much power is vested in both the Authority and the Minister, there is little provision for local involvement or consultation and there is a lack of transparency. We recommend that the Bill be referred to committee (sic) for further investigation.<sup>482</sup>

- 5.17** On 29 November 2004 *The Sydney Morning Herald* ran a series of articles with information on the Redfern Waterloo Authority. The paper claimed to have sighted Cabinet papers with details of redevelopment plans for the area. Included in the *Herald* articles were suggestions that the Government was intending to 'tear down residential towers in Waterloo and privatise \$540 million worth of public assets in a bid to double the area's population to 40,000, create 20,000 new jobs and give the central business district room to expand.'<sup>483</sup> There was considerable community comment as a result of the *Herald* articles, with some support for the plans but also considerable concern, particularly around privatisation of public assets and the redevelopment of the Block. These issues are discussed further below. A number of people, as well as the *Herald's* editorial, expressed concern that the Government's plans were 'a fait accompli' and had been drawn up without consultation with the community:

For reasons best known to itself, the Government has decided the public is not to be trusted in discussing the issues involved with such an ambitious plan, which will feed concerns, possibly ill-founded, that the Government does in fact have a secret agenda – to force out many of the socially disadvantaged living in the area.<sup>484</sup>

- 5.18** In his response to the *Herald* articles, Minister Sartor was reported as saying the plan to renew Redfern was 'still a work in progress and no final decisions had been made.' He said:

<sup>480</sup> Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 8 December 2004, Daily Galleys, p2

<sup>481</sup> REDWatch is a group of residents living in Redfern and Waterloo, including Lyn and Geoff Turnbull

<sup>482</sup> REDWatch, 'Redfern-Waterloo Authority Bill 2004: Briefing Note', in email from Turnbull family, 16 November 2004, p3

<sup>483</sup> Debra Jopson, Gerard Ryle & Darren Goodsir, 'Revealed: how Redfern will be reborn', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 November 2004, p1

<sup>484</sup> Editorial, 'Redfern and social engineering', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 November 2004, p12

‘The Premier had asked me to think outside the square, to come up with new ideas and that is exactly what we are doing.’<sup>485</sup>

**5.19** Recent information placed on the RWPP website, which appeared after the *Herald* articles, stated:

There is no final or completed plan. There are working documents which have explored options. The draft plan, when prepared, will be made public so residents can have their say before being adopted.<sup>486</sup>

**5.20** As the announcement was made late in our hearing schedule, the Committee was not able to comprehensively canvass the views of the organisations and individuals in the Redfern and Waterloo areas. A number of witnesses to the Inquiry were shocked by the announcement of the Authority and would have liked to see a higher degree of community consultation prior to the announcement and the introduction of the Bill to the Parliament. In evidence to the Committee, Mr Charlie Richardson from the South Sydney Interagency said:

I think we were a little bit – well ‘surprised’ is too mild a word, we were bewildered and quite astonished, I would say at the Premier’s announcement of the establishment of the Redfern-Waterloo Authority.<sup>487</sup>

**5.21** NCOSS was particularly concerned that the Bill had no provision for social impact assessments for future development proposals:

Promoting genuine sustainable development in Redfern Waterloo will require the RWA to conduct robust specific social impact assessments [SIA] on all significant development proposals, alongside its obligations under the 1979 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. The SIA process is critical to ensure that the objectives of any long term year (sic) Redfern-Waterloo urban renewal and community regeneration plan are being met in the key development decisions.<sup>488</sup>

**5.22** On 7 December 2004, NCOSS put out a press release on behalf of 13 peak and local organisations, calling for the Government to establish a parliamentary committee to review the Bill. According to the release, while the organisations believe a 10-20 year commitment to appropriate urban renewal is a priority for the area, they have serious doubts that the RWA as outlined in the Bill can deliver on the vision required:

The Bill contains several unacceptable elements with Statewide significance. These include the lack of mandatory social impact assessment for all new major developments, the erosion of public participation in the planning process and the potential for major conflicts within the Authority itself as it tries to delineate its roles as a developer, planner, funder and a regulator.<sup>489</sup>

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<sup>485</sup> Hon Frank Sartor MP, quoted in Debra Jopson, Gerard Ryle & Darren Goodsir, ‘Tunnels, towers and trains: how they will breathe life into Redfern’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 November 2004, p1

<sup>486</sup> Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, ‘Frequently asked questions prepared for residents of Redfern-Waterloo’, [www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au) (accessed 6 December 2004)

<sup>487</sup> Mr Charlie Richardson, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p3

<sup>488</sup> Email from Mr Gary Moore, Director, NCOSS to Director, 7 December 2004

<sup>489</sup> NCOSS, ‘Closer Look Needed at Redfern-Waterloo Authority Bill’, *Media Release*, 7 December 2004, p1

**5.23** The RWPP's Michael Ramsey told the Committee on 12 November that the Government had only received general feedback on the announcement of the RWA and that formal sessions will occur after the Authority is established:

There is clearly interest from the community about how they envisage the Authority will work and what we are trying to do is actually make people as aware as possible that the Bill is going through Parliament at the present time, so we have a fact sheet already on our web site describing the Authority.<sup>490</sup>

**5.24** The Committee understands that organisations such as NCOSS and REDWatch have had input into the amendments to the legislation proposed by Parliamentarians during the passage of the legislation through the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. In summary, the concerns about aspects of the Bill, and the basis for many of the proposed amendments, include:

- the concentration of power with one Minister
- the lack of detail in the Bill, particularly in relation to its functions, which will be determined by the Redfern Waterloo Plan (RWP)
- the capacity for changes to be made to boundaries by regulation
- the provisions of the RWA to override Heritage laws
- the capacity to override established environmental planning processes that apply elsewhere in NSW
- limited public participation provisions and therefore no guaranteed role for community involvement
- the inclusion of economic and environmental objectives but not social objectives, with the possibility that infrastructure objectives will out-rank social objectives
- no provision for regular public reporting on the progress of the RWP.

**5.25** The Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill as passed by both Houses, while it does not incorporate all the proposed amendments, is somewhat different from the Bill presented by Minister Sartor on 11 November 2004. In particular, the Government made ten amendments in the Upper House on a range of matters including:

- specifying 'Objects of the Act' (inserted as a new Clause 3)
- heritage matters (Clause 29)
- development contributions (other than for affordable housing) (Clause 31)
- matters relating to environmental planning (Clause 32)
- preparation of an annual report on the Authority (inserted as a new Clause 38).

**5.26** The Government also accepted an Opposition amendment in relation to the operational area (Clause 49) and two amendments from the Christian Democratic Party in relation to the

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<sup>490</sup> Mr Michael Ramsey, Project Director, Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p3

appointment of advisory committees (Clause 12) and matters affecting the Aboriginal Housing Company and the Block (new Clause 33). As mentioned above, the Lower House agreed to amendments proposed in the Upper House and, on 9 December the Bill was agreed to. At this time Mr Brad Hazzard MP, on behalf of the Liberal-Nationals, said:

We have given the Government the opportunity to try to address some of these longstanding social and infrastructure problems in the area. We trust that the Government will not abuse this opportunity. The Liberals-Nationals want to see local community involvement in the process. We want consultation. We did not believe it was necessary to further amend the Bill. We expect the goodwill of the Government to extend to discussion with the people who live in the area and to reflect in particular the concerns of Aboriginal people in the area.<sup>491</sup>

**5.27** Also at this time, Minister Sartor told the Parliament about the next stage of the process:

The next step will be to appoint a board and hire staff. In the new year I want to establish a consultative process, which I believe will be comprehensive, for this authority, particularly in the preparation of a plan. Appropriate advisory committees will be appointed and there will be very significant community involvement. I want to bridge the gap between various agency staff and members of the community in a systemic way that overcomes the deficiencies that have been alleged in respect to the process over the past couple of years.<sup>492</sup>

**5.28** For the full transcript of debate and amendment, go to [www.parliament.nsw.gov.au](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au) and view the Hansard records for the dates mentioned above. Specific aspects of the Redfern Waterloo Authority and community comment will be further explored in the following sections, and again in Chapter 6.

## **Infrastructure, housing and employment**

**5.29** Central to the Redfern Waterloo Authority is the Redfern-Waterloo Plan 2004-2014. The Plan will focus on three key strategies, which address infrastructure, jobs and human services. In this section we deal with the issues of infrastructure planning, housing including the redevelopment of the Block, and employment. We overview the role of the Authority in relation to these strategies. The role of the RWA and the RWPP in relation to human services is dealt with in the following section.

### **Infrastructure planning**

**5.30** In his Second Reading speech on the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill, Minister Sartor explained that the Authority will manage public infrastructure, land and properties in the area and promote the social and economic development of the community. Minister Sartor emphasised the importance of infrastructure development to improving the circumstances of Redfern and Waterloo:

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<sup>491</sup> Mr Brad Hazzard MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 9 December 2004, Daily Galleys, p58

<sup>492</sup> Hon Frank Sartor MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 9 December 2004, Daily Galleys, p58



Infrastructure development in Redfern and Waterloo is one of the keys to creating a sustainable and strong community. The New South Wales Government is the largest landowner in the area, with prime assets such as the Australian Technology Park, the railway station, Rachel Foster Hospital and Redfern Public School sites and the public housing estates. The development of these government assets in Redfern and Waterloo must deliver significant social and economic returns. It is important that the Government maximises its returns on these assets if the urgent needs in the area are to be addressed.<sup>493</sup>

**5.31** As noted in the Interim Report, the Government was previously developing a plan for infrastructure development known as the Redfern Eveleigh Darlington Strategy, (RED Strategy). The RED Strategy was being managed by the RWPP and was intended to ‘provide a holistic approach to urban renewal, strengthening the local community and improving urban amenities.’<sup>494</sup>

**5.32** There has been some criticism from community groups that the RED Strategy has never been released, making it difficult to know the purpose of the RWA in relation to infrastructure planning. REDWatch argues that:

In the absence of the details of the [Redfern Waterloo Plan] it is difficult to decide how the [Redfern Waterloo Authority] would be best constituted and hence care is required. Ideally the Government should have undertaken the process it started with the Redfern Waterloo community and established the Draft RED Strategy which could have become the Redfern Waterloo Plan for a new Authority.<sup>495</sup>

**5.33** In relation to what will happen to the RED Strategy, the Committee was unable to establish anything more than the fact that the RWA will be responsible for infrastructure. In evidence to the Committee, Dr Gellatly said:

I think it is in the legislation in terms of the plan that the infrastructure will be part of the Authority’s functions. That was always an issue in terms of how you get all the bits of infrastructure and we talked about that before I think in terms of the infrastructure strategy, by bringing it together, and some of the planning issues, that we have one Authority which is responsible for all the infrastructure direction and the planning issues and give it some Authority rather than having to deal with individual agencies all the time.<sup>496</sup>

**5.34** One of the major concerns put forward regarding the Authority is that it is largely a real estate plan. There has been concern expressed through the media and in Parliament<sup>497</sup> about the privatisation of public assets. According to media reports, some of the sites earmarked for sale

<sup>493</sup> Hon Frank Sartor MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 11 November 2004, p12740

<sup>494</sup> Submission 55, NSW Government, p183

<sup>495</sup> REDWatch, ‘Redfern-Waterloo Authority Bill 2004: Briefing Note’, in email from Turnbull family, 16 November 2004, p3

<sup>496</sup> Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p3

<sup>497</sup> See, for example, Ms Clover Moore MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 17 November 2004; Ms Lee Rhiannon MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 7 December 2004

are the Redfern police station, Redfern Public School and the Rachel Foster Hospital site.<sup>498</sup> In its media release prior to the debate on the Bill in the Upper House, NCOSS said:

In the current version of the Bill, the incentive is clearly to sell public assets to pay for new public and community assets as well as entering into joint ventures with private sector interests.<sup>499</sup>

- 5.35** The Committee is unclear of the validity of the claims made by the *Herald* that the Government is intending to sell these and other sites. The Committee notes the comments made by the Government as quoted above, that no plan had been completed and a draft will be prepared for public comment prior to being adopted.<sup>500</sup>
- 5.36** The Committee recognises that infrastructure planning is a significant issue for the Redfern Waterloo area. We welcome the announcement of the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the intention of the Government to substantially address the infrastructure issues in the area. However, we acknowledge the concerns of the community that until a Plan is substantially developed, it is difficult to know exactly how the Government intends to address the infrastructure planning and development of Redfern and Waterloo. At the same time we support the community's call that they be given adequate opportunity to comment before the plan is finalised. We would therefore encourage the Government to produce the draft Redfern Waterloo Plan as soon as possible and to publicly release the draft Plan. In addition, we urge the Government to ensure that appropriate community consultation occurs in the development of a completed Plan. The Committee also believes that as some consultation has already occurred in relation to the RED Strategy, the Government should consider the information gathered during these consultations in drafting plans for infrastructure development. This issue is addressed further in Chapter 6, along with the need for infrastructure to be integrated with other key aspects including human services to ensure the issues in Redfern and Waterloo are addressed in the long term.
- 5.37** In relation to public assets, the Committee believes that the RWA should, as a matter of priority, conduct and publish an audit of the Government assets in the area, including an itemised list identifying and describing the assets. We believe that the Redfern Waterloo Authority should ensure that any development of these assets is done in consultation with the Redfern and Waterloo communities, and that monies raised in the development of these assets go directly to addressing the needs of the area.

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<sup>498</sup> Debra Jopson, Gerald Ryle and Darren Goodsir, 'Revealed: how Redfern will be reborn', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 November 2004, p1

<sup>499</sup> NCOSS, 'Closer Look Needed at Redfern-Waterloo Authority Bill', *Media Release*, 7 December 2004, p1

<sup>500</sup> Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, 'Frequently asked questions prepared for residents of Redfern-Waterloo', [www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au) (accessed 6 December 2004)

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### Recommendation 24

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, produce the draft Redfern Waterloo Plan as soon as possible and ensure that appropriate community consultation occurs in the development of the Plan. In addition, the Redfern Waterloo Authority should ensure that the consultation that has already occurred on the RED Strategy is considered in the development of the Plan.

### Recommendation 25

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, as a matter of urgency, conduct an audit of the Government assets in the Redfern and Waterloo area, and publish this audit including an itemised list identifying and describing the assets. The Redfern Waterloo Authority should ensure that any development of these assets is done in consultation with the Redfern and Waterloo communities, and that monies raised in the development of these assets go directly to addressing the needs of the area.

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### Affordable housing

- 5.38** Two clear issues relating to affordable housing for Redfern and Waterloo have emerged during this Inquiry: the redevelopment of public and community housing in the area, and the creation of public and private affordable housing options for low to middle income earners. This section looks briefly at these issues. Issues relating to housing are also addressed in Chapter 4.
- 5.39** In relation to the role of the RWA, the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill specifically provides for affordable housing. Clause 30 entitled Development contributions for affordable housing allows for, among other things, the development of the former Carlton and United Breweries (CUB) site. The Minister said:
- The capacity of the Authority to raise affordable housing contributions on this site will deliver a range of housing choices to the disadvantaged communities in Redfern and Waterloo.<sup>501</sup>
- 5.40** While acknowledging Ms Clover Moore MP's objections to this Clause on the basis that the CUB site is outside the area overseen by the Authority,<sup>502</sup> the Committee welcomes the commitment of the Government to the provision of affordable housing in the area. However, we note that there are a number of issues concerning peak organisations and some in the local community.
- 5.41** During the recent debate on the Authority, and media articles in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, a number of people expressed deep concern about the loss of their housing in Redfern and Waterloo. On 6 November 2004 about 150 Waterloo residents, many of them Russian-

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<sup>501</sup> Hon Frank Sartor MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 19 November 2004, p13272

<sup>502</sup> For full version of the debate see Ms Clover Moore MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 19 November 2004, p13272

speaking residents from the public housing tower blocks, attended a rally to protest against the Government plans for the area. In response, Minister Sartor expressed his concern that residents had been misled about his plans for the area.<sup>503</sup> According to the RWPP website, no public housing tenant will have to leave their home:

[T]here are no plans to redevelop any public housing at this time, with the exception of the proposed Elizabeth Street development which has been the subject of extensive community consultation.<sup>504</sup>

**5.42** Many other witnesses to this Inquiry have expressed their concern about the provision of affordable housing in the area for middle to low income earners. The Planning Institute of Australia, for example, lists it as one of the key challenges facing Redfern and Waterloo.<sup>505</sup> In its submission for the Metropolitan Strategy<sup>506</sup>, NCOSS suggests that across metropolitan Sydney there should be a general reduction in the number of households in housing stress by 10% in the next five years and thereafter by five per cent every five years. On affordable housing, NCOSS argues:

15% of total housing units delivering public and social housing, low cost private rental and lower income home ownership. NCOSS considers more effective benchmark would be 30%, to reflect the current undersupply of affordable housing in Sydney.<sup>507</sup>

**5.43** NCOSS strongly support measures aimed at ensuring the provision of affordable housing for the area.<sup>508</sup> These measures include targets or benchmarks, financed by a mixture of mechanisms, including:

- inclusionary zoning that should be a specific developer levy
- public sector financing
- joint ventures which could include private public partnerships and superannuation scheme investment.

**5.44** In its submission, the Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Board (NAB) argues that the Government should ensure a significant percentage of both public and affordable housing is

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<sup>503</sup> Lisa Pryor, 'Labor councillors want to limit Sartor power', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 December 2004, p4

<sup>504</sup> Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, 'Frequently asked questions prepared for residents of Redfern-Waterloo', [www.redferwaterloo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.redferwaterloo.nsw.gov.au) (accessed 6 December 2004)

<sup>505</sup> Mr Peter Laybutt, Chair, Metropolitan Policy Sub Committee, Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division), Evidence, 22 October 2004, p5

<sup>506</sup> The Government is currently developing its Metropolitan Strategy, a long term plan to guide the development and future sustainability of the Greater Metropolitan Region. This is discussed further in Chapter 6.

<sup>507</sup> NCOSS, 'Social sustainability benchmarks for the Metropolitan strategy', document provided to the Committee 7 December 2004, p1

<sup>508</sup> Submission 56, NCOSS, p4

included in any new developments. The NAB proposed the provision of a minimum of 6% public housing and 6% affordable housing in all new private housing developments.<sup>509</sup>

- 5.45** Numerous inquiry participants were concerned that the Government stand by its commitment to existing public housing and guarantee public tenants future homes. In addition, Ms Moore proposed that a 10% housing levy be applied to ensure the provision of affordable housing:

I hope that the new Authority will require a 10 per cent affordable housing levy, as I have requested, to ensure that ordinary people like nurses, teachers and hospitality staff can afford to live in the inner city.<sup>510</sup>

- 5.46** As discussed in Chapter 4, Mr Mike Allen from the Department of Housing explained that the Department has approximately 32,000 properties in the central Sydney division,<sup>511</sup> and 4,133 in Redfern and Waterloo (1,605 in Redfern and 2,528 in Waterloo).<sup>512</sup>

- 5.47** In evidence to the Committee, given prior to the announcements of the RWA and plans for housing in the area, Mr Allen suggested that the Department would like to see some private-public partnerships for public housing:

We would like to see an increase in affordable housing in the area, both rental and purchased houses. The Department has recently announced a couple of pilot projects dealing with affordable rental housing focusing on retaining key workers in areas who the private market may have priced out of the location. I see some good opportunities to do that in the Redfern-Waterloo area.<sup>513</sup>

- 5.48** In answers to questions on notice, Mr Allen said that the Department had only one redevelopment project planned for the Redfern and Waterloo area. This proposed project involved the demolition of some existing public housing and the 'construction of both new public and private sector accommodation.'<sup>514</sup> According to Mr Allen, under the bilateral agreement with the Commonwealth as part of the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA), Redfern and Waterloo are priority suburbs:

Redfern-Waterloo is one of the communities identified by New South Wales as a priority community. During the term of the current agreement the Department will continue to build on the work performed during the 1990s to improve the physical

<sup>509</sup> Submission 30, Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Board, p5. This information was provided prior to the Government announcements on the redevelopment of the area, and therefore the figures provided by the NAB may now differ, depending on the details of the plans for affordable housing in the area.

<sup>510</sup> Ms Clover Moore MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 19 November 2004, p13272

<sup>511</sup> Mr Mike Allen, Executive Director, Central Sydney Division, Department of Housing, Evidence, 2 November 2004, p2

<sup>512</sup> Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 2 November 2004, Mr Allen, Department of Housing, p3

<sup>513</sup> Mr Allen, Evidence, 2 November 2004, p2

<sup>514</sup> Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 2 November 2004, Mr Allen, Department of Housing, p4

living environment and work with other agencies to improve the quality of life for social housing tenants in the area.<sup>515</sup>

- 5.49** The Committee notes that the Federal Government has a significant role in relation to affordable housing. According to Mr Allen, Commonwealth contributions to New South Wales via the CSHA have been falling over the past 15 years. The Committee also notes that NSW Government contributions to public and community housing have fallen over the past few years.
- 5.50** The Committee notes the dimensions of this problem for New South Wales and urges the Minister for Housing to continue to work with the Commonwealth to ensure that appropriate levels of funding are provided to public and social housing. The Committee strongly believes that addressing affordable housing issues in Redfern and Waterloo should be a major priority for both the State and Federal Governments. The Committee encourages the State Government to work with the Commonwealth on ensuring there is adequate funding for capital works for public and community housing. This issue, and other matters relating to maintenance, security and residents' support needs are dealt with in Chapter 4.
- 5.51** While many inquiry participants argued that affordable housing is a major issue for Redfern and Waterloo, the Committee did not receive extensive evidence on measures to address this complex issue, particularly in relation to funding affordable housing provision. Nevertheless, the Committee believes the Government must address affordable housing for the area both for existing public housing tenants and in terms of the provision of public and private affordable housing options for low to middle income earners. In relation to current tenants, we are pleased that the Government has given its assurance that there will be no moving out of public housing tenants. We urge the Government to consult with current tenants on any future plans to redevelop public housing stock. The Committee also urges the Government to consider measures to ensure the provision of affordable housing, and allow for affordable housing targets financed through a mixture of mechanisms. In addition, the Redfern Waterloo Authority should ensure that all future commercial or residential development applications of scale should be subject to a comprehensive social impact assessment process.

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### **Recommendation 26**

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, consult with current public housing tenants on any future plans to redevelop public housing stock.

### **Recommendation 27**

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, consider measures to ensure the provision of affordable housing and allow for affordable housing targets.

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<sup>515</sup> Answers to questions on notice taken during evidence 2 November 2004, Mr Allen, Department of Housing, p2

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## Recommendation 28

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority, ensure that all future commercial or residential development applications of scale are subject to a comprehensive social impact assessment process.

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### Redevelopment of the Block

- 5.52** The terms of reference require the Committee to examine the future of the Block. During the first stage of the Inquiry, the Committee concluded that the future of the Block lay in the redevelopment of housing for Aboriginal people by the owners of the land, the Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC). In the Interim Report the Committee examined the AHC's Pemulwuy Redevelopment Project and related issues, making several recommendations.
- 5.53** The Committee first examined the financial and management status of the AHC, which had been identified as an impediment to the provision of Government funding for the redevelopment. The Committee recommended that the Government expedite the completion of the audit of the financial affairs of the AHC and the valuation of its properties, which were initially due for completion in the first half of this year.<sup>516</sup> Dr Col Gellatly advised the Committee in November that the audit and the valuation have been completed and that they have been 'prepared for the workings of Cabinet and there are still deliberations going on'.<sup>517</sup> At the time of finalising this Report the Committee had not received a copy of those reports.
- 5.54** In terms of funding for the redevelopment, the Committee recommended that the Government make a substantial funding contribution to enable the AHC to complete the project, subject to certain requirements relating to the management of the project and other matters. The Committee also recommended that the RWPP continue the provision of in-kind assistance to the AHC. Dr Gellatly advised in November that the NSW Government has not yet made a decision about a funding commitment to the redevelopment.<sup>518</sup> He described the involvement of the Government with the redevelopment since the Interim Report as follows:
- Clearly we have had ongoing discussions with the AHC to try to clarify what the options are so we could actually start to progress the position in terms of the Block, but it is only informal discussion. State Government agencies have still been working with the Aboriginal Housing Company to facilitate the redevelopment. For instance, the Government Architect has spent a significant amount of time working with the Aboriginal Housing Company to look at what the options are around the Block. That work will continue. There has been ongoing work, but there is no resolution and, until such time as Cabinet makes a decision, there is nothing further we can do.<sup>519</sup>
- 5.55** The Committee notes that the Government's announcement of its intention to establish the Redfern-Waterloo Authority contained brief reference to the redevelopment of the Block. For

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<sup>516</sup> See Recommendation 6 in Standing Committee on Social Issues, *Inquiry into issues relating to Redfern and Waterloo: Interim Report*, Report 32, August 2004, p65 (hereafter *Interim Report*)

<sup>517</sup> Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p15

<sup>518</sup> Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p17

<sup>519</sup> Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p17

example, it was stated that 'Mr Sartor will discuss potential opportunities for the site known as the Block with various community groups'.<sup>520</sup> Very little information about how the new Authority intends to deal with the Block was known at the time of drafting this Report. The Premier stated in the Legislative Assembly that:

The redevelopment of the Block stands at the centre of the challenges we face. It will of course be undertaken in consultation with the owners of the site, the Aboriginal Housing Company. ... As I said, we will co-operate with the Aboriginal Housing Company to fix the Block. I hope that, in co-operation with that company, we can boost Aboriginal home ownership in the area. It would be an important achievement if we could reach that goal.<sup>521</sup>

**5.56** The Committee commends the Government for this commitment but notes the lack of consultation with the AHC over the role that the new Authority might play in relation to the Block. Shortly after the announcement, news programs quoted the CEO of the AHC, Mr Michael Mundine, as stating that while the AHC would work with the new Authority it was disappointing that the AHC was not consulted over the plans.<sup>522</sup>

**5.57** In our Interim Report, the Committee also recommended that the NSW Government approach the Federal Government to make a substantial funding commitment to the redevelopment project. Dr Gellatly has since advised the Committee that a formal approach had not been made by the State Government to the Federal Government:

We had some informal discussions, Michael [Ramsey] and I, with some Commonwealth Government staff, but that was before the election, so they were in caretaker mode, and it was just a general background discussion. Really it is an issue that needs to be taken up. There are things happening on broader policy framework and what happens after ATSIC and also the type of funding arrangements that they are going to have with Aboriginal communities, what that would mean for the Block and so on, so I think there is a number of issues floating around at the national level as well that need to be taken into account and worked out over time.<sup>523</sup>

**5.58** The Committee also recommended that the City of Sydney Council make a substantial contribution to the redevelopment project, for example, through in-kind assistance. The Committee is not aware of any formal commitment being made by the Council to date.

**5.59** In relation to our recommendation that the RWPP provide assistance to the AHC to keep the local Aboriginal community, as well as the wider community in Redfern and Waterloo, informed as to the progress of the redevelopment, the Committee is unaware of any action to date. The Committee is disappointed that in the four months since our Interim Report was released little progress has been made on the redevelopment of the Block. The Committee reiterates the comments we made in the Interim Report that the redevelopment of the Block is an important and iconic project for Aboriginal people in the area and throughout NSW and

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<sup>520</sup> Hon Bob Carr MP, Premier, 'Premier announces 10-year Redfern-Waterloo Plan', *Media Release*, 26 October 2004

<sup>521</sup> Hon Bob Carr MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 28 October 2004, p12271

<sup>522</sup> For example, News, 2BL, 26 October 2004, 5pm

<sup>523</sup> Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p18



Australia, and one that needs to commence as soon as possible. The assistance of all three tiers of Government is crucial to the success of the project.

**5.60** The Interim Report also noted the comments made by the AHC that the Company was established as a housing provider, not as a social support service. Nevertheless, the AHC told the Committee, significant time and resources are taken up with providing support and referral services to members of the local Aboriginal community that should be provided by government and non government services.<sup>524</sup> The issue of the adequacy of government and non government services for Aboriginal people is dealt with in Chapter 4.

**5.61** Finally, we note that the recent articles in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, which claimed the RWA will ‘take control of Aboriginal lands on the Block’ caused considerable concern amongst the Aboriginal community.<sup>525</sup> According to the Herald:

The Redfern-Waterloo Authority will commit \$27 million to redeveloping the troubled precinct centred on Eveleigh Street, but only if the Indigenous owners hand the authority exclusive possession of lands through a 10-year lease.<sup>526</sup>

**5.62** Indigenous leaders such as Marcia Ella-Duncan responded angrily, suggesting that any plans to take control of Aboriginal-owned housing ‘would help only a few black people while sweeping aside self-determination.’<sup>527</sup> Minister Sartor responded by saying the options for the Block were ‘not about dispossessing Aboriginal people and sending them off somewhere else.’ Minister Sartor was reported as saying:

Certainly there is no plan at the moment to use any compulsory powers to take control ... The current model and our approach has been to consult and to see if we can gain agreement out of people.<sup>528</sup>

**5.63** In early December 2004, an alliance of 9 Aboriginal organisations calling itself the Redfern Organisation of Aboriginal Unity released a statement in relation to the issues facing Aboriginal people in Redfern and Waterloo, including the future of the Block. The group expressed particular concern about suggestions that the land currently owned by the Aboriginal Housing Company ‘could be forcibly acquired by the Government’:

Aboriginal people would regard any forced acquisition as once again the dispossession of our people and occupation of our land. We would fiercely resist this in a unified, determined but peaceful manner.<sup>529</sup>

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<sup>524</sup> See *Interim Report*, p41

<sup>525</sup> Debra Jopson & Gerard Ryle, ‘Fixing the Block: \$27m development planned’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 November 2004

<sup>526</sup> Debra Jopson & Gerard Ryle, ‘Fixing the Block: \$27m development planned’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 November 2004

<sup>527</sup> Ms Marcia Ella-Duncan, Chairperson, ATSIC Sydney Regional Council, quoted in “‘Revamp helps only a few’, says black leader’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 November 2004, p6

<sup>528</sup> Hon Frank Sartor MP, quoted in “‘Revamp helps only a few’, says black leader’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 November 2004, p6

<sup>529</sup> Redfern Organisation of Aboriginal Unity, ‘Proposed Redfern Waterloo Redevelopment’, *Media Release*, 2 December 2004, p1

**5.64** The Committee notes that the recent information placed on the RWPP website clearly states that:

No decisions have been made about the future of The Block. The Aboriginal Housing Company and the Minister for Redfern and Waterloo are working together to establish a sustainable vision for the area. **There is no intention by the State Government to compulsorily acquire the Block.**<sup>530</sup> [our emphasis]

**5.65** The Committee welcomes the Government's unequivocal statement that it has no intention to compulsorily acquire the Block. We note too, the acceptance by the Government of an amendment to the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill made by the Christian Democratic Party.<sup>531</sup> The Act now requires that the Minister consult with the Aboriginal Housing Company and other relevant members of the Aboriginal community on issues and strategies affecting, or the long term strategic vision for, the Block.

**5.66** The Committee strongly believes the future of the Block is a decision for the Aboriginal community and we would be extremely concerned by any Government plans to take control of the Block. As noted in our Interim Report, the Block is a place of political, spiritual and cultural significance for Aboriginal people and is often described as the 'Black Heart' of Australia.<sup>532</sup> We urge the Government to stand by its commitment not to compulsorily acquire the Block, and ensure that the Block remains in Aboriginal ownership and control. As noted in our Interim Report, we acknowledge that the RWPP has been working with the Aboriginal Housing Company in relation to its financial difficulties, governance and management issues. We encourage the NSW Government, through the RWA and the RWPP, to continue to work with the AHC, and the broader Aboriginal community, to enable the redevelopment of the Block.

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### Recommendation 29

That the NSW Government remain committed to its guarantee not to compulsorily acquire the Block at Redfern. In addition, the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, should work with the Aboriginal Housing Company, and the broader Aboriginal community, to enable the redevelopment of the Block.

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### Employment strategies

**5.67** The problems associated with unemployment in Redfern and Waterloo were raised many times during our Inquiry. Witnesses such as the former Mayor of South Sydney Council and current councillor with City of Sydney Council raised it as one of the major issues to be

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<sup>530</sup> Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, 'Frequently asked questions prepared for residents of Redfern-Waterloo', [www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au) (accessed 6 December 2004)

<sup>531</sup> Reverend the Hon Fred Nile MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 9 December, Daily Galleys, p2

<sup>532</sup> See Chapter 3, *Interim Report*, August 2004, p34; see also Australian Heritage Commission, Place Details of the Block, Redfern, NSW: [www.ahc.gov.au](http://www.ahc.gov.au)

addressed.<sup>533</sup> Similarly, Mr Shane Brown from South Sydney Youth Services highlighted this as a major issue facing young people living in Redfern and Waterloo.<sup>534</sup> These issues are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

**5.68** One of the core roles for the Government under the Redfern Waterloo Plan is to increase employment in the area.<sup>535</sup> While there are some employment programs and services for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people already operating in the area, the Committee understands that the Redfern Waterloo Plan will seek to specifically increase employment for residents of the area. The Premier noted that a ‘core challenge in Redfern is unemployment – 60 per cent of the adult population are unemployed’.<sup>536</sup>

**5.69** A little more detail on the Jobs Plan was provided in a joint media release from Minister Sartor and Minister Tebbutt. In it, the Ministers noted the high unemployment rates in Waterloo with up to 74% of the general population not in the workforce. According to the release, the Jobs Plan will focus on the creation of additional jobs and strategies to address labour market barriers faced by local people. The proposals set out in the Jobs Plan include:

- increasing employment through targeted development of State owned land
- encouraging new commercial activity
- establishment of an Aboriginal Business Hub
- use of Government Procurement contracts for construction projects to create Aboriginal and local training and employment opportunities
- strengthen Aboriginal employment partnerships
- development of a complementary education and training strategy
- a focus on increasing participation of young people in transition employment programs.<sup>537</sup>

**5.70** In evidence to the Committee, Dr Col Gellatly could only provide minimal additional information on the Jobs Plan, suggesting that the detail will depend on the Authority and Minister Sartor. Dr Gellatly was able to say the additional jobs would come through increasing the supply of employment and ‘enterprise development land’ in Redfern and Waterloo. He also mentioned the creation of Aboriginal training and employment opportunities:

The concept has been floated of an Aboriginal business hub to attract Aboriginal craft and business enterprises to the area and create jobs, and exploring ways in which human services organisations could employ local people as well.<sup>538</sup>

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<sup>533</sup> Submission 45, Mr Tony Pooley

<sup>534</sup> Submission 92, South Sydney Youth Services

<sup>535</sup> Hon Bob Carr MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 28 October 2004, p12271

<sup>536</sup> Hon Bob Carr MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 28 October 2004, p12271

<sup>537</sup> Hon Frank Sartor MP and Hon Carmel Tebbutt MLC, ‘Government announces jobs plan for Redfern Waterloo’, *Media Release*, 10 November 2004

<sup>538</sup> Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p29

- 5.71 NCOSS welcomed the Jobs Plan, suggesting it provides an opportunity to facilitate new and sustainable jobs for the long term unemployed. NCOSS stated that it would like to see local employment and training targets introduced to development approvals and Government purchasing contracts in Redfern and Waterloo. Director Mr Gary Moore also argued that:

The Redfern Waterloo Authority and the City of Sydney Council must be given the regulatory power and the financial incentives to make new jobs for local Aboriginal people, disadvantaged young people, poverty stricken sole parent families and the working poor in private rental a reality.<sup>539</sup>

- 5.72 The Committee agrees with the stakeholders that one of the urgent issues to be addressed in the area is the high level of unemployment, both in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. The Committee notes that the Government has identified this issue as a priority in its recent announcements on the RWA. However, it is difficult to comment on the adequacy of the Government's response without seeing the details of the Jobs Plan. The Committee urges the Government to develop and release the details of a draft Jobs Plan as soon as possible. The public release of a draft Plan will allow for the appropriate level of consultation and consideration by relevant government and non government stakeholders, as well as the local community. We urge the Government to ensure that the Plan addresses employment issues for residents in both suburbs, Redfern and Waterloo. We also note that the Commonwealth Government has a significant role to play in relation to employment issues. The Committee encourages the State and Commonwealth Governments to work together on job creation and on the delivery of employment programs and services to residents in the area. In particular, the NSW Government should consult with the Federal Government in the development of its Jobs Plan. The issue of employment, including Commonwealth responsibilities, is addressed in Chapter 4. The public release of the Jobs Plan is addressed in Chapter 6.

## **The Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project**

- 5.73 The Committee addressed many of the issues relevant to the RWPP in the Interim Report, especially in Chapter 2. Since the release of the Interim Report, the Committee has heard further evidence from a range of government and non government agencies and individuals on the effectiveness of the RWPP. In this section the Committee provides an overview of the new role for the Project under the Redfern Waterloo Authority. We also revisit some of the issues raised in the Interim Report, particularly in relation to communication and consultation. In addition this section looks at issues raised in the second stage of the Inquiry, such as the lack of clarity of the role and objectives of the RWPP, the need to develop and publicly release these objectives and the need for a performance framework to assess the effectiveness of the Project.

### **The extension of the RWPP to 2008**

- 5.74 Since the release of our Interim Report, numerous witnesses, particularly from the non government sector, remain sceptical about the capacity of the RWPP to operate effectively in the community, especially in relation to its role in communication and consultation. Despite

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<sup>539</sup> NCOSS, 'Walking the talk in Redfern and Waterloo', *Media Release*, 10 November 2004, p1

this, there is still no overwhelming desire to abandon the RWPP and begin again. In the Interim Report the Committee recommended that the Government continue the RWPP, despite the criticisms made about it, and make a long-term financial commitment to the Project beyond the funding already committed up to 2006.<sup>540</sup> As noted in the Interim Report, some Committee members believed the RWPP had not been successful, that it was not appropriately resourced, and was not the appropriate lead agency to coordinate service delivery in Redfern and Waterloo.<sup>541</sup>

**5.75** On 26 October 2004 the Government announced that the RWPP will be extended until 2008. In evidence to the Committee, Mr Michael Ramsey said:

The Premier, I think in his announcement a few weeks ago about the Redfern Plan, made a statement that the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project will extend. The Government has actually said that the Project will be extended to 2008. As I said, as part of that they have also agreed to actually restructure the Partnership Project so that we can actually have the resources that the community is demanding, in terms of giving us the capacity to deliver on what the community has demanded.<sup>542</sup>

**5.76** As discussed below, the RWPP will be given additional resources and staffing to allow it to undertake its role in the coordination of services and to enhance its communication and consultation functions. The RWPP and the RWA will be co-located within the same office. Dr Gellatly explained that while Minister Sartor will be responsible for the overall activities in the area, the RWPP will continue and will be distinct from the Authority.<sup>543</sup>

**5.77** Minister Sartor, in his Second Reading speech on the introduction of the Redfern Waterloo Authority Bill, suggested that the Authority will build on the work that has been undertaken by the RWPP since 2002. Minister Sartor suggested that the RWPP would be essential to the process of ensuring social, economic, ecological and other sustainable development:

The Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project will work hand in hand to ensure that the Government delivers long-term and sustainable solutions that these two communities need and want. The Authority and the RWPP are complementary.<sup>544</sup>

**5.78** The Minister went on to make the distinction between the Authority and the RWPP:

The RWPP will lead the Government's reform of the human services review system in Redfern and Waterloo, whilst the focus of the Authority is job creation, urban renewal, improved public amenity and enhanced commercial activity. Together this will create a strong and viable community.<sup>545</sup>

<sup>540</sup> See Recommendation 1, *Interim Report*, p32

<sup>541</sup> See *Interim Report*, p12 and also Statement of Dissent by the Hon Robyn Parker MLC and the Hon Greg Pearce MLC, *Interim Report*, pp189-190

<sup>542</sup> Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p5

<sup>543</sup> Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p2

<sup>544</sup> Hon Frank Sartor MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 11 November 2004, p12740

<sup>545</sup> Hon Frank Sartor MP, Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 11 November 2004, p12740

### The new role of the RWPP

- 5.79** According to its own fact sheet, the RWPP will lead the implementation of the initiatives contained in the ten-year plan and drive the establishment of the new Authority. In particular, the fact sheet says, the RWPP will work on ‘community safety, crime prevention, reshaping the human service system and cross agency coordination’.<sup>546</sup> In addition to these medium to long term objectives, the RWPP will continue to be involved in crisis management where issues arise from time to time, for example, when families are in crisis.<sup>547</sup>
- 5.80** The Committee has received little additional information on the continued role of the RWPP in terms of community safety and crime prevention. The Government submission provided early in the Inquiry outlines its role in relation to these matters.<sup>548</sup> We understand that the RWPP is working closely with the NSW Police and Sydney of City Council in establishing appropriate crime prevention strategies. For more information on policing see Chapter 2.
- 5.81** In relation to the RWPP’s role in reshaping the human service system, the Committee understands that the Project will be responsible for implementing the recommendations in the report of the Human Services Review.<sup>549</sup> At the time of the release of the Morgan Disney report, the Hon Carmel Tebbutt MLC explained that the recommendations from the review will be used to help design a Human Services Plan for coordinated service delivery in the area:

The Review makes it clear there are adequate resources in the area, but services are uncoordinated, lack community engagement and are not focussed on outcomes.<sup>550</sup>

- 5.82** According to Minister Tebbutt, the Plan will develop agreed community outcomes and address ways of working with the community, and will include strategies concerning capacity building for government and non government organisations and community leadership development.<sup>551</sup> There are a number of priority areas for the Human Services Plan including services for families, children and young people, and Aboriginal people, addressing domestic violence, drug and alcohol misuse and mental health issues. An Implementation Working Group will be established to develop the Plan, with representation from both government and non government sectors, including Aboriginal organisations. The Committee understands that the Human Services Plan will be presented to Cabinet by May 2005.<sup>552</sup> The findings and

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<sup>546</sup> Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, ‘The Redfern-Waterloo Plan’, Fact Sheet #1, November 2004, p2

<sup>547</sup> Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p24

<sup>548</sup> See Part 6 Community Safety and Justice, in Submission 55, NSW Government, pp231-282

<sup>549</sup> For more information see Morgan Disney & Associates, *Making Connections: Better Services, Stronger Community, Report on Review of the Human Services System in Redfern and Waterloo*, Report for the NSW Premier’s Department, November 2004. To view the report, go to [www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.redfernwaterloo.nsw.gov.au)

<sup>550</sup> Hon Carmel Tebbutt MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 10 November 2004, p12458

<sup>551</sup> Hon Carmel Tebbutt MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 10 November 2004, p12458

<sup>552</sup> Hon Carmel Tebbutt MLC, Legislative Council, New South Wales, *Hansard*, 10 November 2004, p12458

recommendation of the Human Services Review are dealt with comprehensively in Chapter 3 of this Report.

**5.83** Cross agency coordination is identified by the RWPP in its recent fact sheet as another of its core roles. As discussed in the Interim Report, since its establishment the RWPP has had as core objectives, the coordination of government and non government services in Redfern and Waterloo and the development and maintenance of partnerships. As noted in the recent Government announcements on the Human Services Review, the coordination of services in the area is very poor.

**5.84** Further, in our Interim Report we noted the role of the RWPP in establishing and maintaining effective and genuine partnerships between the government and non government sectors, and with the local community. The Interim Report concluded that the full potential of establishing effective partnerships is yet to be realised. This was also raised with us in this second stage of the inquiry process. At a private briefing with the Committee, a number of members of the South Sydney Interagency raised concerns about the RWPP consultation processes and its commitment to partnerships:

The other thing we say is we are suffering from consultation fatigue and some of the comments I got is I would go there again and say it again because there is a sense that it has already been said and nothing has happened and there is a high risk in my view at this stage of a loss of faith in the concept of partnership with the community organizations in this area.<sup>553</sup>

**5.85** In his evidence to the Committee, Dr Gellatly suggested that coordination between various sectors of the local community has improved since the release of the Interim Report. Dr Gellatly told the Inquiry that the recent rugby league tournament held over the October long weekend was a good example of Government coordination and partnership arrangements between government and non government services, and the community. According to Dr Gellatly, the event:

... involved a lot of preparation in terms of working between the agencies and working with the community toward what eventually turned out to be a very successful weekend.<sup>554</sup>

**5.86** While acknowledging Dr Gellatly's comments, the Committee believes, based on the majority of evidence to this Inquiry, that substantial work is still required to ensure effective coordination and partnerships. The Committee welcomes the additional resources and staffing provided to the RWPP and we are hopeful that this will assist the RWPP in its work in cross agency coordination and in the establishment of effective partnerships. The Committee believes that the cooperation between government and non government agencies, and the successful engagement of community members, will be critical to achieving significant reform in the area. Dr Gellatly agreed that this would be necessary and suggested that the establishment of the RWA with a dedicated Minister will go a long way to achieving the level of coordination required:

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<sup>553</sup> Participant, South Sydney Interagency, 3 November 2004, p5

<sup>554</sup> Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p1

[W]e now have an active minister for the area who will, I am sure, help us bang a few heads together ... I think it is a serious attempt to try to get the coordination and the drive behind to fix it. I mean there is no simple solution and it is being worked on from a number of fronts, as we have talked about up-front in our submission, and I think we are not establishing any new group of CEOs, there is already a human services cluster. The fact that there is a Minister now solely focused on that place recognises that the Government is obviously indicating that that is an important issue to get things solved there and it just gives more impetus if a Minister has that as a specific responsibility.<sup>555</sup>

- 5.87** The Committee notes that there has been unanimous support for a long term response to social disadvantage in Redfern and Waterloo. The Government's own submission states that need for long term commitment from the government and non government sector.<sup>556</sup> The recent announcements on the RWA and the Redfern Waterloo Plan (2004–2014) suggest that the Government recognises the need for long term solutions. Despite this, the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, the body charged with coordinating the response to the serious social issues facing the area, has been extended only until 2008. Importantly, the RWPP will lead the implementation of the Human Services Review plan. The Committee believes that, given the important role of the RWPP in overseeing the implementation of the Human Services Review, the Government should commit to the RWPP, or a similar coordinating body, beyond 2008 so that continuity is ensured and the long term social disadvantage in the area is finally addressed. The RWPP, or similar body, should be adequately resourced, with appropriate performance measurement and have appropriate powers to allow it to perform its important role in addressing the complexity of issues facing people living in Redfern and Waterloo.

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### **Recommendation 30**

That the NSW Government ensure that the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, or a similar coordinating body, is extended beyond 2008, is adequately resourced, with appropriate performance measurement, so that the long term social disadvantage in Redfern and Waterloo can be addressed.

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- 5.88** The Committee believes that the RWPP must improve in a number of its key areas of responsibility, including communication and consultation, coordinating service delivery and the development of effective partnerships. In addition, the Committee believes the RWPP must develop clear objectives and performance indicators. These issues are discussed below.

### **Communication and consultation**

- 5.89** As already mentioned, our Interim Report was extremely critical of the communication and consultation processes of the RWPP. In relation to communication, the Committee found that there was an inadequate level of communication between the RWPP and the local community. Witnesses suggested that there was little or no follow up on reporting back to organisations on decisions made by Government. Other witnesses complained about the

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<sup>555</sup> Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p31

<sup>556</sup> Submission 55, NSW Government, p55



RWPP website and lack of updated information, while a number of inquiry participants suggested that the RWPP did not have adequate resources to allow it to communicate effectively.<sup>557</sup> In relation to consultation, witnesses were critical of the manner in which the consultations were conducted, suggesting the sessions were simply information-giving rather than genuine consultations. Inquiry participants noted the failure of the RWPP Taskforces to meet regularly and engage meaningfully with the members. The conduct of the consultation processes has continued to receive criticism since the release of our Interim Report. As noted above, many agencies and individuals are experiencing ‘consultation fatigue’ and do not feel that the consultations have resulted in real change for the area.

**5.90** A number of witnesses both prior to and since the Interim Report commented favourably on the consultation processes undertaken by Morgan Disney for the Human Services Review.<sup>558</sup> As noted in Chapter 3, Morgan Disney held further community meetings in mid December to report back on its Review of the Human Services System.

**5.91** In our Interim Report, the Committee recommended that the RWPP develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to ensure there is effective consultation and communication with the Redfern and Waterloo communities. In the initial round of hearings, Dr Gellatly acknowledged that the criticisms of the RWPP communication strategies were valid and he committed the Government to developing and implementing a more effective communication strategy.<sup>559</sup> In recent evidence, Dr Gellatly again accepted the criticisms and reiterated Government plans to address them:

Criticisms about the communication and lack of consultation by the Partnership during the first 18 months or so we have accepted, and we are trying to find ways to improve that, including putting some resources into that. There are some explanations about why that was the case but I think that is a very legitimate concern and we are going to address it.<sup>560</sup>

**5.92** Mr Ramsey told the Committee that he felt the RWPP had done extensive consultations; he argued that the community had been over consulted and wanted to see the outcomes of those consultations. Mr Ramsey acknowledged that what they have not done well was communicate back to the community:

Again I emphasise that I think we have done consultation well. What we have not done is communication, and they are fundamentally different things.<sup>561</sup>

**5.93** Mr Ramsey said that a communication strategy has been developed and is in the process of being implemented, supported by the appointment of personnel with expertise in the area of communication:

We are just in the process of implementing that, and I acknowledge we are still grappling with it, but that communication strategy is actually going to be built around

<sup>557</sup> See *Interim Report*, August 2004, p27

<sup>558</sup> See *Interim Report*, August 2004, pp22-26

<sup>559</sup> Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 18 May 2004, p4

<sup>560</sup> Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p4

<sup>561</sup> Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p5

some elements related to community engagement. We want to meet with all stakeholders and actually identify with them what the key issues are that they want addressed and how they want to be communicated with. This will come out as we have the communication person on, we will have the capacity to do this. We want to develop a meeting strategy and have that published well and truly in advance, almost giving people three months or six months in advance and saying: This is what our meeting schedule is going to be and these are the issues, so we actually give people advance notice of what we are doing.<sup>562</sup>

**5.94** In addition, Mr Ramsey said the RWPP is trying to address the communication issue in specific ways with regular updates of the website, email contact with agencies in the area and the distribution of fact sheets to the community with information on Government announcements such as the community health facility in Redfern and the establishment of the Redfern Waterloo Authority.<sup>563</sup>

**5.95** While acknowledging changes were needed, Dr Gellatly expressed his support for Mr Ramsey and the RWPP, suggesting that much of the communication and consultation done in the area is on an informal basis:

I think that there is an incredible amount of informal consultation and communication happening and I agree with the comments that it is not just about newsletters and particularly access to the web site and all of that, but it is a matter of on-the-ground talking to people on a daily basis when you see them in the street and that sort of thing, having community meetings and meeting with community leaders. I know that that does happen and I think Michael is underestimating it, but there is always going to be criticism that it is not enough and it is a matter of trying to find smarter ways to do it and get to more people.<sup>564</sup>

**5.96** The Committee believes that while there has been some improvement to the communication and consultation with local services and the community, the RWPP must continue to find appropriate ways to engage with these groups. The Committee has noticed a distinct lack of trust between the non government sector, community members and the RWPP. In Chapter 6, the Committee further considers the relationship with the non government sector, community engagement and Government transparency.

### ***Relationship with the Aboriginal community***

**5.97** In our Interim Report we also examined the effectiveness of the RWPP in dealing with the Aboriginal community and recommended that the RWPP work at improving its relationship.<sup>565</sup> In November Mr Ramsey told the Committee that the RWPP has tried to work cooperatively with the Aboriginal community on a number of events over the past months. He noted the Aboriginal rugby league tournament held in Redfern over the October long weekend and Operation Allunga, a police operation undertaken on and around the Block in late July 2004. According to Mr Ramsey:

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<sup>562</sup> Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p9

<sup>563</sup> Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p9

<sup>564</sup> Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p11

<sup>565</sup> See Recommendation 3 in *Interim Report*, p33

Operation Allunga was widely praised by the Aboriginal community leaders as being a new day in Aboriginal and police relations in Redfern. The Aboriginal community had been saying for a long period of time that they wanted drug dealing dealt with effectively in Redfern and Waterloo, and they saw Operation Allunga as actually achieving that. The fact that there were five addresses on the Block that were identified and were actually targeted in that and 28 people were identified through controlled drug purchases, was actually really well received and in fact I am still hearing comments about that, and Aboriginal people are very responsive about the fact that police are actually taking action in terms of that.<sup>566</sup>

- 5.98** While there is support amongst the Aboriginal community for specific police operations such as Operation Allunga, some members of the Aboriginal community do not necessarily support the action of the police<sup>567</sup> or the work of the RWPP. In a briefing with the Committee, one member of the Koori Interagency said:

With the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Program, it has been going for two or three years now. When it first came into this area it went through community organisations, went to the community people, they picked our brains on what we wanted on domestic violence, on education, on everything, and we have seen very, very little come out of what they have taken away, yet the money is rolling into the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Program - and I am talking millions of dollars - but this community has only seen a pittance out of it because all these consultants are getting paid the big bucks and the community is getting nothing out of it. When are we going to start to benefit from the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Program? That is one question I think everyone in this room wants to know.<sup>568</sup>

- 5.99** The Redfern Organisation of Aboriginal Unity expressed their concern that the Authority 'could undermine the work that is currently being carried out by our community controlled organisations.'<sup>569</sup> While agreeing that the Government has to take a coordinated approach, the group stressed that it should be done in partnership with Aboriginal people. The group acknowledged the Government's commitment to consultation and assurances that no decisions had been made on the future of the area:

We hope that the Minister's understanding of consultation is the same as our own. Consultation in our sense of the word means sharing ideas with an open mind to come up with a joint agreement on the best way forward. It means listening as well as speaking. It does not mean telling our people what is happening after decisions have already been made.<sup>570</sup>

- 5.100** The Committee believes that much more needs to be done to engage with the Aboriginal community. As noted in our Interim Report, the RWPP has done considerable work with the Aboriginal Housing Company and has formed an effective working relationship with

<sup>566</sup> Mr Ramsey, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p22

<sup>567</sup> The relationship between police and Aboriginal people is dealt with extensively in Chapter 2

<sup>568</sup> Participant, Koori South Eastern Sydney Interagency, 15 October 2004, p25

<sup>569</sup> Redfern Organisation of Aboriginal Unity, 'Proposed Redfern Waterloo Redevelopment', *Media Release*, 2 December 2004, p1

<sup>570</sup> Redfern Organisation of Aboriginal Unity, 'Proposed Redfern Waterloo Redevelopment', *Media Release*, 2 December 2004, p1

members of the Company. However, evidence to this Inquiry from Aboriginal non government service providers and individuals indicates that many Aboriginal people are not satisfied with the RWPP's consultation and communication processes. The Committee urges the RWPP to continue to engage with the Aboriginal community and ensure there is culturally appropriate consultation and communication. In Chapter 4 the Committee considers strategies in relation to Indigenous issues, and in Chapter 6 we further discuss the need to address issues facing the Aboriginal community in Redfern and Waterloo.

### **Performance accountability**

- 5.101** Numerous witnesses throughout this Inquiry have expressed their concern that, despite having been established since 2002, the RWPP did not appear to have a clear, transparent and publicly available strategic plan. In her evidence to the Committee, Ms Elizabeth Rice of the Planning Institute of Australia raised her concerns about the apparent lack of a strategic plan:

But we have not seen any comprehensive strategy to address these [outcomes]. It may be that there is a strategy and it has not been made public, but to PIA's knowledge there is no publicly available strategic plan for the Redfern-Waterloo Partnership as a whole. There are no publicly available action plans which indicate how the Partnership as a whole is addressing the objectives, how the inputs it is sponsoring relate to the achievement of the objectives, how it will know whether it has achieved the outcomes, and how it will report these results annually preferably to the Government and the community.<sup>571</sup>

- 5.102** Witnesses to this Inquiry suggested that in addition to the need for clear and publicly available strategic objectives, it was vital that there be a comprehensive set of performance indicators by which the objectives could be assessed. Witnesses argued that without clear performance measurements, it was difficult to gauge the effectiveness of the Project. As Ms Rice pointed out, while there appear to be indicators for separate projects in the Redfern and Waterloo area, there was not 'a set of indicators that relates to the lot':

So you have a collection of activities trying to achieve outcomes rather than a broad strategic direction that is specifically directing how those projects will work to achieve the outcomes.<sup>572</sup>

- 5.103** In his evidence, Dr Gellatly acknowledged that performance measurement and benchmarking are important issues, although often difficult to determine particularly in the area of human services. However, he accepted that just because it is a complex area, 'it does not mean that we should not be trying to do them, that we should not be trying to measure performance.'<sup>573</sup> Dr Gellatly told the Committee that the RWPP is currently establishing a business plan, which will include appropriate performance measures:

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<sup>571</sup> Ms Elizabeth Rice, Member, Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division), Evidence, 22 October 2004, p9

<sup>572</sup> Ms Rice, Evidence, 22 October 2004, p9

<sup>573</sup> Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p4

There is a framework in the human services area that is quite popular at present, the Freidman framework, which we are trying to work on and get some measures out of that.<sup>574</sup>

- 5.104** Dr Gellatly said the business plan will be completed by June 2005 and will be made public. The Committee urges the Government to ensure that this plan is completed by the promised date and that it is made public. This issue is addressed in recommendations in Chapter 6.
- 5.105** The Committee strongly believes the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project must ensure that there is a focussed strategic framework to guide their work in the area. We believe that the recent announcements made by the Government, particularly in relation to the development of the Redfern Waterloo Plan and the Human Services Plan, are positive steps towards developing broad strategic objectives aimed at addressing the issues facing Redfern and Waterloo. We urge the RWA and the RWPP, in the development of these Plans, to ensure that the Plans contain an appropriate set of indicators and performance measurements by which the objectives of the Plans can be assessed. We also believe that the Plans should be made publicly available and there should be a regular process of review. The RWPP should be regularly evaluated to ensure that its objectives are met, and real progress is made in Redfern and Waterloo.

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### **Recommendation 31**

That the NSW Government, through the Redfern Waterloo Authority and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, ensure that the Redfern Waterloo Plan and the Human Services Plan contain an appropriate set of indicators and performance measurements by which the objectives of the Plans can be assessed. In addition, the Plans should be made publicly available; and regular evaluation and review should be undertaken and made public.

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<sup>574</sup> Dr Gellatly, Evidence, 12 November 2004, p7