Renewing Minto
An Analysis of the Minto Renewal Project

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Abstract

In May 2002, the New South Wales Department of Housing announced that it would be undertaking a dramatic renewal project in the Minto public housing estate. This renewal project would involve the demolition of a significant portion of the existing dwellings and extensive redevelopment works across the whole estate. The Minto estate had been developed in the 1970s based upon Radburn design principles, which has been highly unsuccessful. In the time since its inception the estate had gradually deteriorated physically and had developed into an area of concentrated social exclusion. The Minto Renewal Project was introduced in an effort to remedy the social, cultural and environmental problems on this estate. The Project would implement new urban design principles to address the issues that the original Radburn layout created. The Project also introduces a social mix into the area in an effort to bring diversity into the new community. This thesis aims to investigate whether an urban renewal project can have a positive impact on an existing public housing estate. The results indicate that although there will be an impact on the existing tenant population, the Minto Renewal Project will provide long term benefits for the estate and its future residents.
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Chapter One

Introduction
On the 29th of May 2002, the Department of Housing announced that it would be undertaking a dramatic renewal project in the Minto public housing estate. This renewal project would involve the demolition of a significant portion of the existing dwellings, the redevelopment with new dwellings, the renovation of a number of existing dwellings and the introduction of a social mix to bring a new community into the area. This renewal project, known as the Minto Renewal Project, was to be undertaken to address the mistakes made by the Department in the past in terms of the design and management of the estate (Davies, 2002).

This dramatic style of renewal project was necessary on the Minto estate for the following reasons. Firstly, the recognition that Radburn design principles had proven to be unsuitable for concentrated public housing estates (NSW DoH, 2005a). Secondly, much of the housing stock had deteriorated since the estate began in the 1970s and it had become costly to maintain (Smith, 2002). Finally, the Department has recognised that the policy of creating large public housing estates was an error and had a negative impact on the population (NSW DoH, 2003).

The Minto Public Housing Estate was designed using Radburn principles. The Radburn principles of design involve houses which are designed ‘back to front’ with the front door facing walkways and common open space and the back door facing the street and the separation of pedestrians and motor vehicle circulation systems. The Radburn concept was implemented in numerous public housing estates across New South Wales with very little success (Hill, 1996. Wong, 1996).

As a result of the concentration of socially disadvantaged persons and its poor design quality, the Minto housing estate spiralled into a hub of social exclusion. Social exclusion occurs when an area suffers from a combination of linked problems, such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown (Stewart, 2001).
Concentrated public housing estates can develop a stigma for those people who live in these areas as they congregates high levels of residents suffering from social exclusion issues. Non-residents of these estates develop adverse labels for areas of public housing and their residents that can have a negative impact upon the wellbeing of the tenants (Lee, 1985).

One of the key elements of the Minto Renewal Project is the introduction of social mix into the estate. Social mix refers to having a residential neighbourhood with a mixture of people of different social classes and socio-economic status (Shelter NSW, 2003). The introduction of social mix has become a key policy in the provision and renewal of public housing. Social mix breaks up the concentration of disadvantaged tenants, which has made some of the larger public housing estates virtually unmanageable (Randolph, 2006. Brooks, et al, 2005).

Due the failure of the Radburn design, the Minto Renewal Project will implement a new urban structure for the estate. This structure will be based on contemporary principles of urban design that will create increased connectivity between residents and facilities, provide a more open environment with increased permeability and improve the safety and security of the area through the increase in opportunities for casual surveillance of the public domain.

The Minto Renewal Project seeks to regenerate the area physically, socially and environmentally.
Aims and Objectives

The aim of this thesis is to investigate how an urban redevelopment project impacts upon an existing public housing estate. In this study, the Minto Renewal Project involves the demolition of existing housing, reconfiguration of the road and pedestrian networks and the relocation of existing estate tenants.

The objectives of this thesis are as follows:-

- To provide a summary of issues related to concentrated public housing estates and public housing renewal;
- To investigate the existing environmental and social conditions of the Minto public housing estate;
- To examine the rationale as to the style of the renewal project;
- To provide an overview of the Minto Renewal Project;
- To analyse the design principles of the Minto Renewal Project Masterplan; and
- To hypothesise on whether the Minto Renewal Project will successfully address the environmental and social problems that have previously existed on the Minto public housing estate.

Methodology

The methodology for the research and compilation of this thesis was as follows:-

- A theoretical framework for the study was established;
- A literary analysis of the key issues was undertaken;
- A review of New South Wales and other state public housing renewal policies was conducted;
- Observation site visits were undertaken and photos taken to obtain an overview of existing conditions on the Minto Estate;
- A historical perspective on the Minto public housing estate was attained;
- A detailed analysis of the Minto Renewal Project and the Minto Renewal Project Masterplan was undertaken;
- An assessment of the Minto Renewal Project against contemporary urban design principles was conducted;
- An analysis of data and research was undertaken; and
- Arguments established and conclusions formed.

Outline

Chapter One is the introduction to the thesis and includes a brief outline of issues, the aims and objectives as well as the methodology employed.

Chapter Two provides a theoretical analysis of the main issues related to concentrated public housing, such as social exclusion and stigmatisation. It further outlines the reasoning for renewal projects to be implemented in public estates and offers an overview of the range of types of renewal projects that can be undertaken. It also explores the issues of social mix in public housing and community consultation.

Chapter Three describes a number of actual renewal projects that have been undertaken by the New South Wales Department of Housing in its estates. These projects address a range of issues in these areas with varying degrees of success.

Chapter Four contains historical information on Minto and the establishment of the public housing estate. It outlines the original Radburn principles employed in the design of the public housing estate and describes how they have failed. Finally this chapter provides a detailed overview of the existing physical and social characteristics of the Minto public housing estate.
Chapter Five discusses previous interventions by the New South Wales Department of Housing into the Minto public housing estate and comments on the success of the programs.

Chapter Six focuses on the Minto Renewal Project. It provides an overview of the Project including its aims and objectives and a detailed summary of the works to be undertaken in the estate. Additionally, this chapter provides analysis of the impact the Minto Renewal Project may have on existing residents of the estate.

Chapter Seven evaluates the Minto Renewal Project against a range of contemporary urban design principles. It explores the improvements the renewal will bring to the physical environment, whilst also commenting on benefits to the social environment.

Chapter Eight is a discussion reflecting upon a number of issues surrounding the Minto Renewal Project. These issues include the ability of the Project to achieve its goals, the role of urban design in the renewal process, the potential impact that the introduction of social mix will have on the renewed estate, the effect that the Project will have on the stigmatisation of the estate and the impact of relocation on existing residents.

Chapter Nine consolidates the thesis by drawing together conclusions from literature and personal observations to enable a positive conclusion to be drawn provided that constraints of time and effective working partnerships are met.
Chapter Two

Overview of Issues
Introduction

This chapter provides a theoretical overview of the keys issues relating to concentrated public housing estates, the reasons for the renewal of public housing, the types of renewal options for public housing, the concept of social mix and the role of community consultation in renewal projects. This overview will provide information that will form the basis of later discussion.

Issues Regarding Concentrated Housing Estates

Social exclusion

“Social exclusion is shorthand for what can happen when individuals or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems, such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown” (Stewart, 2001, p 28).

The concept of social exclusion provides a framework for the understanding of the interconnectedness of the problems that disadvantaged people, families and communities face. Social exclusion is a development of the established concepts of social disadvantage and even earlier notions of social deprivation and poverty. However, it is further developed to represent more than just the material aspects of disadvantage. It has also come to represent matters regarding access to opportunities and non-material attributes and values. (Randolph & Judd, 2000)

Marsh and Mullins (1998) states that to gain a full understanding of social exclusion it is necessary to examine a range of issues including health, housing, education and the labour market. Only then will it be possible to comprehend the processes which compound disadvantage and cause people to be prisoners of their situation. Furthermore Marsh and Mullins (1998) highlight the economic and
social aspects of social exclusion as they outline that the greatest ‘risks of exclusion’ are the risk of being kept out of the labour market and the risk of the disintegration of social networks and personal interaction. The economic and social aspects of exclusion are tightly woven and both issues need to be faced to adequately address the issue.

Klien (2004) writes that areas with high levels of public housing suffer greatly from social exclusion issues as the “inequality in these neighbourhoods manifests in multiple factors such as poor employment opportunities, inadequate access to transport and other support services, widespread health problems, family breakdown, lower educational achievement, increasing use of drugs and associated crime and social stigma. The cumulative effects of these factors result in the exclusion of many people from the mainstream of social, economic and political life.” (Klien 2004, p20)

Social exclusion is also an intergenerational matter. Where parents are forced to face these complex problems, providing the required level of care and support to their children needed to break the cycle of social exclusion can be a difficult task. As a result, many children end up growing up in an environment of social and economic poverty, which can lead to poor school performance with low levels of literacy and numeracy. Consequently, two or three generations may have no experience in workforce participation (NSW DoH, 2001). This is further heightened when many families in the same locality are experiencing similar circumstances.

Schill (1993) discusses how social exclusion in housing estates is a cyclical and continuing issue as those who can afford to leave the area are often replaced by those suffering under the pressure of social exclusion. Concentrations of economic and social poverty can lead to the downward spiralling of these issues as poverty compounds over time. “Concentrated poverty generates social distress which leads to greater levels of poverty concentration as the more stable
tenants move elsewhere. Heightened social distress, in turn, is often related to increased vandalism and physical deterioration. Physical deterioration only speeds the flight of relatively higher income tenants, creating a more impoverished and isolated community” (Schill,1993, p 17).

*Allocation Policies*

Changes in allocation policies by public housing providers in Australia have been a major contributing factor to the concentration of socially excluded households in public housing estates.

Prior to World War II limited public housing was available to low income workers and their families. When the first Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement (CSHA) was signed in 1945 there were serve housing shortages in Australia and much of the existing stock in the private rental market was of really poor quality, so that “the CSHA was seen as a vehicle to alleviate the housing shortage as well as a means of providing low-cost rental accommodation with a degree of security not afforded by the private rental sector” (Foard et all, 1994, p27. Badcock, 1997).

Housing provided under the CSHA was in the form of estates built to replace the existing slums, which were considered to be unfit for human habitation (Badcock, 1997).

However, the public housing estates did not live up to expectations. At the 1966 census, over three quarters of urban public housing tenants were married, two thirds were Australian born and 80% were in paid employment. By the 1990s, changed economic conditions had led to increased unemployment, more family break ups and a substantial rise in elderly pensioners, all of which created increased demand for public housing and altered the profile of public tenants to one where approximately 80% were receiving social security (Badcock, 1997).
Public housing estates were now associated with populations characterised by the hallmarks of social exclusion, chronic unemployment, welfare dependence, drug and alcohol abuse, crime and other forms of social dysfunction (Bell, 1983. Stubbs & Storer 1996. Vinson, 1999, cited in Randolph & Judd, 2000).

The change in political thinking to economical rationalism in the 1980s and the subsequent emphasis on microeconomic reform in the 1990s, meant that less money became available to the States through the CSHA agreements. Thus there was less money to add to the housing stock yet economic conditions meant an increase in those seeking housing assistance. The Commonwealth was expecting the States make the most of available resources (Badcock, 1997).

The State housing authorities’ inability to provide more stock meant that they had to adopt more stringent allocation policies with an emphasis on those with greatest social disadvantage and need for public housing (Badcock, 1997).

Given that funds for stock additions were now less, the New South Wales Department of Housing has now adopted a new focus to providing houses which relies on partnership.

Social exclusion is a multidimensional issue involving not only social and economic factors but also cultural and political factors. Addressing poverty will not suffice in attempting to deal with this multifaceted issue. Consequently there is a need for an integrated and holistic policy response to address the complexity of the matter (Randolph & Judd, 2000).
Stigma

Concentrated public housing estates can develop a stigma upon those people who live in these areas as it congregates high levels of residents suffering from social exclusion. Public housing estates provide a manner that clearly identifies its residents as beneficiaries of Government support. Non-residents of these estates develop adverse labels for areas of public housing and their residents that can have a negative impact upon the wellbeing of the tenants. This stigmatisation of a neighbourhood may affect residents’ prospects in the labour market and their interactions with non-residents as the perception of the individual may be impacted upon by the stigma of where they live (Lee, 1985).

“As public housing has increasingly become the housing of those in greatest need, disadvantage and low income households have become concentrated in certain localities, which in turn places strain on local social and welfare services. Concentration, and the readily identifiable nature of much public housing have also led to the stigmatisation of tenants and their housing.” (Stevens, 1995, p 82)

Badcock (1997) discusses how the stigmatisation of public housing residents has impacted upon their access to the labour market. Individuals from areas of concentrated unemployment and social disadvantage, such as public housing estates, have lesser opportunities for obtaining work due to the stigma placed upon them by non-resident employers. These assumptions by non-residents, based upon inaccurate social stereotypes, discriminate against those people from public housing estates seeking employment as they judge by their post code and not individual quality.

Other impacts of stigmatisation upon areas of public housing and their residents include constant negative media exposure regarding crime and poverty, public transport and delivery vehicles avoid the most notorious areas due to perceived safety concerns and reluctance by financial institutions to lend money, based on
locality, leaving residents who are financially struggling relying on loan sharks to make ends meet. Furthermore, because of this stigma non-residents are unlikely to visit these estates to quash these perceptions, which continue to develop and spread (Taylor, 1998).

Taylor (1998) also believes that stigmatisation is experienced in a cycle of labelling from which it is difficult to escape. This cycle, as demonstrated in Figure 1, not only develops the stigma but highlights the impact it has on the residents. The labelling of public housing has a damaging impact upon residents of public housing who begin to accept the stigma and lose confidence in themselves and the area. In addition, this negative image is reflected, reinforced and magnified by outsiders, such as the media, politicians and professionals, and as a result the stigma is further developed. As a result, those residents who have the choice and ability to leave move out to escape the stigma, which leads to more vulnerable people moving in to be subjected to labelling as the cycle repeats.

![Figure 1: The Cycle of labelling and exclusion (source Taylor, 1998)](image-url)
Stigmatisation has a negative effect upon the residents of public housing and how the individuals and the area are perceived by outsiders. This labelling can lead to discrimination against individuals from these areas and can have serious impact upon the residents as they themselves begin to believe and accept the label.

**Reasons for the Renewal of Public Housing**

There are a number of reasons that have been put forward to support the redevelopment of concentrated public housing estates. These include the deterioration of housing stock, the suitability of housing stock to meet the needs of today’s society, addressing the issues of social exclusion within an estate and attempting to develop a community within the estate.

*Stock Deterioration*

Over the passage of time much of the public housing stock developed in concentrated estates has begun to physically deteriorate and does not meet the standards and expectations of the private market. Although it is not possible to maintain public housing stock in a state of perfect repair, however much of the stock in excess of thirty years of age is beginning to fall into a high level of disrepair. Many of these might be considered to be of an unacceptable standard (Diacon, 1991).

As a result of this physical deterioration to much of the stock it has become costly to maintain. Furthermore much of the stock requires upgrading to align it with modern standards of housing. Often the expense of the required and continual maintenance is excessive and public housing providers are unable to keep up with the need for repair, which leads to the stock falling into greater states of disrepair (Stevens, 1995).
When the stock falls to an unacceptable standard and the cost of maintaining and upgrading the existing dwelling becomes excessive, a renewal project may be considered to be the only means possible of providing a suitable level of public housing.

**Stock Suitability**

In addition to the deterioration of public housing stock over time, much of the existing stock does not meet the requirements of its current residents. As dwellings in concentrated public housing estates were built around the 1970s to meet the needs of tenants, in particular working class nuclear families, the current situation illustrates an increase in the need to meet requirements for single people and couples without children (Stevens, 1995).

There is a need to address the changing demands for those who require access to public housing. Much of the stock developed in the 1970’s does not adequately cater for the changing nature of public housing residents, which include growing levels of singles, couples and single parent households. Providing a variety of dwelling types will cater to the needs of our changing society and enable public housing providers to more adequately address some of the limitations of existing housing stock.

**Addressing Social Issues**

As discussed earlier, social exclusion is a serious and growing issue in public estates. One of the key reasons that public housing providers undertake renewal projects is to address the serious social issues facing the residents of suffering areas.

Public housing renewal strategies must address the serious social issues as well as any physical limitations if they are to be successful. It is the spiralling impact
of social exclusion that has the greater impact upon the residents then mere deterioration of housing stock. A successful strategy should seek to address the employment issues of the area and seek to increase resident participation in the labour market. Furthermore it should strive to improve the provision of social services in struggling estates as they seek to build support networks for underprivileged individuals and families (Lilley, 2005).

Furthermore, renewal projects in areas experiencing high rates of criminal activity should seek to address the issue of crime in that locality. Crime prevention strategies can be either in the form of, firstly, physical interventions, which seek to attend to issues regarding the quality of the physical environment including housing stock and public spaces in an attempt to deter criminal activity, or secondly, social interventions which establish a range of crime prevention initiatives within the community. Successful crime prevention strategies should seek to engage the whole community and provide integrated programmes involving all stakeholders in an area (Samuels, Judd, O'Brien & Barton, 2004).

Arthurson (1998) writes that one method for addressing the social issues in public housing estates is to break down the concentration of poverty and social disadvantage in an area. Providing a more balanced mix of social classes in an area will have flow on effects within the locality as the diversity of residents within an area increases. A more detailed discussion of social mix is provided later in this thesis.

Renewal projects should be seeking to improve these socio-economic factors that impact upon the residents through interventions undertaken in and with the local community to address problems such as crime, unemployment and family stresses. Although these issues may be difficult to address, a renewal project can only be considered successful if it has a positive impact upon social exclusion issues and not just the physical appearance of the estate (Stevens, 1995).
Building Community

Public Housing Renewal projects can also be implemented to build or develop the community of the area which it is seeking to replenish. There is no set mechanism or method for restoring or establishing a community in a public housing estate. However, any renewal project should seek to have a positive impact upon the residents of that area. It should seek to improve tenant participation in the local area and create/strengthen the connectedness of the people. Through achieving this, it should have a positive impact in addressing the social issues and disadvantage of the area (Lilley, 2005).

Hoatson and Grace (2002) write that a housing renewal strategy should aim to create a sustainable community. They too write that there is no single method that can be implemented in every situation to spark the growth of community and recognise that within each estate there is the potential for a number of different communities to coexist. However, Hoatson and Grace believe that community building strategies should aim to build community empowerment, cohesiveness and internal problem solving capacity. These elements will assist in the development of a positive community identity. Furthermore, providing opportunities for resident interaction and cooperation will assist in the growth of a cohesive community. Addressing issues more relevant to the day-to-day living of residents and providing a quality environment are the most appropriate means of creating a strong community in a housing estate.

Types of Redevelopment Options

Stevens (1995) writes that there are a number of options available to public housing providers for the renewal of estates. These range from the renovation or rehabilitation of existing stock to the complete clearance and redevelopment of an estate. Following will be a brief summary of a variety of redevelopment options that can be undertaken in the renewal of housing estates.
Renovation and Rehabilitation

This is considered to be the simplest form of renewal project which involves the upgrading of the existing housing stock in an area to either bring it up to an acceptable standard or improve the dwelling beyond minimum levels to exceed private sector standards. Works which may be involved in rehabilitation projects may include clearing a backlog of required maintenance work, upgrading the interior décor and external physical appearance of individual dwellings, providing new landscaping in the private open spaces for all dwellings, enhancement of the public domain and public open space and the provision of new community facilities.

Renewal projects involving renovation and rehabilitation can also incorporate the implementation of programs and initiatives to address social issues of the locality. Undertaking physical renewal works within an area can be also used as a platform to tackle the inherent social problems that exist as well.

Renovation and rehabilitation strategies can be aimed at addressing the immediate needs of the estate’s tenants through upgrading the existing housing stock of the area whilst additionally enacting programs to focus on the social issues that are present in that locality.

Demolition and Redevelopment

Demolition and redevelopment projects involve the clearance of existing public housing stock and replacement with new dwellings. Complete redevelopment is seen as an opportunity to start again whilst eradicating all the issues related to the existing housing estate (Arthurson, 1998).
This style of redevelopment option enables the public housing provider to have a blank canvas to work with and create a new estate with the benefit of the knowledge of what has occurred previously in the area, other public housing estates, private housing estates and current planning theory. With this knowledge the public housing providers are able to design and implement a new estate.

The new estate may not even reflect the existing estate as the amount of changes made to the design of the area could be so significant that it alters the entire fabric of the estate. Potential changes that could be implemented in the new estate could be a change in the density of dwelling, the style and size of dwellings, the location of roads and walkways, the location, size and type of public open space, location of community facilities or a variety of different design elements.

Redevelopment projects also enable the public housing provider to implement a social mix amongst the residents. The public authority may go into partnership with a private developer on the project whereby the private developer redevelops the estate and in return is able to sell a percentage of the new dwellings to private residents whilst those dwellings not to be sold by the developer remain in the ownership of the public housing provider (Arthurson, 1998). This type of project enables the provider a unique opportunity to implement an instantaneous social mix in the estate, which in turn is predicted to have a continual benefit to the local population.

**Place-Focused Renewal**

Place-focused renewal projects are area specific policies and programs designed to direct resources at disadvantaged communities. Place-focused projects address specific components of social disadvantage within specific areas. Generally place-focused initiatives are more successful if they focus on
particular aspects of need rather then attempt to be all encompassing (Randolph, 2004).

Place-focused renewal projects can be aimed to address complex issues, such as social exclusion at a local level and thereby attempt to create more inclusive communities. These types of projects enable better access to support services and opportunities available to the majority of the population. Place-focused projects do not need to reflect the complexity of the issues, rather aim they to address the matter and seek solutions.

Place-focused renewal projects can include targeted funding programs which provide grant-based funding to communities to implement projects; place coordination which involves creating improved methods for the delivery of services to enable greater access to these services by residents; and place management where a locally based individual or group is appointed to act as a facilitator of publicly funded social intervention programs within a specific neighbourhood. Place-focused renewal projects provide a holistic approach to addressing the needs of the community and are more an attempt at the renewal of the community and society of an estate rather than the physical characteristics.

**Social Mix**

The term social mix refers to having a residential neighbourhood with a mixture of people from different social classes, socio-economic status, social categories, stages in their lifecycles, and household and family types. An absence of social mix is often associated with social exclusion of people from poorer socio-economic status (Shelter NSW, 2003).
The introduction of social mix has become a key policy in the provision and renewal of public housing. Social mix breaks up the concentration of disadvantaged tenants, which has made some of the larger public housing estates virtually unmanageable, thereby reducing isolation issues, building a diverse community and reducing incidents of crime and other anti-social behavior in that locality (Randolph, 2006. Brooks, et al, 2005).

While the tenants of these concentrated estates often have strong links with the community within their own neighborhoods, they often lack interaction with contacts outside of their locality. It is these external links that are important as they provide connection with potential employment opportunities, access to resources and services and provide engagement with the wider community. Without this connection, residents are isolated from the wider society and opportunities to improve their social situation, such as the employment market (Randolph, 2006).

Creating a social mix in areas of previously high public housing concentration is believed to create a more balanced and stable community. It is aimed to ‘normalise’ the estates and provide the benefits experienced through living in a traditionally mixed residential area due to the connection with other social groups (Stubbs, 2005).

The introduction of social mix is understood to have a positive impact on the public housing tenants, as the private tenants and home owners are likely to be more socially confident, engage with the community, be employed and house proud. It is through building relationships with these new tenants, the existing residents are more likely to have greater contact with life outside the estate and employment opportunities. Furthermore, existing residents are more likely to take greater care of their own dwellings and be more proactive in the community to achieve the standard of living the newer tenants bring to the estate (Randolph, 2006).
Social mix is also likely to have the benefit of breaking down the traditional stigmatisation of a concentrated housing estate. With the rise in the socio-economic status of the area, improved property maintenance and expected fall in anti-social activity and crime will change outsiders perceptions of the neighborhood and over time the stigma will fade (Lee, 1985).

Social mix can be provided through a variety of methods in any renewal or development project. On a new development site or demolition and reconstruction project a social mix can be created through the sale of a percentage of new dwelling to private owners whilst the remaining dwellings are retained for public housing. This is the simplest and quickest method of installing a social mix into an estate as the public housing provider can determine the amount of mix from the beginning. Another method involves the sale of dwellings within existing public housing estates to private buyers. This will lead to a social mix as more properties are sold in the estate. This can be a time consuming project as the sale may be a protracted process and generally properties to be sold require significant renovations to raise them to a quality suitable for commercial sale. However, this method results in a loss of public housing stock, which is not supported by public housing advocates (Hoatson & Grace. 2002).

However, there are concerns regarding the impact that the introduction of social mix has on the existing community of the estate. When the population and demographics are changed through a renewal project and a portion of existing residents are required to be relocated and replaced by new private home owners, the community is resultant broken down and social networks are often lost. This can have a significant impact upon those residents who remain in the area as they are forced to readjust to life in their area. However, the loss of one community provides opportunity for the development of a new, more diverse community which can work together to continue the improvement the estate for years to come (Stubbs, 2005).
Furthermore, there is the possibility that the introduction of social mix can lead to the loss of support services for public housing residents. These services are often highly specialised and are directly targeted to disadvantaged localities. If social mix leads to a reduction in the concentration of those who require these services therefore they may be lost. The loss of these can have a potentially detrimental affect on the remaining disadvantaged households remaining in the estate (Randolph, 2006).

One thing is for sure that replacing over half of an estate of public housing tenants with private home owners, to change the social mix, will have significant impact on the social indicators of the area, such as employment levels, household types, household incomes and demographic profiles. This will result in a shift in the social characteristics of the area (Randolph & Wood, 2003).

More research is required to confirm whether or not the introduction of social mix has a beneficial impact on a locality and whether or not the perceived social interaction between the different social groups actually occurs and, furthermore, if these interactions have a positive influence upon the public housing residents. However, renewal projects are likely to be more successful if social mix is integrated with social welfare programs (Randolph, 2006).

**Resident Participation in the Renewal Process**

The participation of existing residents and key stakeholders should be a key element of any public housing renewal project. Redevelopment projects should no longer be seen as primarily the responsibility of the public housing provider and the developer, but rather a partnership involving the government, the developer, tenants, surrounding residents, public sector agencies, voluntary organisations and local community groups. These stakeholders need to be involved in the process as they have the greatest understanding of the issues
experienced in the locality and are the groups most likely to be impacted by the renewal process (Hoatson & Grace, 2002).

Community consultation is considered to be a necessary prerequisite of any effective renewal project. Residents have experienced the local problems from a first hand perspective and generally demonstrate tremendous amounts of energy when it comes to addressing the issues which hamper their estate. The community can often provide innovative solutions when it comes to various social and economic problems. Furthermore community involvement in renewal can help build local confidence in the project as they can see how their involvement is assisting the development of a solution (Hastings, McArthur & McGregor, 1996).

Stubbs and Storer (1996) write that any urban renewal strategy is most effective when combined with consultation and participation strategies. These participation strategies can lead to many of the desired changes in the absence of any other actions.

Participation in any planning process can be broken down into three key levels of interaction: ‘information’, ‘consultation’ and ‘participation’. ‘Information’ is generally described as the process of the provision of information with little interaction between the various parties involved. There is no expectation that residents can have an influence over the decision making process. ‘Consultation’ describes the process where a controlling body seeks the opinions of those with less power in the project. In a ‘consultation’ process there is the intention to meet the needs of those consulted with ideas ‘taken into account’, but there is no requirement for the ideas to translate into actions. Finally, ‘participation’ implies that all parties involved do so on relatively equal terms on a more partnership level. Participants play a more active role in the planning process with more ideas being translated in the action (Stubbs, 2005). Figure 2 is a visual representation of these levels of community involvement in the planning process.
Tenant participation in renewal projects right from the start has a number of benefits in the design, use and long term future of the estate (Leslie, 1998). These benefits include:

- A more appropriate and practical design outcome that meets the needs of tenants because they have had input.
- A more cohesive, confident and better informed group of tenants that will benefit the new estate because they have worked together in the planning stage, and will have had to negotiate and compromise with each other, which will be beneficial when they are living together as neighbours in the future.
- A more cooperative, productive relationship between tenants and the housing provider.
- A higher level of tenant responsibility and reduced housing management costs. “Tenants who have had significant input in the design of the housing have a greater sense of ownership, pride and emotional attachment to their housing environment and this is reflected in a greater level of commitment, care and responsibility. This in turn results in decreased management costs related to vacancies, bad debts, tenant related damage and general property management.” (Leslie, 1998, p 6).
There are, however, reasons for not involving tenants in the design process (Leslie, 1998). These include:

- It adds to the level of communication needed and cooperation required to get the project up and running, but if done well there are great benefits.
- Involving tenants right from the start of the design and development process with a possibility of long delays before conclusion could cause anger and frustration amongst tenants if the process is not clearly stated at the start.
- The potential for creative design may be limited because of the need to keep cost low but if residents are informed of the budget in the initial stages then creativity can still be achieved.
- If the design is tailored to meet specific needs of the existing tenants, there may be issues in the future when these tenants move out. This is where guidance from the managers is necessary, so that the designs to be used are available to be adaptable for continued use.

For community consultation to be successful there needs to be a clear understanding between the residents and those in charge of the renewal project from its initiation. Clear definitions must be set on the level and extent of ‘participation’ to be undertaken so as to clarify the interaction between parties. The clearer understanding will also help to maintain good will between parties throughout the renewal process (Stubbs, 2005).

However, Australian studies have noted that it is rare for renewal projects to move beyond the ‘consultation’ level of interaction to become a genuine participation process between the housing authorities and the community. Frequently, interaction does not extent beyond the ‘information’ level (Stubbs, 2005).
Good consultation and participation between the parties involved should be a key component of any renewal project. It assists the housing provider gain a greater understanding of local issues and allows the developer to benefit from local knowledge. Furthermore it enables the existing resident to feel more involved and have a sense of influence over the project and the outcome. Unfortunately participation is not being undertaken on housing projects to a level which would provide greater assistance to the housing provider, developer and the community.
Chapter Three

PUBLIC HOUSING RENEWAL PROJECTS IN NEW SOUTH WALES
Introduction

The New South Wales Department of Housing has created and implemented a wide variety of renewal projects in its housing estates in an effort to address the issues of social exclusion and social disadvantage and physical deterioration. The Department has implemented a range of programs to attend to both specific issues in individual estates whilst other projects have been created to be more holistic and tackle a variety of issues at one time. The Department through its operation of these programs over time has developed and refined them to better address the needs of its residents and involve greater community participation. This chapter provides a brief overview of the key renewal projects the New South Wales Department of Housing has implemented within its estates in recent years.

Neighbourhood Improvement Program

The renewal of its housing estates by the New South Wales Department of Housing (NSW DoH) began in 1995 through the Neighbourhood Improvement Program (NIP). The objectives of this renewal program included:-

- Ensuring greater physical integration of the estates with the surrounding neighbourhood;
- Helping to reduce crime;
- Helping to reduce the stigma associated with estates; and
- Contributing to increased tenant satisfaction through:-
  - Reduced vandalism;
  - Lower tenant turn over;
  - Lower vacancy rates;
  - Reduced rejection of offers; and
  - Less rent arrears (Judd, Samuels & O’Brien, 2002).
Strategies employed in the NIP included:-

- Physical upgrades to houses and estate infrastructure;
- Reversing the orientation of dwellings on Radburn designed estates;
- Removal of walkways;
- Establishing and rejuvenating parks;
- Internal and external upgrades of houses;
- Improved lighting and security throughout the estate;
- Provision of additional community facilities;
- Innovations in housing management;
- Involvement of tenants in decision making about the work being undertaken;
- Improving the provision of services from other agencies (Judd, Samuels & O’Brien, 2002. NSW DoH, 1997).

One of the key actions of the NIP involved the de-Radburnisation of housing estates built in the 1970’s. A description of the Radburn design principles is provided later in the thesis, but can be generally characterised by its separation of pedestrians and motor vehicles, large internal public open spaces linked by walkways, back to front housing and ‘super lot’ subdivisions. Designed for the upper-middle class the Radburn design was unsuccessful when implemented in public housing estates in Australia and considered partially responsible for some of the social issues experienced in estates where it was employed.

The de-Radburnisation works of the NIP involved the closing of walkways, enclosing the internal public spaces to create private backyards for individual dwellings, reversal of housing to face the street and the subdivision of superlots. Figure 3 illustrates the de-Radburnisation work undertaken on a single dwelling to transform it into a more conventional dwelling. Other work executed as part of the NIP involved new fencing, provision of carports and extensive landscaping works (Woodward, 1997).
The NIP aimed to rejuvenate DoH’s most deteriorated estates by encouraging an integrated approach to area regeneration. The Department sought partnerships with government and non-government agencies to improve service provision to tenants, for example, the police, to prevent and reduce crime and other anti-social behaviour in the estates and the Commonwealth Government to ensure tenants had access to employment opportunities. It was anticipated that the NIP would address the broader scale issues that previous isolated and uncoordinated interventions had failed to solve (Judd, Samuels & O’Brien, 2002. Wood, Randolph & Judd, 2002).

In June 1999, the Community Renewal Strategy (CRS) replaced the NIP. Whilst in operation the NIP was implemented on 13 estates across New South Wales including Bidwill, Airds, Macquarie Fields and Bellambi (Wood, Randolph & Judd, 2002).
Community Renewal Program

The Community Renewal Strategy built upon the experiences and lessons of the NIP. It acknowledged that the physical renewal solutions implemented through the NIP were not necessarily the most appropriate method of addressing all issues. The CRS placed greater emphasis on the importance of an integrated approach involving employment and community development initiatives. Furthermore the CRS provided for improved tenant involvement and participation in the decision making processes and implementation of programs (Wood, Randolph & Judd, 2002).

By 2002, the NIP and the CRS had been completed or had commenced operation on twenty-eight estates in New South Wales.

Intensive Tenancy Management

The Intensive Tenancy Management initiative (ITM) was established by the NSW DoH in 1998 to improve life on problem estates. The ITM focused on more intensive management of public housing tenancies through the use of greater staff numbers and more specialised staff. The ITM was launched to enable a more responsive service, combined with greater community participation, to address the needs of tenants. Components of this initiative included:-

- On-site management housing teams;
- Flexible local allocations policy;
- A smaller number of residents per house; and
- Using a local handy person for minor maintenance.

This program began on a trial basis in Bidwill and Minto Hill in 1998 and its success encouraged the Department to extend it to Booragul/Bolton Point, Bonnyrigg, Redfern, Toongabbie, South Moree and West Dubbo by late 2000. By 2005 the ITM was operating in 17 housing communities across the state.

**Tenant and Communities Initiatives Program**

The Tenant and Communities Initiatives Program (TCIP) establish by the NSW DoH in 1997 provides financial support to independent tenant organisations, that provide support and advocacy for tenants in their negotiation with the Department and other housing providers, for a range of project and training to support their participation in Neighbourhood Advisory Boards. Additional support is provided for estates with significant numbers of Aboriginal tenants or tenants from Non-English speaking backgrounds, such as Waterloo, Moree and Dubbo (Judd, Samuels & O'Brien, 2002).

The TCIP aimed to:

- Increase the opportunities for tenants to have a greater say in their living environment;
- Raised tenant awareness of local tenant and community groups;
- Provide information to tenants about issues which affect them; and
- Create a cooperative working environment with tenants (Judd, Samuels & O'Brien, 2002).

**Transforming Estates into Communities Strategy**

The Transforming Estates into Communities Strategy was launched in 2001 to support community regeneration with regard to:-

- Building more community pride, trust and social responsibility;
- Reducing social isolation, deprivation and crime;
- Providing more employment and training opportunities; and
- Improving the physical living environment for tenants (NSW DoH, 2003).
During 2003-2004, the Department reviewed this strategy and found that property standards had improved and employment projects had brought about service improvements and increased individual training opportunities. However, the review found that better planning and more engagement of tenants, other government agencies, not-for-profit organisations and the private sector was needed to bring about sustained change in communities and to tackle the long term disadvantage existing in some areas (NSW DoH, 2004).

**Community Regeneration Strategy**

As a result of the review of the Transforming Estates into Communities Strategy, the NSW DoH Annual Report 2004-2005 introduced a new initiative, the Community Regeneration Strategy (2005-2010). This Strategy will focus attention on a small number of priority locations for a longer period of time. The strategy will also focus on the greater involvement of tenants, business, other government and non-government organisation in developing long-term improvements for estate communities. At the same time improvements will continue across the state in the other Departmental estates also involving increased partnership arrangements.

**Other Initiatives in Public Housing Estates**

The NSW DoH has implemented a wide variety of other initiatives within their estates which have sought to address existing social issues and develop community. Following is a brief summary of some of these Departmental initiatives.
Community gardens. These can regenerate run down areas, encourage community interaction and cultural understanding and give residents a sense of satisfaction have continued to be a successful program. When commenced in 2000, there were 2 major garden projects, in Waterloo and Riverwood Estate. By 2005 there were 70 projects with over 4,000 residents involved (NSW DoH, 2000. NSW DoH 2005b).

The Good Neighbour Policy. This aims to reinforce tenants rights and responsibilities in relation to anti-social behaviour and is supported by the early intervention by client services staff from the Department. This Policy seeks to benefit from members of the community informing Departmental staff of occurrences or possible occurrences of criminal and anti-social behaviour within the estates (Judd, Samuels & O’Brien, 2002).
Chapter Four

The Minto Public Housing Estate
Introduction

This chapter presents a brief history of Minto and the establishment of the public housing estate. The Minto housing estate was designed applying Radburn principles. An overview of Radburn design is provided, along with an analysis of how it was implemented in the Minto estate and why it failed to be successful.

Furthermore, this chapter provides a detail site analysis of the Minto public housing estate in its current physical condition. An outline of the social characteristics of the estate is also included.

Regional Context

Minto is located approximately 45 km south west from the City of Sydney, located in the Campbelltown City Council Local Government Area. The suburb of Minto is about 5 km north of the Campbelltown Central Business District. The area has good access to the region’s highway network and has its own station on the Sydney Suburban Rail network; which enables Minto to have good accessibility around the Sydney Metropolitan Area (NSW DoH, 2005a). Figure 4 shows Minto in the context of Sydney.
A Brief History of Minto

Minto was named after the Earl of Minto, Viceroy of India from 1807 to 1814 by officers of the notorious NSW Corps or ‘Rum Corps’ after they deposed Governor William Bligh in an attempt to flatter and find favour with the man who was the nearest high-ranking British officer to the colony.

This new farming district, west of the Georges River opened in 1809 and the districts of Upper and Lower Minto stretched across the significant portions of the now Macarthur Area, from the north of Appin to Denham Court.

The area of Minto was altered by Governor Macquarie and in 1811 the colony’s best known physician, Dr William Redfern, was granted 800 acres (320 hectares) covering much of the modern day suburb of Minto. His property was named ‘Campbellfield’ after the Governor’s wife, Elizabeth Campbell.
In 1874, a railway platform was built to serve the surrounding farmlands named ‘Campbellfields Station’ but this was officially renamed ‘Minto’ in 1882, helping to preserve the early district name. Within a year part of the Redfern’s property closest the railway station had been carved into residential allotments creating Minto village. By the 1950s the population of Minto was a little over 500. It was a close-knit semi-rural village (CCC, 2006).

In 1969 Campbelltown Council sold a large slice of hillside land east of Pembroke Road to the New South Wales Housing Commission, along with several parcels of land in the area. The Sydney Region Outline Plan released in 1968 by the State Planning Authority, had identified the Macarthur Region as an important centre for development along major transport routes, with Campbelltown earmarked for the development of a major self-contained city to support in catering for Sydney’s expanding population. Until this time the Macarthur region consisted of a number of small villages, towns and suburbs. The Housing Commission was to lead the way as a developer in Campbelltown, creating the first new suburbs in the area and assisting in the establishment of infrastructure. It was believed if the Commission was to develop in the area and attract people to live in Campbelltown, private developers would be enticed to also construct in the region. This had a considerable amount of success as by 1982, 36.5% of Campbelltown’s population occupied Housing Commission dwellings.

By the time the plans were released for the site in Minto in the 1970s major concerns were being raised by the locals, mainly because the Housing Commission were planning to develop rows of townhouses and residential flat buildings, which differed greatly from the traditional detached single dwellings of the area. Figure 5 demonstrates one of the earliest plans by the Housing Commission for the Minto Estate. This plan was revised prior to the development of the estate, removing the proposed flat buildings and lowering the density of the development (CCC, 2006. Liston, 1988).
Figure 5 – Original Concept Plan for the Minto Housing Estate (source: HCNSW: undated)
By 1975 the Housing Development had commenced the development of the Minto Estate and by September of the following year 55 dwellings had been completed and by March 1980 1,060 homes had been built and a new ‘district centre’ was under construction. The district centre would include Sarah Redfern High/Primary School, the Minto Mall shopping centre, playing fields, a public library and community hall. By this time Campbellfield Public School, within the estate, had already been constructed and was opened in June 1978 (HCNSW, 1975. HCNSW, 1976. HCNSW, 1980. CCC, 2006).

Whilst the Housing Commission was developing the Minto estate, private developers began to move into the area and began the construction of new estates to the north and south of the Commission’s development.

By 1982, the Housing Commission had completed the residential component of the development in the Minto Estate, which contained a total of 1,220 publicly-owned dwellings. In 1983, the Commission built a Child Care Centre in the estate to provide required services to the estate’s new residents (HCNSW, 1982. HCNSW, 1983).

**The Radburn Concept**

The Minto Public Housing Estate was designed using the Radburn concept. The Radburn Concept involves houses which are designed ‘back to front’ with the front door facing walkways and common open space and the back door facing the street and the separation of pedestrians and motor vehicles. The Radburn concept was implemented in numerous public housing estates across Sydney with very little success (Hill, 1996. Wong, 1996).

The town of Radburn is located in New Jersey and was designed in 1928 by Clarence Stein and Henry Wright as ‘a town for the motor age’ or ‘the garden city plus the motor car’. It was designed with separate and independent pedestrian
and vehicular systems. A walkable town where pedestrians were not required to cross the road to move about. Houses were built in superlots with cul-de-sacs used as the only access to the dwellings, to reduce the amount of traffic on the street (Woodward, 1997. Ravetz, 2001). Figure 6 below is a plan of Radburn, New Jersey; note the superlots with individual cul-de-sacs.

Figure 6 – Layout of Radburn, New Jersey (source: Vale, 2000)
Another principle of Radburn design is large expanses of open space connected by internal walkways. These open space areas are generally located in the centre of a clustering of superlots and form the backbone of neighbourhood. These communal areas are expected to be the focus of neighbourhood life, where children could play and people could meet. They also provided pedestrian linkages across the entire estate, which negated the need for a car (Hill, 1996. Stewart 2001).

Back to front housing is one of the key principles of the Radburn design. This entailed the houses being designed to address both the communal open space and walkways network and the cul-de-sacs. The entry to the dwelling and main living areas were orientated to face the open space areas whilst the back of the dwelling was orientated towards the cul-de-sac. This resulted in high back yard fences fronting the streets. This design feature was installed to integrate with the walkway networks and enhance the town as a walkable community (Hill, 1996. Ravetz, 2001).

**Radburn and Minto**

The Housing Commission of New South Wales developed five estates in the Campbelltown area between 1972 and 1989 applying the Radburn concept. These estates, Macquarie Fields, Airds, Minto, Claymore and Ambarvale/Rosemeadow contain a total of 5,700 dwellings. However, these estates were not designed to the full extent of the original Radburn Concept, but more with a watered down and incomplete approach. Furthermore, the social characteristics of the estate residents were not suited to the Radburn design.

Radburn was initially designed for the upper middle class as a garden-based, community orientated neighbourhood away from the bustle of the outside world. However, by the 1990s the Campbelltown estates are characterised by a concentration of lower class residents and high levels of social exclusion, with a
population consisting of residents with high levels of unemployment, low levels of household income, high levels of single parent households and extensive crime and vandalism (Woodward, 1997).

Minto was designed on Radburn principles however they were applied loosely and in a watered down nature when compared to Stein and Wright’s original design philosophy. The cul-de-sacs developed to provide vehicular access to each dwelling were built as little more than small service lanes at the rear of the dwellings, generally only wide enough to allow traffic to travel in one directions. This design was preferred to the original design, which provided for spacious car courts with extensive landscaping, as it enabled a more economical use of the land and higher density of dwellings (Stewart, 2001). Figure 7 below demonstrates an example of a cul-de-sac implemented in the Minto estate.

Figure 7 – Example of a cul-de-sac in the Minto Estate (source: Author)
To further increase the density of dwellings on the estate, significant amounts of attached townhouses were preferred by the Housing Commission to Stein and Wright’s detached dwellings and semi-attached dual occupancy style dwellings. Figure 8 shows the style of attached townhouses built in Minto. However, estate-wide this did not lead to an overall increase in the density of the estate because of the vast amounts of unutilised open space (Woodward, 1997).

Figure 8 – Example of townhouses in the Minto public housing estate (source: Author)

Much of the internally located public open space has become run down and dilapidated and, as a result, underused. Although the provision of vast amounts of open space is a key Radburn principle, it needs to be maintained, attractive to residents and have a suitable level of facilities for it to be utilised by the community. The Minto estate was designed and developed with a high amount of public open space, but it is plagued with problems such as inadequate access as it is often hidden behind dwellings, lack of appreciation by residents, poor
maintenance, perceived lack of safety and a lack of quality facilities and play equipment (Hassell, 1997).

The implemented Radburn principles have also been attributed to be a factor contributing to the high levels of crime within the estates, where they have been applied. As the houses have been orientated front to back, this has resulted in high fences and a lack of sufficient casual surveillance of the street and cul-de-sacs. Figure 9 below shows an example of the high fences facing the street in the Minto Estate. Additionally, the internal open space and walkway network, which is often poorly lit, and the blurred boundary between public and private space can also encourage criminal and anti-social activity as it provides easy access to properties. This environment coupled with the high level of social disadvantaged is associated with high crime rates in the estates (Hill, 1996. Hassell, 1997. Woodward, 1997).

Figure 9 – Example of high fencing along the street frontage in Minto (source: Author)
Radburn principles were used by the NSW Housing Commission when designing the Minto public housing estate. However, a combination of incomplete implementation of the design principle and the social characteristics of the area has led to the Radburn concept being considered a failure in the area and associated with furthering the social issues of locality.

Minto Renewal Project Area

Physical Characteristics

The Minto public housing estate, also known as the Minto Renewal Project Area, is located within the boundaries of the suburb of Minto. The suburb of Minto contains a variety of land use with a commercial precinct and industrial land but it largely consists of residential properties. Figure 10 below is a map outlining the entire suburb of Minto and identifies the Minto Renewal Project Area and Figure 11 is a more detailed map illustrating the site, which is the focus of this thesis.

The Minto Renewal Project Area (MRPA) consists of residential properties and large parcels of open space. The land is owned by the Department of Housing, the Department of Planning and Campbelltown City Council with some portions in private ownership. Breaking it down, the Department of Housing owns all residential properties on the site, Campbelltown City Council owns all parks on the site, whilst all four owners hold portions of currently undeveloped land (NSW DoH, 2005a).

As previously mentioned, the estate was designed on Radburn principles, where houses were designed in a back to front nature, with the front of the dwelling facing the walkways and areas of public open space and the rear of the dwelling facing the street and rear laneways.
Figure 10 – The suburb of Minto (source: NSW DoH, 2005a – edited by Author)
Figure 11 – Minto Renewal Project Area (source: Woods Bagot: 2006)
There are 1,007 dwellings in the MRPA in the form of both low and medium density development. Approximately 200 of these are single storey detached cottages in the estate and approximately 800 are attached townhouses. Figures 12 and 13 below show examples of a cottage and a row of townhouses that have been built in Minto. Furthermore, the MRPA contains a number of special uses such as schools, churches, child care centres and community centres (Burton, 2005).
In accordance with the Radburn principles, many of the dwellings in the estate have been designed to face walkways and open space, whilst some do orientate towards the street.

There is very little variety in the style and design of the dwellings on site with the majority of townhouses and cottages built upon similar designs. This has left quite a bland and inactive streetscape throughout the estate, particularly when compared to the variety demonstrated in private dwellings in surrounding areas (NSW DoH, 2005a).

As previously mentioned, the Radburn design of the estate has been attributed to increasing the social problems of the area. Dwellings which face public open space lack privacy and security, whilst the back laneways and cul-de-sacs have become isolated and unused due to the dominance of garages and high fencing, which also has resulted in a lack of surveillance. This lack of surveillance has led to high instances of rubbish dumping and graffiti in these laneways. Additionally,
the estate is considered to be confusing with a lack of obvious street addresses due to the orientation of the dwellings (NSW DoH, 2005a).

Much of the housing stock in the MRPA can be seen to be run down and in need of maintenance or upgrade. Furthermore, the landscaping of most properties is of low quality and generally not kept up and significant amounts of property fencing is damaged or suffering from the test of time.

The Minto Renewal Project Area contains substantial amounts of public open space. Approximately 28 hectares are located on the site in the form of large parcels of open space and small pocket parks. Figure 14 is a map of the existing open space and undeveloped land in the MRPA. The map shows that the open space is well distributed across the site, a benefit of the Radburn design. Whilst over 10 hectares of open space is dedicated to sporting fields, some 13 hectares of open space is merely undeveloped parks with very little embellishment (NSW DoH, 2005a). These areas are considered to be underutilised and poorly designed. Furthermore, these parks are generally poorly maintained and in a deteriorated condition. Figures 15 and 16 show examples of different open space in the MRPA.
Figure 14 – Location of Existing Open Space in Minto (NSW DoH, 2005a)
Figure 15 – Example of open space in Minto (source: Author)

Figure 16 – Example of open space in Minto (source: Author)
There are two large sections of the site which are currently undeveloped. Both are located on the western side of the site and it can be assumed that these were not developed for different reasons. Piggott Reserve, shown in Figure 17 is located in the North West corner of the site, dislocated from the majority of the estate. Piggott Reserve is currently covered with dense vegetation which is remnant of the vegetation which previously covered the area; this vegetation is now classified to be degraded and no longer suitable to be maintained as a reserve. The second section is located in the middle of the western edge of the northern section of the estate. This area, shown in Figure 18 has never been developed and is generally poorly maintained. It is assumed that this area was never built upon by the Department due to the significant slope that exists in this area.

The road layout of the estate is based upon Radburn principles with main residential roads feeding secondary roads around the estate with cul-de-sacs connected to the primary and secondary roads providing access to dwellings. Also consistent with Radburn principles there is a clear separation between vehicle and pedestrian routes, as walkways are scattered across the estate linking housing clusters and amenities.
Figure 17 – Piggott Reserve (source: Author)

Figure 18 – Undeveloped Land in the Minto Housing Estate (source: Author)
Social Characteristics

The Minto Renewal Project Master Plan Environmental Assessment Report produced by the NSW Department of Housing (2005) provides an overview of the demography of the MRPA as of the 2001 Census. The Environmental Assessment Report states that in 2001:

- The MRPA has a population of 4,127, of which 57.2% of residents had lived at the same address 5 years previous.
- Minto has a young population with 36.1% of residents under the age 15. This figure is quite high compared to 25% of residents in the whole of Campbelltown and 20% across Sydney. Additionally, the number of residents over the age of 50 were lower when compared to Campbelltown and Sydney.
- The estate has a high proportion of indigenous Australian residents, consisting of 8.3% of the population.
- It is suggested that Minto has a multi-generation migrant community as 40% of the population are bi- or multi-lingual.
- 59.8% of adult residents in the MRPA have never been married, were divorced or separated. These figures were significantly higher than the entire suburb of Minto (51.9%), Campbelltown (45.4%) and Sydney (43.1%).
- The Minto public housing estate has a high percentage of single parent families consisting of 38.5% of all households, compared to Minto suburb (24.5%) and Campbelltown (17.2%).
- A quarter of the working age population is unemployed (24.4%); this is extremely high when compared to the 9.8% and 8.5% unemployment rates of Minto suburb and Campbelltown, respectively.
- Over a third of all residents in the MRPA earnt less than $200 per week in 2001. This represents a population that earns significantly less than the whole population of Campbelltown (27.6%)
• The level of education in the Minto estate is low. 51.6% of tenants in the public housing estate did not proceed past Year 10 of high school and over two-thirds of the population have no tertiary qualification.
• 30% of residents do not have access to a car (18.4% Minto suburb, 10.9% Campbelltown LGA).

These details illustrate a picture of social exclusion within the MRPA with all statistical data from the 2001 Census demonstrating that the estate is less socially stable and more disadvantaged when compared to the wider community. These figures are in line with the theory discussed previously in this thesis regarding concentrated public housing estates and high instances of social disadvantage, as the indicators for the Minto housing estate reveal that the area is in a more disadvantaged position than the whole of Minto, the Campbelltown Local Government Area and the whole of Sydney.
Chapter Five

Previous Renewal Programs in Minto
Introduction

Prior to the announcement of the Minto Renewal Project, the New South Wales Department of Housing had attempted two programs within the estate in an attempt to revitalise the area. The first and most significant of these was an Intensive Tenancy Management program and the second was de-Radburnisation works. This chapter will review these programs and the impact they had on the Minto estate.

Intensive Tenancy Management

As previously mentioned, the Intensive Tenancy Management initiative (ITM) was established by the Department of Housing in 1998 to focus more intensive management of public housing tenancies through the use of greater staff numbers and more specialised staff. The ITM was launched to enable a more responsive service, combined with greater community participation, to address the needs of tenants (NSW DoH, 2003).

In 1998, the ITM was piloted in a section of the Minto housing estate known as the ‘Hill Precinct’. The Hill Precinct consists of 347 dwellings, mainly consisting of double-storey and multilevel townhouses. This area was perceived to be particularly problematic and had been particularly targeted by the Department to undergo the ITM. Due to its location, the ITM program became known as the ‘Hill Project’ (NSW DoH, 2000. Stubbs & Hardy, 2000).

Much of the focus of the Hill Project involved community participation and listening to needs of the residents. It consisted of an informal style of management located in a field office in the heart of the precinct and aimed to improve resident satisfaction within the area. Departmental staff on the project were granted considerable policy and procedural flexibility to allow them to
promptly and effectively deal with the issues facing the neighbourhood (NSW DoH, 2000. Stubbs & Hardy, 2000).

Through the project residents were encouraged to take greater ownership of their homes and become more involved in the life of both the estate and the greater community.

The Hill Project established a significant number of partnerships with government and non-government agencies which provided support for events and projects. A number of local initiatives came out of the Hill Project, including a garden club, a community mural, maintenance workshops and a series of neighbourhood events. Figure 19 is a photograph of the community mural created as part of the Hill Project (NSW DoH, 2000).

![Figure 19 – Photograph of the mural created as part of the Hill Project](image)

One of the most significant initiatives of the Hill Project was the employment of a full time handyman to promptly undertake minor maintenance work on dwellings and to make sure that all vacated properties are ready for new occupants within two days. This scheme was highly supported by the residents of the Hill Precinct as it enabled required works to be completed on their properties without the usual waiting delays (NSW DoH, 2000. Stubbs & Hardy, 2000).
Effective elements of the Minto Intensive Management Project included:

- Participation by residents in identifying priorities and, where possible, carrying out or organising work to be done, with adequate resourcing and support from the housing provider.
- A positive reduction in the number of vacant properties in the neighbourhood and a growing number of people choosing to relocate to the precinct.
- A quick response to minor maintenance and repairs before they become major, with the employment of a Handyman at the Hill Project a particularly effective example.
- A higher staff to stock ratio, which allows for better communication with residents and contractors, and more effective monitoring of the quality and completion of contractor work in consultation with tenants.
- Tenant incentives to improve processes, such as putting savings made from more efficient or participatory organisation of maintenance and repairs into tenant identified priorities for neighbourhood improvement.
- Participation of tenants in neighbourhood improvements. This includes prioritising and carrying out work to be done, such as area clean ups, open space improvements, graffiti removal, and monitoring area needs. This leads to both a sense of pride and a sustainability and commitment to changes made. It is also likely to be cost effective (Stubbs & Hardy, 2000).

However, the Hill Project was only implemented in a small section of the Minto housing estate and all residents did not benefit from the program. Despite there being a number of positive outcomes from the Hill Project in the precinct where it was employed, the benefits were not felt across the whole estate. For a renewal project to be truly successful it should be implemented across the whole of the estate so that whole community of Minto can benefit and not just a single precinct.
De-Radburnisation

Although it never went under the Neighbourhood Improvement Program, parts of Minto did receive some de-Radburnisation works. These works, though not extensive, included the closure of some laneways and the reorientation of some dwelling to the street. Figure 20 below demonstrates the closure of a walkway and creation of a backyard in Minto estate.

Figure 20 – Closure of a walkway and extension of backyard in Minto (source: Author)
This Radburn reversal work was only undertaken in selective sections of Minto and not estate-wide. Still today much of Minto resembles its original Radburn design from the 1970's with car courts and walkways spread across the whole neighbourhood.

For de-Radburnisation to be a successful renewal tool it needs to occur across the entirety of the estate and not in the piece-meal method which occurred in Minto. If this type of physical regeneration is to address the issues of Minto and benefit all residents it would be required to be undertaken on a wider scale.
Chapter Six
The Minto Renewal Project
Introduction

On the 29th of May 2002, the then Minister for Housing, Dr Andrew Refshauge, announced that the State Government would be undertaking a dramatic renewal project in the Minto public housing estate. This renewal project would involve the demolition of a significant portion of the existing dwellings and redevelopment with new dwellings, the renovation of a number of existing dwellings and the introduction of a social mix into the area. This renewal project, know as the Minto Renewal Project, was to be undertaken to address the mistakes made by the Government in the past in terms of the design and management of the estate. Costing $350 million, the Minto Renewal Project is a joint venture between the Department of Housing, Landcom and Campbelltown City Council (Davies, 2002. Dickins, 2002. Smith, 2002).

The key elements of the Minto Renewal Project are:

- Replacement and redesign of the superlots containing townhouses in the estate;
- Develop a better street and pedestrian network, removal of all walkways and orientate all dwellings to the street;
- Create better open space; and
- Upgrade the stormwater and other utility services (NSW DoH, 2005a).

Why Minto?

The Minto public housing estate was selected to undergo this style of project for a number of reasons. Firstly is the recognition that Radburn principles have proven to be unsuitable for the design of a concentrated public housing estates, as they create a confusing neighbourhood with unsafe walkways, poor vehicular access and inadequate surveillance of the public domain. The Minto Renewal Project provides an opportunity to implement a new and contemporary design
into the estates and remove the negative elements of the Radburn design from the area (NSW DoH, 2005a).

Secondly, much of the housing stock has become deteriorated since the estate’s development in the 1970s and had become costly to maintain. A combination of poor quality design, poor construction and lack of maintenance over the years has led to the houses becoming run down and dilapidated. Additionally, many of the homes are termite infested. Dr Andrew Refshauge stated in 2002 that it was a more financially viable option to demolish the problem housing and redevelop the site than maintain the existing housing stock. (Smith, 2002).

Finally, the Department has recognised that the policy of creating large public housing estates was an error and had a negative impact on the population. Concentrating large number of socially disadvantaged residents in a single location led to the increased social exclusion of the area as a result of the downward spiralling social conditions of the estate. A recent comparative needs study of public housing estates in Sydney showed Minto to be one of the four metropolitan estates with the highest level of disadvantage, relatively high unemployment and many high needs tenants. This type of environment enables unemployment and crime to prosper and social problems to become an intergenerational issue. This redevelopment project allows the Department to break down the concentration of socially disadvantaged residents by introducing a social mix to the area, which it is believed will have a positive impact on the area (NSW DoH, 2002. NSW DoH, 2005a).
Aims, Objectives and Vision

The Minto Renewal Project Master Plan Environmental Assessment Report states that the objectives of the Minto Renewal Project have been developed within the Department of Housing’s ‘Living Communities’ vision, which seeks to enhance communities, improve services and improve housing. The Department has set the objectives of the Minto Renewal Project as to:-

- Facilitate the provision of improved social services, creating new opportunities for residents in association with other government agencies and community organisations;
- Work with local communities to develop local skills, enhance communication and strengthen neighbourhood networks;
- Enhance the amenity, improve and upgrade the housing, roads layout, open space and public areas across the Minto Estate and adjoining Council land; and
- Work with residents being rehoused to ensure that appropriate support services are provided, that needs are met, and that residents are assisted to integrate into their new communities (NSW DoH, 2005a).

These objectives are wide ranging and cover all aspects of the Renewal Project. This shows that the Department is looking at the Minto Renewal Project as a holistic renewal project and not purely a physical regeneration program of a run down housing estate, as only one of the four objectives relates to the physical works. Through these objectives the Department is seeking to look after the needs of the residents in the long term as it aims to develop local skills and communication and improve the provision of services to the estate. It additionally does not want to abandon those residents who are forced to relocate due to the project as it has set up support structure for these residents. The renewal of the estate is not simply about physically upgrading the site but seeks to address the lingering social issues related to the Minto housing estate.
The vision of the Minto Renewal Project Masterplan is to ‘provide a safe, vibrant sense of place and community in Minto’ (Woods Bagot, 2006). This is a vision in keeping the Department’s view of reforming the community and creating a new socially diverse community.

This vision is supported by the following aims and objectives of the Masterplan:-

- To change the mix of residents to a more sustainable public / private mix with better integration into the surrounding suburbs;
- To assist in strengthening the sense of place and fostering community identity for Minto’s existing and future residents;
- To improve the quality of local infrastructure, public open space areas and local community facilities in pedestrian friendly environments that assist in achieving ESD principles;
- To develop a built form which will enhance the visual environment and create a unique character for the development;
- To create a physical environment which encourages a vibrant local community with a distinctive and memorable neighbourhood character; and
- To enhance the different characteristics of areas of the site and respond to the natural topography and character (NSW DoH, 2005a; Woods Bagot, 2006).

This vision and the aims and objectives of the Minto Renewal Project and the Masterplan provide a number of environmental, social and economic goals. They aim to improve the physical and social aspects of the estate and sustain this improvement for generations to come. Achievement of these goals can only be assessed once the project is complete or near completion.
Summary of the Minto Renewal Project

In November 2005, the Minister of Planning, Frank Sartor, approved the Minto Renewal Project Masterplan. This Masterplan illustrates the future of Minto and outlines all works to be undertaken as part of the Minto Renewal Project. The Masterplan is to be implemented over a 10 year period, in staged sections. Figure 21 is the approved Masterplan for the Minto Renewal Project. This Masterplan provides for the provision of a variety of housing types, reconfigures the road network to remove the Radburn elements and creates a number of new public open spaces throughout the estate.

Housing Variety

It is anticipated by the Department of Housing that upon completion of the Project there will be approximately 1,100 dwellings in the renewed estate comprising of the following:-

- 49 existing DoH cottages to be upgraded and sold;
- 127 existing DoH cottages to be upgraded and retained as public housing dwellings;
- 197 new DoH public housing dwellings to be developed; and
- 719 new private sector dwellings to be developed (NSW DoH, 2005a).

The new dwellings to be developed in the Project Area are to be provided in three different styles, integrated housing, detached housing and rural residential housing. Figure 22 illustrates the location of these housing types across the MRPA. All housing in the estate will be developed on a separate title and not on superlots, as previously was the case in the Radburn design.
Figure 21 – Minto Renewal Project Masterplan (source: NSW DoH, 2006)
Figure 22 – Dwelling Type Locations in the Minto Renewal Project (source: Woods Bagot, 2006)
Integrated Housing

Integrated housing refers to a high density of development which is to occur along the edges of public open space. These dwellings will provide character and surveillance to the open space to improve the safety and security of these areas. Integrated dwellings will consist of narrow two storey townhouses. Areas of integrated housing are encouraged to have garages located in car courts with vehicular access from the rear or secondary street frontages. Figure 23 below demonstrates some examples of integrated housing on other sites. Dual occupancy, or semi attached dwellings, are required to be developed on major intersections of the site to strengthen the built form, address all street frontages and not leave blank walls (which would have a negative impact on the streetscape.) Figure 24 shows examples of semi attached housing (NSW DoH, 2005a).

Figure 23 – Examples of Integrated Housing (source: Woods Bagot, 2006)

Figure 24 – Examples of Semi Attached Housing (source: Woods Bagot, 2006)
Detached Housing

The detached housing will be the predominant style of dwelling across the estate. The sizes of these dwelling will vary between single and two-storey houses on a variety of lot sizes, dependent on the location within the estate. Variety in design is encouraged for the detached dwellings to add to the character of the area and enhance the streetscape. Detached dwellings located near areas of existing housing are to be retained or integrated housing is to assimilate with the character of these developments to help incorporate the variety of housing types. Areas of detached dwellings are to be highly landscaped to further add character. Figure 25 below demonstrates some examples of detached housing (NSW DoH, 2005a).

![Detached Housing Examples](image1.jpg)

Figure 25 – Examples of Detached Housing (source: Woods Bagot, 2006)

The Masterplan makes provision for the retention and upgrade of 176 existing Department of Housing cottages in the estate. These dwellings are currently considered to be in reasonable condition but require some work to raise their quality. These cottages will be upgraded to a condition where they will be able to be reused or sold to private owners. These cottages are located at the northern and southern extremities of the site. Appendix 1 provides a map showing the sites where these cottages are to be retained. Of these cottages, 49 will be sold to private home owners and 127 will be retained by the Department for public housing.
Rural Residential Housing

Rural Residential housing is to be developed along the western edge to the north of the site. This is proposed to maintain the character of this area, which currently has a number of rural residential properties within the locality; it is also proposed to maintain a green ridgeline along part of the site with higher topography. These areas are to be developed at a far lower density to the rest of the MRPA and are to incorporate large setbacks. These houses are to be designed to have a minimal visual impact on the natural environment and require, where possible, existing trees to be retained and new landscaping installed (NSW DoH, 2005a). Figure 26 below demonstrates some examples of rural residential housing.

![Figure 26 – Examples of Rural Residential Housing (source: Woods Bagot, 2006)](image)

Road and Access Network

A key feature of the Masterplan is the reconfiguration of the road network within the estate. To de-Radburnise the estate a complete new road network and hierarchy had to be installed within the estate. The new estate design removes many of the existing streets, including the traditional Radburn cul-de-sacs, and replaces them with a new road structure. The redevelopment provides an increase in the amount of road within the site which enables greater connectivity.
within the site. It also enables all housing on the site to be orientated to the street and not internal service lanes. The new street network does include seven cul-de-sacs across the site, however these are to be larger, more bulbous cul-de-sacs which provide good vehicular access.

Much of the structure of the new road network is dictated by the stormwater management system, which is being installed across the site. In order to manage water run off across the site more effectively, many of the roadways are located to accommodate and direct water flows. This has resulted in a network which provides for roads which traverse the natural topography of the estate.

A new pedestrian/cyclist network will also be developed in the MRPA. This will not be provided through walkways, such as were in the original estate but through wide footpaths running adjacent to the road network. This improves pedestrian safety in the area as it increases casual surveillance of the pedestrian walkways.

All roads and pedestrian walkways will be landscaped with suitable street planting on both sides of the street. This will add to character of the estate and further enhance the streetscape (NSW DoH, 2005a).

Public Open Space

All public open space in the Minto estate is to be redeveloped to improve the quality of the public realm. Much of it is to be physically relocated within the estate to better serve the community and to be incorporated in the stormwater management system of the site. Figure 27 demonstrates the location of public open space within the Estate. Despite the relocation of the public open space there will be no overall loss in the total amount provided on site. A total of six parks are in the redevelopment, which are to be evenly distributed across the site.
Figure 27 – Location of Open Space in the Minto Renewal Project (source: Woods Bagot, 2006)
The public open spaces will provide a diverse range of recreational facilities across the site, which will provide high public amenity. All open space is to be embellished with facilities which enable both passive and active recreation for all ages and abilities.

Across the estate the public open space caters for all lifestyles. Facilities in the public open space in the estate include sporting fields, play equipment, barbeque and picnic facilities, walking paths, public art, skateboard ramps, water features and ornamental planting. Concept plans for the public open space can be viewed in Appendix 2.

Safety of the parks will be high as integrated housing is proposed along the edges of all open space. This will not only improve casual surveillance of these spaces, but will also enhance the open space (NSW DoH, 2005a).

Community Facilities

As part of the Minto Renewal Project, the existing community centre in Minto will be demolished. However, the Department of Housing is committed to a planning agreement with Campbelltown City Council which will require them to build a new community centre in the estate. This community centre is proposed to be located in the new Redfern Park. The centre is designed to be flexible and able to be used for a variety of uses.

The planning agreement between the Department and Council also requires the Department to upgrade the existing Council child care centre in the area and construct all parks as discussed above (NSW DoH, undated).
Social Mix

A social mix will be integrated into the new community of Minto as part of the Minto Renewal Project. It is anticipated that 30% of the total dwellings in the estate are to be retained by the Department as public housing stock. This equates to approximately 324 dwellings in the estate. The remaining 683 are to be sold off for private ownership. The Department held dwellings will be evenly scattered across the estate, to allow for an even distribution of public housing residents and private owners. This social mix is in keeping with the Department’s policy of de-concentrating public housing residents to avoid previous experiences of estates spiralling into social exclusion.

The introduction of this social mix, however, will lead to an overall loss of public housing properties in the area of approximately 683 units. To combat this loss in a single location, the Department is committed to obtaining the same number of dwellings within the Greater Western Sydney region during the life of the Minto Renewal Project. This is to result in no overall net loss in dwellings to the Department as a consequence of the Project. Figure 28 is a table demonstrating the demolition, construction and replacement of dwellings during the Minto Renewal Project. It demonstrates that there will be no overall stock loss (NSW DoH, 2005a)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Demolitions</th>
<th>Cottage Upgrades</th>
<th>DoH Cottage Sales</th>
<th>New DoH Dwellings</th>
<th>New Non DoH Dwellings</th>
<th>Progressive Public Housing on Site</th>
<th>Progressive Total Dwellings on Site</th>
<th>Off-Site Replacement Dwellings</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 28 – Dwellings over Time (source: NSW DoH, 2005a)
Staging of the Development

As the Minto Renewal Project is a ten year plan which involves the redevelopment of currently occupied dwellings, it is proposed that the progress of the Project will be staged. The whole project has been arranged into 8 separate stages. The project has been staged to enable the community of Minto to continue to function during the life of the project.

Much of the staging has been determined by the Department of Housing’s ability to organise the relocation of Minto’s existing residents to other areas. The relocation of all residents at one time would not be physically possible. Furthermore, expected sales of blocks is also a factor in the staging of the project.

Redevelopment will occur in the precincts which have already been vacated. Figure 29 is a table showing indicative time frames of the staging of the project and Figure 30 is a map illustrating the different areas which relate to the staging. Figure 31 is an aerial photo which demonstrates all the precinct stages in the Minto Renewal Area.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Precinct</th>
<th>Rehousing and Demolition Period</th>
<th>Cottage Upgrading Rehousing</th>
<th>Construction Period (Road Work)</th>
<th>Anticipated Sales Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Note: Final timeframes will be clearly conveyed to all stakeholders

**Figure 29 - Indicative Staging of the Minto Renewal Project (source: NSW DoH, 2005)
Figure 30 – Staging Plan of the Minto Renewal Project (source: NSW DoH, 2005)
Figure 31 – Aerial photo of the Minto Renewal Project area, showing the staging precincts of the project (source NSW DoH, 2005a)
Community Consultation

Community consultation from the Department of Housing with the residents of Minto was initially very poor. Residents were given a mere 24 hours notice prior to the State Government announcing the Project and the eventual demolition of their homes on the 29th of May 2002. This was done through a letter box drop undertaken by local Departmental staff. Referring back to Stubb’s levels of consultation, this method would rate as only information as the residents were only provided with information that the Minto Renewal Project was to occur and were afforded no input into the decision making process (Thorn, 2003).

Following this there was a number of community meetings held by the Department, which provided further information to residents and community organisations on the Project. Again there was no scope to allow community input into the project (Thorn, 2003).

The lack of community consultation by the Department caused great uproar amongst residents and community groups who were concerned that decisions were made that would greatly impact on their lives without them being consulted. The residents felt that they had valuable input that could contribute to the Project (Stubbs, 2005).

As a result of this outcry the Department of Housing established a number of consultation sessions with residents when it came to the preparation of the Masterplan for the renewal project. These sessions were held in two stages. Firstly, in May 2003 during the early stages of the formulation of the Masterplan and secondly, in August 2003 to discuss the previous comments, from the May 2003 session, and gauge further opinion from the residents on issues relating to the continuing development of the Masterplan (Thorn, 2003).
The Department of Housing has since established a Community Reference Group as a method of gathering the community’s views about the design details of the projects and to provide information to the residents of the estate. The Community Reference group consists of residents of Minto, representatives of community groups and officials from the Department (NSW DoH, 2004).

**Current Status of the Project**

The Minto Renewal Project is well underway and progressing forward. In July 2006, the State Government provided development approval to the Masterplan and has enabled the Department to progress the project to a more detailed design stage of the Project.

Demolition of has already been undertaken in two precincts of the estate, known as Sarah and Valley Vista, with the commencement of roads, engineering works and open space expected to commence in these areas in early 2007 (refer to Figure 31 above for location of these precincts in the MRPA). Figures 32 and 33 show the existing situation in both Sarah and Valley Vista as all housing has been demolished and awaiting redevelopment work, leaving the existing road network as a memory of what used to stand.

Also in July 2006, the residents of two further precincts, Erskine and Darcy, were informed that they would be relocated in 12 months to enable the next phase of the redevelopment to occur.
Figure 32 – Valley Vista after demolition (source: Author)

Figure 33 – Sarah precinct after demolition (source: Author)
Potential Impacts on Existing Residents

The Minto Renewal Project will have some potential impacts upon the existing residents of the Minto Estate. As a consequence of the Renewal Project, 862 households in the estate will have to be relocated (NSW DoH, 2005a).

This relocation of residents severs established neighbourhood ties within the community. These social networks can be often one of the few positive elements of an estate suffering from social exclusion, as at least the residents can offer each other support and understanding. As a result of being moved away from their existing social networks, residents can often feel isolated in their new environment away from friends and familiar surrounds (Fuller, 1995. Keating, 2000. Gotham, 2001).

Relocation also impacts on residents as they can lose their long-term homes. A study of the social and economic impacts of the early stages of the Minto Renewal Project undertaken by Stubbs (2005) revealed that many long term residents relocated from the Sarah and Valley Vista precincts suffered with the loss of their family home, which some residents had occupied for over two decades. These families had strong connections with their dwellings and as a result of the project these ties have been broken down as they have been forced to relocate to new locations.

The announcement of the Renewal Project may also cause uncertainty amongst residents as they can often lack information about their relocation and future location. Residents would prefer to know up front and in advance of all relevant information regarding their future in public housing. Stubbs (2005) revealed that frequently details received by Minto residents would be inaccurate, incorrect, inconsistent or even non-existent.
The Renewal project may also have an unsettling effect on the residents in the estate who are yet to be relocated away from Minto. With residents knowing that in time they will be relocated the community can become unstable, as they realise that it is only a matter of time until they themselves are moved out. This can also result in the housing becoming further run down, as tenants may not maintain the same level of upkeep on their house (Stubbs, 2005).

The greatest impact of the relocation can be on the children of households who, as a result of the relocation, can be forced to move schools and be ripped away from their friends during a fragile time of their development. Children generally do not have the same mechanisms as adults to deal with the uncertainty and impacts created by their relocation (Gotham, 2001. Stubbs, 2005).

In an effort in minimise the impact of the relocation, the Department has become very mindful of addressing the needs and concerns of the Minto resident to be relocated. Following some of the errors made in the relocation of residents from the Sarah and Valley Vista precincts, the Department has created an independent Tenant Advocacy position arranged through the South Western Regional Tenants Association to provide an independent advocacy and support service to residents experiencing difficulties during the relocation process. Additionally, the Department has also appointed a Resettlement Officer to organise and assist with the relocation of tenants (NSW DoH, 2004. Stubbs, 2005).

The Department is also trying to be transparent with the details provided to the residents regarding their relocation. From the initial announcement of the project the Department released details of indicative time frames for when
residents in the various precincts on site will be required to be relocated. Figure 34 is a map released by the Department illustrating the time frames of when precincts will be rehoused. This map has been updated to show the precincts which have been already cleared. Furthermore, the Department has committed to providing a minimum of 12 months notice to the residents before they are to be rehoused (NSW DoH, 2005a)
Figure 34 - Indicative timeframes by precinct for resident resettlement (source NSW DoH, 2006)
Chapter Seven

DESIGN ANALYSIS OF THE MINTO RENEWAL PROJECT MASTERPLAN
Introduction

The Minto public housing estate was originally designed loosely applying the principles of Radburn development. This design, as discussed in previous chapters, has been a failure in providing a good residential environment in an area of concentrated social exclusion. The design did not suit the needs of its residents, is confusing, became increasingly run down and fostered a culture of social decline. This chapter will analyse the design of the Minto Renewal Project, as presented in the Masterplan, against modern principles of urban design and assess the changes that are to be made in the estate and whether they will be beneficial to the environment and residents.

Urban design is defined by the New Zealand Ministry for the Environment (2005) as “the design of the buildings, places, spaces and networks that make up our towns and cities, and the ways people use them” (p 7). This definition of urban design highlights that the process is not purely about the physical environment but also its impact on society. Oxman (1987) defines urban design as the “enhancement of public values in the design of urban environment” (p 5). This shows that urban design seeks to improve urban areas to maximise their social benefit.

Urban design can be seen as the coming together of a variety of environmental elements to create a place. There are a number of key principles against which the urban design of an area can be assessed, however there is no set formula that can be applied to all areas. Urban design is individual to each locality, as it requires different approaches to address the needs of that area. Successful urban design will not only enhance the physical environment but also provide benefit to those who use it (Gindroz et al, 2003).
Following is an analysis of the Minto Renewal Project against a number of key principles of urban design:

**Permeability**

The extent to which the environment allows people a choice of access through it from place to place is the key element of permeability in urban areas. In the Figure 35 the right diagram offers a greater choice of routes than the diagram on the left, it is therefore more permeable.

![Figure 35 – Diagrams of an impermeable and permeable urban area (source: Bentley et al: 1985)](image)

Permeability is basic to achieving a responsive environment and must be considered early in design. Consideration must be given to how many routes there should be, how they are to be linked and where they are to be located, keeping in mind that there should be blocks of land left for developmental purposes (Bentley et al, 1985).

The Minto Renewal Project will greatly increase the permeability of the estate. The proposed new road network is more open and connected than the existing streets on site, which were based on Radburn Principles. The new road network has limited the use of cul-de-sacs to a minimum which has resulted in a more flowing layout. The site will contain more linkage between areas and provide
greater accessibility between locations. The redesign of the road layout is one of the most significant features of the Minto Renewal Project.

**Variety**

Variety is the choice of experience on offer, that is, a variety of uses for the land. Variety of use is therefore the key to variety of a whole, for example building types, varied people at various times for various reasons, and the creation of a rich mix of images (Bentley et al, 1985).

For people to take advantage of choice in the variety of uses available they need to be mobile. People’s mobility must be taken into consideration. In this regard, the variety of uses should be easily accessible from all aspects of the area. Variety is not achieved if a mixed bag of activities is simply put together. The uses must be interdependent and offer mutual support (Bentley et al, 1985).

There is very little variety in types of land uses in the Minto Renewal Masterplan as most development associated with the Project is of a residential nature. However, there is proposed be a variety in the housing styles provided on site, with detached, integrated and rural residential housing to be constructed. Furthermore, variety in the design of all housing is encouraged to make the estate consistent with adjoining neighbourhoods. Figures 36 and 37 show examples of dwelling design in the area surrounding the Minto estate.
Figure 36 – An example of a modern single storey dwelling, in an estate adjacent to the Minto Public Housing Estate (source: Author)

Figure 37 – An example of modern two storey dwelling design, in an estate adjacent to the Minto Public Housing Estate (source: Author)
Variety is also provided in terms of the public open space to be developed. All parks proposed on site are individual in character with each embellished with unique facilities that differentiate them from other parks in the estate. This variety in style of public open space will enable both passive and active recreation for all ages and abilities. Appendix 2 contains the concept plans for the proposed new parks in the Minto estate.

**Edges**

Edges are defined as the lineal element of the urban area which are not used as or considered to be access routes. Edges can often form boundaries between different elements of the urban environment or breaks in the continuity of the same element. Edges in the urban area can be barriers which restrict access or can be soft and permeable. Edges can be used to identify an area or location. Strong edges can define a place and make it stand out from the surrounding locality. Edges can be either created or part of the natural environment and are a key feature of any urban area regardless of how they are applied (Carmona, et al, 2003).

The most significant edges in the Minto Renewal Project are the built up rows of integrated housing adjacent to the all parks in the estate. These strong built form edges consisting of attached town houses not only provide a clear boundary between the housing and the open space but they also assist in defining the parks as an open and free land use for the residents to use.

The orientation of all dwellings to the street, instead of to internal service lanes, helps to create clear edges along all roads. This is particularly important along major and collector roads in the estate as it greatly enhances the streetscape.
There are no defined edges between the site and the existing neighbourhoods of the area. This is because it is anticipated that the renewal area will easily integrate with the existing built form and no longer be easily identifiable as a location of public housing.

Robustness

This refers to the different purposes that a space can be used for. The more opportunities a space can offer increases its robustness. Robustness focuses on individual buildings and open spaces where the objective is to have the widest possible range of likely activities and future uses, both in the short and long term (Bentley et al, 1985).

It is fair to say the estate has been planned as a residential community with very little opportunity to provide alternatives uses of dwellings. Therefore the estate is generally not very robust. However, the public open space has been designed to be multifunctional and able to accommodate a variety of uses. The new community hall, to be built, will be adaptable and capable of being used for an array of activities.

Safety

Safety should be a key element of the design of any urban area. Residents like to feel safe and secure within their estate. To promote safety and security in residential areas, surveillance of the public domain is an important feature. Housing in the area must overlook the parks and pedestrian walkways to provide casual surveillance over these areas. Without suitable casual surveillance, the environmental design may encourage crime and anti-social behaviour (Schmitz et al, 2003).
Safety and security on the site will greatly improve as a result of the Minto Renewal Project. The redevelopment will see the removal of the potentially dangerous pedestrian walkways, service lanes and isolated public open space. The renewed area will provide for greater casual surveillance of the public domain. Requirements for all dwellings to be orientated to the street will mean that no area of the estate will not be able to be viewed from a dwelling. Additionally, the integrated housing lining the public open space intensifies the opportunities for surveillance of all parks. As mentioned above, the removal of the existing walkways and development of new pedestrian systems adjacent to the road further improves the surveillance in the estate. As a result of these works, the opportunity to commit crime should greatly decrease in Minto and the improved surveillance across the estate should improve the feeling of safety and security for residents.

Legibility

Legibility refers to how easily people can understand and use a space. It helps people to be able to move around a space. It also involves identifying what is public space and what is private space. Legibility makes people feel safe because they understand where they are and where they are going (Bentley et al, 1985).

The new road network to be laid out in the estate will greatly improve the legibility of the estate. The existing road network is considered to be confusing and difficult to navigate, however the new layout of road is far more open and connected and should be simpler for people to understand and travel through.

Furthermore, public open space will be more clearly defined as a result of the renewal process. It will no longer be located in poorly accessible areas, hidden behind rows of townhouse. All parks in the new estate will be surrounded by roads on all sides and further defined by strong edges of integrated housing.
Pedestrian/Cycling Access

A well connected urban area will encourage its residents to walk and cycle around the neighbourhood. However, people will generally only travel a limited distance without the use of a vehicle, which means a range of destinations, such as open space, community facilities and shops, should be provided within walking distance of the residents (Schmitz et al, 2003. NZ Ministry for the Environment, 2005).

As previously discussed, the provision of a road network with greatly improve connectivity across the site and enable easier pedestrian access across the site. Furthermore, the traditionally disliked and often dangerous walkways that traversed the estate are to be removed and new pedestrian footpaths will be built adjacent to the road network. This opens up the pedestrian walkways and provides better linkages between locations.

A new cycle network is also proposed on site consisting of a mix of on and off road routes. This cycle network is proposed along all major roads in the estate and will greatly improve accessibility on the site. Figure 38 shows the proposed cycle network across the estate.
Figure 38 – Proposed cycle network in the Minto Renewal Project Area (source: NSW DoH, 2005a)
**Nodes**

Nodes are points of reference in urban environments used by people to assist in moving around a locality. They help guide people whilst they travel as they are noticeable and easily identifiable. Nodes are generally key junctions in the area and/or concentrations of a particular element or physical characteristic. Either way nodes often have distinctive physical elements which make them more memorable along the journey of travel (Carmona, et al, 2003).

There are few nodes within the Minto Renewal Masterplan, however, the most clearly identifiable elements of the estate will be the parks. These parks are evenly distributed throughout the estate and generally located on main roadways. They will be a distinctive area amongst the built up character of the area and be easily used as beacons to direct travel.

**Landmarks**

Landmarks are recognisable features that clearly identifies a place. Similar to nodes, they are a point of reference used by travellers to mark a journey; however they are more significant and have their own uniqueness. Landmarks can vary in scale from a regional level which can be seen from a great distance such as a hill or tower, to a local level which are used to guide around smaller localities, such as signs, public art or trees. Landmarks are prominent features in the urban environment, which can define an area (Carmona, et al, 2003).

The key landmark of the Minto estate is located off the renewal site. Minto Mall is by far the largest single development in the suburb of Minto. It is easily identifiable and prominent within the area, as it is located on a major intersection, Figure 39 is a photo of Minto Mall. Within the site, there are no significant landmarks proposed as part of the renewal project.
Interconnectedness

All renewal and infill developments should be designed to integrate with the existing development surrounding the site. Development should occur so that there are no clear boundaries between the new and existing neighbourhoods. The new development should be well connected with the existing neighbourhood in terms of roads and pedestrian walkways, using the present routes where possible. This not only allows the development to be consistent with the area, but also increases the opportunity for the community to develop as the new and existing housing becomes integrated (Barton et al, 2003).

It was always the intention of the Department of Housing to renew Minto in a manner that would allow it to be integrated and interconnected with the existing developments surrounding the site. The development is planned to be sympathetic with surrounding neighbourhoods, with new dwellings on the fringe of the site designed to be compatible with existing housing. Furthermore, the
new street network will improve the integration of the renewal area as the new roads will provide greater connections to surrounding areas and the points of access to the estate will significantly increase.

**Gateways**

Gateways are identifiable features, either natural or artificial, that indicate entry has been made into a locality. A gateway does not have to be a significant landmark, such as a historic arch or statue. It can be something as simple as a sign post bearing a name (Alexander et al, 1987).

There are no gateways planned for the Minto Renewal area to inform people that they are entering the estate. The renewed estate is planned to be integrated into the greater suburb of Minto without any identification that it is in part of a public housing development. For years the Minto public housing estate has been clearly identifiable and suffered from stigma issues. The aim is that as a result of the redevelopment, is for the area to be easily assimilated with adjacent neighbourhoods in regard to both physical and social characteristics.
Chapter Eight

Discussion of Issues
Introduction

This chapter will reflect upon a number of issues surrounding the Minto Renewal Project. These issues include the ability of the Project to achieve its goals, the role of urban design in the renewal process, the potential impact that the introduction of social mix will have on the renewed estate, the effect the Project will have on the stigmatisation of the estate and the impact of relocation on existing residents.

Achieving Objectives

The Minto Renewal Project Masterplan is only one element of the whole project. The Masterplan will create widespread changes to the physical environment across the public housing estate. These changes will transform the housing, road network, open space and public areas. The renewal will have a positive impact on the area as it removes the negative physical elements of the existing estate, which was designed along Radburn principles. The Project enhances the design quality of the estate and will provide housing and infrastructure more suited to meet the needs of the residents. The proposed design of the new estate, as outlined in the Project Masterplan (NSW DoH, 2005a), should be successful in achieving one of the Department of Housing’s objectives for the project, which is to ‘enhance the amenity, improve and upgrade the housing, roads layout, open space and public areas across the Minto Estate and adjoining Council land’.

However, the remaining three objectives of the Minto Renewal Project require the Department to be actively involved with the local community, other government agencies and non-profit organisations to implement programs to address the existing social problems of the area. These objectives are:-

- To facilitate the provision of improved social services, creating new opportunities for residents in association with other government agencies and community organisations;
• To work with local communities to develop local skills, enhance communication and strengthen neighbourhood networks; and
• To work with residents being rehoused to ensure that appropriate support services are provided, that needs are met, and that residents are assisted to integrate into their new communities (NSW DoH, 2005a).

It is difficult to ascertain, at such an early stage in the Renewal Project, whether or not the Department will be successful in realising these objectives. Past experiences with Departmental renewal projects across New South Wales and even in Minto with the Hill Project, have demonstrated the Department’s commitment to addressing the issues surrounding social exclusion in their estates. Therefore, it is to be assumed that the Department will exhibit the same level of commitment in this project. However, success will be strongly reliant upon the quality of the partnerships the Department will be able to forge within the community. To ensure that it is successful, the Department has identified an extensive list of actions that it needs to undertake to achieve its objectives. Some of these actions have commenced implementation, particularly those related to the relocation of tenants. A comprehensive list of these actions is included as Appendix 3.

The Role of Urban Design

A centre point of the renewal project is the implementation of a new urban design within the estate. This will replace the physical environment which resulted from the unsuccessful implementation of Radburn principles. To apply this urban design proposal requires the demolition of a significant percentage of the existing housing, removal of the road network and work on open space in the estate.

The design principles being employed will aim to create increased connectivity between residents and facilities, will provide a more open environment with
increased permeability and improve the safety and security of the area through the increase in opportunities for casual surveillance of the public domain.

The design principles with create more variety in housing choices to better meet the needs of residents as well as provide rejuvenated public open space which will allow for a more comprehensive range of both passive and active recreational opportunities. Overall the new design will allow the estate to better integrate with surrounding neighbourhoods and therefore be less identifiable as a public housing estate.

The new Masterplan represents significant improvement on the traditional Radburn-based design, which has historically fostered social decline and physical deterioration within estates. The new urban design should create a greater sense of place within Minto and greatly improve the quality of the physical environment.

**Social Mix**

The Minto Renewal Project has a strong focus on introducing a social mix into the estate. This should radically overhaul, in a positive way, the existing community of the project area.

The Project states that there will be a 30:70 mix of public tenants and private residents. There is a pre-planned distribution for the occupants, which will result on public tenants being evenly distributed across the estate. There will also be a variety of housing designs and sizes that will assist in meeting needs of individual households. This will break down the former concentration of all public tenants in the one area, living in identical dwellings. Thus there will be increased diversity in housing and with the re-arrangement in the linkages there will be an improvement in the aesthetic appeal of the estate. The 30:70 mix will also bring
with it increased diversity of residents, in terms of age, employment, attitudes, values and wealth.

The public/private mix should create more positive community values and attitudes to maintaining dwellings, using facilities and access to services. The interaction between public and private residents should increase the potential for employment opportunities and access to external resources.

The introduction of social mix is one of the key elements of the Minto Renewal Project. Concentrated public housing, as discussed in previous chapters, has been linked to fostering the growth of social exclusion in these estates. Social mix breaks down this concentration and the continuous downward spiral of social disadvantage. It is anticipated that the change to community diversity will have a positive effect on public housing tenants and reverse the trend of social isolation.

**Stigmatisation**

Through the introduction of social mix, compatible housing design and increased connectivity with the neighbouring areas there should be change to the external perception of Minto, so that the negative stigma is removed.

Although these elements will bring change, time will be needed to remove the negative images of the original estate as perceived by the external community. It is anticipated that it will take longer than the 10 year life of the project for the social mix to create more empathy from the outside community.
Impact on Existing Residents

The Minto Renewal Project involves the demolition of a large proportion of the housing stock and the upgrading of the retained dwellings. All estate residents need to be relocated with the assistance of the Department of Housing.

It is acknowledged that this relocation process will disrupt the lives of the residents and impact upon their social networks.

Although this will impact on the individuals concerned, the project must be viewed holistically, taking into consideration the long term benefits that will come to the area. Thus there is a trade off between the immediate personal situation of the residents and the potential benefits, in the long term, to be gained from the project.

The Minto public housing estate was in such a state of disrepair and its residents suffered such extensive social exclusion that an intervention of the magnitude of the Minto Renewal Project was necessary to remedy the social and environmental issues of the estate.

However, it should be seen that rehousing may provide opportunities for the public housing tenants that may not have been previously accessible to them when living on the Minto estate. It has been previously noted that the Department has offered assistance and support during their relocation and while they are adapting to a new location and community.
Chapter Nine
Conclusion
Scholarly and practice literature, Department of Housing reports and documents and my research strongly indicate that the Minto public housing estate was in urgent need of renewal, not only in its physical appearance but also in an effort to try and remedy the high level of social disadvantage on this concentrated public housing estate.

This thesis has shown that the Minto estate exhibits many of the negative aspects that occur in a concentrated public housing estate. It illustrates high unemployment, low levels of income, high rate of single parent families, restricted tenant mobility and a lack of care of the dwellings and public domain. These factors are all representative of the issues discussed in the literature.

Again, the literature and my on-site visits have enabled me to present an overview of the existing environmental and social conditions on the estate. This is highlighted by the failings of the Radburn design in providing an adequate residential environment.

The research into the estate’s current condition presented the opportunity to assess the Minto Renewal Project and its Masterplan against contemporary urban design principles. This assessment found that the new design would significantly improve the quality of the urban environment.

Finally, I have been able to consolidate all the research into a hypothesis on whether the Minto Renewal Project will be able to successfully address the social and environmental problems that have existed on the estate. My conclusion is that over time and with effective working partnerships with the community, other governmental agencies and non-profit organisations, the Minto Renewal Project will provide the social mix and positive attitudes to make the estate a vibrant, stable and cohesive place of residence.


Appendices
Appendix 1

Location of cottages to be retained and upgraded

Source
Woods Bagot, 2006
Appendix 2

Open Space Concept Plans

Source
NSW DoH, undated
1. Cricket Practice Nets.
2. Pedestrian path linking to school.
3. Deciduous trees to north of building.
4. Amenities and Kiosk facilities
5. Feature grove of flowering deciduous trees with table settings underneath.
6. Adequate 45 degree on street parking provided street.
7. Pedestrian footpath behind parking.
8. Oval with retaining wall to low side.
9. Street tree plantings.
10. Low feature plantings to terminate view corridors.
12. Connection to cross site shared way network.
14. Existing trees to be retained where possible. Existing stone feature retained, strengthen planting with clean trunked and granous species.
15. Entrance feature and ornamental planting.
16. Existing Playground.

Note: Design subject to separate Development Application.
1. Forest. Hi top vegetation open underneath to maintain surveillance. Including seating, and picnic tables.
2. Small seating areas along linking pathway down hill.
3. Largely open grassed area for active recreation.
4. Earth mounding feature directs overland flow.
5. Pedestrian paths linking across park.
6. Play for teenagers could include skate ramp.
7. Overland flow into dry creek bed.
8. Mid aged children's play equipment.
9. Cross estate shared way network.
10. Rain Garden.
11. Small children's play area.
12. Minto community Hall.
13. Outdoor courtyard, seating, Cafe.
14. Low screen planting to carparking.
15. Entry feature.
17. Performance / gathering space, terraced walls afford seating and picnic set ups.

Note: Design subject to separate Development Application
1. Young children’s play area, close to shelter and seating.
2. Shelter to BBQ/Toilets/Picnic facilities, incorporating relocated community mural.
3. Street Trees
4. Performance Amphitheatre space
5. Gentle grade pathway for easy access and children’s bike path.
6. Incorporate memorial created by existing tenants to commemorate Minto Estate community including a stone wall feature.
7. Concept for entire playground aims to illustrate the history of the area, starting with native bush, indigenous culture, through farming, housing and to the future.
8. Older children’s playground, accommodating aged and disabilities.

Note: Design subject to separate Development Application
1. Grid of trees and grasses as strong entry statement.
2. Active Play area with full size basketball court for informal games, and grassed kick about area.
3. Feature planting of Exotic deciduous trees to create seasonal interest.
4. Passive recreation area
   Open grassed space with seating.
5. Timber boardwalk linking across rain garden area.
6. Grid of trees and grasses as strong entry statement.
7. Boundary and street tree plantings, spaced to create interest and difference along the length of the park.

Note: Design subject to separate Development Application
1. Possible incorporation of public art work
2. Feature trees shared way link
3. Deciduous street trees
4. Grove of tall clear trunked indigenous trees along ridge line, maintaining open views out, and green views in.
5. Picnic facilities under grove of clear trunked indigenous trees.
6. Central access spine pathway linking discreet spaces.
7. Small seating viewing areas, incorporated into level changes.
8. Feature entry planting statement.
9. Larger seating BBQ area.
10. Mass planting on banks taking up level changes.
1. Cross site shared bicycle and pedestrian way.
2. Access lane to dwellings.
4. Gently ramped path for equitable access with lighting and retaining walls along length.
5. Tall clear trunked Eucalypt trees to maintain views to mountains under canopy.
6. Pedestrian path access from neighbouring subdivision.
7. Screen planting to back fences and seating area.
8. Raised, paved lookout platform with shade structure and seating.
9. Low dense planting to create a variety of spaces while maintaining views.
10. Seating area.
11. Open grassed area for open views and play.
12. Street tree planting and on-street parking.

Note: Design subject to separate Development Application
Appendix 3

Actions to be implemented by the New South Wales Department of Housing to assist in achieving the objectives of the Minto Renewal Project

Source
NSW DoH, 2005a
Actions to be implemented by the New South Wales Department of Housing to assist in achieving the objectives of the Minto Renewal Project

1. Facilitate the provision of improved social services, creating new opportunities for residents in association with other government agencies and community organisations.

   **Actions**

   - Identify with the stakeholders the areas where the Minto community requires support from other agencies, Non Government Organisations, government departments, local support groups;
   - Document a place management strategy and timetable to meet these needs;
   - Liaise with other government agencies (eg schools, health) and local businesses (eg retail, transport) to minimise the disruption to their services during the life of the Minto project;
   - Improved DoH provision of a range of support services- including ongoing tenancy management, specialist rehousing support team and community services; and
   - Identify and manage social support-related risks.

2. Work with the local communities to develop skills, enhance communication and strengthen neighbourhood networks.

   **Actions**

   - Support and facilitate the development and operation of community organisations that engage local residents and reinforce community bonding;
   - Include in the development, community facilities where groups can meet and interact, where services can be delivered. Link the new development with facilities in surrounding areas (eg schools, retail, libraries etc);
   - Engage with stakeholders including peak housing groups, community groups, local advocates and other government agencies, to assess potential social impacts;
   - Seek the participation of community representatives and relevant stakeholders in project related activities;
   - Review of / decisions on alternative housing management models;
   - Exploring affordable housing opportunities;
   - Design of community facilities and open spaces;
   - Creation of employment opportunities;
• Develop and implement a communications strategy that covers all stakeholders and gives consistency of message;
• Offer information in several formats to residents and stakeholders; and
• Identify and manage consultation related risks.

3. Enhance the amenity, improve and upgrade the housing, road layout, open space, and public areas across the Minto estate.

Actions

• Plan, design and implement a viable, sustainable renewal of the Minto Estate that is responsive to community requirements;
• Align the renewal with local housing and social needs;
• Improve the integration of public & private households;
• Engage stakeholders in the planning process and gain endorsement of planning outcomes;
• Negotiate with Council to achieve viable guidelines for streetscapes, setbacks, services relocation etc;
• Design new dwellings that foster a vibrant community and reflect the principles of sustainable development;
• Stage development work to allow the estate to continue to function as a community throughout the project;
• Ensure funding is available and endorsed, confirming long term project financial feasibility for the project;
• Comply with all relevant statutory regulations, codes, standards etc (eg planning controls, design codes, safety standards etc);
• Comply with DoH standards and systems, eg: dwelling standards; OH&S requirements, QMS tender processes and systems;
• Specify quality standards for cottage upgrades and renewed areas (functional, image, infrastructure, community facilities etc);
• Pursue opportunities to enhance ecological sustainability (energy, water, BASIX etc);
• Identify and manage standard related risks (cost, time, project financial viability etc);
• To deliver the Minto project on time, on budget and to the agreed standard; and
• Identify and manage project-related risks.
4. Work with residents being rehoused to ensure that appropriate support services are provided, that needs are met, and that residents are assisted to integrate into their new communities.

Actions

- Support relocating tenants during their move, and provide ongoing assistance to help them integrate into their new community;
- Establish a specialist rehousing team to support tenants in their move;
- Develop transparent principles to guide tenant retention and relocation decisions, give all tenants at least 12 months notice before rehousing them; and
- Develop and implement a communications strategy that covers all stakeholders and gives consistency of message.