

## **BEP2 ISSUES: OPEN SPACE**

### **What's the problem?**

The Redfern Waterloo Authority (RWA) in their plan for the redevelopment of the consolidated public housing estates propose 3500 new apartments over the next 20-25 years. No population projections were included in the BEP2. A recent RWA estimate indicates a population increase of 6,125 (1.75 people per new private unit). CoS project multi-story buildings at 2.05 people per unit giving an extra 7,175 people. BEP also proposes "infill" housing around the high-rises such as Waterloo Green reducing space.

The BEP2 says it is to "deliver an enhanced public domain, including new parks, open space and improvements to the existing public domain". The draft planning controls do not reserve specific areas in Redfern and Waterloo for public parks or make a commitment to achieve a per capita target for the increase in population. Open Space is left to the subsequent Housing NSW Master Plan (see overleaf).

REDWatch is concerned that unless the planning controls provide for adequate per capita public space from the outset that the required level of public space for the new population will not be delivered.

### **Why does this matter?**

Redfern-Waterloo's open space is already well below the standard originally set in the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (EPA Act) of 2.83 hectares per 1,000 people - that's 28.3 square metres per person. The City of Sydney public space in the Inner South Region, which covers the proposed development, has a square meter per person average of 6.9 compared to the city average of 11.8. Recent planning in Green Square and Victoria Park has a target of 10sqm per person.

Whether the standard used is the initial EPA Act, the Redfern-Waterloo area, the City, or the new developments the only conclusion is that the area has too little open space before more people move in. BEP2 should also set a minimum 10 square metres per person target for Redfern and Waterloo. The area may be surrounded by district and regional parks but these are not local open space.

### **What's wrong with trying to make district and regional parks offset low local open space?**

This suggestion ignores the realities of daily life in Redfern-Waterloo. Half the households do not own a car and so rely on public transport for access to district and regional open space. However, the local public transport services are inadequate for this purpose, as they primarily pass through the area on their way to or from the city. This creates open space access problems for people who are elderly and/or infirmed and for families with young children.

Residents are therefore forced to seek more indoor (and passive) recreation pursuits, or - if they do have a car - to generate greenhouse and other negative effects by driving to wherever district or regional open space is located (assuming they can park when they get there!).

### **What do we need?**

What we need is local, usable, public open space - and not just bits of paved/landscaped area around shops or private open space within or around new apartment blocks.

### **How do we get it?**

By persuading the RWA & HNSW to create zoned public open space in the final planning controls.

### **Why does open space need to be zoned in?**

Unless it is zoned in, we're unlikely to get the quantity and quality required. If there is no provision for open space in the controls then open space has to compete with the floor space allocated to the block - you have to stack the floor space higher in taller buildings to get a sizable park. The Master Plan must make provision for adequate public parks and space and the land use controls need to zone for it.

### **What can we do about it?**

Write to the RWA by 5.00 pm on Monday 28 February letting it know how important local open space is to you - and why - and that you want it zoned into the final Built Environment Plan 2 controls.

## What the RWA Built Environment Plan 2 Planning Framework say about Open Space:

### 4.4 Preliminary Public Domain Strategy (Page 74)

The delivery of an enhanced public domain is a key outcome of the social housing renewal which the draft BEP 2 seeks to facilitate. One of the key objectives of the draft BEP 2 is to achieve an enhanced public domain by:

- Providing new public parks and open space, and improving the quality of existing parks and open spaces;
- Ensuring parks and open spaces are well-designed, useable, accessible and safe and comply with Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles;
- Ensuring quality landscaping of the public domain, including the retention of established vegetation where appropriate;
- Improving the safety and design of pedestrian and cycle links and provide new site linkages to maximise permeability within the social housing sites and accessibility to the surrounding neighbourhood, local shops, community facilities and other services; and
- Incorporating environmental sustainable practices in the design of the public domain.

This is reinforced by the urban design guiding principles relating to “Public domain and open space” identified in 4.1 and repeated below.

- Create a quality public domain which signals and supports a successful community.
- Provide for attractive, well located, clearly defined, safe and usable open spaces and pedestrian linkages.
- Provide private open space to all dwellings in the form of courtyards, terraces, balconies or roof top gardens.
- Delineate the progression of spaces from public to private and provide a clear definition of territory and ownership of all spaces.
- Facilitate resident surveillance of public and common areas.
- New public open spaces to be contiguous with streets, highly visible and overlooked.
- Review the existing landscape qualities in streets and open spaces to maximise amenity and safety and create of new high quality landscape design for public spaces. Respect existing quality streetscapes.

The public domain objectives and urban design guiding principles will provide an important basis for the development of a detailed public domain and open space strategy, which will form part of the Master Plan to be developed by HNSW, following the finalisation of the planning framework.

It is important that the planning controls proposed in the draft BEP 2 are supported by key strategies and commitments relating to public domain. Accordingly, a Preliminary Public Domain Strategy has been developed as part of the draft BEP 2 planning framework. The Strategy relates to the public domain within and around the Redfern and Waterloo HNSW sites. The key elements of the Preliminary Public Domain Strategy are outlined below, which will form the basis of a detailed public domain strategy to be prepared with the Master Plan.

#### New parks and open spaces

- The renewal of Redfern and Waterloo HNSW sites is to make provision for new public parks and open spaces. The location of future parks and open spaces is to be identified within the future Master Plan, in close consultation with the Social housing residents, as well as the wider community.
- New public parks and open spaces should be located along street frontages to maximise accessibility and visibility.
- New public parks and open spaces should accommodate facilities appropriate for the envisaged uses and functions i.e. playgrounds, seating, lighting, shading, etc.
- New public parks and open spaces are to be designed in accordance with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) criteria to maximise safety of the spaces for users.
- New public parks and open spaces are to incorporate environmentally sustainable features in their design e.g. water sensitive urban design.
- New public parks and open spaces are to incorporate landscaping and appropriate tree planting to maximise the use and amenity e.g. adequate sunlight, daylight and shade, while minimising opportunities for crime and anti social behaviour.

#### Upgrade of existing parks and open spaces

The renewal of the Redfern and Waterloo HNSW sites is to provide for the upgrading the existing parks and land used as open space to ensure:

- Maximum use and enjoyment of these spaces by the community.
- Improve safety and security within the parks and open space.
- The facilities provided within the parks and open spaces (playgrounds, etc) are most appropriate for those using the parks and open space.
- Existing landscaping and vegetation does not adversely impact on the amenity, use or safety of the parks and open space.