

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS BEFORE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL ISSUES

INQUIRY INTO ISSUES RELATING TO REDFERN AND
WATERLOO

At Sydney on Friday 22 October 2004

The Committee met at 11.35 a.m.

PRESENT

The Hon. J. C. Burnswoods (Chair)

The Hon. Dr A. Chesterfield-Evans
The Hon. K. F. Griffin
The Hon. R. M. Parker
The Hon. G. S. Pearce
The Hon. I. W. West

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CHAIR: I declare this hearing open. I acknowledge that we are meeting on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation would. I thank you both very much for coming and for your submission.

PETER MERVYN LAYBUTT, Chair, Metropolitan Policy Sub Committee, Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division), Post Office Box 879, Broadway, and

ELIZABETH ANNE RICE, Member, Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division), 5 Harden Road, Artarmon, sworn and examined:

CHAIR: In what capacity are you appearing before the Committee?

Mr LAYBUTT: I am a town planner. I am here today on behalf of the Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division), in particular on behalf of the Metropolitan Policy Sub Committee of that division.

Ms RICE: I also am appearing on behalf of PIA (NSW Division), particularly the Metropolitan Policy Sub Committee, and I also appear in a private capacity.

CHAIR: You have both received the questions that we thought would give us a framework for today?

Ms RICE: Yes.

CHAIR: As far as possible, we will stick to them, although Committee members always like to add their own questions and answers lead to other questions. Did either of you want to make any type of opening statement?

Mr LAYBUTT: First, I thank the Committee for giving us this opportunity to speak on this issue, which the Planning Institute certainly believes is of particular relevance to Sydney as a whole and not just to the local Redfern area. We will come to the reasons why we believe that this particular inquiry has perhaps a unique opportunity to make a difference in this area and through that to really demonstrate practical Reconciliation on a broader framework, not only with the local indigenous community but also with other disadvantaged people who are resident in the Redfern-Waterloo area.

CHAIR: You may need to speak up a little bit. The microphone does not amplify. Do you have any other comments to make to start with? Our first question gives both of you a fairly open opportunity because we want you to tell us about the role of the Planning Institute and the particular subcommittee that you are appearing on behalf of. Would you give us just a little bit of information about that?

Mr LAYBUTT: I might respond on the question and then I will perhaps hand over to Elizabeth shortly. As I have indicated to you, the planning institute is a national body and we represent a very wide range of planning professionals. Each State and Territory of Australia has a division. The structure of the Planning Institute of Australia [PIA] does reflect a great diversity of planning experience. We include urban and regional planning chapters, we also have specialist chapters in social planning urban design and we also have proposed chapters in planning law, economic development, transport planning and also environmental planning.

With specific reference to the New South Wales division of PIA, we represent over 1,000 professional planners across both metropolitan and regional New South Wales. The division also has a number of other committees that I have alluded to, which support the New South Wales division in fulfilling its aims. In particular, the Metropolitan Policy Committee, which I am particularly involved with, is one of these committees. Its brief is specifically to examine metropolitan planning policy and environmental issues that are relevant to the Sydney metropolitan area and to develop policy for the consideration of the PIA State division.

In our submission we have referred to the PIA national vision, which was released earlier this year, that vision really focuses on creating liveable communities. It also focuses on creating vibrant

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economies, sustainable places, diverse cultural expression and, most importantly, social cohesion. This vision has been subscribed to by all the State and Territory divisions of the PIA. We believe that all these aspects that I have just referred to have relevance to the future of Sydney and Redfern-Waterloo, but specifically creating diverse cultural expression and ensuring social cohesion have particular relevance to the terms of this inquiry.

CHAIR: In our second question we refer to your submission and the goal you identify of creating a sustainable social environmental and economic future for Redfern and Waterloo and then we ask you, firstly, to tell us more about what you envisage, but, to come right down to it, you say that such a goal is doomed to failure unless the residents of Redfern and Waterloo are given a key role in defining the problems and shaping the solutions. So we are really asking you to expand on your views there and how you envisage the goal. You obviously have some criticisms of what is happening at the moment.

Mr LAYBUTT: I might hand over to Elizabeth to respond to that, if I may.

Ms RICE: There are three questions within that and I will respond to each in turn. First of all, about a sustainable future for Redfern-Waterloo, I must stress that PIA cannot speak for the communities of Redfern-Waterloo in any detailed way on the matter—that is their right. However, we can indicate the key matters that we believe need to be monitored in general in an attempt to achieve social, environmental and economic sustainability in any area, including Redfern-Waterloo. The matters I will list are taken from PIA's Liveable Communities policy of February 2004 to which Peter referred. I can leave a full list of those indicators with the Committee but, in the meantime, I will mention the ones most relevant to Redfern-Waterloo. These are, for social sustainability: access to quality public transport service; tolerable divergence in socio-economic indicators; comparative living standards in indigenous communities; accessible urban public domain per capita; and alleviation of housing stress.

In relation to environmental sustainability the most relevant one for Redfern-Waterloo is modal split in urban transport. For economic sustainability the indicators include: accessibility of metropolitan jobs by public transport; growth in business service and other high-value-added exports; availability of high order skills in key regions; rates of new business formation; and growth in participation in the workforce and/or training. They are general matters; they need to be sensitised to local requirements by those best placed to determine whether there should be any additional ones added, that is required the balance amongst them for the local area, and the local measures, targets and indicators that would allow them and others to evaluate whether improvements have been made in each of these categories.

The New South Wales Government's report to the inquiry indicates that residents and other stakeholders have already provided some information relevant to this task, particularly in the areas of social and economic sustainability, and I refer you to pages 81 to 95 of the report. It is vital that sustained efforts continue to be made to engage with local communities on those matters, to ensure the best possible outcomes from the resources in the area. Finally, although we have listed those areas of sustainability separately, we stress that in practice there are many inter-relationships among them. They need to be reflected in the planning budgeting and evaluations associated with them. I pause to say that we can leave a full copy of this. Although you will have *Hansard*, we will probably condense it at points, but we can leave a copy with the Committee, or at least get it to you on Monday.

CHAIR: Thank you, that would be helpful.

Ms RICE: In terms of the importance of community engagement it is important as an ethical requirement, as part of a democracy, but it is also a practical requirement, because, although we are expert planners, we recognise that local knowledge and experience are also forms of expertise that must be acknowledged and valued. Unless this expertise is drawn upon, valuable local perspectives on the causes of problems in the area and the most effective local ways of meeting them are lost. There is nothing worse than coming up with the right answer to the wrong problem. Further, cynicism and lack of engagement result when either local expertise is not tapped or it cannot be demonstrated that it has been taken into account in decision making, or the decisions taken do not result in actions that improve the problems that consultation is supposed to address.

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Further, good consultation is not necessarily quick or cheap in the short term, although it does save money in the long term. We are aware of the range of consultation measures outlined in the New South Wales Government's report to the inquiry. However, we are also aware that one of the principal mechanisms, the Community Council, has met only once since December and that was in relation to the Human Services Review, not Redfern-Waterloo issues generally. I checked that yesterday with the partnership. Further, the Community Council meetings are not open to the public. In effect, deliberations in relation to the Redfern-Waterloo partnership project are less transparent than those of local councils.

Finally, I refer to recommendations for short- and long-term engagement. If it is judged that the community engagement strategies in Redfern-Waterloo have been inadequate and need strengthening, there are two main options in the short term. First, go back to the drawing board. I would think that option might well frustrate both decision makers and the local community. Second, to continue with the decision-making processes already under way on the matters currently under consideration, which essentially are the Redfern, Eveleigh and Darlington, known as the RED Strategy, and the Human Services Review up to the point where the material could be left, to use a parliamentary analogy, to lie on the table while the community engagement strategies for Redfern-Waterloo are reviewed.

That option would allow the local communities to see what people are considering. At the moment they have had a very long time without any real indication of what the outcomes are likely to be. It does not allow any of the matters to be progressed immediately, but it does mean that once the community engagement strategy is reviewed and has the agreement of the community, the community can respond to those matters and will have had the time that has elapsed while they have been lying on the table to get their heads around it and give an informed response. In the longer term, we think an ongoing system of community engagement is needed that allows for a number of things.

First, public review at appropriate intervals of the strategic objectives for the area and of the key outcomes associated with them. That probably needs doing every three years. Also, there should be annual reporting to the public on the achievements of the outcomes and the factors affecting over- or under-performance, and there should be regular forums, say quarterly or six-monthly, that allow members of the public formal opportunity to highlight areas that need early attention before the annual review.

The community engagement strategy should specify the roles and responsibilities of all relevant parties. The formal engagement processes should be synchronised as far as possible with agencies' ongoing consultation cycles so as to minimise participation fatigue. On the one hand communities are very eager to be appropriately consulted, on the other hand they want it to be done in a manageable way.

CHAIR: In question (5) the Committee has asked specifically about the place-focused approach. At this stage, presumably your recommendations would not apply to planning and all of the goals we are talking about for every community in New South Wales. You are defining Redfern and Waterloo as a community in special need of all of the processes that you have outlined.

Ms RICE: Yes.

CHAIR: Will you give an indication of whether that is a one-off, or whether there are lots of similar communities in New South Wales? What is it that makes the Redfern-Waterloo area in need of the processes you have just outlined? Are you assuming that other communities do not need them?

Ms RICE: I am not assuming other communities do not need them. There are a number of communities throughout New South Wales with special needs. Redfern-Waterloo, of course, suffers from long-entrenched disadvantage and the failure of numerous attempts to take hold. I would actually see all those place-management projects as best managed within a framework of joint local and State government planning at the local area.

CHAIR: Which we get onto in another question.

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Ms RICE: Yes, in fact I have dealt with that in a later question, but basically within a system where there is a specific brief for that place within this joint system, with a strategic plan directed to it, but that would allow it to be linked into the resources available through both agencies, a strategic framework or whether you develop it, et cetera, so you do not end up with just a collection of activities, which you hope will achieve the outcomes.

CHAIR: We start then from the assumption that a community with the levels of entrenched disadvantage that the Redfern-Waterloo area has needs this special extra attention and the processes of consultation, development of strategies, triple government approach, but this is intrinsic in the place-focused approach.

Ms RICE: And it is also the diversity of needs. People's needs are diverse anyway but within Redfern-Waterloo you have a lot of diversity. You also have between the Redfern community and the Waterloo community significant differences. I did read through the statistics that the Government report provided a couple of months ago, but I recollect from it that Waterloo was more homogeneous than Redfern but homogeneously disadvantaged.

Redfern had a different pattern, partly because of the high number of students in the area. The educational indicators showed a different picture of advantage, but that is only part of the picture. Partly because there has been some gentrification in the area, you have a number of high-income earners but you also have huge disparities within that community, whereas Waterloo, as I say, is more homogeneous. For those reasons you just cannot assume that the solution you come up with as a bureaucrat, and I have been one, is the one that is actually addressing the right problem and in a way that will solve the problem for the people whose needs you are trying to address.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: What is your perception in terms of the Redfern-Waterloo partnership consultation? We have had a lot of evidence that it has been very poor or absent.

Ms RICE: The general impression I get from people is that they are not happy with the level of consultation. They are also not happy with the long delay in anything getting back to them to comment on in relation to the RED Strategy and the Human Services Review. I notice that the Government had pages and pages of its consultation strategies but not a lot of detail about what is happening when and, as I say, the Community Council, which is one of the major ones, has not met for a long while and it is not open to the public. So you have to balance consultation that allows everybody to have a say in the way they can say it with something that is manageable, and there are community engagement specialists who do this very well.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Who is responsible for calling community council meetings?

Ms RICE: I think—and I would need to check this—the Lord Mayor of Sydney chairs it. I understand the reason that there has not been a meeting called is that there is, in effect, not much to discuss at the moment until there is a Government decision on what will happen with the RED Strategy and the Human Services Review. That is the impression I have got from the couple of community meetings that I have been to.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Have you voiced your concerns about the Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project not advancing any of these issues?

Ms RICE: We have not separately. I think we are registering that concern through this hearing.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Has the community raised those concerns with you as well?

Ms RICE: Yes. Well, I was, in fact, asked to address the RED Watch Group on planning issues two or three months ago and part of what I am relaying I have picked up from that. No, they are one group within Redfern, but from what I have seen of them, they seem to be a reliable group and they, themselves, are very clear that they do not speak for everybody in Redfern-Waterloo. What they want to try to precipitate is a decent community engagement strategy that will allow everybody to give their view.

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The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: What is your view of what is a decent strategy?

Ms RICE: It is one that allows everybody who has an interest in the matter to have a say, and that is very broad. It is local residents, business, industry, further education and training, other levels of government and it is sometimes groups from without the area but who have businesses or activities within the area. The strategy has to be in such a way that it allows all those people to make their contribution in the way they are most comfortable with. It is well known that indigenous communities often prefer a different form of consultation to a standard non-indigenous consultation. People with disabilities of various sorts and mental illness may need particular sorts of environments or particular aids to be able to contribute properly.

As I say, it is not my area of expertise and Peter may be able to add more to that, but it is essentially trying to put yourself in other people's shoes; consult with them about how they need to be approached and what they need to be able to contribute on what they have to say. You also have to make it clear that the decisions will be made in the light of consultation and not necessarily according to every outcome from every consultation because there will be conflicting views from the community and the decision makers have to achieve a balance that is in the best interests of all parties.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: It has been presented to us that the Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project, with the level of funding it is had, has not been able to address anywhere near the issues that they need to and that they have been ineffective. Would you support that view?

Ms RICE: It is hard to judge on whether they have been ineffective because I have not seen, for example, a strategic plan for it. I have seen objectives but, yes, it will come through in that. Resourcing, I think, is a real issue and it is hard to judge the partnership. Certainly, people are saying that they have not had enough consultation. Whether they have done as much as they can within the resources they have got, I do not know. I imagine that is what they have tried to do, though.

CHAIR: We take up some of these questions later.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Sorry, I have gone off the track.

Ms RICE: That is all right. Question 2, but the challenge is 3 and I think that Peter—

CHAIR: Yes, because we particularly drew attention to the challenges like affordable housing, inequality and social exclusion. Peter, would you like to focus on how these challenges specifically relate to Redfern and Waterloo?

Mr LAYBUTT: Yes, thank you very much. That really brings us to what I believe is the core planning issue that triggered our submission. That is, that we do see Sydney as a wealthy city. We see Sydney as the Olympic city. It is a global city, possibly Australia's only global city. It is a very wealthy city. There are a lot of challenges facing global cities, not only in Australia but around the world and a lot of those challenges are exactly the challenges that are facing Redfern-Waterloo—talking about social inclusion and affordable housing.

What I believe is quite unique in the Sydney experience is that because we are well placed—we have robust, democratic structures; we have a very vibrant and healthy economy—we should be very well placed to address some of these issues. What I see particularly—and it is the key reason for my being motivated with the PIA to respond to this inquiry—is to drive around Sydney and see the wealth, to drive around Sydney and see the economic activity, and then to drive to Redfern-Waterloo and see the disparity between what you see in other parts of Sydney and what you see in Redfern-Waterloo. I believe in a democratic society every citizen and every planner has a responsibility to ensure that the benefits of Sydney's economic growth are fairly distributed and that is not what I have seen over the last five years, which I think is very sad, because Australia does have robust and democratic structures and this inquiry is part of that.

I think this Committee has a very important role to ensure that these social equity issues, which have a spatial working out across Sydney, are really integrated with a whole-of-government approach. You are probably aware that we have a metropolitan strategy consultation process, which is

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happening right now—it happened last night—and there was some really positive feedback coming to the Government from that.

Just picking up on a point made earlier, this is a special community and it does have special needs, but the model is appropriate to the whole of Sydney and it is a model that the State Government appears to be picking up on in relation to the whole of metropolitan Sydney. But this particular set of issues does need to be integrated into that metropolitan strategy. We need to have funding, and we need to have a budget-linked process to support the outcomes that Redfern-Waterloo needs. I am mindful of the time, but I would just like to respond very specifically to those three challenges that you asked us about. The first one was keeping our cities more competitive.

Elizabeth has kindly done some research and found a statement by our Premier, Mr Carr, on 19 February in which he referred to his 25-year time frame for Redfern as including major commercial development—because of its public transport focus, its proximity to the investment being rolled out at Australia Technology Park and because it is the obvious place to take a rollover, spill over of commercial investment from Sydney's central business district [CBD]. That seems to be a broad direction that the State Government has in mind for this area, which is fine. I guess from the PIA's point of view I would not see any difficulty with that, provided that the benefits of that growth flow through to the communities that are impacted by it.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: That is basically a real estate outlook, and investment outlook, rather than social disadvantage being addressed.

Mr LAYBUTT: These are some issues that are being addressed by the metropolitan strategy. Again, I understand there will be some further announcements later in the year, but it is about linking the budget process and, if you like, the enormous windfall property gains and putting some of that back into the community. We used to call it betterment tax, now we call it value capture. It is a matter of capturing some of that value and putting it into the local community needs.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Some call it capital gains tax.

Mr LAYBUTT: I am coming at it from a planning focus. I do see an opportunity, and a very real opportunity, for this economic benefit to flow through to these communities that we have identified as being, in the metropolitan area, probably one of the most in need. Specifically, in regard to keeping our cities more competitive, we do see that Redfern is well placed to support development that will enhance Sydney's economic development. I mean it is well placed strategically in this arc between the airport and the CBD. It is part of that global aspect of Sydney's function. For these benefits to be captured by the local community, we believe there is a real need to get a balance between new development and old development. There is really a need to encourage residents who wish to remain in the area to do so, and not to inadvertently—or even deliberately—force them out.

PIA is aware that the RED Strategy encompasses more than just major redevelopment sites and we are aware of some draft principles that are being prepared. But I am not personally aware if they have been publicly exhibited for comment. If it has not been I think that is a key priority that should be addressed.

Ms RICE: The principles have been, but that is about all.

Mr LAYBUTT: A point we would like to make in relation to world competitiveness is that successful global cities require attractive living and working environments and they require social, stable, equitable social settings. It is really incongruous to have a prosperous city with social isolation and non-cohesion of local communities. Getting the balance right in Redfern-Waterloo and getting the balance right across Sydney are very much key elements of keeping Sydney a competitive world city.

In relation to challenge three, I have already mentioned briefly inequality and social cohesion. As Elizabeth has said, it is very unfortunate that inequality and social exclusion do mark the lives of many people in Redfern-Waterloo. It is so critical that all levels of government work together to address both the spatial aspects of planning policy and the aspatial things, such as human services that Elizabeth talked about. Again, this comes back to a genuine process of community consultation and engagement that Elizabeth talked about before.

In relation to affordable housing, I mentioned that affordable housing is an issue not just for Sydney but also for a lot of global cities—Tokyo, Chinese cities, cities in south-east Asia and cities in America all have the same set of issues and challenges that face Sydney. Sydney, because it is a wealthy, profitable city, is uniquely placed to address these issues. We believe that both public housing and community housing are going to be very important components of the Redfern-Waterloo area and really must be maintained in order to maintain that sense of social cohesion.

In particular, indigenous housing is a longstanding feature of the area. I know that that has been the focus of this Committee. All I can do is add the PIA's support to the community social plan, which I understand the Committee has already had the benefit of being aware of. It is what I would regard as an excellent model of communication and consultation with the local community, leading to some specific actions that really should be supported fully by the RED strategy.

CHAIR: One area we have not specifically touched on is in question four. With regard to the kind of integrated, well thought-out planning and development that you advocate, how do we get the three tiers of government working together? You mentioned affordable housing which immediately brings in a major role for the Commonwealth, for instance. You earlier mentioned that the Lord Mayor of Sydney chairs the community Council. What comments to you have about how we might actually gets these three tiers of government working together.

Mr LAYBUTT: I think Elizabeth would be very well placed to respond to that question.

Ms RICE: I think I have more here than time will allow, so I will condense it and I can leave the transcript with the Committee. First of all, within that question you have asked is why integrated inclusive planning is important. The short answer is that planning needs to be integrated for two reasons. The first is that people's needs cut across bureaucratic boundaries, State and Federal, and solutions need to reflect that complexity. The second is that planning is essentially about making sure spaces is available for people, their activities and the services they need—housing, employment, transport, education, health et cetera. It cannot on its own make these things happen.

Planning has to be allied to strategic corporate planning across government and involving other service providers, like the non-government sector, business, industry, and further education and training—if those activities are going to be able to happen. The tripartite approach is important because all three levels of government contribute to the factors that influence social, environmental and economic sustainability, and they all carry out activities that impact on the use of space and whether the space can be used for the activities the community has decided it wants. The role of the State and local government are often recognised here partly because they are such big service providers, but the Commonwealth also has a critical role because it controls major policy areas affecting how livable and sustainable our cities will be. Those areas include economic policy, taxation policy, income security policy, immigration policy—which has a huge effect on settlement patterns—major infrastructure proposals and considerable funding for hospitals and schools.

It is also in the Commonwealth's own interest to be involved because there are considerable costs to the Commonwealth from poorly-managed urban development. That is the rationale. How can it be achieved? There is an ideal way and there is the way we will have to go in the interim. Ideally, the three levels of government would be involved through an overarching policy framework which is set out in PIA's Livable Communities Policy, which specifies the key measures of social, economic and environmental sustainability that the three levels of government are aiming at; adopts targets that are to be reached within a particular timeframe; is clear on the roles and responsibilities of the three parties in reaching the targets; and is accompanied by transitional funding related to the degree of participation and the performance in reaching targets. That is the ideal system. That will require political will on the part of all three levels of government and we do not have that at the moment. What can we do in the meantime? Essentially, work with what we have.

Before I go on to that I should point out that we are not assuming that it is only the three levels of government whose decisions matter in achieving livable cities. Many of the decisions made by other stakeholders as, individuals or through business and interest groups have an impact as well. This merely highlights the need for governments to capture all these interests in their planning. But as I say at the moment we have essentially the two levels of government trying to integrate planning

using whatever Commonwealth-State mechanisms are available. So under that situation it seems to us that the best way for a State government to proceed in general is to develop a system in which it articulates its objectives in broad terms for the State and for regions within it, even if achieving those objectives is not solely within its power; identify the contribution of each of the partners in government; identify the gap to be filled by the Commonwealth; and then advocate to the Commonwealth on the measures needed to fill that gap.

On issues affecting just one State, that can happen agency to agency, Minister to Minister or Premier to Prime Minister. For issues across the States and Territories it would be best managed by the ministerial councils or Premiers' conference and COAG. That is essentially what happens at the moment. The main difference I think is that no State that I am aware of has a co-ordinated national issues strategy where it pulls together within its jurisdiction and tick-tacks with other jurisdictions about the matters where they feel there should be a concerted approach to the Commonwealth on the matters that are affecting the State's and local governments' ability to achieve outcomes their communities desire.

For specific areas—for example, Redfern-Waterloo—within that broader framework you could have a subsystem that allows for joint planning and budgeting to develop, between the State Government and relevant local governments, appropriate objectives for the area, along with strategic plans, action plans, and monitoring, evaluation and review mechanisms, and participation by all relevant stakeholders in developing these objectives and supporting mechanisms. As you see, the system we are talking about all the time is, first of all, get your strategic directions right. Then work out what the objectives are that you need to achieve within those. Then look at the outcomes that you require if you are to meet those objectives, make sure you have the inputs for them, make sure you can measure them and know whether you have achieved what it is you wanted to achieve.

It must be stressed that the measures need to relate to the changes you need in people's lives if their lives are to improve. So when I say "outcomes", some may regard it as jargon but what I am really talking about is what is the change we want to see in someone's life so that their life is genuinely improved. It could be health; it could be a whole range of things. That is about all I have to say on that issue.

CHAIR: Would other Committee members like to take up any of those issues? The next question relates specifically to the place-based approach.

Ms RICE: You asked us what we think about place management. It can be a useful mechanism for integrating responses to the need for activities and services in a place. But you cannot assume that it will be sufficient on its own because, first, individuals rarely meet all their needs in one place. In some communities that may be true but by and large people are in and out of their place and other places all the time. For some services—for example, air travel or highly specialised medical procedures—the place may well be the whole State. So place management is a useful tool but it is not useful enough on its own. It needs to be linked strategically to the other processes of government, which I think harks back to your earlier question of whether we are suggesting a model that applies everywhere and how specifically it applies to Redfern-Waterloo.

The way it specifically applies is by examining the characteristics of that community and seeing what it is you need to do to apply that general model there. You also asked us how effective the Redfern-Waterloo partnership project is as a model of integrated and inclusive planning. I should preface that by saying that I think even an ideal model of integrated and inclusive planning would have to overcome the long history of cynicism in the area, which the Government's own report documents, as a factor in the area. But even allowing for this, the partnership falls short of the criteria that we outlined in relation to question 4. It is very difficult to get a sense that it is any more than a collection of activities.

The most succinct statement I could find at the moment—I know that the partnership's site was revamped a bit ago, and there may have been earlier material—was on the Premier's Department community builders web site. It has a set of objectives which relate to improving the built environment, local infrastructure, improving streets and public facilities, reducing drug and alcohol abuse and related crime, improving community safety, providing support to vulnerable communities, especially families and young people, improving the quality of services to the community, promoting

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more and better educational and employment opportunities, and engaging the community in determining how the area grows and develops. We assume that they are the objectives. They do not call them those but they seem fairly clearly to be objectives.

They are similar to the list given in evidence by Michael Ramsey when he spoke to the Government's report, although he referred to them as outcomes. But we have not seen any comprehensive strategy to address these. 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.

I think Col Gellatly's response, when asked about this issue, was that there are indicators for subprojects within the whole project but there is not, as far as I can make out, 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. It may be that it is in someone's head and the strategic direction is there but it is hard to see it. It may be that the approach will become evident when the Red Strategy and the Human Services Review are made available to the public. In the meantime we think the best way of moving forward is to develop a focused strategic framework along the lines we indicated there and which we spell out the bit more in our answer to question 4. But we also think that the partnership would benefit very strongly from—and this is not within its control; it is a matter for government—clarity about whether its role is to facilitate, to co-ordinate, to fund or to do or all of those. Then there needs to be a realistic assessment of the resourcing required to allow the partnership to perform all these roles.

Allowance must be made for the complexity of juggling all those roles because it can be very difficult to be focusing on strategic objectives at that end and a crisis here and then the middle term management of something that is on track but needs a bit of attention because it can stall if there is no time for it. I think I say elsewhere in this that whole-of-government work takes time. It is not often seen as an additional thing that people need to spend time on. Over time as the approach becomes entrenched that may not be the case to the same extent but certainly while you are working with agencies and trying to get them to focus on a shared outcome, rather than one that is regarded as part of their core business, you need to allow time for that process and that means resources.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: That was a very good summary. Basically, it accords with my view that it should be scrapped and started again.

Ms RICE: I am not necessarily saying that. You are always faced with this. When you are looking at something—

CHAIR: I think you dealt with that before and specifically said—

Ms RICE: It is how much the community can stand of stop and start and stop and start.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: They are saying that they cannot stand it as it is.

Ms RICE: Yes. Whether they want to go back to the drawing board, I do not know. Again, I want to reinforce that everything we say here we say from our perspective but it needs confirming with the local community.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: In terms of your comments about an absence of key performance indicators, in the last budget this project received an increase in funding of \$2.5 million for the next few years and an extension of time. What is your view on that?

Ms RICE: I am pleased that there is an extension of time for an approach to work seriously and holistically with the problems at Redfern and Waterloo. I am glad that there is additional funding. The only thing is that I do not know whether or not it is enough. From the outside in it is impossible to tell. Until you can see a clear statement of the roles of the partnership, what it is intended to achieve and when, it is very hard to say whether or not it is enough money.

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The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: In your experience is that usual? The Government is dishing out increased funding without any key performance indicators or any apparent objectives. Is that the normal course of events?

Ms RICE: I think that on something as complex as this you have a gut feeling that it is a big problem, that it will take a lot of resources and that you will have some sort of ballpark figure of what will be necessary to get it through to the next stage. What I find interesting in the United Kingdom is that there has been bipartisan agreement about the length of time that is needed to address these issues. For example, there is a 20-year time frame for some of the social inclusion measures, (which are referred to in the United Kingdom as social exclusion measures).

There are very solid indicators, some of which are too global, for example, increases in life expectancy. You will not show an impact in the short term. Others relate to levels of completion of various basic levels of education within the community—and they can be measured fairly quickly. At the same time as they are trying to improve national performance in all these areas they are trying to increase the level within the local community in relation to the region, and the region in relation to the nation. So it seems to me to be a much clearer framework than we have in Redfern and Waterloo.

The Hon. IAN WEST: I wanted to thank you for your submission, which sets out many, if not most, of the difficulties and buzzwords. I do not say that in a derogatory sense. It is a very good document. The unfair issue that I was trying to come to grips with was the participation fatigue issue that you talked about and the difficulty that is being experienced in relation to it. I do not know whether it is genetic, generic or what is the buzzword for it, but participation fatigue causes great difficulties when facilitation of any strategic direction is attempted. I would like to get some ideas from you in a difficult area such as this. How do you come to grips with that dilemma—participation fatigue between residents, and even facilitators, and the people who trying to come to grips with the strategic direction? Do you have any magical solutions for us to the great dilemma that you are putting before us? That does not relate only to Redfern and Waterloo.

Ms RICE: The key problems that Redfern/ Waterloo residents seem to be articulating when I talk to them are as follows: "A body has come into our area and it has been given funding. Assumptions are made about what are the problems and what are the solutions. We have not been consulted properly to know whether they are addressing the right problems and whether the solutions will work out in our area in the way in which they think they will." In order to minimise the participation fatigue you actually have to do some planning around consultation. Government agencies are conscious of this too. They have consultation cycles.

I think some solid work needs to be done with all the people in the area who are undertaking consultations, including some of the mandatory consultations for Commonwealth-State programs such as the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program—that would benefit other areas as well—just to try to get something that is sustainable for people to participate in and for those trying to do the consultation. The short answer is that you just have to have a good look at what is going on and plan for it, and not just keep doing it on an ad hoc basis. You need to take into account some of the mandatory consultations. Ideally, you should have one consultation process, but that probably is not feasible. You could certainly get it down to a manageable number.

The Hon. IAN WEST: In trying to draw together the whole of government—the three levels of government—do you believe that we need a knight in shining armour as the driver?

Ms RICE: The trouble with whole-of-government things is that it is always the business of somebody else. That is where resourcing comes in. You need somebody who can focus and for whom this is a sole job. Let me give an analogy. Before I retired from Government I was managing the work program for the Human Services Chief Executive Officers group. I was a one-person band doing that. Essentially, my role was to ensure that all that happened. I was given a great deal of autonomy and I was left to get on with it, so I did not have to do all the other bits and pieces that are all part of policy work. I was allowed just to focus on getting that up. As a result, we were able to get the better service delivery strategy approved and funded. So, yes, it is very hard to expect people to be doing all things at all times. I think that somebody needs to be dedicated to the task.

CHAIR: I also wish to ask a question relating to participation fatigue. You said earlier that you felt it was important, following the human services review and when the Redfern, Eveleigh and Darlington, which is known as the RED strategy, actually produces some plans, documents and so on, that there be a proper consultation process on those plans and proposals. On the other hand, people are saying to us—they are obviously also saying this to one another in Redfern and Waterloo—"We have been consulted. All this stuff has been going on. The human services review has been delayed. When will it be made public? When will a decision be announced?" Clearly there is tension because people feel that there has been a delay in getting something done. You insist that you cannot just come in from outside and say, "This is what we will do." You also have to consult and involve people on those plans and you have to say, "This is what we think we should do." In light of the issue raised by the Hon. Ian West, can you comment on how you would resolve those tensions?

Ms RICE: First, it is not really an either-or situation. I am sorry if I gave that impression. There is always ongoing work in an area and someone coming in can pick up on that. I accept that in a project like the Redfern-Waterloo partnership project you have some immediate stuff that you have to do. You have to work on the basis of the best information you have. You have medium-term stuff and you have some long-term stuff. There is a whole list of projects that they are getting on with; some of them apparently showing results. I noticed at the last public hearing you had that some residents were saying, "There are some improvements in some areas." One then has to pause, take stock and say, "Okay, have we got it right?" Whoever is sponsoring the consultation certainly has to do some hard work—they have to have the resources to be able to do it—and they have to pool the results of everything that has happened so far.

So that rather than going to the community again and saying, "Tell us what you want", they can say, "We have asked you about this and that. From what you have said it appears that you want X, Y and Z. There are several options we can use to achieve it, which are these, and some new things have come in. In light of what you told us previously we think this would be an appropriate way to go. Please tell us, first, whether we have the problems right and, second, whether you think our proposed solutions are right. Within them, what do you think are the most important ones, both in terms of being done at all and in terms of priority for implementation?"

You can get it, but it requires some solid work to synthesise. There is so much material that it is difficult. When Morgan Disney and Associates did the Human Services Review I was interested to discover that they took the view that they would not insult people by asking them again what they wanted. First of all they went to the material and then they conducted a range of consultations. Again, some members of the community were not satisfied that that was adequate, but that is the approach that they took. It would be interesting to see what is the summary of the consultation so far, at least in relation to the human services.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Without wanting to usurp residents of ownership of the issue, which I believe to be a fundamental one, it appears to me that unless you have an individual driving components and coming to an understanding of the definition of ownership by the community as opposed to fatigue participation being converted into ownership, we will go round and round in circles with these bureaucratic buzzwords.

Ms RICE: It does need driving, and I must admit one of the things I have been playing around with in relation to question 7, which was addressed to me in a personal capacity, is how can we get real power-sharing around that project? A steering committee is one way; a board is another. I think some sort of joint auspicing of it and even a community board of some sort with, say, one government representative, one local government representative, three community representatives, of which one would be indigenous, may be the way to go. You have to have a protocol around who is responsible for what and who can make what decisions. So you have to have a protocol around the structures and processes needed for that. Again, if it turned out to be just another committee, that would be no good. But I cannot agree more, you need somebody who can drive it and who is given the space to drive it.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Surely that was why the Redfern partnership project was established by the Government to do in the first instance? Is that your impression that that is what it was established for?

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Ms RICE: It was certainly to work with longstanding problems in Redfern and to solve them, yes.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: And to be the driver in drawing all of that together?

Ms RICE: I am not sure to what extent it was meant to be driving hard or to be facilitating. I think you do need driving hard.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: In either case it has failed though, has it not?

Ms RICE: Until we see the Human Services Review and what comes out of that, it is very hard to see what the lead time has led to. So I cannot make a judgment until I see that. There may be evidence that there has been a strategic approach to driving the whole lot. Certainly in terms of the RED Strategy, they are trying to use infrastructure to achieve social outcomes. So, there is certainly linking across the two areas but it is just difficult to know until we see some results.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: It has been going for a number of years, though.

Ms RICE: Yes, it has.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: With a great deal of funding. You would think there would be more outcomes?

Ms RICE: In terms of the people driving it, I am not sure how many positions there are. I hear various things. Sometimes I hear there are five positions and only three are filled. Having been involved in whole-of-government work myself, I know it is extremely time intensive, and unless you are given the space to get on with it and not to be trying to solve crises along the way it is very hard to push through.

CHAIR: Our next witness is here. I am conscious of the time. I know, Elizabeth, you have stressed you have a lot more detail in the written material?

Ms RICE: Yes.

CHAIR: You have just started to talk about question 7 and you have made some comments about the RED Strategy. Perhaps we need to tie you down a little bit more on those two, and then Ian has another question as well. But I am conscious about the time constraints.

Ms RICE: Can I comment on the RED Strategy because I think it is critical that something emerge from the process? You have asked us whether we think it appropriately balances the interests of new development, commerce and current residents. You simply cannot tell at this stage because only the draft principles have been exhibited. On my reading of the Government submission to the inquiry, we are still in stage two of the strategy for which the process was: research and analysis by Cox Richardson of what has been exhibited to date, review by the Government of that material and then drafting of options for community consultation. That was meant to conclude by February/ March this year and then be followed by stage three, community consultation on the draft options.

At the moment neither the community nor planning professionals can evaluate whether the options are consistent with the draft principles or whether they strike an appropriate balance between competing interests. We also have no knowledge of when the Government will make a decision on this. One option would be for the Government to review the material and then make it available publicly and allow it to lie on the table without comment, so if serious issues are impeding a decision at least let the community have access to the material, even in an edited form, so they can see what is proposed.

On the questions you were asking, whether the partnership has succeeded or not, and my saying it is very hard to tell, a few things need to be taken into account there. It does require clear roles for the project leaders and the other agencies participating in them. If the leadership involves multiple roles, the leadership needs to be resourced for that. It takes time and skill, which I have already said. The joint contributions to this work of other agencies are as much a part of their core

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business as anything they do on their own, and that has to be recognised, and the contributing agencies also need to be resourced appropriately to make their contribution to the shared outcomes. The Government submission put in at one stage has three pages about cross-cutting work, I think it called it. There is some useful stuff in there. I have some reservations about competition as a tool but apart from that there was some very sound stuff about the preconditions for successful whole-of-government work.

CHAIR: Peter, Ian is going to ask the last question, but Elizabeth has had her go on some of these questions. Do you want to add anything from your point of view?

Mr LAYBUTT: Certainly from the PIA's perspective, we want to send a clear message that there are opportunities to address this issue, and Elizabeth has gone into a lot of the detail about how that might now be taken on board. In relation to consultation fatigue, I think people get fatigued when they see no outcome. If people see even just a little bit of movement they are prepared to show some commitment. That is what appears to be lacking. I do not know enough of the detail to make that comment but I do get the impression even from just today's discussion, that there is a perception that there have been insufficient outcomes on the ground or evidence that we are moving forward. People need to see something as a result, otherwise they become disillusioned.

That has been the history of The Block. There have been proposals for 15 years or more to do something but very little has been done. While there is a clear need to consult with the local communities, we cannot speak on behalf of those communities but we can reflect the voices that are demonstrated in this document. I could not stress strongly enough our commitment to present this and to reinforce what has been placed in this document. If you are familiar with the document and if you are familiar with the recommendations it comes up with, and again this is through—

CHAIR: Can you just name the document for the record?

Mr LAYBUTT: Certainly. This is the community social plan, the Pemulwuy Way Redevelopment Project Aboriginal Housing Company, prepared by Angela Pitts, and it was dated 2001. On page 8 of that document there is a table which lists the direct and indirect benefits of the proposed redevelopment of The Block. While that is a very specific one, I believe these benefits apply more broadly, and it lists the organisation and it lists the benefits of investing in this part of Sydney. That is what we are asking the Government to do, invest in this part of Sydney. There are ways to have a positive outcome, not only in human services, which we see as a crucial issue but also a financially positive outcome if it is done correctly.

It lists here local residents. The benefits to them are to contribute to a positive local identity and image for Aboriginal people in Redfern and the surrounding suburbs; enhance the lifestyle, living standards and safety of the local community, which is a core issue that this inquiry is looking at; economic and cultural improvements for the local Aboriginal community, high standard of housing and social advantage; greater access to Aboriginal services; strengthening community capacity to address its own long-term needs; and increased self-determination. This is what has come out of the process of internal consultation with the community itself.

Other Aboriginal communities in New South Wales and nationally: a benchmark for other Aboriginal housing developments; positive image for Aboriginal people on a national level; enhance the lifestyle of other communities. Health services: improved Aboriginal health and wellbeing due to improved housing conditions and a clean, drug-free environment. State and Federal Government—and again we have talked about whole of government. It is really crucial to achieving these outcomes. Practical reconciliation: improving lifestyle and living standards of Aboriginal people, fulfilling their obligation to address the disadvantage to Aboriginal people. It is all there. That was a public document in 2001 and I believe that is a very sound basis for moving forward.

The Hon. IAN WEST: If one were to continue to play the blame game and set up someone to blame next, what would you like to see come out of this inquiry?

Ms RICE: I would like to see a range of things.

The Hon. IAN WEST: And make sure it works.

Ms RICE: In general, I would like to see a holistic attempt to identify and resolve the issues associated with the entrenched disadvantage in Redfern-Waterloo, including the strategic approaches that we have talked about. We would like to see certainty for residents in terms of consultation and the future of development and a long-term commitment to adequate resourcing for the Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project or any other vehicle that is used to try to address those problems in a whole-of-government way. Specifically, we would like to see the implementation of a genuine process of community consultation that leads to policies and action plans that are funded and supported by all levels of government. They should allow sustained opportunities for the people of Redfern-Waterloo to participate effectively in shaping their own future through the various measures we advocated in the earlier parts of our response.

We would like to see a specific strategy to capture the economic benefits of any redevelopment and share them with the residents of Redfern-Waterloo. Peter has already alluded to that. But we also think we would like to see some capitalisation on the opportunity provided by the forthcoming metropolitan strategy to integrate equitable development of the Redfern-Waterloo precinct with a cohesive regional planning framework for the airport-CBD arc—again, Peter touched on that point. Ultimately, we would like to see delivery of a solution to the endemic problems of disadvantage and social exclusion. In particular, we refer you to the social plan Peter has already mentioned. Some of the issues highlighted there that we think are important are the development of a sense of ownership and self-determination by the local Aboriginal people and the building of trust, co-operation and a sense of responsibility and wellbeing among the local Aboriginal population; and, in relation to the future of the Block, strong management structures, efficient maintenance of the site and its buildings and spaces, and funding for management and maintenance and a biannual review of its business plan.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Ms RICE: If we could have until Monday to sensitise this document and get it ready for the Committee that would be good.

CHAIR: We accept the material that you have prepared and thank you also for the amount of detail you have included. It would be a great help if we could get the information from you on Monday.

Documents accepted.

(The witnesses withdrew)

(Conclusion of public hearing)

(Evidence continued in camera)