

INQUIRY INTO ISSUES RELATING TO REDFERN/WATERLOO

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Date Received: 15/04/2004

Theme:

Summary

Submission #15

Issues relating to Redfern/Waterloo

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Submission

Submission #: 15
Pages: # Appendices:
Received: 15/04/2004 Acknowledged: 16/04/2004
Type: Web
Contact Type: Representative
Publication Status: Public Requested Status: Public
Subject: Submission to Issues relating to Redfern/Waterloo lodged by Kristina Keneally
Summary:
Generate in Word: Submission Cover Acknowledgement Letter

Attachments

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission into the Upper House Inquiry in to Issues Affecting Redfern and Waterloo.

This submission is divided into three sections.

- I. Background and Demographic Information
- II. The Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project
- III. Issues and Concerns Affecting the Heffron Electorate

A summary box follows each section and highlights its key points. Where appropriate, I have also supplied case studies for emphasis.

As the Member for Heffron, I have given primary focus in this submission to Waterloo, which is geographically located entirely within the seat of Heffron.

I would be pleased to discuss any issues arising from my submission with the Inquiry further if required.

SUBMISSION TO THE UPPER HOUSE INQUIRY INTO ISSUES RELATING TO REDFERN/WATERLOO

Kristina Keneally MP

Member for Heffron

Summary

This submission is divided into three sections.

- I. Background and Demographic Information
- II. The Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project
- III. Issues and Concerns Affecting the Heffron Electorate

A summary box follows each section and highlights its key points. Where appropriate, I have also supplied 'case studies' for emphasis.

As the Member for Heffron, I have given primary focus in this submission to Waterloo, which is geographically located entirely within the seat of Heffron.

Redfern is wholly located within the seat of Bligh.

In Section I, Background and Demographic Information, I use statistical and other data to support the argument that not only is Waterloo a disadvantaged community, but also that it is a pocket of high disadvantage surrounded by quite advantaged communities. Even the suburb of Redfern relies on more social advantage indicators than Waterloo.

In Section II, the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, I report the community's hopes and excitement about the Project, and also record some of their frustrations and concerns. I also recognise the many tangible outcomes the Project has produced, and examine some of the challenges the Project faces. Finally, I note the successes of similar community renewal programs.

In Section III, I particularly address two key issues for the Heffron electorate in relation to Waterloo – affordable housing and policing. In particular, I highlight the proactive, high visibility policing strategies put in place by the Redfern LAC. I also argue that a significant injection of affordable housing is a key strategy in preventing Waterloo from becoming a suburb of the haves and have-nots, and suggest that the community and the government need to engage in a debate about what constitutes affordable housing.

I. Background & Demographic Information

In March 2003 the residents of Heffron elected me as their representative to the New South Wales Parliament.

The suburb of Waterloo is entirely within the electorate of Heffron.

The boundary between Waterloo and Redfern is Phillip Street, which is also the boundary between the electorates of Heffron and Bligh.

As such, my submission addresses issues relating mainly to Waterloo, with some reference to Redfern.

Waterloo presents many challenges for a local member. In my first 12 months as the Member for Heffron, I have actively sought to hear the concerns of Waterloo residents through mobile offices (2 in the last 12 months in Waterloo), community surveys (2 in the last 12 months), and doorknocking.

In the 12 months that I have been the Member for Heffron, my office has had 420 direct interactions with constituents in Waterloo. The major reasons that these constituents contacted my office are:

- 62 responses to community surveys
- 100 requests for postal vote applications
- 73 requests for assistance with public housing
- 26 interactions relating to public transport
- 10 interactions regarding law enforcement

As the local member, I also serve on the Redfern Waterloo Community Council and attend the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project's Community Forums.

I also meet regularly with local agencies, including the Department of Housing, the Redfern Local Area Command, Alexandria Park Community School, Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, South Sydney City Council, and the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project.

General Information

Waterloo supports one of the highest concentrations of public housing in Sydney. One, two and three story walk-up flats replaced terrace housing in the 1960s, followed later that decade by high-rise flats. The largest complex of these is the Endeavour Estate, which comprises two thirty storey towers, Matavai and Turanga. In the 1970s, lower rise buildings, usually 6 storeys, were built.

Today there are more than two thousand units of public housing in Waterloo. These are mixed in style from high-rise, walk-ups and medium density housing.

A large proportion of tenants are older people from non-English speaking backgrounds, including Russian and Chinese.

Waterloo includes other significant landmarks, including Waterloo Town Hall (now a library), Waterloo Oval, and Mount Carmel Catholic Church.

Demographic Information – Waterloo

The following statistical data about Waterloo paints a stark picture of the social challenges facing the suburb.

- Population – 5,202
- Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander population – 403
- 41% of the population comes from a NESB Background
- 35% of families have children under 15 years
- 22.8% of families are single parent with a children under 15 years; compared to 10% for the rest of Sydney;
- 38% of the population stopped education at year 10 or below
- Approximately 67% of residential dwellings are public housing;
- 95% of those public housing residents receive income support from Government;
- 51% of households earn below \$399, compared to 20.7% of the rest of Sydney;
- The unemployment rate is 16.6%, almost triple that of the rest of Sydney;
- The total number of employed persons is 1,414.
- The types of employment in Waterloo – 37% management/professionals; 35% clerical/sales/social work; 8% tradespersons & related work; 8% labourers & related work; 8% production & transport work.¹

Community Adversity and Resilience Report

In March 2004 Professor Tony Vinson released a report examining the distribution of social disadvantage in New South Wales and Victoria.

The report measures the concentration of disadvantage according to postcode areas in each state.

To rank postcodes, Professor Vinson expressed the comparative disadvantage score of each postcode as a quintile score.

Professor Vinson sub-divided the range of scores for postcodes in each state into 20 equal parts. Thus, he designates the 5% of postcode areas that are most disadvantaged as 1st quintile, those occupying positions between 5 and 10% as 2nd quintile, and so on up to the last 5% (20th quintile).

¹ Data from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2001) National Census of Population and Housing and from Australian Bureau of Statistics (2002), *2001 Census Basic Community Profile, from 2001 Census Basics*, CD-ROM, ABS Catalogue Number 2045.1.30.001

That is, the lower the quintile number, the more disadvantaged the postcode area. A quintile ranking of 20 would be a highly advantaged area.

In the report, the 2017 postcode (Beaconsfield, Waterloo and Zetland) ranked a quintile number of 1, that is, in the 5% of NSW postcodes that is most disadvantaged.

The 2016 postcode (Redfern) ranked in the 8th quintile, which is in the range between 35 – 40% on disadvantage rankings.

It is also worth noting the quintile rankings of the other postcodes adjacent to Waterloo:

- 2018 (Rosebery/Eastlakes) – 15
- 2015 (Alexandria) – 16
- 2043 (Erskineville/Eveleigh) – 17
- 2033 (Kensington) – 18
- 2021 (Edgecliff, Moore Park, Paddington, Victoria Barracks) – 19

Professor Vinson also attempts to identify the characteristics of local communities faced with severe social disadvantage that could be promoted to build greater social cohesion rather than social exclusion.

To do so, he ranks postcodes by 'disadvantage indicators' on a scale of Disadvantaged, Degree of Disadvantage, Middle Range, Degree of Advantage, and Advantaged.

The table below notes the disadvantage indicator rankings Professor Vinson's report assigns to Waterloo and Redfern.

	<i>Waterloo (2017)</i>	<i>Redfern (2016)</i>
<i>Low Birth Weight</i>	Disadvantaged	Degree of Disadvantage
<i>Court Convictions</i>	Disadvantaged	Degree of Disadvantage
<i>Disability and Sickness</i>	Disadvantaged	Degree of Disadvantage
<i>Imprisonment</i>	Disadvantaged	Degree of Disadvantage
<i>Low Income Families</i>	Disadvantaged	Degree of Advantage
<i>Long Term Unemployment</i>	Disadvantaged	Middle Range
<i>Unemployment 2001 Census</i>	Disadvantaged	Middle Range
<i>Mortality Ratio</i>	Disadvantaged	Degree of Disadvantage
<i>Low Skilled Workers</i>	Degree of Disadvantage	Degree of Advantage
<i>Early School Leaving</i>	Middle Range	Degree of Advantage
<i>Year 12 Incompletion</i>	Middle Range	Degree of Advantage
<i>Childhood Accidents</i>	Middle Range	Middle Range

Waterloo and Redfern are often linked together in the public's mind as two communities with the same problems. This data shows that this is not entirely accurate, as Waterloo suffers more so than Redfern on several key social disadvantage indicators.

Key Points – Background and Demographic Information

The suburb of Waterloo suffers disadvantage in many key indicators, and indeed is one of the most disadvantaged areas in New South Wales.

The contrast between Waterloo and the suburbs that border it shows that Waterloo is a ‘pocket’ of disadvantage surrounded by healthy, advantaged communities.

Contrasting statistical data on Redfern and Waterloo shows that there are important differences. Waterloo lags behind Redfern when it comes to those factors that create advantage and opportunity.

II. The Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project

In March 2002 Premier Bob Carr announced the comprehensive package of initiatives that make up the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project.

The Project is meant to begin to address the complex range of serious long-term and entrenched issues being faced by the Redfern and Waterloo communities via a whole-of-government, whole-of-community approach. State government agencies, the Federal Government, South Sydney City Council and Aboriginal organisations worked together to develop the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project.

The Project acknowledges that long-term sustainable solutions can be achieved only by developing strategies that connect employment, human services, community safety, infrastructure, the built environment and enterprise development.

The Redfern-Waterloo partnership project has several programs well under way, including:

- The Redfern Waterloo Street Team;
- A new Family Intervention and Support Service run by Barnardos;
- A sports development program operating at the Alexandria Park Community School.

The Project is also developing a *crime prevention plan*, a *public domain plan*, and a master plan covering Redfern, Eveleigh and Darlington, as well as Waterloo, known as the *RED Strategy*. I am aware that part of that master plan includes working with the Aboriginal Housing Company on redevelopment of the area known as the Block in Redfern.

The Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project has also commissioned a *comprehensive audit of all human services* in the area as a way to better meet the needs of the local communities.

The local communities are partners in the Project through the *Community Forum*, where members of the public can receive reports and ask questions of government representatives about progress with the initiatives of the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project.

The local communities also participate through the *Community Council*, which consists of community and business members as well as elected representatives, by advising the Government and assisting the project to progress issues and projects arising from the Community Forums.

Further, local residents are members of the many groups working on specific aspects of the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, including the *taskforces on Youth, Children and Families, Drug & Alcohol, and Community Safety*.

As the elected representative for the Waterloo area, I sit on the Community Council and attend the Community Forums.

I augment this community consultation through mobile offices that I run regularly in Waterloo, community surveys and regular newsletters.

From my consultation, I know that the residents of Waterloo want a more vibrant, healthy community. They want a better social mix. The Government, through a variety of initiatives in the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, is committed to helping them achieve that goal.

My consultation also indicates that community members are excited, hopeful, frustrated and at times confused by the Partnership Projects activities, intentions and progress.

I note a general happiness that such a whole-of-government, partnership approach is underway, and that specific attention is being targeted to the Redfern and Waterloo areas. I hear residents expressing *satisfaction* such as:

- The Project is the best thing that any government has tried to do in Redfern and Waterloo.
- The Government, through the Project, has recognised that Redfern and Waterloo are not sustainable as is, and are taking proactive steps.
- The Project offers hope.

I have also heard *dissatisfaction* around several key points:

- That the Project has not always communicated effectively or efficiently with the local community.
- That the Project has not produced tangible results quickly enough, or has not delivered on promises made.
- That the Project is replicating work done previously, such as the mapping of human services.
- That the Project is really just a front to do away with public housing in the area, and push through gentrification.

Regarding these points, I am aware that the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project has had some difficulties with *distributing information* about community meetings in Redfern in relation to the RED Strategy. I also know that the Project has acknowledged these early problems and has taken steps to ensure that information is distributed accurately and in a timely manner.

I also know the Project has organised buses, interpreters, and consultation sessions at various times of the day in order to get feedback from over 1000 people in the Redfern Waterloo area in relation to the RED Strategy.

Regarding the issue of *producing results*, I understand the community's frustration. The community has many hopes riding on the Project, and fears that the Project may just become another bureaucratic, government service. The work of community revitalisation and partnership the Project is undertaking is complex, and in some cases – such as built environment and planning – results may not be evident for several years.

However, it is worth noting that many tangible results have taken place, including:

- The Intensive Family Support Service is up and running with Banardos
- Alexandria Park Community School is open and enrolment in public education in South Sydney has increased by over 100 students from last year.
- The Street Team (after hours youth support) has been recruited and is operating.
- The Community Safety Plan is ready for public comment and Council approval.
- The Community Council meets regularly and Community Forums are regularly held.
- The RED Strategy has conducted a wide public consultation and formulated 7 key principles to guide development.
- The Redfern Community Centre on the Block has opened.
- The Pathways to Prevention Program is operating in Alexandria Park Community School, Our Lady of Mount Carmel School Waterloo, and Darlington Public School.
- The Redfern Waterloo Anti-Drug Strategy, focusing on Redfern Station, has resulted in a decline of drug-related crime.
- The Mobile Needle and Syringe Van, operated by Central Area Health Service, has been moved away from residential areas near the Block at the request of local residents.
- The Redfern Police Youth Camps have taken two trips with 20 local children and the police are developing mentor relationships with the kids.
- An OC (Opportunity Classes) stream for Gifted and Talented students has started at Alexandria Park Community School.
- The Community School Sports Development Program, offering cricket, rowing, Little Athletics, tennis, soccer, gymnastics and self-defence classes, is up and running at Alexandria Park School.

Regarding the concern that the Project is *repeating work done previously on mapping human services*, I understand the concerns, particularly from services in the area, that this is another bureaucratic exercise eating up funds that might better be used on service delivery.

Case Study – Youth Service in Waterloo

A youth service in Waterloo reported to me their concerns about the time and money being spent on the audit of human services. This service has been working in the area for 10 years, and is frustrated at seeing resources go to bureaucratic exercises. They report cynicism in their young clients, and frustration that more tangible resources for services have not yet been delivered.

However, they also report hope that the audit will identify those needs that are not being met, such as weekend operating hours for youth drop-in services, and resource services appropriately. They also hope the audit will recognise that young people in Waterloo have different needs than those in Redfern, and that a one size fits all approach will not work for young people in these communities.

Whilst it is the case that the Review will provide a map of human services in Redfern and Waterloo, the aim is that the review will be outcomes driven and will determine if services are delivered to the community in an effective, timely and cost efficient manner.

I also understand that for the first time the Review will consider all government and non-government services.

The Review will also consider the co-location of complementary services, the possible creation of a back-office for non-Government services, and the establishment of a one-stop shop for Aboriginal clients.

Finally, regarding the concern that the Project is an attempt to *eliminate public housing* in the Redfern and Waterloo areas, the Government has given a clear guarantee that there will be no reduction in either the number of public housing units or public housing tenants. I address this issue more fully below in Part 4 – Issues and Concerns Affecting the Heffron Electorate.

From my meetings with the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project, I am aware that the project faces some *challenges*, including:

- Co-ordinating and networking the activities of a wide range of government departments and agencies to provide a true ‘whole of government’ approach. The Project’s focus on connecting employment, human services, community safety, infrastructure, the built environment and enterprise development means that the Project has to interact with agencies as diverse as the RTA, DIPNR, DOCS, Central Area Health, Police, Attorney-General’s Department, Transport and Education. *The Project meets this challenge by residing in a central location, the Premier’s Department, which gives it flexibility, the ability to network across this range of activities, and the clout to motivate agencies when required.*
- However, I understand that the Project has had particular difficulty co-ordinating agencies that work with children and youth, such as education, police, and community services. *The Project is trying to meet this challenge by developing a Case Coordination Framework to enable agencies to more effectively manage ‘high risk’ children and young people living in Redfern and Waterloo.*

Generally these children have a history of low priority reporting to Department of Community Services (DoCS). Over time, many of these children have shown a significant escalation of behaviours resulting from complex social issues. Whilst many individual government agencies have attempted to respond to issues in isolation from other agencies, the complex nature of the issues means that no one agency alone can effectively respond. The inability of agencies to exchange information has been a significant contributor to the incapacity to adequately manage these children’s cases. I understand from the Project that often these behaviours reach such a level of crisis that the Project has been called upon to intervene.

I know from my consultations with Education, Police and Housing that, generally, the children and young people are well known to the range of services and agencies in Redfern and Waterloo. Often they and their families have had a long history with many, if not all, of the major agencies in the area, yet given the complexity of the issues involved with these families, no single agency has the capacity, expertise or resources to be able to address their needs.

However, the effective management of these cases hinges on the capacity to be able to exchange of information across all relevant government and non-government agencies.

The Case Coordination Framework is intended to share information to result in a more coordinated and better-tailored response. This will not only benefit the children and their families but also has clear benefits for the community in terms of reduced anti-social and criminal activity, and reduced costs associated with long term institutional responses (eg. Police, Corrections).

The Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project advises me that the model will have the capacity to target 15 - 20 young people and children at any one time who are known to services in Redfern and Waterloo to be 'at risk'. The family circumstances of these children and young people are such, that it would be difficult or impossible to obtain informed consent to share information between agencies.

I understand from the Project that the Case Coordination Framework would only operate if an exemption under Section 41 of the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1988* applied. The information exchanged under the Case Coordination Framework would include personal and identifying information used to assist case coordination and crisis management.

Of course, in addressing care and protection issues that arise from unlawful acts, a balance will be required between protecting the privacy of individuals and sharing information that will contribute to effective child protection and case management.

I also understand that the Project is now seeking a direction from the Privacy Commissioner to give the agencies participating in the Redfern Waterloo Case Coordination Framework the authority for full exchange of information without breaching the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)*.

The good news about community renewal projects like Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project is that the evidence shows they work. Professor Vinson's report *Community Adversity and Resilience* praises the Hunter Community Renewal Scheme, a similar whole-of-government partnership approach. In 1999, Professor Vinson ranked the suburb of Windale as the most socially disadvantaged community in New South Wales. In response, the Government developed a Community Renewal Strategy led by the Premier's Department and involving various State Government Departments in the Hunter Region and the local community. The Premier's Department invested \$660,000 in the area over three years and appointed a full-time co-ordinator to initiate

Windale's renewal. He worked closely with residents, local government and welfare groups.

The result for Windale is notable. Over the three-year implementation period for the renewal scheme, significant achievements were made. Professor Vinson documents these in his report.

However, it is worth noting here that statistics relating to children predict hope for Windale. For child abuse, Windale was in the worst 1 per cent of postcodes in 1999 and is now in the best 25 per cent; for low-birth weight babies it has moved from worst 3 per cent of postcodes to best 25 per cent.

Key Points – The Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project

- The Project is meant to begin to address the complex range of serious long-term and entrenched issues being faced by the Redfern and Waterloo communities via a whole-of-government, whole-of-community approach.
- The Project acknowledges that long-term sustainable solutions can be achieved only by developing strategies that connect employment, human services, community safety, infrastructure, the built environment and enterprise development.
- The local communities are partners in the Project through the *Community Forum*, the *Community Council*, and *taskforces on Youth, Children and Families, Drug & Alcohol, and Community Safety*.
- The community is positive about the Partnership Project.
- The community and the Project working together have already achieved many tangible outcomes.
- The community has expressed some concerns about the Project, particularly about its aims and methods, and the Project is seeking to address these issues.
- The Project's central location in the Premier's Department is essential to providing a 'whole of government' approach.
- The Project does experience some difficulties in relation to agency co-ordination of young people at risk. A Case Coordination Framework to deal with privacy issues would help meet these challenges.
- Professor Vinson's report indicates that community renewal projects like the Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project work.

III. Issues and Concerns Affecting the Heffron Electorate

Community Safety/Policing Strategies

As the local member, I meet regularly with the Redfern Local Area Command. The officers at Redfern respond quickly and effectively when I represent constituent concerns to the LAC.

Case Study – Constituent Concerns about Public Safety

On 20 September 2003 I held a Mobile Office on the corner of Raglan and Elizabeth Streets, Waterloo. A husband and wife who lived in Waterloo came to see me about their concerns that local police did not respond adequately to a recent incident involving Aboriginal young men and a public brawl. They also asked about community policing strategies. On 30 September I wrote to Superintendent Dennis Smith of the Redfern Local Area Command about these constituents' concerns.

Within a week, Superintendent Smith had one of his officers contact the constituents directly to discuss the particular incident. The officer explained to the constituents that plain-clothes police had attended the event in question. The officer also answered their questions about community policing strategies and gave them his name and a direct line to ring in the future if they had concerns or questions about safety and law enforcement matters.

The LAC also keeps me briefed on crime statistics and police activities.

I am advised by the LAC that from the period April 2002 to October 2003 crime statistics halved from 800 incidents to 400.

The decline has been across the board – assaults break & enter, robbery, stealing, and stolen vehicle statistics are all decreasing.

In addition, the Redfern LAC has taken a proactive approach to preventing crime, particularly from preventing young people from becoming involved in criminal activity.

The LAC is actively involved in mentoring young people on the fringe of criminal activities in the Redfern and Waterloo areas. They undertake this mentoring by building one-on-one relationships via day trips, regular conversations, and taking approximately 20 young people on quarterly camps. They also regularly take young people from the area to Nippers programs on Saturdays, ride school buses in the mornings and go to the local schools to get to know the young people in the area.

Further, the LAC employs 2 full time youth liaison officers.

In my experience, the Redfern Local Area Command has exhibited a commitment to high visibility policing. Under Superintendent Dennis Smith's leadership, the

Redfern LAC will continue a focus on policing robberies, steal from persons, break & enters and stolen vehicles. Additional police will be maintained on foot in and around Redfern and Waterloo. The LAC takes the commitment to local solutions to local crime problems seriously, and does not hesitate to doorknock local residents, respond quickly to local concerns, and get involved with the local community.

Affordable Housing

The average house price in Waterloo for the last 12 months, according to the Fairfax on-line property guide, is \$558,408. The average unit price is \$426,411.

These prices make it nearly impossible families in Waterloo (51% of whom are living on \$399 or less a week) to purchase a home in their local area.

Given these prices, and the fact that two-thirds of residential dwellings in Waterloo are public housing, it is conceivable that Waterloo could evolve into a suburb starkly divided between the haves and the have-nots.

The Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project intervenes in this evolution, to work instead towards a healthy socio-economic mix.

The RED Strategy addresses urban renewal, economic revitalisation and improvements in urban amenity for the Redfern, Eveleigh, Darlington, and Waterloo precincts.

Principles to guide this redevelopment have been approved following a series of public consultations involving up to 1000 community members via public meetings, 16 precinct meetings with public housing tenants, focus groups, and consultation with railway users, young people, and the arts community.

These principles include:

- Facilitating a sustainable, balanced and diverse social mix in residential precincts;
- Retaining Government owned sites to meet the future need for community infrastructure;
- Facilitate a diverse, sustainable social and residential mix, including affordable housing;
- Maintain public housing

The NSW Government has guaranteed there will be no reduction in the number of public housing units or in the number of public housing residents.

However, the *ratio* of public to private housing will change. I see this as a positive step. The development of more private accommodation, at a wider variety of styles and costs, will allow for a more diverse social mix and help avoid the creation of distinct lines between advantage and disadvantage.

The Government has indicated that it is strongly committed to an affordable housing component in the RED strategy.

However, I *believe there are two issues around affordable housing* that the community and the Government need to discuss.

One issue is how much affordable housing is needed. In nearby Green Square, the Masterplan that has been on public exhibition includes an affordable housing component of 3%.

As a result, I am quite confident 3% is achievable for the RED strategy, but I don't think it is enough.

I recommend – at a minimum – a doubling of the Green Square amount, and suggest that if the Government is serious about developing a diverse social mix that it is more appropriate to deliver an affordable housing component of 10%.

The second issue is to adequately explore the question of what it means to provide affordable housing.

Affordable housing means many things, including:

- low priced home purchases available to low and middle-income families
- changes to building design and regulation to allow the development of less costly homes
- a land bank that Council or developers could develop for public housing
- subsidised rent or rent control
- private housing vouchers

The discussion that we have not yet had in Redfern and Waterloo is what kind of affordable housing is desirable.

My preference is for development of homes and units that are inexpensive enough for low and middle-income families to purchase and maintain without significant government subsidy.

I would like to see the affordable housing strategy in Redfern and Waterloo strive for a non-subsidized situation where many different sorts of housing form a 'housing ladder.' Whilst the lower rungs of this ladder might be modest indeed, they would provide the opportunity for low-income persons to start climbing in the property market.

Case Study -- Professor Howard Husock of the John F Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University writes that the unsubsidised housing market plays a "crucial role in weaving a healthy social fabric and inspiring individuals to advance."

Professor Husock argues that a sensible housing policy would purge housing and building codes of unnecessary barriers to construction that drive up costs, such as using plastic pipes instead of more expensive copper ones, or excessive requirements for electrical outlets. He cites the City Homes development in Baltimore, Maryland, where a developer and state and local government have worked together to 'minimally rehab' older buildings. As a result, no rent subsidies are required, and City Homes has created blocks of units inhabited by nurses, city sanitation workers, etc to create healthy, safe communities.¹

Husock, Howard. America's Trillion Dollar Housing Mistake: The Failure of American Housing Policy. Ivan R. Dee: Chicago, 2003, p 23, 28.

The Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project has not yet engaged the community or the Government on what constitutes affordable housing. I believe it is a debate we need to have as part of the revitalisation of Redfern and Waterloo.

Key Points – Issues Affecting the Heffron Electorate

Affordable housing strategies are essential to ensure that Waterloo does not become a suburb of the haves and the have-nots.

The community has yet to have a debate on what are appropriate affordable housing strategies

The Redfern Local Area Command has a demonstrated commitment to high visibility and proactive policing, resulting in declining crime statistics.

In particular, the Redfern LAC has developed extraordinary contacts and mentoring with local youth.