

REDFERN-WATERLOO COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN

A plan adopted by Council on 10th March 2004

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to express his sincere gratitude to the following people without whose assistance this plan would not have reached fruition.

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John Maynard
Community Safety Officer
City of Sydney Council

ABORIGINAL STATEMENT

South Sydney Council and the various Government departments, community organisations and community representatives which form part of the Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project acknowledge the Aboriginal people as the first peoples of Australia.

In doing so the Partnership recognises the loss and grief by Aboriginal people caused by alienation from traditional lands and their spiritual relationship to such land.

The Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project acknowledges and recognises the heritage of the Aboriginal struggle and achievements, the right of Indigenous Australians to live according to their own beliefs, values and customs and we celebrate Aboriginal people's contribution to strengthening and enriching the heritage of all Australians.

The South Sydney area including Redfern and Waterloo is now occupied by people drawn from many different lands who share the values of tolerance and respect for one another.

We encourage Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to work together to better understand one another's similarities and differences as we continue to move forward in the spirit of reconciliation.



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

A sense of belonging is in many ways the key to feeling safe in our communities. As a proud and long time resident of the area I can attest to many of the strengths of the Redfern-Waterloo community, its diversity, its friendliness and its willingness to work together on local solutions to local issues. Nevertheless we can always work on ways of making our communities safer places.

The Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Plan is an important initiative in laying the foundation for not only improving people's sense of security in the area but also in providing more opportunities for people to get to know each other. People must not only share a sense of ownership of their place but also feel a connection to those who share that space with them. In this way safer places are created.

There is no doubt that reducing fear of crime and levels of disorder is a challenging goal. There is no silver bullet or magic formula when we seek to create safer communities. Traditionally we have relied on the Police and the criminal justice system as the most important components of law and order policy. Over time however as Police have consolidated their "reactive" role in the arrest and punishment of offenders, it has become apparent that approaches that can help to eliminate the conditions that contribute to crime depend on more than just police authorities.

This is not to downplay the effectiveness of the police in reducing or preventing crime. Rather, it is to highlight that any successful community safety strategy will need to involve a broad range of different groups and individuals, developing strategies around a number of key issues related to the issues of crime and safety in our communities.

Consequently this plan has an emphasis on strengthening communities and underlines the importance of increasing opportunities for people to engage in legitimate activities. By carefully blending together a number of complex factors the plan aims to create more vibrant and welcoming communities which can continue to grow and flourish. This is the commendable approach undertaken by the Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Taskforce.

Aside from Council the Taskforce contains representatives from a range of state government departments through the Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project including the Premier's Department, the Attorney General's Department, Central Sydney Area Health Service, the Department of Community Services and the Department of Housing as well as the Aboriginal Housing Company and community representatives reflecting a co-ordinated approach to tackling the underlying causes of crime in the planning process.

The Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Plan also acknowledges that often it is the most vulnerable and marginalised members of our community who are most likely to be perpetrators and / or victims of crime.

On behalf of Council I would like to congratulate the Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Taskforce and the range of organisations and individuals who have contributed to the plan. I recognise that this is the first Community Safety Plan ever developed for Redfern-Waterloo and it is an important first step in creating a more secure environment and improving the area's image.

As a result the plan also acknowledges the importance of other initiatives of the Partnership aimed at supporting the most disadvantaged groups and individuals in the Redfern-Waterloo area and ensuring appropriate services and other support mechanisms are available to ensure a reasonable quality of life.

Councillor Tony Pooley
October 2003

* NB The former South Sydney Council officially amalgamated with the City of Sydney Council on 6th February 2004. The bulk of this plan has been developed for Redfern and Waterloo throughout 2002-2003 when the two suburbs were a part of the former South Sydney Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The problems associated with crime and safety in local communities have a major impact on the quality of people's lives. All over the world the public and private sectors are realising that the causes of crime or the risk factors associated with offending behaviour are complex and that Police departments alone cannot successfully deal with the twin issues of responding to crime and correcting the conditions which contribute to crime.

The Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Plan has as its primary aim to reinforce common values, so that crime prevention is based on the principle of shared responsibility and that only a co-ordinated approach involving a wide range of groups and individuals will be able to cope with its challenges. It also acknowledges that the safety of communities will depend largely on basic institutions such as the family and kin, work, school and communal associations.

With this in mind the Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Taskforce who have been responsible for the development and production of this plan have examined existing research, compiled a crime profile from the latest available data and conducted an extensive community consultation process to identify the key community safety issues which form the basis of each section of the document. These are:

Community Strengthening Activities – this chapter includes ways of improving community consultation processes and the connections or interactions people share with one another

Early Intervention approaches to Community Safety – this chapter includes issues concerning children and families

Community Safety and Young People – a chapter which looks specifically at issues affecting the 12-18 age group

Health issues – a section which includes drug and alcohol abuse and the prevention of community harm and

Safer Environments – a chapter which looks at ways of planning for safer urban design including private dwellings and maximising the use of public spaces.

The key to creating safer neighbourhoods is to encourage social interaction and community connections where perceptions of fear are low, where community bonds are strong and where residents have a sense of ownership of their neighbourhoods. It is this central theme which essentially underpins the Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Plan, that community safety is a shared responsibility and the best weapon we have to address crime in our communities is a planned and united community effort. It is acknowledged that this is the first plan of its kind in the area and while much of the challenge may still lie ahead it is hoped that a promising start has been made.

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“Community Safety is about creating and maintaining a safe place in which to live, work and visit. This is achieved through a high level of community interaction, a well maintained environment and a strong sense of community responsibility for ongoing safety issues”.

**Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Taskforce
June 2003**

POLICY STATEMENT

Vision

To provide the South Sydney community with a safe place to live, work and visit by encouraging social interaction and community connections where perceptions of fear are low, where community bonds are strong and where people share a sense of ownership of their neighbourhoods.

South Sydney Council will achieve this by:

- Adopting an integrated planning approach to community safety by establishing and developing strategic partnerships with a range of groups and individuals.
- Ensuring that the benefits of community safety programs are shared equitably by all parts of the community.
- Promoting healthy lifestyles and well-being including a commitment to a harm minimisation philosophy and acknowledging that drug and alcohol use and abuse is primarily a public health and social issue.
- Ensuring that community safety programs involve the whole community and reflect the community's diversity.
- Adopting Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles by striking a balance between the social and physical environments with regard to all new and existing development applications.
- Investing in early intervention approaches to community safety by supporting children and families in the prevention of long term crime and safety issues.
- Working with local Police area commands on community-based approaches to addressing local crime and safety issues.
- Adopting innovative approaches in relation to drinking in public places.

Chapter One - Introduction

1.1 Background

The role of local government in community safety planning and crime prevention is a relatively new one. Historically South Sydney Council has been involved in a number of initiatives which relate either directly or indirectly to the safety of the community. These initiatives include the provision of lighting for motor vehicles and pedestrians, conducting community safety audits, the removal of graffiti and rubbish, the provision of child care, cleaning up unsafely discarded needles and a number of community development programs designed to build and strengthen the community as a whole.

In recent times local government has begun to take a more strategic role in planning for safer communities. This is largely due to the fact that local Councils are well positioned to co-ordinate the range of agencies and organisations who need to take an active role in tackling the broad range of community safety issues.

In response to these concerns South Sydney Council at its meeting of 26th October 2001 resolved to create the position of Community Safety Officer with a view to developing a Community Safety Plan for the South Sydney Local Government Area. The aim of the plan is to address the underlying causes of crime by focusing on building and strengthening community networks and supporting the most vulnerable groups and individuals in the South Sydney community. This is in line with Council's vision in its 2002-2005 Management Plan for a sustainable City balancing all the needs of the community and its mission statement to

“ensure a sustainable City of South Sydney through the efficient and equitable management and allocation of resources and to enhance the quality of life and well-being of its communities”.¹

The Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Plan is a key component of the overall strategy for South Sydney City Council.

1.2 The Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project

In March 2002 the Premier Bob Carr announced the establishment of the Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project as a first step in developing real and sustainable outcomes for the people of Redfern and Waterloo. A total of \$7 million dollars was dedicated to the project over three years to develop and implement a number of practical initiatives to address key issues in the two suburbs.

The Partnership Project moved quickly to support the development of a Community Safety Plan as one of the key initiatives for the Redfern-Waterloo area with South Sydney Council taking the lead agency role. The partnership approach is vital in the context of community safety planning. There are no silver bullets or magic formulas when it comes to preventing crime in our communities. This is because the causes of crime are many, varied and complex.

¹ South Sydney Council 2002-2005 Management Plan

They include factors such as family background, schooling, income and employment, drug use, gender, peer relations, the physical environment, risks and punishment, criminal history and offender motivation. While traditionally we have looked to the Police to keep our communities safe and secure clearly this single agency cannot be responsible for all of these issues.

South Sydney Council and the Partnership Project recognise that the key to creating safer communities is to co-ordinate a whole of government and whole of community approach involving a range of key groups and individuals to tackle the underlying causes of crime. This fact acknowledges that community safety is a shared responsibility and that only through a planned and united community effort can we realistically hope to create safer communities.

As partners in the Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project, South Sydney Council, State Government agencies, non-Government organisations and the community have all been working together on a range of initiatives to achieve sustainable solutions to the complex range of issues in the Redfern and Waterloo area.

The broad range of initiatives of the project aim to build on existing community strengths and include supporting children, families and young people as well as improving the physical environment with a view to improving public amenity. These initiatives all form part of a holistic approach to addressing community safety issues in the area and are covered in more detail in relevant sections of this document.

1.3 Framework for the development of the Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Plan

Legislative framework and Community Safety

Under the Local Government Act (1993) local Councils are responsible for managing public land. This means in effect that Councils have a responsibility for maintaining a sense of safety and security in relation to the users of public land.

The Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act (1997) provides a statutory basis for the development of community safety or crime prevention plans with local governments taking the lead agency role. The Act recognises the importance of community safety activities that draw upon local knowledge and services in adopting a strategic partnership approach to addressing local community safety issues.

The New South Wales Government and Community Safety

The Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety planning process is based on the following key principles as outlined by the N.S.W. Attorney General's Department Crime Prevention Division:

- Programs focus on community safety outcomes
- Multi-level interventions will have the most impact on safe communities
- Responsibilities for community safety are shared
- Community safety programs will involve the whole community and reflect the community's diversity
- The benefits of community safety programs are shared equitably by all parts of the community
- The lead agency in local community safety planning should be local Councils and
- Community safety activities will be based on evidence of what works or is likely to work.²

Guiding Principles

The strategies contained within the Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Plan aim to:

- Develop local crime prevention strategies and establish safer communities through establishing strategic partnerships
- Deliver social justice, access and equity to all groups in the community
- Redress social, economic and cultural disadvantage
- Promote community networks and local identity while reducing social isolation
- Preserve and promote environmental values including enhancing community well-being and welfare through ecologically sustainable development
- Promote healthy lifestyles and well being including a commitment to a harm minimisation philosophy and
- Respect human rights.

Development of the Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Plan

The range of government departments and community organisations which form part of the Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project agreed that the framework for developing the Community Safety Plan would involve the following steps as recommended by the Crime Prevention Division of the New South Wales Attorney General's Department:

² N.S.W. Attorney General's Department (1998) Community Crime Prevention – A decision making framework for planning and action

- **Defining the problem** – including community consultation, analysis of existing research and the development of a crime profile
- **Deciding what to do** – prioritising problems, identifying, piloting and selecting options, selecting strategies and preparing a draft plan
- **Publicising the Plan** – informing the community, receiving feedback and amending the plan
- **Implementing the Plan** – publicising the final version, assigning responsibilities, obtaining agreements, committing resources and taking action and
- **Assessing Progress** – monitoring progress, measuring outcomes, evaluating impact and publicising success.³

This document focuses on the first two steps in the above planning process. It is emphasised that this is the first plan of its kind in the development of a strategic and community development approach to the problems of crime and safety in Redfern and Waterloo. Furthermore the Partnership acknowledges that in developing the plan to address the underlying causes of crime in the area evolving practice and unique local conditions will always give rise to new ways of creating safer communities.

Interrelated plans and other initiatives

The Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project is a whole of Government, whole of community approach to address long standing social, economic, cultural, environmental and planning issues in the two suburbs. The partnership aims to improve planning and service co-ordination and better alignment between different levels of Government. What this means in the context of this plan is that it is one of many strategic planning documents and initiatives currently in progress in Redfern-Waterloo. Many of the problems or issues being addressed through these plans and initiatives relate directly to strengthening the two communities and by extension the safety of the area.

The Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Plan is part of an integrated planning approach to the community safety concerns identified in Redfern and Waterloo. As such this plan will contain strategies which may overlap or complement other initiatives being implemented in other planning documents including Council's

Draft Social Plan 2001-2003 – a plan which through research and extensive community consultation identified the needs and concerns of the diverse community groups in South Sydney and which has developed policies and plans to respond to these needs.

³ N.S.W. Attorney General's Department (1998) How to develop a Local Crime Prevention Plan

Public Domain Plan – a plan being developed by South Sydney Council in conjunction with The Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Metropolitan Resources (formerly Planning N.S.W.) and the Department of Housing for all open space within the South Sydney Local Government Area. The plan will identify opportunities within the districts, neighbourhoods and specific sites of South Sydney to provide and enhance civic spaces and other essential qualities of the city's diverse neighbourhood. This plan forms part of the Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project.

Community Facilities Plan – a plan being undertaken by South Sydney Council which aims to review Council's existing community facilities and assess future needs to ensure that facilities meet the needs of a diverse and changing community.

Affordable Housing Strategy – a strategy currently being developed to achieve more appropriate and affordable housing outcomes in the area

Homelessness Strategy – a strategy currently being developed to meet the needs of men and women who are homeless in the area

Recreation Plan – a plan currently being developed which will inform and guide Council on its role as a sport and recreation provider and facilitator to meet the recreational and leisure needs of local residents.

Art in Sight Plan – a public art initiative where artists produce site specific art works for the interiors of Council owned properties including community centres, facilities, child care centres, town halls and public libraries.

Road Safety Action Plan 2002-2003 – a plan which aims to improve pedestrian and road safety in the area.

In addition the Redfern-Waterloo Partnership Project includes:

The RED (Redfern, Eveleigh, Darlington) Strategy – a strategic plan targeting redevelopment and employment opportunities, diversity of housing, transport, revitalisation of shopping areas and better location and distribution of human services.

Review of Human Services

A review of both Government and Non-Government services is currently underway. The review recognises that the capacity to deliver additional resources to meet community needs is limited and that in order to meet the highest needs of the community it may be necessary to redirect existing resources. The findings of the review will be used to inform the reshaping of the existing services network.

1.4 Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Taskforce

The Redfern-Waterloo Community Safety Taskforce was established in June 2002 with a view to co-ordinating an integrated planning approach to the development of a Community Safety Plan for the area. The Taskforce comprises representatives from a number of Government departments who form part of the Redfern-Waterloo Partnership project including South Sydney Council, Premier's, Attorney General's, Housing, Health, Community Services, Education and Training, Probation and Parole as well as the Aboriginal Housing Company and community members.

The range of agencies who form part of the membership of the Taskforce is a reflection of the fact that the Community Safety Plan aims to tackle a broad range of social issues in addressing community safety concerns in Redfern and Waterloo.

1.5 Redfern-Waterloo Community Profile

The suburbs of Redfern and Waterloo are part of the South Sydney Local Government Area and are located just to the south of the Sydney Central Business District.

Below is a summary of key statistics for the area based on the 2001 Census.

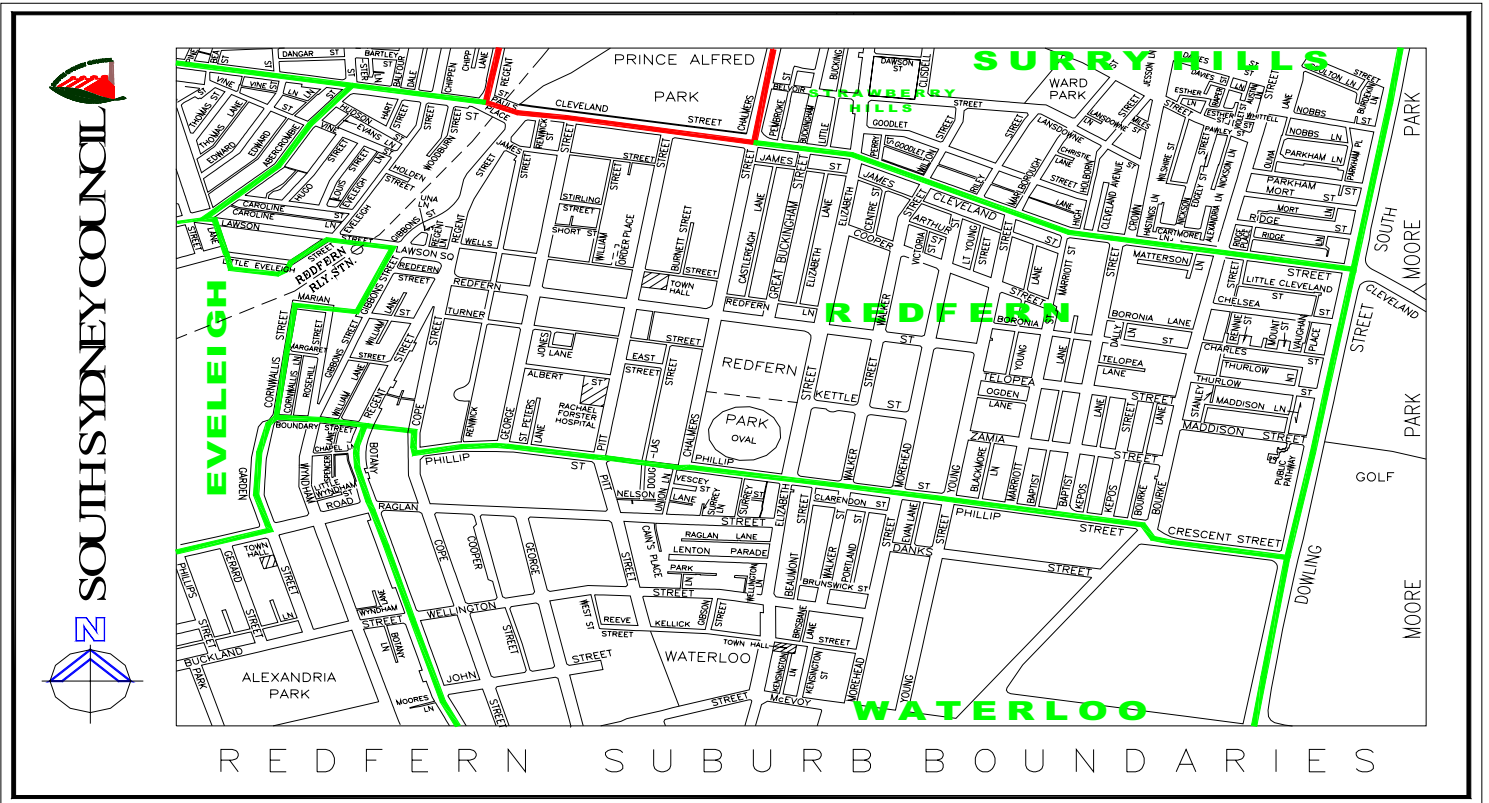
Area (sq km)	3.1
Population	Redfern – 11,206 Waterloo – 5,745
Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander	311 Redfern 411 Waterloo
NESB Background	31% Redfern 41% Waterloo
Families with children under 15	928 22% of Redfern families 35% of Waterloo families
Single parent families with Children under 15	8.5% Redfern 22.8% Waterloo

School attendance - Pre-school	59 Redfern
	45 Waterloo
Infants / Primary	266 Redfern
	310 Waterloo
Secondary	236 Redfern
	263 Waterloo
Total	561 Redfern
	618 Waterloo
Highest Educational levels – Year 10 or below	25% Redfern
	38% Waterloo
Public housing (% of suburb)	23% Redfern
	67% Waterloo⁴
Weekly income less than \$300	39% Redfern
	66% Waterloo
Disability Support Pension	1,600
Newstart Allowance	1,000
Single Parenting Payment	460
Age Pension	2,500⁵
Unemployed	7.6% Redfern
	16.6% Waterloo
Total employed	5,348 Redfern
	1,414 Waterloo
Types of Employment – Redfern	
Management / Professional / Assoc Prof.	53%
Clerical / Sales / Services Workers	29%
Tradespersons & related workers	6%
Labourers and related workers	5%
Production and Transport workers	4%
Types of Employment – Waterloo	
Management / Professional / Assoc Prof.	37%
Clerical / Sales / Service Workers	35%
Tradespersons & related workers	8%
Labourers and related workers	8%
Production and Transport workers	8%

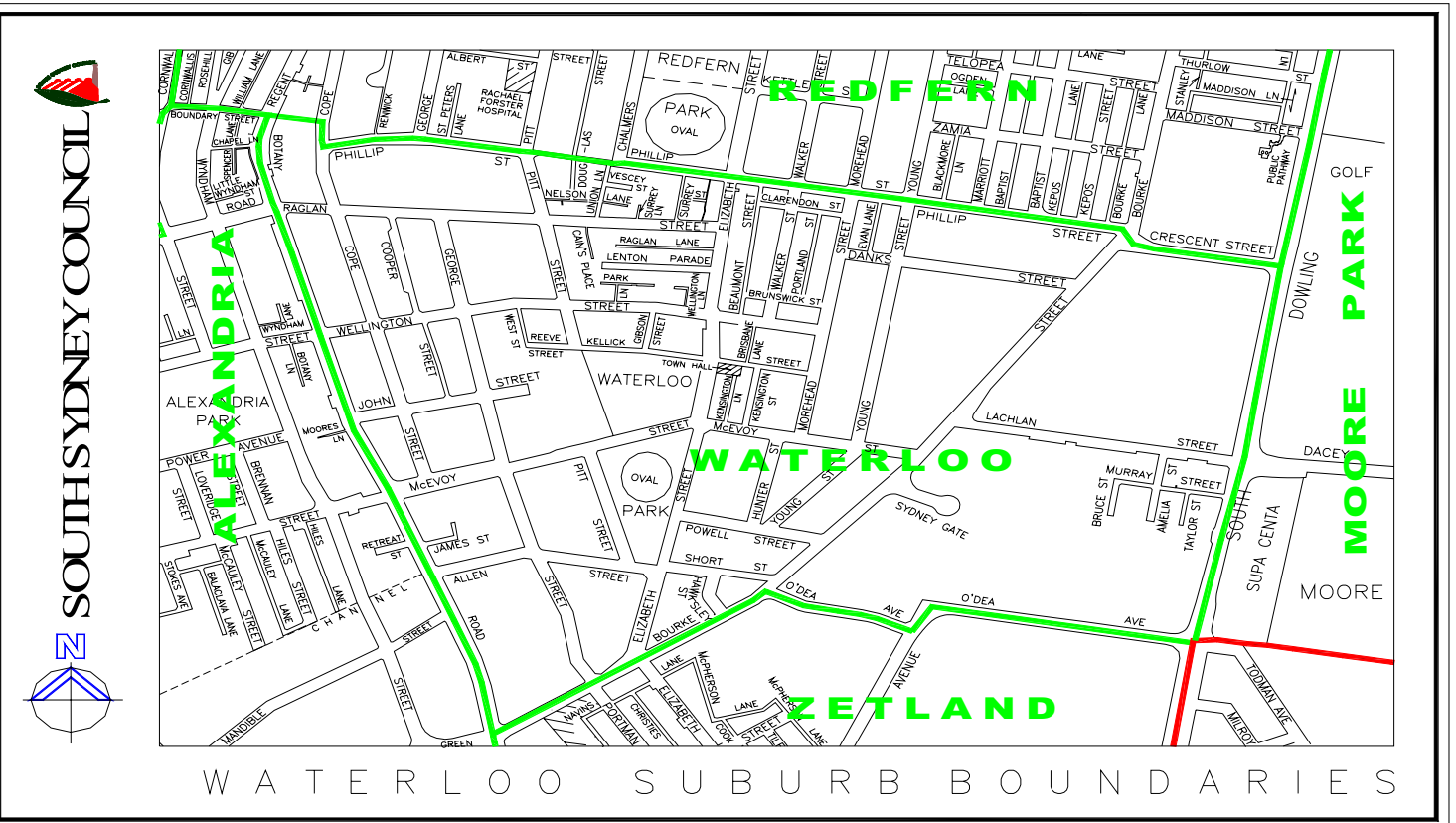
⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2001) National Census of Population and Housing

⁵ South Sydney Council (2001) In Pathways to Prevention Project – Interim issues paper

1.6 Redfern – Suburb Map



1.7 Waterloo – Suburb Map



1.8 Redfern – Selected characteristics

Redfern exhibits the features of many older inner city suburbs and contains many items of heritage and cultural importance including sites of Aboriginal significance. The area like many similarly located suburbs is undergoing a period of rapid gentrification due to increasing demand for inner city housing stock. As a consequence property values have increased rapidly in recent years reducing the affordability of housing in the suburb. The gap in socio-economic status between the high and low income groups is particularly evident in Redfern.

One of the most significant sites in the Redfern area is The Block. The Block lies within the lands of the Gadigal (Cadigal) people, part of the Dharug Nation. It falls within the larger Darlington Conservation Area, which is historically significant as an area of late nineteenth century (1880's) housing constructed largely to provide housing for those employed at the Eveleigh Railway Workshops.

Since the 1940's Redfern and The Block in particular has been seen by many as one of the bases for Aboriginal people in Sydney. It was one of the first pieces of land in urban Australia owned by Indigenous people when it was purchased for Indigenous housing in 1973. Since then The Block has provided Indigenous people moving to Sydney with the opportunity to remain living in a community environment with extended family, living together providing a support network. Several generations of Aboriginal people have been brought up in The Block and it is of social and cultural significance to these long-term residents and those who have returned to the area after moving elsewhere.⁶

Other significant landmarks in the area include Redfern Town Hall, Redfern Post Office, Redfern Courthouse, Redfern Oval the traditional home of the South Sydney Rabbitohs rugby league club and Redfern railway station which with the exception of the Airport Line is the only station other than Central on the Sydney train network through which every line runs.



Aerial view of The Block adjacent to Redfern railway station.

⁶ Australian Heritage Commission (2003) Register of the National Estate Database Website

1.9 Waterloo – Selected characteristics

Waterloo is an inner city suburb which supports one of the highest concentrations of public housing in Sydney. In the 1960's terrace housing in the area was initially replaced by one, two and three storey walk-up flats and maisonettes. Later in the same decade high-rise flats were the predominant form culminating in what was then known as the Endeavour Estate which comprised two thirty storey towers, the Matavai and Turanga buildings. Lower rise buildings of six storeys became more popular in the 1970's.⁷

Today up to 90% of all dwellings in Waterloo are owned by the Department of Housing. There are more than two thousand units of public housing in the suburb with a mix of high rise, three storey walk up apartments and medium density housing. A large proportion of tenants are older people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

The area also comprises a significant industrial sector which has been one of the traditional employers for Waterloo residents.

Other significant landmarks in Waterloo include Mt. Carmel Catholic Church, Waterloo Oval and Waterloo Town Hall which is now used as a library.



Waterloo Public Housing Estate.

⁷ N.S.W. Department of Housing (1997) The History of Public housing in New South Wales, Website