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ATSIA Standing Committee
Federal Parliament
Sent by Email: atsia.reps@aph.gov.au

12 October 2000.

Re: Inquiry into the needs of country and metropolitan urban dwelling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Aboriginal Housing Company owns and manages the urban Aboriginal community in Redfern Sydney colloquially known as the Block. The community here has experience extreme disadvantage and distress for many years now with very little being done by Government to help correct this problem.

For too long this area has been considered too hard to fix and it has been allowed to decay into a ghetto. As a result criminals operate on the Block with virtual impunity and the resident Aboriginal community can do little to stop it.

In response the Aboriginal Housing Company has commissioned a Community Social Plan to finally address the social problems on the Block. We do not believe that simply disbanding the community will solve the problem. As a society we can not use dispersal of a community as a valid instrument to solving social problems. To do so would begin a chain of events with no real resolution. Instead the AHC proposes a radical and comprehensive program of strategies to tackle the issues in the area.

We would like to submit excerpts from our Community Social Plan for your Committee's consideration. Our Plan is only at it 1st draft stage and its completion date will not correspond with your closing date for submissions.

Also we would bring to your attention that the AHC has launched a web site dedicated primarily to the Block, www.ahc.org.au. Our completed Social Plan and Social Plan Criteria amongst other things will be made available on the site soon.

Yours faithfully,
PETER VALILIS
AHC Project Manager

AHC COMMUNITY SOCIAL PLAN EXCERPTS

INTRODUCTION:

This Community Social Plan (henceforth referred to as "the Plan") is one of a series of planning studies commissioned by the Aboriginal Housing Company Ltd. (AHC) as a part of the Master Plan of the Pemulwuy Redevelopment Project (project area a.k.a. the 'Block'). A Social Plan is an essential part of the comprehensive planning process that integrates individual communities' responses and expectations and incorporates them into an overall strategy for development. The term 'Community Social Plan' is used in this instance to denote the specific nature of the unique characteristics and needs of the Aboriginal community on the "Block".

The aim of this Plan is to take a closer look at the causes and effects of the social issues and problems plaguing this community. In the process the Plan will investigate the problems in Aboriginal communities at a national macro level and relate these at a micro level to the Block. It will also offer solutions to the problems of social disadvantage on the 'Block' and argue for the replacement of the existing near derelict buildings with high quality and culturally appropriate homes. By presenting clear and achievable strategies this community will become a benchmark for all Aboriginal urban communities throughout Australia.

Social plans of this magnitude are usually written by local government, and are mandatory under the 1988 Local Government (General) Community and Social Plans Regulation. To a lesser extent, Social Plans are required of private developers as part of a Development Application (DA). However due to the enormity of the problems faced by this community, this Plan is created specifically for the "Block" in an attempt to alleviate the distressed and disadvantaged in this community, through the urban planning process.

This Plan also reinforces the AHC's commitment to rebuilding new, culturally appropriate indigenous houses as well as to ensure that the Aboriginal community in the redevelopment area has access to services, (cultural activities) and facilities. Ultimately this Plan will provide a basis for the future planning of these services.

WHY A SOCIAL PLAN FOR THE BLOCK?:

This Plan is an important planning tool for addressing the social issues in the area and ensuring any future development creates a high level of livability for the community. It also becomes an important avenue for the Aboriginal community to express their goals, objectives and outcomes and incorporate them into strategies and guidelines for the redevelopment project. Accordingly, this Plan is a prerequisite for assessing services and resources within the community, and planning the development within the context and on the basis of the social, economic and cultural needs of the indigenous people.

Specifically the aims and objectives of the Community Social Plan are to:

- ensure culturally appropriate housing for Aboriginal communities,
- ensure sustainable, easily maintained and high standard housing,
- provide avenues for reconciliation and social harmony,
- provide access to Aboriginal services and facilities,
- review community safety through urban design,
- ensure community health,
- support families and children,
- acknowledge the significance of Redfern as a national and local centre for Aboriginal culture,
- foster a sense of ownership by the local Aboriginal population,
- ensure the project encourages Aboriginal artistic, cultural and spiritual expression,
- adhere to the principles of ecological sustainability,
- provide opportunities for training and diverse skills development,
- provide opportunities for Aboriginal enterprise and self-determination,
- ensure the project provides safe open space and meeting place for the Aboriginal and wider community.
- provide guidelines and standards for future urban Aboriginal community developments

Finally, the Plan will also include comprehensive strategies, recommendations and action plan will form a major instrument to eradicating the problems that exist within the community.

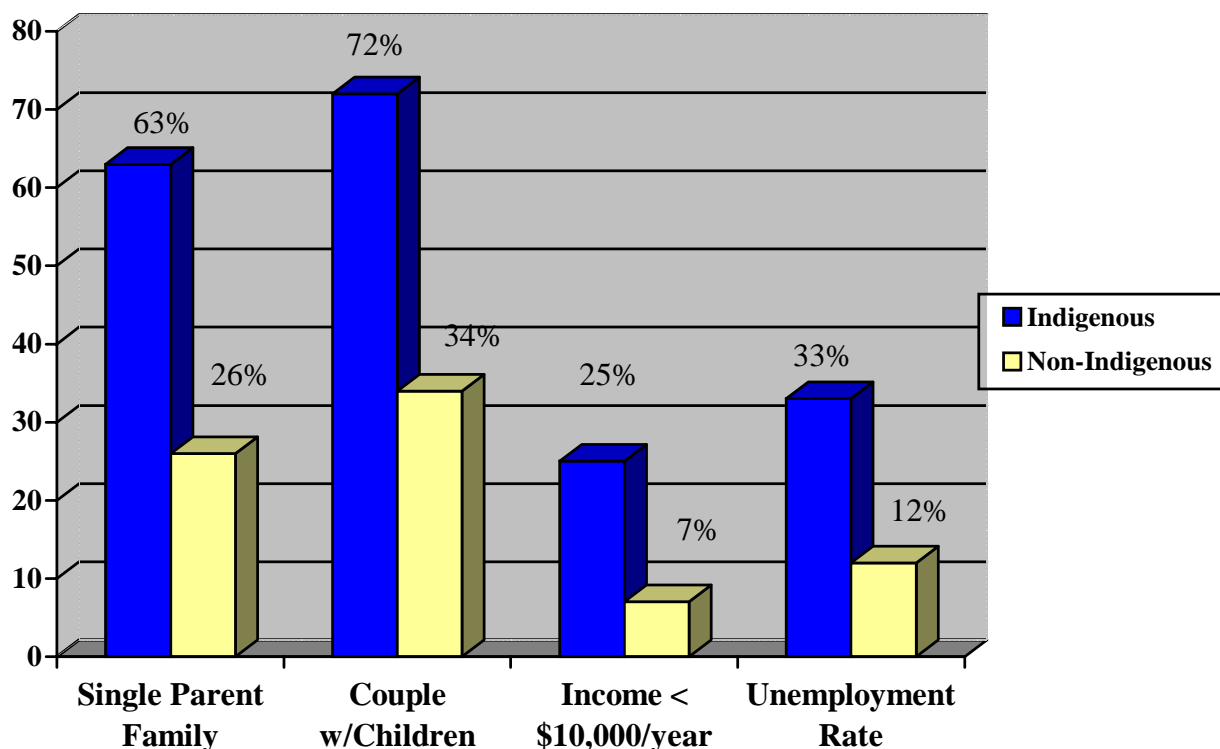
REDFERN INDIGENOUS PROFILE:

Facts At a Glance			
Redfern Indigenous Population	397	% Single Parent Families	63%
% Children (0-11 years)	28%	% Couple, with children	72%
% Young People (12-24 years)	25%	% Couple, no child	28%
% Adults (25-54 years)	39%	% with no schooling	3%
% Older People (55 years and over)	7%	% left school before 15	48%
% Living in Rental Accommodation	80%	% with higher degree/diploma	2%
% Live in House Owned/Purchased	< 1%	Income less than \$10,400	25%
% Live in Families	66%	Income greater than \$52,000	0
% Live Alone	34%	Unemployment rate %	33%

Source: Compiled from 1996 ABS Census

The graph below summarises some of the inequalities amongst Redfern's indigenous community.

Redfern Indigenous Community Profile



Source: 1996 ABS Census

KEY SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ISSUES:

There are number of key social and cultural issues effecting the community on 'Block' and the immediate neighborhood. Recently summarised from various community consultations and AHC meetings with tenants and community organisations, the key issues are as follows:

- the out of control drug and alcohol problem which is devastating this Aboriginal community,
- crime and vandalism in the area
- the drug and alcohol-related crime in the area,
- the health problems in the area and effects on well-being,
- the transient population problem in the area (drop-ins from outside the community introducing a disruptive and criminal element), as well as homelessness
- the substandard and unsuitable housing in Aboriginal communities
- dysfunctional Aboriginal families and the stolen generation,
- the need for Aboriginal services and facilities,
- the need for children and youth recreation areas and services,

- community safety
- garbage
- lack of coordination of services in the area
- access to facilities for Aboriginal people in the area
- cultural misunderstandings, rifts in the community and distrust
- lack of respect in the Aboriginal community
- indicators of the social disadvantaged, they include
 - a) family stress
 - b) low-income
 - c) court convictions
 - d) sexual assault
 - e) child abuse
 - f) unemployment
 - g) lack of skills, etc.

In a survey prepared for the South Sydney Council, respondents were asked to identify the five main problems that were most critical to them. Issues of major concern by the Redfern suburb are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Issues of Major Concern in Redfern

Issue	Redfern N=16	Waterloo/ Alexandria N=24	Total
Drugs and Alcohol	11	13	24
Housing	7	7	14
Crime	6	3	9
Employment	7	2	9
Lack of recreation areas/parks	2	5	7

Source: South Sydney Council, *1999 Consultations with the South Sydney Aboriginal Community*

Other issues which rate highly, in Redfern is homelessness and in Waterloo/Alexandria is personal safety.

GREATER AWARENESS OF THE CAUSES:

The social problems on the 'Block' are compounded by multiple socio-economic and health disadvantages and by the lack of spiritual and cultural sense of place, which have effect on whole families and the whole community. These social problems are often hidden from the wider public and consequently its extent and effects are not sufficiently understood. However, what is more obvious is that the 'Block' has become the epicentre of drug activity. This drug problem unchecked will continue its current course of degradation and isolation.

When taking a closer look at why the 'Block' is a centre of drug activity, the main cause seems to be that people who have adopted the role of leaders on the 'Block' have turned a blind eye to the drug dealing and thus are indirectly the main component of the drug

problem? Furthermore, as a lucrative business, individuals and organised groups are eager to defend and sustain the current drug trade. These select few individuals and organised groups have a strong influence on the community and use intimidation to quash any dissent or opposition. Until this community realizes that they are being marginalised and possibly manipulated by a select few and until the community understands the root cause of the drug problem, they remain unable to begin to rid their community of this problem.

Those select few who have a vested financial interest in the drug activity have also caused a rift in the community - 'united we stand, divided we fall' (a strategy used against the Black Americans during the civil rights movement which is where the slogan came from). The AHC and other organisations that are trying to 'clean-up' this area have been a target and the rift in the community is staggering. In circulation are viscous rumours and the perpetuation of a general feeling of fear, angst and anger against these organisations. The redevelopment of the 'Block' has been an uphill battle only because of the rumours and misinformation compounded by negative media coverage. The AHC is one of the only private organisations trying to build a respectable and drug free Aboriginal community with modern and culturally appropriate housing for Aboriginal people, but the AHC has been targeted mainly because of their policy to get rid of drugs and crime through this redevelopment process. This project is a threat to those who are manipulating the community and it becomes obvious to anyone who chooses to look closer into the drug problems that they want to retain the status quo, an urban Aboriginal ghetto, for the benefit of a few, to the detriment of many.

This situation is augmented by the presence of a needle distribution bus on the streets of the Block. The needle bus acts as an attractant to transient drug users who view this community as a safe place to do drugs. The presence of the bus sends a clear message to drug users and dealers that this sort of activity is tolerated on the Block.

Further compounding the social problems is that the 'Block' is missing a 'sense of place'. 'Sense of place', meaning a situation where people value their neighborhood and are prepared to commit their future, is common among most neighbourhoods in towns and cities across Australia. Unfortunately, the sense of place initially created by the original directors of the AHC cooperative spirit in the 1970's, has been rapidly deteriorating as a result of rampant crime and drugs in the area. Moreover, many people feel that there is no longer a sense of community in the 'Block', but just a drug community.

The sense of place among most Aboriginal communities has a strong connection to Aboriginal spirituality. To quote an Aboriginal theologian, and tenant on the 'Block' Raymond Finn:

"The 'Block is one of the places left for Aboriginal spirituality...the spiritual roots are still there but they are not receiving nutrients." ¹

¹ Comment made in the Wilson Brothers Stage One Analysis report.

The drug problem on the 'Block' is paramount. The drugs are destroying the spirit of this Aboriginal community resulting in hopelessness and despair. If the drug problem is not alleviated, the 'Block' will continue its course of decline and deterioration. Further, this area is the main crossroads for transient Aboriginal people on their traditional 'mission' walkabouts. Many Aboriginal people throughout the nation are exposed to this drug culture and are vulnerable to disease and infection from discarded needles. This area has also become a supply depot for drugs to other Aboriginal communities.

THE EFFECTS OF THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS:

The effects of the social problems on the 'Block' are resounding in Aboriginal communities throughout the region. The Block in particular is preserving a pattern of residential genocide, as young Aboriginal people continue to die on the streets of Australia's largest and richest city.

Health

Just in the inner city suburb of Redfern alone, primary health care agents have identified a very high incidence of Hepatitis B& C, and respiratory problems in between 50-75% of all tenants, attributed to substance abuse, and a similar incidence of skin disease and middle ear infections associated with overcrowding.²

Inadequate Housing & Health

High rent arrears have resulted from an increase in the social problems and deterioration on the 'Block'. This has caused financial problems in budgeting for the maintenance of the houses on the 'Block' and have resulted in the further deterioration of the housing stock. The existing 2/3 bedroom terrace houses are over 100 years old and are inappropriate for an average family requiring 4 bedrooms, causing severe overcrowding and excessive stress on the properties and the occupants. As a result all the terrace housing stock on the 'Block' are badly deteriorated. The houses are unhealthy with suspended floors encouraging cockroaches, fleas and rats, lack of cross ventilation exacerbating respiratory problems as well as a lack of sunlight's to act as a disinfectant to and mold & mildew.

Drugs & Alcohol

Substance abuse on the 'Block' is very high. This has created a need for a detox program in the Redfern/Waterloo area placed strategically away from the 'Block' stressing the need to create a clean environment within the 'Block' for people coming out of detox. The creation of a clean environment is problematic with the combination of the presence of drug dealers and the needle distribution bus on the 'Block'. Recommendations have been made to the NSW Health Department by the AHC and the AMS that a more appropriate site such as the Rachel Foster Hospital in the Redfern/Waterloo area would be a better placement for a drug rehab and needle exchange program. Drug addiction is a sickness

² Denis McDonald and Colin James, *Health Infrastructure Priority Program, Expression of Interest, Aboriginal Housing Company, Redfern, January 1995*

and needs to be treated in a hospital setting, and not haphazardly on a vacant lot in this fragile Aboriginal residential area.

Crime

There is a high rate of crime as a result of drugs and drug dealing in the Redfern area. There is also a high rate of vandalism attributed to a criminal transient population causing a disruptive element to the community.

Transients/Drop-Ins

As well as the "Block being a beacon for Aboriginal people from all over the country, there has been a transient population coming into Redfern to get their drugs, get high, and hang out to get 'out of it' on the 'Block'. This has caused a major problem for the community and the Redfern police as people coming from other suburbs the major cause of criminal activity.

This transient population places additional pressure on the community. The majority of the transient population is seeking out drugs and a place to shoot up. Other transients, who used to just hang out getting drunk, now are taking drugs on top of drinking. The alcohol problem common among Aboriginal transients has now escalated to a lethal and addictive drug and alcohol problem, with the dealers on the 'Block' accommodating and encouraging both vices.

Children & Youth at Risk

The high rate of vandalism attributed to the transients is also attributed to bored youth. In January 1995, 81% of the tenant population on the 'Block' were children under 15 years old.³ However, there are no effective programs targeting children and their special needs. These children are in grave danger of being targeted to become the new generation of drug dealers and/or junkies on the 'Block'. Young people on the 'Block' and their friends (blow-ins), aged under 15, are now heavily involved in substance abuse and crime, and invariably live in over crowded circumstances, are unemployed, poorly educated and on the streets. Other considerable concerns are the reportedly high levels of dirty needles and broken glass on the streets especially as many local children do not wear shoes.

NEEDS ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT:

The needs assessment was compiled from community consultations and surveys with the Aboriginal community over the past year and are reflective of the needs and expectations of this community and the Aboriginal people in South Sydney and the Inner West. The needs assessment was also compiled from the following reports: Health Infrastructure Priority Program, 1995 and the 1999 Consultations with the South Sydney Aboriginal Community. A needs assessment specific to the Block is currently being conducted and will be available in the final draft of the Community Social Plan.

³ McDonald, D. and James, C. *Health Infrastructure Priority Program, Expression of Interest, Aboriginal Housing Company, Redfern, January 1995.*

Housing and Accommodation

There is a high demand for affordable housing in South Sydney and the Inner West. Marrickville's Social Plan highlights this point and reports that a high number of Aboriginal people that have made contact with the Homeless Person Information Centre. The research results from the South Sydney Council Aboriginal Community Survey⁴ shows that a sizable proportion of Aboriginal people in this region are reliant on some form of public housing. Some of the problem issues raised in the inner west and South Sydney area in relation to housing were:

- **Insufficient and inadequate public housing.** The standard of public housing was generally considered to be poor and at times unsatisfactory. Homes were described as run down and in ill repair, sometimes compared with slums. There was lack of security measures and no provisions were made for children to play in outdoor areas around public housing. There was also concern about density levels.
- **Lack of private rental opportunities.** Many people reported that they are forced to live in public housing due to their socioeconomic status. There is a lack of affordable private rentals and many respondents felt that due to high rent levels for inner city properties, including Redfern, they would have to move out of the South Sydney area in order to find affordable accommodation. Given that the major incentive for settling in this area was the support network provided by the existing Aboriginal community, living outside of the inner city was not a viable or preferred option for many people.
- **Low Level of Income.** The low levels of income of many Aboriginal people and consequent low levels of home ownership compared with the non-indigenous Redfern community.
- **Prejudice and Discrimination.** A high level of prejudice and discrimination in the private rental market. Respondents reported that they encountered racial problems when they looked for private housing, with a perception that real estate agents do not want to rent to Aborigines no matter what their economic situation is.
- **Limited Options for Housing.** Respondents reported that there is a limited options for housing for a high number of Aboriginal women with children.
- **Need for More Aboriginal Housing.** A high number of respondents reported that there is a need for housing designated for Aboriginal people.
- **Other concerns regarding housing.** Increasing rent prices, particularly due to the Olympics; refuge/hostel needed to deal with high levels of homelessness; smaller houses rather than flats/high-rise; disabled housing; more elderly housing; better shopping areas; single parent housing; vandalism of property; want to own home; waiting period too long and selection unfair.

Crime & Safety

The Aboriginal community in the South Sydney survey⁵ identified crime and safety as two of the most important issues in the research. The community is extremely concerned about the high level of crime and the personal safety of the people living in the area. Table 4 reflects the issues of safety among Aboriginal people.

⁴ South Sydney Council, 1999 Aboriginal Community Survey.

⁵ South Sydney Council, 1999 Aboriginal Community Survey

Table 4: Safety Survey

Do you feel safe	Yes	No
Safety at Home	68.4%	37.6%
Safety in Public Places	39.7%	60.3%
Safety on Public Transport	61.1%	38.9%

In this same survey, respondents were asked to comment on the levels of crime and perceived unsafe nature of the area. The reasons for crime and harassment levels were:

- **Youth boredom** associated with lack of employment opportunities and a sense of hopelessness toward the future was seen as a major reason for high levels of crime. The youth were seen as the primary offenders.
- **Drug and alcohol abuse** was seen to be closely associated with crime, violence and harassment. Some respondents felt that drug abuse in the area is contributing to the fears about personal safety and that it is critical that this issue is addressed. Some felt that the problem was so deeply entrenched that it was insurmountable.
- **High-density housing and low incomes** were also contributing to fears about personal safety and poverty.

In the same survey, there were a number of suggestions for improving safety as listed below.

- More police/street patrols
- Tackle drug problem
- More security around public housing and generally
- Personal alarms
- Street lights
- More youth programs/places for young people
- Neighborhood watch/SAFE houses

In a community consultation conducted for the Wilson's Brothers Site⁶, drugs and crime (including violence and assaults) were of great concern. Some participants described the area as 'severely socially traumatised', and that there was a strong call to address drug-dealing problems.

Health (Health & Infrastructure)

An assessment of health issues has been compiled from the 1995 report, Health Infrastructure Priority Program⁷. Its report on the 'Block' revealed there is a very high incidence (50%-75% AHC 'Block' tenants) of Hepatitis B&C (some A) and respiratory problems which are attributed to substance abuse and smoking. Also, there is a very high incidence of skin disease and middle ear infections associated with overcrowding.

⁶ Wilson Bros, Stage One Analysis, 1999.

⁷ McDonald, D. and James, C. *Health Infrastructure Priority Program, Expression of Interest, Aboriginal Housing Company*, Redfern, January 1995.

Common complaints (30%-50% AHC 'Block' tenants) of liver problems - alcohol related and diabetes, obesity, HIV Aids, were attributed to lifestyle and hygiene. In particular, the AHC houses are unhealthy with suspended floors encouraging a high exposure to mice, rats, cockroaches, and fleas. Also, the houses have lack of cross ventilation exacerbating respiratory problems as well as a lack of sunlight's to act as a disinfectant to mold & mildew.

In regard to health services, the 1999 South Sydney Aboriginal Community Survey results indicated that the two major barriers to using mainstream services by the Aboriginal community in the South Sydney area were lack of awareness that services existed (or that they bulk billed) and discrimination and lack of sensitivity to the specific needs of Aboriginal people. Residents found using mainstream services problematic however Aboriginal staff within these services would help make the services more accessible. The same survey mentioned that there was a need for 24-hour medical centres.

Assess to Appropriate Services. There is general consensus that there is a lack of Aboriginal specific community services within the area and many mainstream services are culturally inappropriate. There is also a certain sense that more people would access community services if they were staffed with trained Aboriginal people. Another important finding is that a sizable portion of respondents do not utilise community services because they are not aware that many services existed. Further, respondents suggested the need for more youth services, elderly services, transport services, and better and more comprehensive employment services.

Children's and Youth Services. Respondents agreed across the range of surveys and consultations that there is a lack of children and youth services. Respondents reported that there were not enough services, the existing services were inadequate and the services were culturally inappropriate. It was reported that compared with other community services there was a much lower awareness of services for youth. Amongst many respondents, there was a sense of despair about the future for the youth in the area. Issues of concern raised included: lack of employment opportunities, lack of hope for the future, fragmented communities, lack of connection with community elders, lack of supervision and roles models, drug and alcohol. It was also reported that a lot of young people are blindly coming to Sydney with a sense of hope and are vulnerable and at risk of exploitation and homelessness.

Unemployment. The high levels of unemployment in the local Aboriginal community need to be addressed by increased job opportunities in the local area. There is a general sentiment in the community that employment opportunities simply do not exist for many Aboriginal people, and many community members tended to express despondence in relation to employment opportunities for Aboriginal people. In the 1999 South Sydney Aboriginal Community Survey, the types of difficulties people reported facing in seeking employment were as follows: lack of experience/qualifications; discrimination because they are Aboriginal; discrimination because they are mothers, and age discrimination.

Cultural & Spiritual Awareness and Heritage Protection. Aboriginal culture and heritage in the Redfern area needs to be protected and a better appreciation of Aboriginal history, culture and spirituality needs to be developed within the community and surrounding areas. Moreover, Redfern is a significant area for Aboriginal people both locally and nationally. The contributions made and the achievements of the Aboriginal community in Redfern needs to be recognized by the wider Australian community.

OBJECTIVES AND CRITERIA:

A set of goals and objectives has been developed specific to the needs and expectations of the Aboriginal community on the 'Block'. The goals and objectives are based on the various community consultations that have taken place over the past 12 months. These include but are not limited to:

- Sarkissian Associates Planners extensive community consultations as part of the Draft Plan of Management, The Wilson Brothers Site and Yellowmunde Reserve, Caroline Street, Redfern, prepared for South Sydney City Council, November 1999.
- 1999 Consultations with the South Sydney Aboriginal Community.
- One to one consultations with the 'Block' tenants over the past year by the staff at AHC.
- AHC meetings with various community and government organisations.
- Marrickville Social Plan consultations with the Aboriginal community (Marrickville Council Social Plan adopted by Council 21 June 1999).

As part of this redevelopment process, criteria have been developed in response to these objectives and are specific to the needs and expectations of the Aboriginal community. The respective criteria are to be applied to key decisions regarding development options, recommendations, conceptual models and strategies.

The Social Plan Objectives & Criteria document is set up in a format to measure the outcomes of the redevelopment. The performance scoring has been implemented specifically to be used by architects, builders and planners in the development and design of their plans, and will also function as guidelines for architects/builders/planners to follow in order to ensure the development reflects the expectations of the Aboriginal community. The scoring will also be used to systematically evaluate the redevelopment project along with a post-occupancy evaluation, which will include feedback from relevant stakeholders such as tenants/occupiers, maintenance staff and cleaners, etc. The need for measurability and assessment is crucial, as incorrect strategies may actually exacerbate the problems already facing this community. Therefore, it is important to systematically evaluate and monitor the impact of the redevelopment project. Further, consistent and continued evaluation will ensure that the successes of the project as well as the failures are measurable.

STRATEGIES, RECOMMENDATION & IMPLEMENTATION:

The following strategies and recommendations are the AHC's blueprint for addressing the 12 goals (principles) in this Community Social Plan. As the redevelopment of the 'Block' takes place, we anticipate the need to review and revise these strategies on a regular basis.

GOAL 1: SOCIAL HARMONY AND RECONCILIATION

Strategy 1

- Our first strategy is to encourage interaction and respect between groups and individuals in the community as well as interaction and harmony between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Work in partnership with residents and community organisations to promote social harmony and reconciliation through various activities on the 'Block' such as barbeques, special events, multi-cultural events, educational programs, art exhibitions, etc. Other community participation strategies include implementing neighbourhood watch programs and gardening/clean-up activities.
- Use communication tools such as newsletters, community advisory board, information technology (AHC's web site at www.ahc.org.au) to keep the community informed of the Block's activities and programs.

Strategy 2

- Our second strategy is to diversify many aspects of the redevelopment in order to reflect and include the multi-cultural diversity of the area and to ensure the development is flexible enough to accommodate a mix of all income and skills levels.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Promote innovative development options such as a mix of housing types, a mix of landscape architectural styles and open space.
- Invite community input from a mix of socio-economic backgrounds and skills to comment on architecture, design and open space style.

GOAL 2: MEETING THE HOUSING NEEDS OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Strategy 1

- Our first strategy is to provide culturally appropriate and affordable housing for Aboriginal residents and to provide other housing options as well.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Involve the community in the redevelopment planning process by conducting community consultations at each stage of the redevelopment.
- Work with community in identifying their needs and developing culturally appropriate housing by including tenants and service providers on the redevelopment planning team. The planning team is set up to consist of AHC Staff, University of Sydney Architects and Planners, South Sydney Council Planners, tenant representatives from the 'Block', representatives from the Aboriginal Medical Service and the Aboriginal Legal Service.
- Ensure redevelopment is flexible enough to accommodate Aboriginal student housing by working with the University of Sydney and also to accommodate elderly housing through other interested community organisations.

Strategy 2

Our second strategy is to ensure sustainability of the redevelopment and to facilitate the application of the Social Plan Objectives and Criteria. This strategy will ensure that the successes of the project as well as the failures are measurable,

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Work with consultants who specialise in sustainable projects to assist in the design of the houses, water, waste and energy systems.
- Develop and implement a Housing Checklist to ensure the project meets the needs of the Aboriginal community.
- Monitor and review the implementation of the redevelopment action plan
- Systematically evaluate the building performance of the housing and through feedback from relevant stakeholders, such as tenants/occupiers, maintenance staff and cleaners, the AHC staff and service providers. This evaluation is to take place one year after tenants have lived in the houses.
- Evaluate and monitor the impact of the redevelopment project. This will include community health and social impacts as well as cost benefit analysis.

Strategy 3

- Our third strategy is to ensure the housing is capable of efficient maintenance and is energy efficient and durable.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Develop and implement a Building Standards and Housing Checklist to ensure the housing is durable, easily maintainable and energy efficient.
- Develop and implement a Repairs and Maintenance (R&M) action plan and prevention program.

GOAL3: IDENTIFY CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE SERVICE AND FACILITY NEEDS

Strategy 1

- Our first strategy is to identify needs and help the relevant service providers in delivery of the service and to facilitate a coordinated approach for the planning and delivery of services and for the funding for these services. This strategy will also avoid duplication of existing services and complement the existing services and facilities in the area.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Work with other agencies and community organisations to adequately address the needs of Aboriginal people by setting up a Strategic Planning Advisory Committee or a "Whole of Government Grassroots Committee". The role of this committee is to ensure decisions are made from the grassroots, rather than a government official deciding on the needs of the community. The committee will ensure the process is a bottom-up approach to decision-making
- Liaise with South Sydney Council Social Planners to ensure facilities and services are culturally appropriate and are Aboriginal friendly.
- Liaise with Wilson Brothers Site planners to ensure facilities and services are culturally appropriate, to ensure the projects complement each other (i.e. design, architectural style, open space, etc.), and to avoid duplication of facilities.
- Map a comprehensive network of services and support systems for Aboriginal people in the Redfern area, and make accessible through AHC's web page and at the AHC office. Update and revise periodically.

Strategy 2

- As AHC is usually the first contact for Aboriginal people who come to the Redfern area in need of services, our second strategy is to ensure accessibility to appropriate services.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Liaise with various agencies and community organisations to ensure the AHC staff are resourced and trained to access appropriate services for Aboriginal people. This accessibility includes but is not limited to a range of services such as drug and alcohol services, employment services, medical services, supported accommodation, etc.
- Liaise with community and government organisations to provide buses/transport to link services.
- Liaise with community and government organisations to set up a systematic information and referral service. May include the creation of an Aboriginal service directory.

GOAL 4: COMMUNITY SAFETY

Strategy 1

- Our main strategy is to create a safe environment and to reduce street crime and drug dealing by incorporating into the redevelopment principles of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED).

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Develop and implement a Community Safety Checklist to ensure project creates safe spaces and encourages natural surveillance and positive guardianship in all outdoor spaces.
- Liaise with the Redfern Police to identify neighborhood hot spots and review redevelopment plans to ensure the project design does not promote crime areas.
- Provide opportunities for activity during the day and night to increase the levels of legitimate activity on the site and on the surrounding streets, and focus on facilities open at night and on weekends.
- Include in the project Building Standards the incorporation of security and safety devices in all of the homes.

- Another community safety initiative may include the implementation of a neighborhood watch program.

GOAL 5: SUPPORT FAMILIES AND CHILDREN.

Strategy 1

- Our first strategy is to promote facilities, services and activities which support positive parenting, health and inter-generational family support.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Work with the community to increase awareness and identify needs of families and children.
- Work in partnership with the Strategic Planning Advisory Group or the "Whole of Government Grassroots Committee" to coordinate funding for projects that provide services for families and children.
- Work with community and government organisations to increase access to education regarding health, child-rearing, child abuse, sexual assault, etc.

Strategy 2

- Our second strategy is to promote facilities, services and activities which support sport and recreational activities and spaces for youth, and highlight sporting opportunities as a way of building self-esteem and improving health.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Liaise with the Eloura (Tony Mundine) Gym to provide sporting opportunities for youth.
- Coordinate with local government and the Wilson Brothers site to provide facilities for sport and recreation for youth.
- Liaise with agencies such as the Department of Juvenile Justice to provide bus transportation to various sporting and recreational events across the City.

GOAL 6: ABORIGINAL HEALTH

Strategy 1

- Our first strategy is to improve the AHC housing stock. Also, refer to the strategies and initiatives proposed for Goal 2, Meeting the Housing Needs of Aboriginal People.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Secure funding for the redevelopment project, and adhere closely to the redevelopment action plan.
- Ensure that the unsafe and unhealthy housing stock (which is beyond renovation) are demolished and replaced with durable and sustainable houses.
- Develop and implement a Repairs and Maintenance (R&M) action plan and prevention program.

Strategy 2

- Our second strategy is to evaluate community health and social impacts of the redevelopment project.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Systematically evaluate and review the impact of the redevelopment project and the building performance of the housing. Liaise with AMS to monitor the health of the AHC 'Block' tenants. Carry out social impact analysis and cost benefit analysis.

Strategy 3

- Our third strategy is to discourage drugs and drug dealers on the 'Block'.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Liaise with Redfern Police to identify neighborhood hot spots and review redevelopment plans to ensure the project design does not promote drug and crime areas.
- Ensure project design discourages alleyways and lanes, which has been used to shoot up drugs and to deal drugs.
- Liaise with the NSW Health Department to phase out the Needle Exchange Bus, which acts as a magnet drawing drug dealers to the 'Block'.
- Liaise with the NSW Health Department to strategically place a drug rehab and needle exchange program in a more appropriate site such as the Rachel Foster Hospital in the Redfern/Waterloo area.
- Incorporate a no-drugs clause into the AHC Tenancy Agreement.

Strategy 4

- Our fourth strategy is to improve the health of families and children by encouraging facilities and services dedicated to healthy exercise, diet, lifestyle, drug and alcohol counseling and reconciliation.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- See Actions and Initiatives proposed for Goal 5, Support Families and Children Strategies.

GOAL 7: ENCOURAGE ABORIGINAL IDENTIFY, CULTURE AND SPIRITUALITY

Strategy 1

- Our first strategy is to provide avenues for Aboriginal spiritual, cultural and traditional values through the redevelopment project.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Significant involvement of local Aboriginal community in the design and themes and architectural styles of the redevelopment project to reflect Aboriginal spiritual, cultural and traditional values.
- Work with the community and the Redfern Police to alleviate the drug and crime problem that is destroying the Aboriginal spirit and suppressing Aboriginal culture and traditional values.

Strategy 2

Our second strategy is to acknowledge the significance of Redfern as a national and local centre for the Aboriginal Australian.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Encourage project design to include references to the Aboriginal significance of Redfern. Also ensure project develops and maintains Aboriginal history and culture through cultural environmental and heritage programs.
- Use communication and information technology (i.e. AHC internet site) to increase the awareness of the history of Redfern and the local Aboriginal, and to acknowledge the contributions made and the past and current achievements of the Aboriginal community in Redfern.

Strategy 3

- Our third strategy is to contribute to a positive local identity for Aboriginal people, for Redfern and for surrounding suburbs and enhance the lifestyle of the community.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Work with local government, community organisations, and the media to contribute to a positive local identity for Aboriginal people and for Redfern.
- Provide opportunities for non-local Aboriginal people and non-indigenous people to visit and come to understand Redfern's significance through activities, events, educational programs and information technology.

Strategy 3

- Our third strategy is to provide an outlet and space for Aboriginal artistic and cultural expression.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Ensure redevelopment project is flexible enough to accommodate spaces for Aboriginal arts and crafts, i.e. use of open space for market stalls, exhibitions, etc.
- Involve Aboriginal artists to express Aboriginality through the site plan. For example, artists involved in illustrating Aboriginal themes in landscaping materials, streetscaping, project entry signage, building facades, tiles, etc. Also, encourage the installation of Aboriginal artwork.

GOAL 8: TRAINING, SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

Strategy 1

- Our main strategy is to create opportunities to capture the economic benefit of the redevelopment project.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Ensure project generates Aboriginal skills training and employment - this may include design, construction, landscaping, material supply, plant hire and subcontracting. Skills training and employment may also include post-construction maintenance and associated infrastructure services as well as housing management skills training.

- Liaise with local employment centres and employment group such as the Australian Retailers Association, the health industry, Roads & Traffic, etc. to create job opportunities for the Aboriginal community.

GOAL 9: OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Strategy 1

- Our first strategy is to foster a sense of ownership and self-determination by the local Aboriginal people and to build trust, cooperation and a sense of responsibility and well-being amongst the local Aboriginal population.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Identify and pursue opportunities for the local Aboriginal community to capture the economic benefit of the redevelopment project.
- Continue to advocate for facilities and services controlled and operated by the Aboriginal community.

Strategy 2

- Our second strategy is to ensure strong Aboriginal management structures and efficient maintenance of the site, its buildings and spaces.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Pursue funding for management and maintenance, and ensure Business Plan is reviewed bi-annually.
- Prepare a Repairs and Maintenance (R&M) schedules and action plan.
- Develop a comprehensive R & M prevention programs (i.e. care guidelines for plumbing).

GOAL 10: ABORIGINAL ENTERPRISE

Strategy 1

- Our main strategy is to support and provide opportunities for Aboriginal enterprise and to create a positive and thriving business environment.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Identify and pursue business initiatives for the local Aboriginal community, and ensure commercial uses are developed with consideration of the local Aboriginal population.
- Ensure project is a model development which will draw/attract commercial developments.

GOAL 11: ECOLOGICAL & ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Strategy 1

- Our main strategy is to adhere to the principles of ecological and environmental sustainability in all aspects of design of the site, its buildings and spaces.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Work with consultants who specialise in sustainable projects to assist in the design of the houses, water, waste and energy systems.
- Work with agencies such as the South Sydney Council, Sustainable Environment Development Authority and the Department of Public Works and Services to optimise opportunities and incentives for ecological and environmental sustainability.
- Ensure buildings and spaces are appropriately designed to take into account the local micro-climate conditions in selecting materials and vegetation.
- Ensure the development makes a positive contribution to environmental conditions in So. Sydney by a way of the following:
 - a) on-site water management
 - b) provision of vegetation
 - c) reduction of sealed surfaces and heat islands
 - d) contributions to shade and shelter.
- Minimize need for on-street parking by incorporating parking garages/paved spaces into the housing design.
- Promote bicycle, pedestrian and alternative types of transportation.

GOAL 12: CONTACT WITH NATURE

Strategy 1

- Our main strategy is to create safe places where people can enjoy the outdoors.

Actions and Initiatives Proposed for 2000/2001

- Ensure project provides open space and landscaped to successfully reach maturity and able to be easily maintained.
- Ensure project provides tree species selected to provide shade, encourage bird life, and contribute significantly to the greening of the site.
- Principles of CPTED are applied to the design to ensure public open spaces do not inadvertently become the territory of illicit users and dealers.
- Liaise with the Wilson Brothers Site planners in the provision of safe open space in the project area, and to ensure the projects complement each other.