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Study focus: Draft Community Infrastructure and Social Issues Review

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What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the Community Infrastructure and Social Issues Review (CISIR) prepared by consultancy GHD to UrbanGrowth NSW, is to ensure that social sustainability is considered in the development of an urban transformation strategy for the Central to Eveleigh Urban Transformation and Transport Program. When complete, the strategy will drive the future shape of this part of the city and guide future decisions on rezoning and development applications.

Socially sustainable development aims to create places that are vibrant and connected, where the population is diverse and supported, and the environment contributes to healthy and safe lifestyles. The CISIR examines the 80 hectare corridor of government owned land between Central and Macdonaldtown and Erskineville Stations, as well as 500 hectares around the corridor known as the study area. It includes an analysis of the social issues of current and potential future residents, workers and visitors. The following is a description of the methodology and initial findings of the draft study.

Key elements of the study include:

- a community profile for the area
- assessment of community infrastructure requirements
- assessment of potential impacts and opportunities resulting from the renewal
- recommended priorities for future social sustainability to be incorporated into planning for the area.

How has the study been prepared?

- Identifying and assessing leading practice social sustainability frameworks.
- Reviewing the outcomes of previous consultations for the project.
- Reviewing previous consultation and studies for the proposed renewal of Redfern, Waterloo and South Eveleigh social housing sites, including Draft Built Environment Plan 2 (BEP2).
- Interviewing service providers including government and non-government (e.g. The Factory, WEAVE, Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development, affordable housing providers) to understand potential community and service provision impacts.
- Identifying and assessing 'big picture' trends which may impact the transformation.
- Reviewing existing policy context including NSW Government and City of Sydney.
- Auditing existing community infrastructure and consider potential infrastructure needs.

What are the key findings?

- The *existing community is uniquely diverse*, including people from high and low income groups, vulnerable groups and groups with specific needs including social housing tenants, older residents, families with young children, Indigenous people, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- *Future households* are likely to include high numbers of young couples and singles, young families, and some older people looking to downsize/remain living in the area. Many residents are also likely to be from culturally diverse backgrounds, and working in professional roles.
- There is a *diversity of existing workers* in the area, from professionals to creatives, people working in retail and hospitality, and factory and warehouse workers.
- *Future workers* are expected to primarily be located in the Central Station area, potentially a commercial and retail hub, and the Redfern Station area. It is likely that future workers will be a mix of white collar workers (e.g. professionals and key workers (e.g. nurses, child care workers, cleaners, retail workers)).

- There is *high demand in the area* for affordable housing, education, community health services, public open space, childcare and aged care.
- *New residents and workers* will increase the use of community infrastructure and change the form and character of the existing built environment.
- *Alternative and new models for both the delivery and operation* of community infrastructure are required to meet needs as the population grows.
- *Renewal is an opportunity* for new communities to connect with existing communities, and to create new places that are vibrant and diverse.

What does this mean for Central to Eveleigh?

Based on the key findings, GHD has suggested the following social sustainability objectives and priorities to deliver a vibrant and connected place for the community.

Housing – *deliver a range of appropriate, affordable and quality housing types and tenures to meet the needs of diverse households through initiatives such as:*

- Consider a range of housing types and tenures, including affordable rental and purchase options, new intermediate income housing and social housing, to meet housing needs of different income groups.
- Continue to engage the community and housing providers about ways to deliver affordable and appropriate dwellings for a range of households.

Economy and employment – *support economic growth and diversity whilst providing access to new employment opportunities close to home through initiatives such as:*

- Investigate ways to link developers and businesses associated with the renewal with local training and skills development programs
- Explore provision of an enterprise hub (mainly focused on the combination of creative, education and knowledge based local industries) providing affordable office/work space for small businesses and start-ups

Community cohesion and identity – create vibrant and unique places that encourage connections between all community members and improve access to high quality community infrastructure through initiatives such as:

- Explore new and/or improved community facilities in each including community arts, shared workspace, community health, indoor sports and/or multipurpose – indication that around 3 to 5 new mixed use community facilities required over the long term.
- Consider planning for the provision of child care centres in each Precinct in line with City of Sydney benchmarks – indication that around 10 or more child care centres would be required over the long term.
- Consider planning for new public open space and improving access to existing sports fields and parks – indication that around 3,000m² of local public open space in each Precinct (per 5,000 residents) with a program to upgrade existing sports fields and new sports courts over the long term (new full sized sports fields will be difficult to achieve given the shortage of land. This issue requires further community discussion).
- Ensure best practice requirements for open space design which integrate Safer By Design principles to be workshopped with the Police.
- Ensure community engagement throughout the planning and construction phases targets social housing tenants, the Aboriginal community, culturally diverse communities, and other communities throughout the study area.

Health, wellbeing and safety – encourage active and healthy lifestyles through provision of walkable neighbourhoods that are green, connected and safe through initiatives such as:

- Work with the City of Sydney to ensure a network of pedestrian and bicycle routes is provided which link to key destinations, have high amenity and are easily identified.
- Consider a 'green infrastructure' strategy to provide green landscape elements in streets, buildings and public places as way of improving wellbeing in a dense area
- Prepare an urban design scheme that delivers Precincts which integrate with and reflect the character and identity of neighbouring areas and provide high quality and safe public domain spaces.