



REDFERN WATERLOO PRELIMINARY MASTERPLANNING PROJECT

REDFERN COMMUNITY DESIGN WORKSHOPS,
23-24 NOVEMBER 2011

SUMMARY REPORT

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01

INTRODUCTION

The Redfern area contains a major concentration of social housing in buildings ranging from 2-storey walk-up blocks to towers up to 17 storeys high. Redfern and Waterloo contain 3,500 dwellings owned by Housing NSW.

This area is suffering from a wide range of physical and social problems, including visually dominating buildings, uninviting public spaces, crime and anti-social behaviour. Much of the housing is also in poor condition and not up to contemporary standards.

The Redfern and Waterloo Preliminary Masterplan Project will provide a plan to address these issues through the renewal of the social housing. It will provide for at least 3,500 additional homes resulting in a total of 7,000 dwellings, to be split approximately to at least 50% private housing, 40% social housing and 10% affordable housing. The plan will also provide for new shops and community facilities, and identify improvements to streets and public spaces.

During 2000 and 2011, Housing NSW has been talking with local residents and other stakeholders about their ideas for the renewal of the social housing area.

This has included the following activities:

- Bus trips to see other renewed areas;
- Workshops and street corner sessions on topics related to the masterplan;
- Presentations to community meetings; and
- A Planning Expo.

In November 2011, a series of Community Design workshops were held to provide local residents and other stakeholders with an opportunity to contribute to the plan for the renewal of Redfern estate. This report outlines the process and outcomes of these workshops.

All social housing tenants and nearby private residents and local agencies were invited to attend the workshops. Other invitees included:

- The Sydney Metropolitan Development Authority
- The City of Sydney

The workshops were organised and staffed by Housing NSW. They were facilitated by Barbara Company of GHD. Additional support was provided by staff from Scott Carver and David Lock Associates.



02 WORKSHOP OUTLINE



The objectives of the workshops were:

- To elicit values held by the community about their area, both positive and negative
- To raise awareness amongst the community about the potential for positive change
- To seek ideas from the community about how their area could be improved

Two workshops were held – one during the day and one in the evening – in order to maximise the potential for all residents to participate. The workshops were held at the Redfern Town Hall, relatively close to the social housing area.

Each workshop involved the residents working in groups, assisted by a facilitator and designer. Bilingual community educators were provided for Mandarin, Cantonese and Russian-speaking groups.

Each workshop followed the following process:

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Group exercise: Identification of the main aspects of the area that the residents love, followed by reporting back
3. Brief presentations of community priorities, key challenges, key opportunities and key ingredients of a successful neighbourhood
4. Group exercise: Identification of the main aspects of the area that the residents don't like, followed by reporting back
5. Group exercise: Identification of other places that the residents like (including streets, open spaces, shops, community facilities and residential buildings)
6. Group exercise: Identification by residents of where new 'ingredients' such as shops, community facilities and open spaces should be introduced in their area, and how streets should be changed, using photos and a plan
7. Viewing of the plans resulting from activity 6, and 'voting' on preferred plans
8. Wrap up and next steps

The following sections of this report summarise the main outcomes from each of these activities.

03 LOVED ASPECTS OF THE AREA



The aspects of Redfern that the residents love are summarised below.

Daytime workshop

Table 1

- Good location
- Bus stop near, easy access to pedestrians/visitors
- Like the heritage character and scale of surround areas, like the shops along Redfern St
- Some streets more friendly
- New housing
- Diversity
- Friendly people

Table 2

- We are in the heart of the city
- Close to everything
- A lot of shops

Table 3

- Diversity
- Friendliness

Table 5

- Like closed streets as no traffic especially Morehead to avoid rat running car eg. Redfern, Young, Phillip

03 LOVED ASPECTS OF THE AREA



Evening workshop

Table 2

- Redfern Park
- Café culture
- Mt Carmel Church
- Built environment – range of facilities
- Unusual development



Table 3

- Proximity to city
- More accessibility with more bike lanes
- Community gardens
- Indigenous people add community
- Bike links
- Dogs/companionship
- Fresh food & vege market
- Hanging gardens
- Aboriginal people

Table 4

- Capacity to walk down street and recognise something familiar, feel safe
- Upgraded Redfern park and Oval
- Cafes/culture
- Restaurants
- Redfern Park
- Trees/green space
- Hanging gardens
- Diversity
- Nature strips/community gardens

Table 5

- People meeting & seeing
- Diversity
- Know your neighbours
- Sense of caring
- Fabulous deciduous trees
- Good open space

Summary

Amongst the aspects of Redfern that the residents love identified through this activity, a series of common themes emerged. These included:

- Proximity to the city
- Redfern Park
- Cafés
- Trees
- Parks
- Community

04 ISSUES

The aspects of Redfern that the residents don't like are summarised below.

Daytime workshop

Table 1

- Three main buildings too high
- Lack of shade and shelter
- Heritage needs to be visible

Table 2

- Closed spaces
- Old fences
- Corners that do not function
- Graffiti

Table 3

- Black spots/unsafe intersections
- Access to buildings/mobility
- Shape of building
- Underground parking
- Cycle ways, unsafe to walk
- Lighting
- Not enough bench seats along footpaths



Table 3

04 ISSUES

Table 4

- Smoking and pollution around bus stops
- Need more small businesses, not just Coles and Woolworths
- Fences around Morehead and Cooper St blocks views and divides up the site
- Safe areas for car parking
- Strong general feeling of threat throughout the area
- 3 Buildings on Poets Corner do not have 'homely' feeling
- Buildings are too close together with poor lighting
- Lack of accessibility for elderly, disabled
- Streets can be steep, dangerous for elderly, disabled
- Need more areas where elderly can stop to rest
- Unsafe feeling walking along smaller streets, poor lighting
- Need separate park for dogs
- Too much inactive open space
- Need to provide more opportunities for active recreation activities in parks (even just tables and chairs)

Table 5

- Lots of open space, uncertain of who can use it
- Uncertainty if open space is safe

Table 6

- Safety issues with shopping
- Lack of accessibility, safety
- Need Medical Centres
- Need libraries
- Need a Senior Community Centre
- Need facilities in open space
- Not enough trees

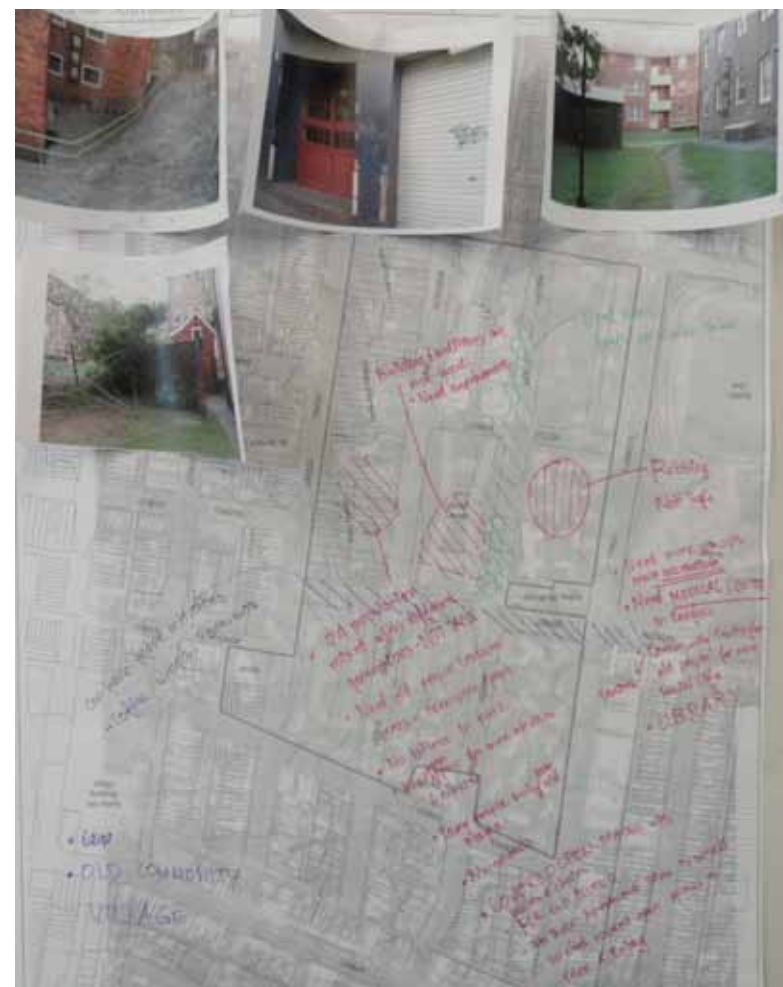


Table 6

Table 7

- No activated space - get rid of dead space
- Fix non-welcoming spaces
- Need more shops
- No community connection & integration with new sections
- Elizabeth & Cooper St - no addressing street front
- Security shutters

Table 8

- Wooden seats not enough
- Need more affordable shops
- Lack of security/safety at building entries
- Lack of balconies
- Covered space not enough
- Non-functional lifts

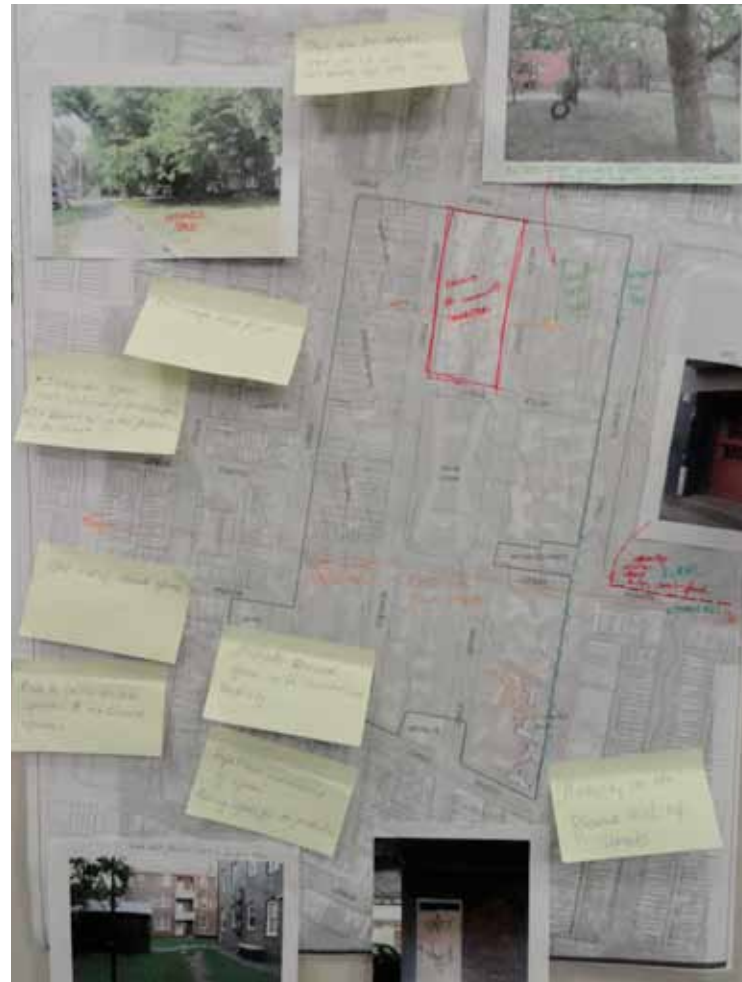


Table 7



Table 8

04 ISSUES

Table 9

- Lack of functionality in open space
- Dogs not on leashes in open space
- Lack of seating
- Signage too small
- Lack of toilets
- Lack of medical centres
- Need for more pedestrian walkways - safe for elderly, disabled

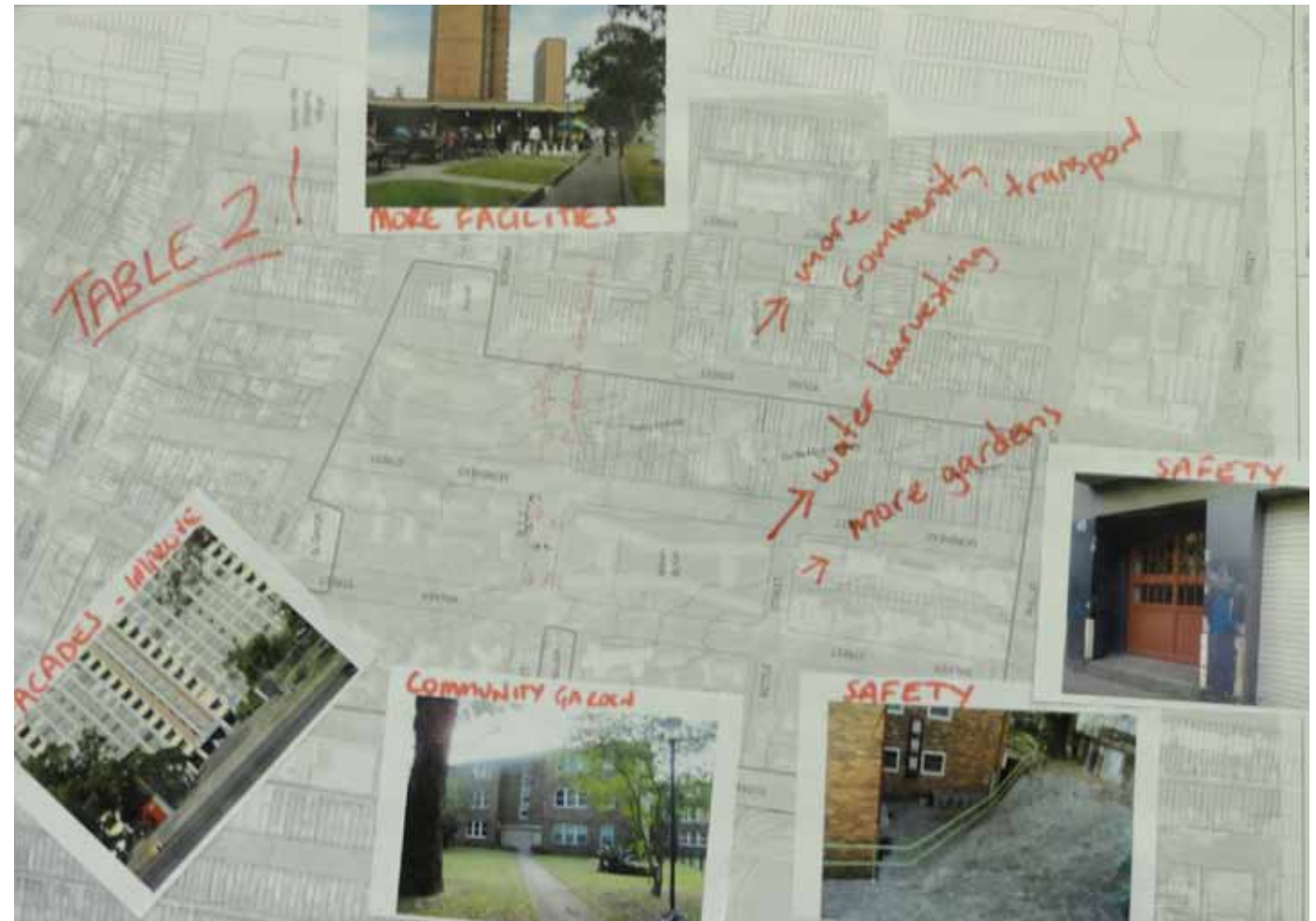


Evening workshop

(There was no Table 1)

Table 2

- Maintenance of trees
- Lack of frontage on Walker St
- Improvements to common spaces
- Neglect of spaces/residents taking ownership
- Do not like fences/labyrinth an eyesore
- Lack of bus services
- Lack of security



04 ISSUES

Table 3

- Lack of connectivity: all social housing, no services to attract people
- Poor open spaces
- Not sure who is responsible, lack of ownership in public housing, neglect
- Not sure of entrances, uninviting
- Poets Corner: lack of shade

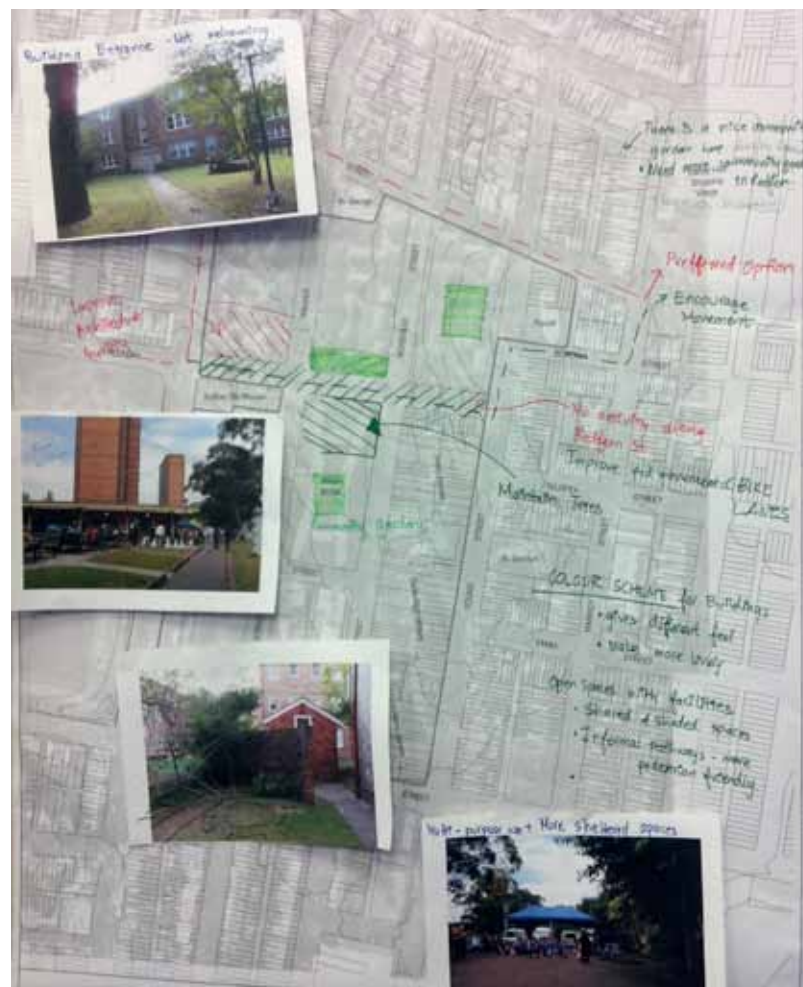


Table 4

- Do not like big buildings with functionality issues
- Poor interaction and access
- Poor maintenance and care of public spaces
- Elizabeth St buildings - staying idle
- Issues with rats and mice

Table 5

- Dislike public housing in Young St - look and feel is depressing
- Communities use unrestricted streets as parking
- Vermin, mice, rats
- Elizabeth St underutilised - empty buildings
- Poorly maintained parks
- Little shared open space

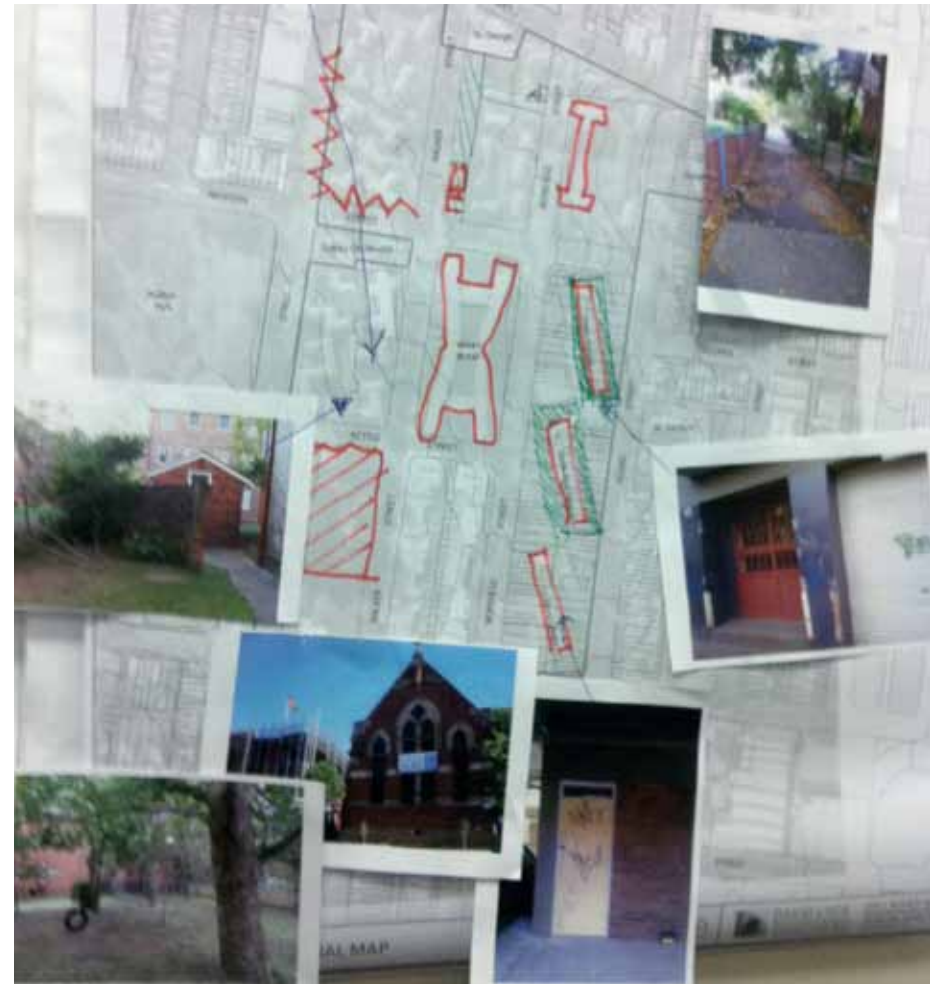


Table 4

04 ISSUES

Summary

Amongst the concerns about Redfern identified through this activity, a series of common themes emerged. These included:

- Uninviting and unused open spaces
- Feeling of insecurity in streets, open spaces and building entries
- Lack of seating along key pedestrian routes
- Poor lighting in streets and public spaces
- Lack of shops, community facilities and toilets



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IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The ideas for the improvement of Redfern suggested by the residents are outlined below.

Daytime workshop

Table 1

- Places for elderly to exercise (not just children) with equipment
- Café
- Market in Redfern Park (Not for profit - run by HNSW tenants, not business)
- Redfern & Morehead St Bicycle Route (but maintain closure)
- Medical Centre on a corner
- Break up blocks as too big/wide with streets
- Underground secure car parking (19-20m building) ->20m street with balconies and setbacks.
- More community gardens
- Retain street plaza - Morehead St



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IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Table 2

- Communal open space at Morehead with facilities
- Local spaces that establish 'Main Community Life'
- Mix of building heights
- Private gardens also give privacy
- Car parking underground is important
- Urban spaces which are safe, secure, attractive
- Separation of activities for young and elderly
- Recreation space



Table 3

- Reclaim street/plaza area as concept - Morehead St
- More shops; small businesses (Post office, GPs, Medical Centre)
- More public toilets
- Urban art
- Central focus for community
- Integrated services/as shopfront/one-stop shop
- In building - private open space/could be shop top housing
- Social mix within building - should be building by building/not within building; public housing reps
- Encourage more 'Community'



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IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Table 4

- Opening Cooper St - medium density and activity
- Elizabeth St - shops with housing higher rise
- Community centre & plaza along Redfern St - with accessibility for elderly
- Through streets to increase flow
- Danks St link with plaza and shops to centre
- Improve bus routes through site



Table 5

- European style spaces - murals, gardens to soften environment
- Trees to separate areas from pedestrian zone
- Hub to lead to St Saviour's Church
- Connections to pocket parks - big park - pocket parks – hubs



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IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Table 6

- Low rise and medium density between areas
- Green open space between buildings
- Pedestrian/car free in community central areas
- More pedestrian access
- More community facilities (near Morehead, Kettle and Redfern)
- More medical facilities
- More shops (affordable small businesses)/restaurants on Redfern St
- Centres of every Centre
- High rise for better ventilations



Table 7

- Break down barriers to bring people in - make existing park focus
- Redfern to have mixed use commercial
- Kettle St - bicycle & pedestrian streets
- Boronia St - more bicycle & pedestrian areas
- Heritage of surrounding into areas
- Activity nodes/activity corners (Cooper, Phillip and Elizabeth St)



05

IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Table 8

- Shops to face Elizabeth and Redfern Park - more pedestrian friendly
- Elizabeth and Walker residential with public walking area with seating
- Communal open areas between buildings
- Cooper St new areas/buildings/community gardens
- Young St/Poets Corner - Medical centre, chemist
- Shaded areas
- More artwork along walkways



Table 9

- Shops on ground - residential above (eg use for Moon Festival)
- Library in central area
- Mix of building heights across Redfern
- Cooper St to be med/higher density -> private communal open space
- More seating and covered areas
- Small pocket park on Morehead; 5-10 people covered area park
- Central plaza is key idea
- Community garden at Purcell
- Private communal open space between buildings



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IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Evening workshop

Table 2

- Community Centres - bright, cheerful, cutting edge, sustainable
- Catch water on top of buildings to irrigate gardens
- Improve Poet's Corner hub - important
- Extend concierge service if successful
- Upgrade Walker St and store frontage
- Multi-functional spaces - tennis, skate, basketball
- Community facilities - agency involvement supporting community
- Well-lit thoroughfares and better security
- Walk throughs from Elizabeth St
- Bring down fences - entice
- Activities for all ages
- Housing for everyone
- Doctors, dentists - Elizabeth St
- More BBQs - Redfern Park
- Better cleaning of Redfern Park and more shaded areas

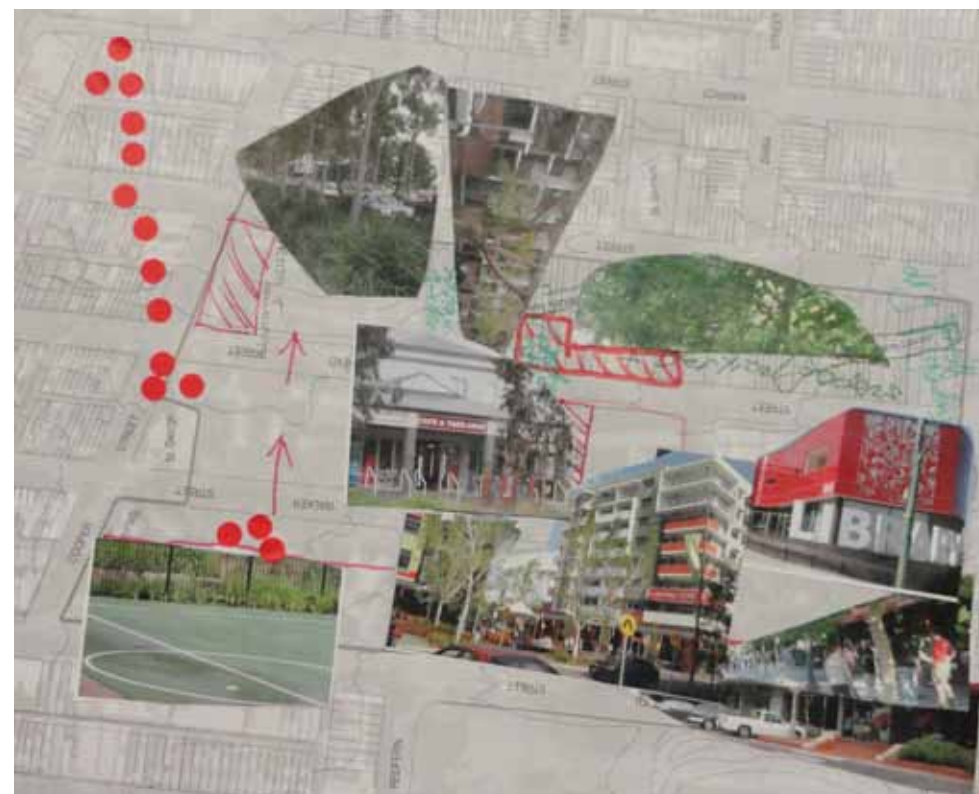


Table 3

- Elizabeth St - awnings - old look
- Zig zags through open spaces - children's play spaces
- Paired buildings with space between
- Build on success of Souths - respond to design to feel like part of this
- Artwork on walls
- Sustainability
- Connect Kettle to Young St
- Informal pedestrian and bicycle links
- Staggered low and tall buildings
- Additional shops
- Should have 2-way streets



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IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Table 4

- Central community spaces in each block (both internal and external)
 - Stephanie Alexander program
- Green corridors linking
- Low shrubs and high canopy trees
- Pause places where they meet streets
- Electronic notice boards at building entries - meeting entries
- Pause places to rest on steeper streets
- McKell building - main community facility
- Vertical gardens
- Ground-breaking building to set new standards
- Recreate native bush planting
- Closer relationship between social and community housing





Table 5



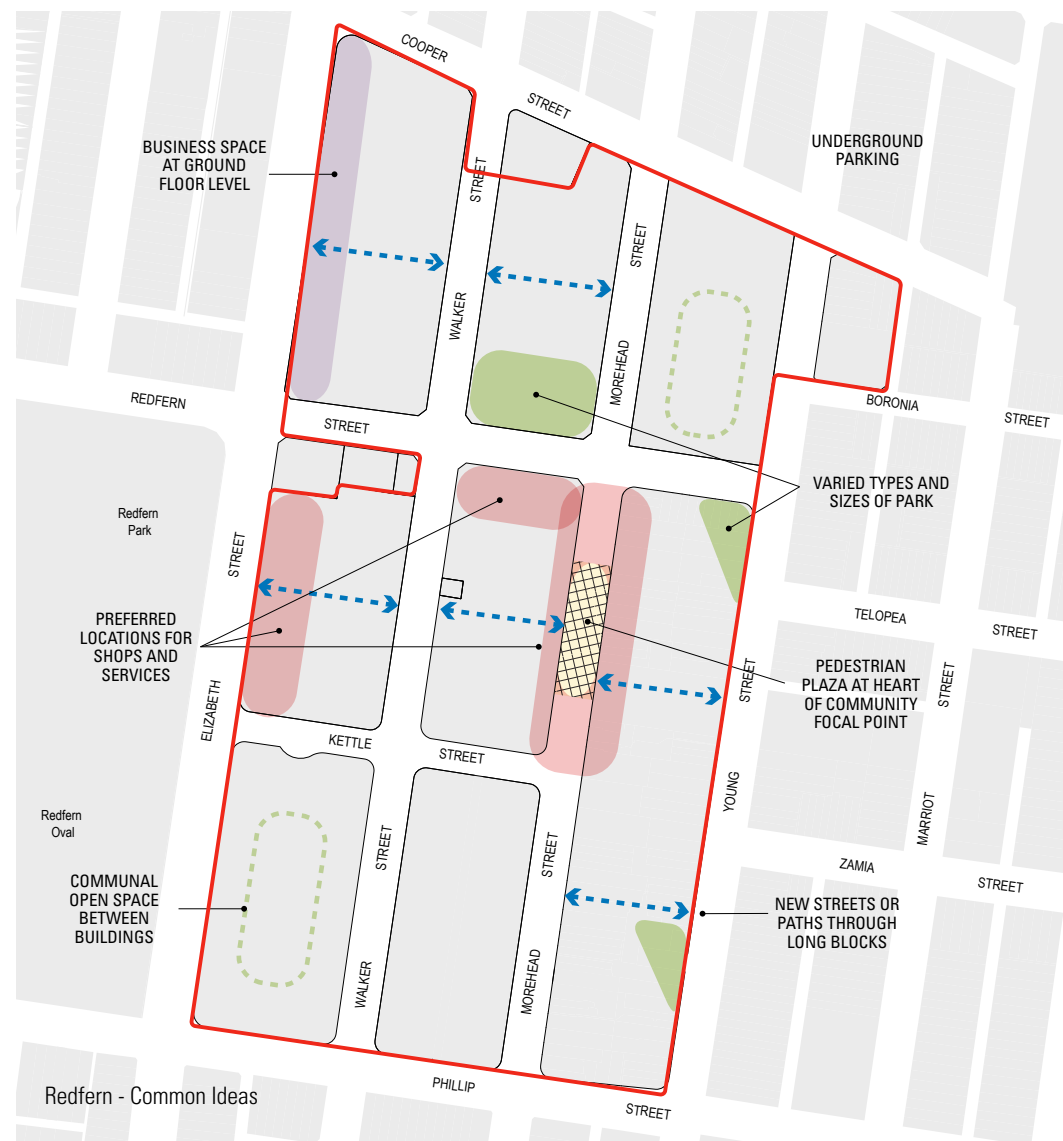
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IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Summary

Amongst the ideas for the improvement of Redfern identified through this activity, a series of common themes emerged. These included:

- A central hub of local shops, services, community and medical facilities on Morehead Street
- OR
- Shops and services on Redfern Street with apartments above
- OR
- Shops and services on Elizabeth Street south of Redfern Street with apartments above
 - A pedestrian plaza at the heart of a community focal point
 - Business space facing Elizabeth Street north of Redfern Street
 - New streets or paths through long blocks, particularly Poets Corner
 - Varied types and sizes of park
 - Communal open spaces between buildings
 - Underground car parking



06 NEXT STEPS

The ideas generated by the workshops will now be used to formulate and refine concepts to deliver the best outcomes. This will result in preferred concepts which will identify the proposed location for new shops and facilities, new and upgraded streets, paths and open spaces, and new residential buildings.

The refined concepts will form the basis of the structure plan within the Preliminary Masterplan and will be presented to the community in March 2012. This will form part of a second series of community design workshops intended to develop more detail around the concepts.

Finally, a Preliminary Masterplan will be developed that will provide more detail about the nature of the proposed new and upgraded buildings, streets and open spaces. This will be presented to the community in the second half of 2012.





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