



INNER SYDNEY VOICE
regional social development council

SUBMISSION

**Public Exhibition of the Waterloo South
People and Place Plan (draft) – Homes
NSW**

June 2024

Acknowledgment

ISV office is located on the land of the traditional owners of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. We acknowledge and pay our respects to the traditional owners of the lands across the areas we service, including the Bidjigal, Birrabirragal, Gadigal, Gweagal and Wangal people.

We acknowledge that sovereignty over these lands has never been ceded. ISV covers the local government areas of City of Sydney, Bayside, Randwick, Waverley, Woollahra, and the Inner West.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Introducing Inner Sydney Voice

Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development (known as Inner Sydney Voice - ISV) was established in 1974. We are a registered charity and a not-for-profit organisation that empowers people to have an equal say in the big-picture decisions that affect their lives and communities.

We do this by:

- Urging decision-makers to listen to *all* voices, not only the most dominant ones
- Working with local communities to create genuine opportunities for people to have input, especially people who are disempowered
- Enabling people to engage effectively in consultation, planning and decision-making
- Strengthening the capacity of organisations that pursue related goals

One of our key activities is publishing the iconic Inner Sydney Voice Magazine.

Inner Voice was first published in 1978 by the the Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development. Throughout its existence, the magazine has been unique among community publications in many topics it covers, such as employment, the environment, transport, welfare, housing, politics and the community sector. Contributions are drawn from staff, local residents, community organisations, academics and groups.

Inner Sydney Voice has a strong legacy and deep connection with Waterloo and surrounding areas.

We have valued the opportunity to input into the planning process for the Redfern Waterloo Redevelopment. Inner Sydney Voice is not a direct service provider but the independent, regional social development peak agency. Our diverse stakeholders have a clear expectation that we continue to centre equity, inclusion and community cohesion in all key decision making.

People and Place Planning Approach

Inner Sydney Voice has welcomed the place-based planning approach for the Waterloo South area. The approach has included a diverse range of activities that have sought to understand, share and confirm our local challenges and build on strengths to address these challenges.

The Waterloo South place based approach should continue to evolve as we all work together to design, share stewardship, and share accountability for outcomes and impacts. Inner Sydney Voice wants to be part of an approach that targets the specific circumstances of Waterloo South (and other defined areas) and engages local people as active participants in development and implementation, requiring government to share the decision-making.

The Waterloo South draft People and Place Plan is a solid plan that **can be further developed and improved** to achieve a shared vision and provide a clear direction to the the soon to be procured, Renewal Partner for the area. **Engaging people as active participants is a key opportunity.**

Key Feedback

Inner Sydney Voice has worked with others in the region, discussed the plan with local residents and/or their representatives and reviewed the plan against our underlying principles of equity, inclusion and community cohesion. The following feedback is intended to strengthen the draft plan.

- **The Vision for a Bold and Exciting Renewal:** The renewal project has been long awaited. It has a deep history and the current community and those who will be attracted to become part of the community in the future need to feel optimistic, excited and secure about their place in this renewing community. The Plan needs to harness the vision and excitement of the redevelopment and set out, up front, what outcomes we are seeking to deliver with this redevelopment. What will Waterloo South look like? Feel like? Be like? How will it respect this Aboriginal land and the legacy of a working-class area known for its deep sense of community and community organising? The new buildings, green spaces, the artwork and colours are all part of the vision. We need to be able to capture this vision in the plan. A plan where everyone belongs.

A name for the Plan such as “Belonging; Waterloo South People and Place Plan” can help to capture the vision and enhance the 6 principles underpinning the plan. It may also be useful to expand the explanations of the principles and pillars to include the types of people and families who will be living in the area such as people on very low incomes, those with disability, those who are unable to work or study, people who live alone. In other words, reassure that our people and place plan is for all, not just those who can afford to buy and live here.

- More emphasis on people rather than place should be given consideration by moving “about waterloo community” to the front of the document. The document would be strengthened by naming up front the types of people (beyond ethnicity or language spoken) that call Waterloo home. Descriptors like people who live alone, people on low incomes, people living with mental ill health and those living with disability, single parent families should be used as it helps people identify. Those descriptors will bring our inclusive vision to life.
- The seven pillars described are only as relevant as the actions we plan to deploy in relation to the pillars. In **Pillar Number 1**, Working Together, it is suggested that Community and Consumer peak organisations are included as a critical group with the responsibility of informing, organising and supporting residents to be involved in the renewal project. At this time the plan does not recognise the role of agencies such as ISV, Counterpoint, Shelter NSW and the coalition of agencies, (i.e., Groundswell) plays in representing, involving and including all people across the area.
- **The second Pillar**- working with Social Housing Residents needs to be strengthened and include protections for people on low incomes. A role for people to be involved in local governance, and investment in key social infrastructure (through trusted local community organisations). It is also important to link this social investment to the creation and maintenance of community cohesion.
- **Pillar number 3** relates to working with Aboriginal Communities and can be strengthened by celebrating and documenting the history of Aboriginal people in the area. Work to ensure governance structures include local Aboriginal people and their representatives and community led awareness and education works to build community cohesion and belonging
- **Pillar 4** can be strengthened by clarifying and describing the people in the area. The data used to tell the story of people in the area needs to be cross checked and an analysis of trends to describe people and families should be used to describe the “*people in the place*”. For example, the community will be made up of single bedroom units to accommodate lone households as well as larger

homes to meet the needs of families. Furthermore given the anticipated number of older people, people with disability and people living with mental health problems the principles of universal design will guide all development and service infrastructure.

Health and wellbeing also need to include the role community organisations and other important social connection enablers (such as churches, sporting associations, local shops etc.) play in improving and maintaining health and wellbeing.

Overall the issue of agencies working together and sharing data (with the full consent of individuals) to ensure the human services are able to provide a fully integrated health and support service needs to be articulated in the plan. Without it there is a risk that every government agency and key stakeholder operates within a siloed model using privacy protection as the excuse for poor integration and coordination.

The plan should also include a strategy to deliver on digital equity and acknowledge responsibility of agencies in ensuring people can be digitally included and how that inclusion can lead to better health and wellbeing outcomes.

- **Pillar 5** goes to accessing quality information, learning and jobs. ISV wants better engagement with NSW Education and the resourcing of a local employment and skills development strategy. This could be undertaken with the full support of Workforce Australia and a local enabler like ISV. Furthermore, local agencies such as Counterpoint can play a lead role in supporting people to directly access job support programs particularly for sectors with high job vacancies (e.g. care industry, retail and hospitality).
- **Pillar 6** addresses the need to develop a safe and welcoming community. Given the diversity of the population and our collective vision of “belonging” specific strategies pre, during and post the construction phase can go a long way to creating the sense of safety. A well-coordinated information hub responsible for bringing together locals who are supported to plan and organise their place based activities. This peer-to-peer model can enhance the range of other activities delivered by Council and formal services.
- **Pillar 7** is strong and the focus on green and clean is important. The issue of ensuring waste collection and clean up particularly during construction phase is important. Integrating activities led by locals such as a place-based, collaborative art Project during construction can help tell the story of people and raise

awareness of green and clean.

- Finally, the issue of local voices and resident self-determination is almost silent in the current plan. Whilst there is constant mention of people being consulted, we run the risk of missing the opportunity of truly placing decision making, influence and voice of local people at the centre of this development. Again, as stated above, the strategy should include the development of a local structure that is independent of the developers and of direct human service organisations. One that is community led and responsible for providing peer to peer information and guidance as well as strategies to deliver community cohesion. This has been a consistent theme in the feedback ISV has provided throughout the planning stages.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Kontellis', with a stylized, cursive script.

Marika Kontellis, Executive Officer Inner Sydney Voice
14th June 2024