

INQUIRY INTO ISSUES RELATING TO REDFERN/WATERLOO

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Summary

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Submission

to the NSW Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues

Inquiry into

ISSUES RELATING TO REDFERN AND WATERLOO



The region covered by the Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development is that of the inner city and eastern suburbs, or more precisely of the local government areas of Leichhardt, City of Sydney (including the former City of South Sydney), Woollahra, Waverley, Randwick and Botany. Redfern and Waterloo are of course only a small part of that region, so only part of our time and energies can be devoted to it. However, given the highly disadvantaged nature of Redfern and Waterloo, the question marks over the area's future and the importance of this Inquiry to it, we have made the submission below.

Due to time constraints, we have only addressed three of the Inquiry's terms of reference. These are "*Policing strategies and resources in the Redfern/Waterloo areas*", "*Non-government services and service provision in the Redfern/Waterloo areas*" and "*Strategies under the current New South Wales Government 'Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project', and the effectiveness in meeting the needs of local indigenous and other members of the community.*"

At the end is a re-printed article from our organisation's journal, '*Inner Voice*', on the subject of the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project's RED Strategy and the concept of 'Social Mix', which might throw more light on the Strategy and consultations surrounding it.

Policing strategies and resources in the Redfern/Waterloo areas.

It is often reported that the population of 'The Block' includes many transients from elsewhere in NSW or other states, and these transients are often blamed for much of the crime in the area. What is often overlooked, however, is that much of the local police 'population' is also, to some extent, transient. The frequent turnover of Commanders and of police Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers is of particular concern, but other police officers also seem to move on with unhelpful frequency.

We do not say this to denigrate those officers that leave. It is a difficult posting. However, it must be recognised that with a frequent turnover there is a loss of corporate memory and of the wisdom that might otherwise be built up in regard to the area in which they work. We must keep a Commander who will stay around long enough to put long term strategies in place. We must also keep Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers in place long-term, because the very nature of liaison between groups that are often in conflict (Aboriginal people and police) demands it. It is necessary to build up trust, it is necessary that the personal qualities of the officer become respected.

Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers are in perhaps the most difficult position of any police officers. There is the potential to be seen as a traitor by the community or by other police or both. Some have stayed in place for only a few months. It does not help matters that the role is seen as a dead end as far as the ladder of potential promotion is concerned.

Redfern police station is horrible. The sooner it can be moved to more suitable premises, the better. The current state of the police station building does nothing to help retain police officers, and nor does it inspire confidence in visitors.

There have been calls for the creation of a body of police similar to the 'Tactical Response Group' (TRG) to deal with incidents such as the riot that occurred in Redfern during February. We urge great caution before making any such recommendation. It is possible that the operations of such a group will cause greater resentment of police. Once such a group is established, it will be tempting to use them, or to have them in the vicinity ready for use, whenever a crowd gathers. Dressed in all their riot gear, and getting about in their own mini-buses, they can appear more like a paramilitary force or an occupying army than civil police. They can also appear de-humanised and easier to attack because they don't look like 'real people' any more. It is also quite possible that ordinary officers in the Redfern and Waterloo areas would cop the consequences of what their elite TRG officers had done.

It would be much better to bring the local area command up to strength with ordinary police officers, and to give all police officers greater training in the containment of civil disorder and in the protection of themselves, other officers and the public. Police have to get on with the communities they are policing, and to do that they need to understand those communities, so extensive orientation of new officers also needs to take place.

To keep officers in place may require incentives for them to stay. It is not an easy posting. Therefore it may be necessary to add a 'loading' to the pay of officers in difficult postings such as Redfern and Waterloo, and/or to award points toward promotion or transfer to more attractive postings for those who stay for a period of, say, five years or more.

Non-government services and service provision in the Redfern/Waterloo areas.

"They starve us of funds, then blame us for being skinny".

The above comment was made by a worker from a community organisation at a meeting of the South Sydney Interagency. It was made in the context of government's apparent frustration that despite the fact that government funds a number of community organisations in the area, problems fail to disappear. This then causes government to call for greater coordination of the services, or to try to impose different ways for the services to make referrals to one another, or to look at ways in which the services can somehow be made more efficient. The underlying assumption is that there is something basically wrong with the services, and that they need to be fixed.

Essentially this same sentiment was unhelpfully echoed by the Rev. Bill Crews from the Exodus Foundation, when he said in the wake of the riot *"You would think with 80 welfare agencies in this area you wouldn't find the mess you've got now."* The uninitiated might draw the conclusion from this statement that there are 80 agencies in the area with a brief to carry out some kind of 'trouble prevention' activities, and that they had failed the population miserably.

Of course, there are not 80 services with such a brief. The majority of the services are focused on the needs of people who are elderly or who have a disability, or young families. Youth services have funding to employ workers, but not much left over to actually do anything with. In any case, the availability of services cannot be considered the answer to all of life's problems, when at least some of those problems have arisen, at least in part, from past government decisions.

One of those decisions, no doubt made with the best intentions, was to create vast estates of public housing in this area. Another, forced by the failure of the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement to fund more public housing, was to prioritise the waiting list, so that only those most in need could get housed. This means that where once the population of the public housing estates simply had the disadvantage of being workers on low incomes, they are now nearly all unemployed and have multiple disadvantages. It has turned public housing, especially in the inner city, into a ghetto of disability, psychiatric disorder, refugee trauma, old age and frailty, along with offenders recently released from jail.

A person with a psychiatric disability, next door to someone that they don't have a language in common with, next door to a person with one leg, next door to someone very old and perhaps deaf, next door to someone just out of jail does not a strong community make. Add angry Aboriginal families with memories of (and sometimes day-to-day experience of) discrimination and ill-treatment into the mix, and it's no wonder there's a problem. In many cases, neighbours are fearful of one another, and many, especially the old, will not venture out after dark.

It is in this environment that the *"starved"* and *"skinny"* community based agencies work. They do not have magic wands. Nor do they have funding or time to enable them to undertake many activities outside of the activities mandated for service delivery and written into funding agreements. Most of these activities have little to do with changing the status quo in the area. They are about the provision of services, such as Home Modification and Maintenance or Community Transport, to individuals who need them.

What the community based organisations do have, however, is strong linkages with each other, strong information flows to and from the community, a pretty clear view of what's occurring locally, the ability to tailor what they do to the particular people they need to serve and a high level of commitment to their work. What they also have is a great sense of frustration at the fact that the

only time government seems to take an interest in the area is when there is trouble, as though the area's problems are not obvious at other times.

When government does take an interest in the community based organisations, it is with the apparent assumption that there is something wrong with them. It looks at their governance, their referral practices and their accountability, and seeks to improve these. It is as though government's own inadequate funding or other potential support for those organisations is irrelevant, when in many cases the funding is at the level of what most might consider a 'pilot' level. This is the case in an environment where costs such as rent, workers' compensation insurance, public liability insurance and professional indemnity insurance have all seen hefty price increases. These factors are also a distraction from service delivery because of the need to 'shop around' for these insurances in an unstable market and the need for these matters to go onto the organisations' meeting agendas.

It would be worthwhile looking in detail at the funding levels of community based organisations to see which of them might, with a small increase in funding, be able to double their activity level. The current funding somehow covers the cost of the existence of the organisation and allows some service delivery. Any additional funding could almost all go into service delivery.

Strategies under the current New South Wales Government “Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project”, and the effectiveness in meeting the needs of local indigenous and other members of the community

At the beginning of the Redfern/Waterloo Partnership Project (RWPP) nearly three years ago, its officers attended a meeting of the South Sydney Interagency and gave some information about the RED (Redfern, Eveleigh, Darlington) Strategy and a forthcoming Review of human services in the area. We were told that the RWPP was a three year project that would involve extensive consultation with us, and that partnerships with community agencies would be built.

The Review of human services is now nearly completed, and the RWPP now says that the community has been widely consulted in regard to both the Review and the RED Strategy. These claims need to be taken with a pinch, or perhaps a truckload, of salt.

Though the RWPP has been on the ground for nearly three years, and announced the Review of human services at the outset, the RWPP waited until just a few months ago to engage consultants from Canberra, Morgan Disney and Associates, to conduct the Review. This has meant that the process has been rushed, and has not included a needs analysis of the area. The needs analysis should have been the starting point, conducted before attempting to map service delivery and certainly before making recommendations about changing it.

The area's needs, and the pattern of service delivery in the area, are both highly complex and should have had time and resources devoted to the proper study of them. It is telling that after nearly three years on the ground, the RWPP was unable to supply Morgan Disney with even a list of the services and their contact details.

In regard to the RED Strategy, it was first described as being about streetscapes and the public domain around Redfern Station, The Block and Redfern Street. On June 11th last year, nearly two years after the RED Strategy started work and with no further word about any alterations in regard to what the RED Strategy was about, the RWPP held a poorly publicised ‘consultation’ in a little park near the Block and again that evening at Redfern Town Hall about the RED Strategy.

The poorly distributed leaflets gave no indication of the scale of the change to what the RED Strategy was about. The time chosen for the evening consultation coincided with a televised major ‘State of Origin’ rugby match. What was discovered at these consultations was that the Strategy had grown from being about “streetscapes and the public domain around Redfern Station, The Block and Redfern Street” in both geographic area and scope. It was now about the potential re-development of all public land, including all public housing, in an area stretching from South Dowling Street to King Street in Newtown and down to McEvoy Street. That is all of Redfern and Waterloo and more, and places a question mark over the future tenancy of thousands of public tenants.

The consultations were not run as a group of people being informed by the RWPP at the same time. They were more like exhibitions, with people being invited to turn up at any time during certain hours of that day. Those periods ran for about two hours, with RWPP and DIPNR and Cox Richardson (consultants) staff having chats with people. This meant that people did not have the benefit of hearing answers to questions raised by others.

On one of the information boards at the consultation/exhibition held on June 11th 2003 was the following information. Reading the last dot point under ‘existing’ in conjunction with the last dot point under ‘potential’, it can easily be seen why people can be very concerned about this sudden transformation of the RED Strategy.

Target Area

EXISTING

- RED is at the heart of the emerging sydney economic crescent which stretches from Macquarie University to Sydney Airport and is focussed on the orbital and the metropolitan rail networks
- The RED area is generally located between the Eastern Distributor, cleveland street, sydney university & the green square area
- The area is strategically located 4km from circular quay, 2km from the southern CBD & 1km from broadway
- The study area represents 340ha and is defined by cleveland street to the north, eastern distributor to the east, o'djordan ave, bourke st, botany rd, mcevoy st, fountain street, henderson rd & the railway pde to the south and Newtown to the west
- The area is characterised by inner city terrace housing, multi-unit housing and industrial structures such as factories and warehouses
- The original street grid pattern is generally still intact, however, the area suffers from regional traffic accessing the CBD from the airport and industrial areas to the south
- The largest land holdings are the former eveleigh rail yards, *the department of housing estates* (our emphasis) and the sydney universities darlington campus

POTENTIAL

- the potential future of RED is influenced by the proximity to the Sydney CBD, three of the Sydney's leading universities and its accessibilty to the sydney region via redfern station and the orbital, less than 2km to the east
- the extensive government land holdings allows extensive redevelopment opportunities"

No material was made available to attendees to take with them to ponder later or to share with their neighbours. Feedback forms were provided on which people could tick boxes to answer nine questions, some of which were framed in such a way that they shaped the answers. Examples are:

- Should we create a distinctive Town Centre around Redfern Street, Regent Street and the Railway Station?
- How important is it to you to maintain a diverse social mix with the RED area by providing a variety of public housing, affordable housing and private housing options?

When the Premier announced the RWPP, he referred to what was later called the RED Strategy. He said that he hoped it would bring about “a better social mix” in the area, and this is part of what the RWPP has used as justification for the Strategy. However, there has been no foreshadowing of what sort of social mix is sought, and no examples given of where attempts to change social mix have had a positive outcome.

Development projects in this inner city area arising out of the RED Strategy would potentially be worth billions of dollars. In the absence of any specific plan for re-development being presented, there is concern that the supposed positive social outcome of improving social mix will not be the real driver of development. There is concern that it will be the dollars that drive development, to the potential detriment of existing residents/tenants.

This is especially so given that the likely route for re-development would be public/private partnerships with developers. There have been a couple of examples of where the NSW Department of Housing have tried to engage in public/private partnerships to re-develop public housing in the inner city of Sydney. One is at Erskineville, where community opposition stopped the process, and another is closer by within Redfern, on Elizabeth Street near the Redfern Oval, which is still a current plan.

At these two sites, the NSW Department of Housing has selected pieces of public housing that are low-density, low rise buildings. These are the sections with most appeal to developers and the Department as sites for re-development, because to re-develop high rise buildings would entail re-housing too many public tenants without freeing up much land for the re-development. This is despite the fact that people generally consider their quality of life to be better in the low density, low-rise parts of the estate, and find the high rises more alienating.

Part of the Department's logic can be seen in Elton Consulting's 'Q&A' section on their website in relation to the now dead proposal to re-develop the Erskineville Estate:

Why is the Department considering the sale of land which has low-density housing which people like, rather than the unpopular high-rise housing nearby?

Redevelopment of low-density housing will require a small amount of resettlement, which will be within the resources of the Department. Redevelopment of a high-rise block would involve many people and the Department would find it very difficult to provide rehousing in the area.

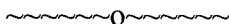
Obviously, Elton's did not say that the low density parts are also more attractive to would-be developers.

So the high rises, with all their attendant problems, are likely to be left alone while the low rise, low-density areas are re-developed into some sort of mix of public and private housing, with both being of higher density than the public housing it replaced.

The Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project has missed an opportunity to constructively engage with the community and with community organisations in the area to tap into their local expertise and their goodwill. By its secrecy (its officers claim that they are not allowed to talk to the press, and they withhold information from the public and from organisations in the area) and its shallow consultations, it has brought disrespect upon itself.

This organisation had hoped that with some \$7.2 million to spend over three years, the RWPP might have helped effect real change for the better. What we find is that it seeks to squeeze more service out of a pitifully stretched community sector through 're-shaping' service delivery while explicitly stating that there will be no extra funding or resources, and a 'plan' for re-development of the area that seems to consist of nothing more than making public tenants' homes available for plans that parts of the private sector might come up with.

It is frustrating that there is not more time to make this submission. There is more that could be said. However, it can be recommended that the Standing Committee come to our area and meet with the Interagency and hear the above concerns echoed and fleshed out by many of the struggling and disillusioned organisations in Redfern and Waterloo.



Article from our organisation's journal, 'Inner Voice', on the RED Strategy and the consultations surrounding it

Early last year (2002), rumour had it that something big was in the air for Redfern and Waterloo. Riots following an incident in which a local boy was injured while attempting to run from police had attracted a lot of media attention. It seemed that a critical mass of 'bad news stories' sufficient to get action from government had been reached.

On Thursday, 21 March 2002, I went in to the NSW Parliament to hear the Premier, Bob Carr, make his announcement about what was to be done.

The Premier announced what later became known as the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project (RWPP), which answers to the Premier's Department of the NSW Government. He said "The Government will invest \$7 million over three years in a comprehensive package to reduce crime and improve public amenity."

He went on to say "Local residents want better services, as well as jobs and training. To this end, the Government will spearhead the development of a master plan covering Redfern, Eveleigh and Darlington. It will revitalise local shopping strips, improve short-term and long-term employment opportunities, encourage a better social mix, enhance transport options and provide for the better location and distribution of human services."

The "masterplan covering Redfern, Eveleigh and Darlington" was quickly dubbed "The RED Strategy", and staff were seconded from Planning NSW to the RWPP to develop it. It would affect

the areas of Redfern, Eveleigh and Darlington around Redfern Station and 'The Block', owned by the Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC).

I was particularly struck by the phrase "encourage a better social mix" in the Premier's speech, because it seemed to me that you can only change the social mix of any area by replacing some or all of the people who live there, or by bringing in extra people of a different social status to dilute the present population. I wondered how that would be brought about. A year and three months later, I think I found out.

On June 11, 2003, an information session was held by the RWPP on the RED Strategy. I learned there that the RED Strategy area had expanded from the area around Redfern Station and 'The Block' to encompass the whole of Redfern and Waterloo. And, instead of being just about streetscapes and the public domain, it was now about re-development, with a projected increase in population of 10,000, or 50%.

There was a map of Redfern and Waterloo showing all of the government owned land, including all of the public housing, marked in yellow. It was accompanied by text saying, "The extensive government land holdings allows extensive redevelopment opportunities". Elsewhere, the land was described as being "easily developable".

There are over 4,300 units of public housing in Redfern and Waterloo that are home to about 9,000 thousand people. According to Professor Tony Vinson's study of social disadvantage, *'Unequal in Life'*, those in Waterloo are the most disadvantaged people in greater Sydney. Of the dwellings in Waterloo, 83% are public housing, with approximately 6000 residents living on the Waterloo Housing Estate. 35% of the Sydney Metropolitan allotment of public housing is in Waterloo. The local State MP, Clover Moore, has said that these tenants "struggle to live with low incomes, drug and alcohol addiction, gambling problems, mental illness, high debt levels and limited employment. These families need the Government's support and help."

Senior officers of the NSW Department of Housing have reassured tenants that there is no plan to reduce public housing in the area, but tenants are still concerned. They are well aware of a current plan to re-develop one part of the Redfern estate, near the Redfern Oval, as a 'public-private partnership'. In that case, the plan is for a developer to demolish two blocks of public housing, and then rebuild one block as public housing and the other as private dwellings.

The Department is keen to pursue this kind of arrangement to fund improvements to dwellings because of the breakdown of the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement. Almost no new money is now flowing from the Commonwealth for public housing. The Department is strapped for cash and having trouble paying for maintenance of existing dwellings, let alone building new ones. Tenants on the two affected blocks have been told that they can move into nice new flats on the same site once the work is done. Other people have been told that while there will be a reduction in public housing units, there will actually be more public housing tenants there because the new flats will have two or three bedrooms each. The statements are not consistent because many of the existing units are bedsits or single bedroom units. It's hardly likely that the Department is intending to place single people in nice new flats that contain two or three bedrooms, and tenants know it.

It's difficult to know what the future holds. This is the beginning of what will be a long process, and there is very little that is definite in the RED Strategy. We do know that it is at least considering the re-development of part or all of the public land, including the public housing estates, in Redfern and Waterloo. We know that it envisages an extra 10,000 people moving in. Some of those extra people will no doubt end up housed on what is now surplus railway land, but it seems likely that some proportion of them will end up living on re-developed public housing land, built as a series of public/private partnerships, just like the plan for the blocks near Redfern Oval.

If this is what occurs, it will mean that the Premier's desire for a "better social mix" will be brought about mostly by diluting the existing population by settling people on higher incomes among them, block by block. It also seems likely that there will be some reduction in public housing, despite reassurances to the contrary, when it's time for detailed negotiations with developers.

So, what's the case for and against a strategy of changing social mix to bring about improvements in an area? Firstly, we need to work out whether we're talking about improving an area or improving the quality of life of the people living there. If the perception is that the disadvantaged population is the area's problem, then the area could be 'improved' by moving the population away and replacing them with people who are more upwardly mobile. However, that doesn't necessarily improve the quality of life of the people who are moved and dispersed. If it's the present population's quality of life that we're trying to improve by moving new people in to 'dilute' them, then we should think of how that would work.

It's an appealing enough notion. We might think that the new people would improve quality of life for the original residents through three mechanisms. One is that people who are more middle class provide role models of other ways in which it's possible to live, so that kids don't only see examples of unemployment, alcoholism, drug addiction and petty crime around them as they grow up. The new people might bring more money to the area and therefore more work opportunities. The more affluent new people might also be more demanding about service provision and thereby bring about improvements for everyone. But rather than assuming that a 'better social mix' will do the trick, we'd better look for some evidence or precedent rather than relying entirely on this kind of 'gut feeling'.

There's not a lot of hard evidence either way, but *'Housing Tenure, Social Mix and Creating Inclusive Communities'*, a paper by Kathy Arthurson of the University of South Australia, sheds a little light on some alarming potential outcomes.

Firstly, she says that because home owners tend to be more mobile, they carry out their activities away from the area in which they live. This means that they are not really integrated into the community, and the result is actually greater isolation for the remaining public tenants than if their neighbours had continued to be other public tenants. She also says "The research findings also question whether placing residents with different income levels in the same neighbourhood raises awareness of class differences, thereby creating tensions, rather than the anticipated social integration."

Ms. Arthurson makes an interesting point about what she perceives as governments shifting responsibility for the well being of an area away from itself and onto communities. "While varying social mix reflects efforts by government to create sustainable communities, it also represents a retreat from public policy as a way to alleviate problems of social inequality. Instead, community is portrayed as the locus of social change. Once the heterogeneous communities are created and the problems of public tenants are made less visible then responsibility is placed on communities through some anticipated but highly questionable normalising effects of middle-income role models."

It's also interesting to read that, according to Arthurson, "... there are ... some advantages in having high needs groups located together in certain regions. Many special government services are only available when numbers of recipients reach a certain threshold. Without a critical mass, services are unlikely to be set up or if already established maintained once the concentrations of disadvantaged residents are lowered through dispersal."

So much for the notion that new residents from a higher socio-economic background will attract a higher level of better services. Maybe it means that local shops will carry a greater range of boutique breads.

Probably most worrying was the effect that re-development of estates to bring about a “better social mix” might have on the availability of public housing stock altogether. Arthurson says, “At Inala in Queensland, for every three public housing sales in regeneration only one replacement can be purchased elsewhere. In South Australian projects the ratio is even greater with 3.5 sales only resulting in enough funding to purchase one new replacement public dwelling. Given the costs of replacement housing, regeneration projects that ... involve large reductions in public housing will result in considerably lower levels of public housing overall (2 460 to 760 and 1 390 to 500 respectively).”

Back in December 2002, Shelter NSW hosted a conference, *‘Social Mix in our Cities’*. Participants identified a number of concerns. The ‘Social inclusion and public housing estates workshop’ stated, “The group felt that to define the problems of estates as something to be addressed by encouraging social mix was fundamentally mistaken. The problems of the estates were related to issues like poverty, health, education, unemployment, transport, poor design, lack of maintenance etc. Addressing these problems directly was more likely to be effective than trying to restructure estates to encourage social mix.”

The workshop also concluded that “Given that the problems of dysfunctional estates were at the least exacerbated by reductions in government funding and ever-tighter targeting of public housing to people with high and complex levels of need, it was unfair to blame the people for the problems, or to seek to resolve the problems by forcing already underprivileged people to move yet again.” The Premier had said during his speech announcing the RWPP that “I acknowledge the willingness of local residents to take responsibility for problems and to work in partnership with the Government to generate practical solutions. The community will be involved in the implementation of this project at every step.”

If only that had been true, the RWPP might have engaged the community and gained its assistance. Instead, its actions have caused unease and suspicion.

As mentioned earlier, the RWPP’s RED Strategy was originally about streetscapes and the public domain around Redfern rail station and The Block, and we only learned at the information session on June 11th that it had expanded to cover all of Waterloo and Redfern, and was now about re-development. That expansion in geographic scope and purpose had occurred at least six months before June 11th, and no one was told, let alone ‘consulted’.

There were actually two information sessions on June 11th, one during daytime in a small park in Caroline Street, and the other in the evening at Redfern Town Hall. They were both poorly advertised, with leaflets distributed in a very haphazard way and not reaching most residents. Even the local member of the NSW Parliament, the independent Clover Moore, was not informed.

People who did get the leaflet were not exactly encouraged to attend because the leaflets gave little idea of the scope of what was being discussed. The evening session at the Redfern Town Hall clashed with the ‘State of Origin’ match being played that night. A second information session a few weeks later also clashed with a ‘State of Origin’ match.

These information sessions were not the standard form where people gather in a room and are taken through a proposal step by step, together. Instead, people were told to turn up “anytime between 12.00 and 2.00 pm”, and were then free to individually wander around a group of boards with various aspects of the RED Strategy displayed on them. Consultants would steer them around and talk about the proposals. This means that people did not have the benefit of hearing the questions that others might ask.

No material was given to attendees, so there was not the chance to show material to neighbours and friends, or to read and reflect on it later. People were asked to give feedback by filling in a double-sided piece of A4 paper that asked questions that almost supplied the answers.

Staff at the RWPP, including those working on the RED Strategy, say that they are forbidden to talk to the press. This does nothing to encourage awareness, let alone debate, about the Strategy. The RWPP will soon be conducting an audit of the social services in the area, with a view to identifying gaps in services and eliminating duplication. This fact makes a lot of the community-based services worried, since the NSW Government seems to prefer larger service providers like the charities. It also makes those community based services apprehensive about criticizing the RED Strategy or the insufficient consultation taking place around it.

No one is pretending that Waterloo and Redfern are free of problems and do not need attention from our NSW Government. There may be merit in the notion of tinkering with the local social mix, but we can't know that yet. What we do know is that the scale of re-development mooted by the RED Strategy adds up to about one and a half billion dollars. We have a government strapped for cash and unwilling to raise taxes.

As Kathy Arthurson says in her conclusion "implementing large scale changes to social mix rather than promoting social integration could easily become strategies to move tenants around and render them less visible and in need of some attention.

Clearly, continuing to pursue current directions in estate regeneration will obscure arguments about the importance, in lessening social disadvantage, of maintaining continued access to secure and low cost public housing. It seems more likely to lead to debates about communities as the locus of social change than positive actions by government to address causes of inequality. There is a danger that Australian Housing Authorities' social mix policies will be used as an excuse to dismantle the estates and support further untenable reductions in public housing numbers."

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End of Submission