

Attachment B9(b)

**Consultation and Visioning Report Part 2 –
Waterloo Estate (South) – Land and
Housing Corporation**

WHAT WE HEARD

Section 4



“Make Waterloo about the people. All the amazing characters make this place.”



Resident living on the Waterloo Estate

4. What we heard at Visioning

In 2017 more than 1,500 residents, members of the community and other stakeholders shared their **vision** of a redeveloped Waterloo. Consultation on the vision focused on the **five key themes** of:

- Culture and community life
- Transport, streets and connections
- Housing and neighbourhood design
- Community facilities, services and shops
- Environment and open space.

These themes also formed the basis for conversations with the community as part of the **options testing** phase of consultation where three redevelopment options were presented. Feedback was invited on three options for the redevelopment of Waterloo. The guiding principles established following the visioning process were used to support development of the three redevelopment options. They were developed from what we heard in the ‘visioning’ phase, as well as the findings of a number of technical studies that have been undertaken – on topics like traffic, heritage, etc.

A summary of what we heard in the visioning phase of consultation is provided below. [Further details of the visioning phase of consultation are provided in the **Visioning Report** included in Appendix E.](#)

4.1. Culture and community life

In the visioning phase people identified Waterloo’s diversity, inclusiveness and community spirit as important attributes that make it unique and which they want to retain and strengthen into the future. For residents of the social housing estate, Waterloo is their home and community, and it is important to them that they continue to feel at home and welcomed in a redeveloped Waterloo. People offered a variety of suggestions to encourage and promote community interaction across different cultural backgrounds, age groups, and socio-economic backgrounds, ranging from communal spaces and facilities to community events. People said they are keen to see Waterloo’s unique identity and character embodied in the redevelopment – through the physical design or in other ways. Respecting and celebrating Waterloo’s history and multicultural diversity through a redevelopment where old and new are respectfully mixed was highlighted as a key priority. Recognising and preserving the Aboriginal community and its history and culture also emerged as being important.

4.2. Transport, streets and connections

Participants in the visioning phase discussed the ideal future transport system in Waterloo as being reliable, frequent, integrated, clean and sustainable to meet the needs of current residents and the future population. While many people commented that they were largely reliant on and satisfied with existing public transport options in Waterloo, they would like to see expanded public transport options in the future, with many seeing the Waterloo Station as a positive development. People in Waterloo commented that they would also like to make use of more extensive and affordable community transport, safe and accessible pedestrian walkways, dedicated cycleways, and frequent transport connections to the rest of Sydney. While cars were not discussed by many people, the lack of available parking, including for service and emergency vehicles, and traffic congestion in and around Waterloo were raised as concerns by some.

4.3. Housing and neighbourhood design

In discussions about the urban environment in the visioning phase of consultation people talked about the importance of accessible and adaptable buildings and homes, spaces that are designed with purpose, buildings that are energy efficient and oriented to maximise sunlight, sustainable solutions, and spaces between buildings to maximise airflow and ensure privacy. Safe and affordable housing was identified as important across all engagement activities, including by those who responded to the Aboriginal community survey. Discussions also focused on safe internal and external spaces, design and building quality and the housing mix. The key difference between discussions among social housing residents and other community stakeholders was the focus on the immediate housing environment. Social housing residents provided various suggestions to improve housing design, including building in flexibility to meet people's changing needs, and ensuring that room layouts are accessible and practical.

4.4. Community facilities, services and shops

People commented that they want the requirements for daily living (such as food, groceries and essential services) to be within easy reach, making Waterloo a place where residents can live, work, shop, rest and play. People said they were keen to see more local facilities and services that are accessible for all, including the elderly, people with disabilities, and those with complex needs. Feedback highlighted the importance of facilities, services and shops that cater to the existing community, including the specific needs and price points of existing residents, as well as future residents.

4.5. Environment and open space

Feedback from people who participated in the visioning phase of the consultation process for the Waterloo Redevelopment highlighted value placed on the physical environment in the Waterloo area. People emphasised the importance of green open spaces, sunny and shaded places, and plenty of trees to attract birds. Across all forms of engagement, we heard that a sense of 'green' and nature, trees and space are important to people and their enjoyment of the Waterloo environment.

Access to open spaces, the natural landscape and sunlight were seen as positive for the health and happiness of individuals and the community as a whole. People commented that they are keen for the future Waterloo to be open and green with shaded sitting areas, local parks and natural parklands with native plants. Community gardens emerged as a space valued by people in Waterloo, and were raised in discussions across multiple themes, when talking about culture and community life, housing and neighbourhood design, and community facilities. Importantly, it was noted that the enjoyment of these open and green spaces is dependent on the environment being safe, well-maintained and clean.

Consultation in the **options testing** phase focused on the five key themes to:

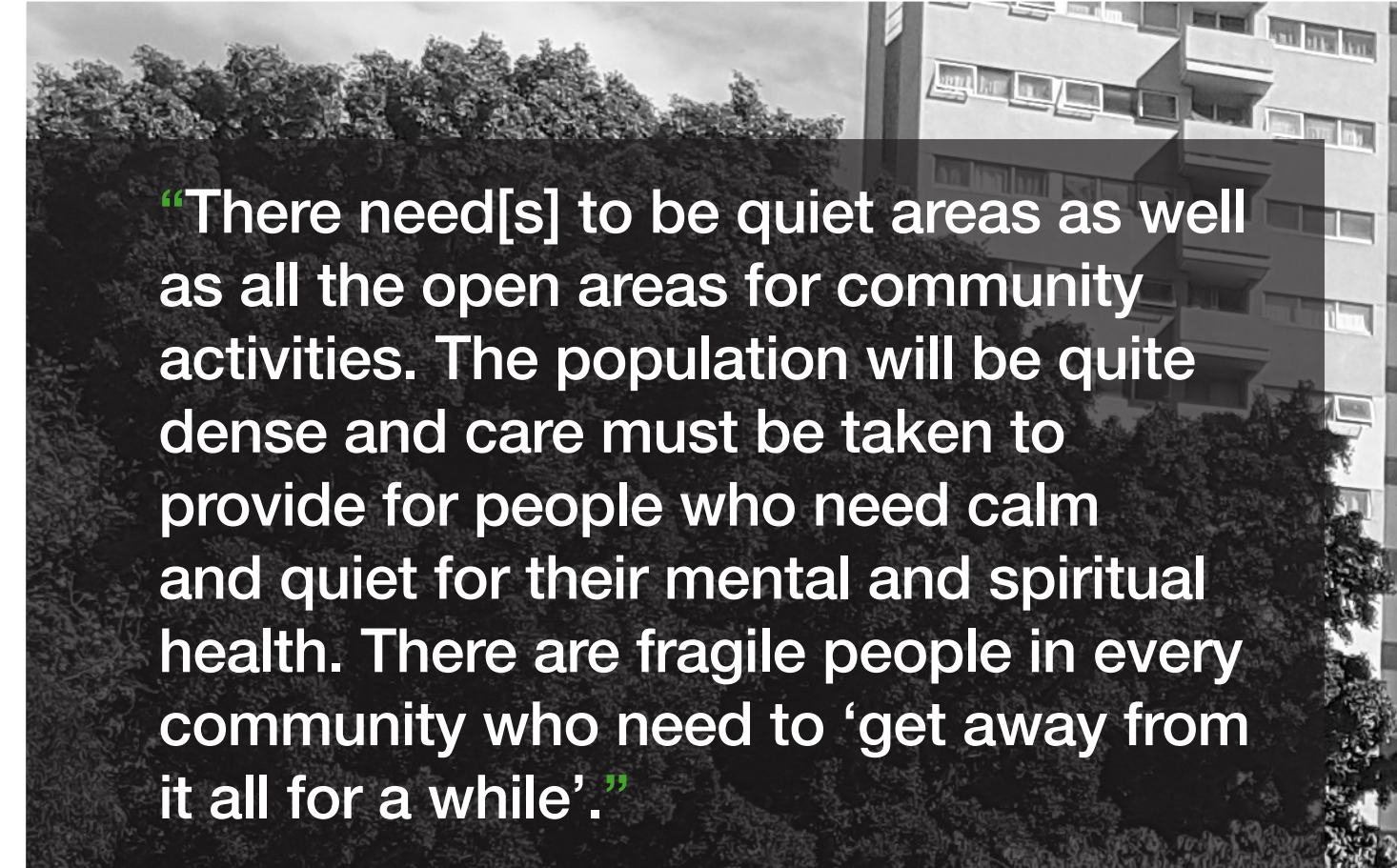
- ensure the consultation provided information about and invited feedback on all key aspects of the proposed redevelopment as per the Study Requirements
- support ongoing engagement – with the options testing phase of consultation involving a mix of people who had been involved in the visioning phase of the consultation process as well as those who had not previously been involved.

Feedback from the options testing phase of consultation will be used to inform preparation of a preferred master plan.



CULTURE AND COMMUNITY LIFE

Section 5



“There need[s] to be quiet areas as well as all the open areas for community activities. The population will be quite dense and care must be taken to provide for people who need calm and quiet for their mental and spiritual health. There are fragile people in every community who need to ‘get away from it all for a while’.”



5. Theme: Culture and community life

5.1. What we heard at options testing

5.1.1. Detailed feedback

Feedback on Waterloo as a welcoming and friendly place

Participants expressed a strong connection to the Waterloo social housing estate and local area. They want the existing sense of community to be retained as part of the redevelopment. Participants emphasised the importance of Waterloo **remaining an authentic place with its own character** and where current residents continue to enjoy a strong **sense of community and belonging**. They highlighted the need for redevelopment of the precinct to provide opportunities for people to meet and socialise and for it to continue to be a **welcoming place** for *all members of the community*.

Young people described Waterloo as being about local “people” above all else. They highlighted the strong sense of community in Waterloo and importance of maintaining existing community connections and supporting new connections to form over time. They expressed concern that existing residents who have a deep and long-standing attachment to the area could feel “outnumbered by private housing” residents.

“What I’m afraid of is being forced out of Waterloo.”

“I want this [Waterloo as it is] because this is what I know, this is what I’ve come to really appreciate and be part of.”

“Make Waterloo about the people. All the amazing characters make this place.”

Feedback on community spaces and activities

Participants, including social housing residents and local stakeholders, expressed a desire for Waterloo to include a range of spaces to support community life including **places for residents to meet, socialise and gather**. Participants wanted the redeveloped precinct to incorporate a community space / centre for larger community gatherings (such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander gatherings, Chinese New Year Moon Festival, community markets etc), an arts centre, indoor swimming pool and sauna.

Community gardens, dog parks, play areas for kids and activities for young people were all considered important. Community gardens were widely identified as being an important feature of Waterloo at present and into the future – providing places for people to connect with one another, grow their own food and reduce grocery bills. However, some people commented that at present the community gardens on the estate are not really open to all members of the community, but should be (ie they are used by particular groups and not all members of the community are made to feel welcome). Management of community gardens was identified as an important issue for consideration and articulation as part of the redevelopment. Many participants expressed a desire for community gardens to be located at ground level, while others also liked the idea of community gardens on building rooftops.

“Access to green iron-rich food is important to people, especially the elderly.”

“[Discussing the idea of edible landscapes] “If people are hungry we should be lining the streets with orange trees.”

“Provide glorious gardens on each rooftop, so that in reality, no green space is lost, it is simply higher up with fresher air and better views of our beautiful city”
(Survey respondent)

Feedback on age inclusive places and spaces

- Support for social housing residents to age in place and to reduce social isolation among the elderly were identified as being important, for instance, for residents of Matawai and Turanga. Strong support was expressed for **onsite aged care** and over 55s services to meet the needs of older residents. In particular, Russian residents highlighted the value of onsite aged care provided early in the redevelopment process to “connect the community”, ensuring that existing friendships among local residents are maintained, and that people can transition into aged care as their needs change over the course of the redevelopment program (without having to be relocated off the site).
- It was noted that **existing local services** – including youth services and services for older people – are highly valued and should be appropriately funded/supported to ensure they are able to continue to provide much needed services to support the ongoing needs of social housing residents.
- Young people commented on the important role played by **youth support services and spaces** like The Fact Tree, where young people can go for a meal, counselling, support or just to hang out; and the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence (NCIE) where they can go to get fit and de-stress (eg for early morning boxing). Importantly services for young people should continue to be available at low or no cost.
- Young people highlighted the importance of having being able to easily access “good” Aboriginal medical services to support young people and their families. Opportunities for older people to engage in employment were also suggested by some participants.

Feedback on recognising and celebrating Aboriginal culture and heritage

Telling the multiple ‘stories’ of Waterloo was identified as an important part of preparing a master plan so that people know about “the beginning” of this place. This includes recognising and reflecting Aboriginal and multicultural stories. Further to this Waterloo was seen as a cultural destination by some people who took part in the consultation, not just a residential community.

“People come here and have no idea of the area we are in.....the worst thing is to feel like you are not included or you are a problem, or a thing of the past.”

Participants across the board commented that **recognising and respecting Aboriginal culture** is critical as part of the redevelopment. Including some form healing space was one idea suggested by Aboriginal residents. It should be a dedicated space not connected to another community centre and could provide meeting space for people of all ages and gardening opportunities for Aboriginal residents. Other places and spaces for the community to meet and gather were also identified as important, such as BBQ areas, a space for community events and gatherings with a performance space.

Opportunities for **cultural interpretation and learning** (such as signage, a visitor information centre, cultural centre, museum) were also seen as important, so as to connect the past and future in Waterloo. Participants said they would like to see water features in the redevelopment, interactive water play for kids and other water features (for instance, similar to those in Redfern Park).

Aboriginal employment and engagement was also identified as an important part of the redevelopment. Participants suggested that members of the Aboriginal community could play a role in telling the stories of Waterloo, as part of the planning process and into delivery. For instance, through engaging Aboriginal landscape designers or architects in the detailed design stage, commissioning Aboriginal artists to create artworks for building foyers, and or by engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to manage the cultural centre.

“Community gardens are lovely except there is a long waiting list to get into them and often people from our mob don’t get a look in, and I would really like us to have something separate next to the Aboriginal cultural centre. A section of it could be a meeting place, a place for young people to get in and put their hands in the dirt and grow stuff. It would also have huge health benefits. We don’t need a big space, we need the right space that gets enough light.”

“Why don’t you get Aboriginal people to do the landscaping design. They would love and appreciate that they have done something for it too... They’d make sure that nobody would destroy it.”

“Waterloo and Redfern are interconnected. This place is unique and there is no other place in Australia like it and it’s famous worldwide. The history of what has happened here may never happen again and it was amazing that it even happened. We need to remember that and pay homage to that and there is still a strong Aboriginal Community here... For me I’m looking at it, visually yes, art and all that but also we need to think about how we are going to create what it should have been with the sense of small businesses and changing Aboriginal people’s lives by the dollar.”

Feedback on celebrating cultural diversity

A **multicultural centre** was also suggested by residents and local stakeholders. Russian and Chinese residents wanted easy access to multicultural support services; and to see the multicultural history and culture of Waterloo reflected and celebrated.

Russian residents particularly highlighted the importance of onsite aged care, library services, a new indoor swimming pool and spa, and an education facility tailored towards migrant learning.

Chinese residents highlighted opportunities to reflect and support Chinese culture through community gardens, landscaping of the public domain, and indoor and outdoor spaces for a range of cultural celebrations and activities (from annual celebrations such as Chinese New Year festival, to birthday parties and functions involving cooking, through to day to day activities like Tai Chi). They wanted new buildings to incorporate communal spaces where residents can play chess, mah-jong, table tennis and get involved in other activities.

5.2. Towards a preferred master plan

Feedback from members of the community and other stakeholders confirmed that **a wide range of public activity areas**, as proposed by the redevelopment options, should be included in the preferred master plan. This commonly included community gardens, youth facilities, play areas, and space for entertainment and events. Cafes and exhibition spaces were less frequently discussed.

The proposed **location of activity areas within the public domain** – in and around parks and the George Street boulevard – was supported. However, key issues raised by the community in relation to the location of activity areas were:

- the importance of universal access for people of all abilities
- the equitable distribution of these spaces within walking distance of homes for people living on different parts of the estate
- ensuring that parks and open spaces enable diverse uses without becoming “congested” and “overused”
- ensuring pedestrian safety in areas that incorporate shared paths for cyclists including the George Street boulevard
- a desire for community gardens to be located at ground level and within close proximity of social housing residents’ homes; given the importance of community gardens to the people of Waterloo and their success, it will be important for the detailed design of new garden spaces to be undertaken in liaison with the community
- a preference for dog parks to be located separate to children’s play areas
- a desire for some activity areas to be co-located and others to be spread out across the estate – to enable opportunities for social interaction, enhance community safety, and to provide different groups of people within the community with “space to breathe” and do their own thing.

Spaces for social/affordable and private residents to come together and spaces for them to also spend time apart were widely discussed – including space in the public domain and space within buildings. **Spaces for young people** to socialise and do their own thing, and **spaces for Aboriginal residents and community members** to come together, were also highlighted as being important for inclusion in the preferred master plan.

Feedback focused on the types of public activity areas, factors relating to their location, use and management, rather than specific commentary about **the number of these areas** to be included in the preferred master plan. With the highest number of these spaces included in Option 1 and the lowest included in Option 3, the most relevant feedback relating to volume was that: public parks and open space areas should be designed to support a wide range of uses at different times of the day and week by people with different needs and interests, to avoid being overused and feeling overcrowded.

Management of public activity areas was identified as an integral part of planning for the future of the Waterloo precinct as a welcoming and socially cohesive place. Feedback focused on management of community gardens and community spaces to ensure they are welcoming and accessible for all, to build on the strong sense of community ownership and pride that already exist, and to ensure these important community spaces are well maintained and sustainable into the future.

TRANSPORT, STREETS AND CONNECTIONS

Section 6



6. Theme: Transport, streets and connections

6.1 What we heard at options testing

6.1.1. Detailed feedback

Feedback on providing convenient access to Waterloo station

An accessible precinct that offers **residents convenient access to a range of transport options**, offering residents *choice*, was seen as an important opportunity for the redevelopment. Public transport was described as being particularly important for some members of the community (such as some social housing residents) for whom it provides their only means of getting around, accessing shops and essential services, and connecting with friends.

They highlighted the need for the redeveloped precinct to provide **safe and direct connections to Waterloo station and local bus stops**. Access to public transport should provide for people of all abilities including the elderly and people with disability. Participants emphasised that commuter access to Waterloo station should not impact use of the park or the local neighbourhood feel of the redevelopment area. They expressed mixed views on which of the three redevelopment options would provide the best access to Waterloo Station. Some liked the more traditional street pattern of Option 1, whereas others liked the diagonal street pattern leading to Waterloo Station in Option 2.

“As long as there is convenient transport then we will be happy.”

Feedback on walkability and pedestrian connections at Waterloo

Participants highlighted the importance of **accessibility for people of all ages and abilities** throughout the Waterloo precinct, in all new buildings and the public domain. Participants also expressed support for a pleasant public domain including streets, parks and public spaces where people can enjoy the outdoors and feel safe.

Easy access to shops, services and public transport were identified as a priority. Many people who took part in the consultation shop locally, access a range of local services (and would like to see further services and facilities located within walking distance as part of the redevelopment), and use public transport to do their shopping, access essential services and meet friends. They expressed a desire for direct and clearly signposted access to local bus stops and Waterloo station. A number of residents were concerned about how to access bus services during the redevelopment period, and wanted any changes to local bus routes to be communicated well in advance.

There were mixed views on the most **appropriate pattern for streets and blocks** within the precinct as reflected by survey responses and qualitative feedback. The highly walkable character of Option 1 was supported by some, particularly for its interest and sociability, whereas others preferred the diagonal lines and direct connections offered by Option 2. Young people expressed a preference for the walkable street layout of Option 1, with its more traditional street pattern, smaller blocks and laneways. They liked the idea of being able to get from A to B quickly and directly, but also having more flexibility and choice about how to get around within the redevelopment area.

“The street layout should ensure a connection with Green Square.” (survey respondent)

“Make it a truly walkable neighbourhood. Ensure all new buildings demonstrate good design. Make it green and lush.” (survey respondent)

“I want to be able to just put my headphones in and take the back way if I’m not feeling like dealing with people that day.” (Young person living in the Waterloo area)

Feedback on cycle connections and facilities at Waterloo

Participants commented that the George Street boulevard **should not be a thoroughfare but a destination in itself**, with clear, designated paths for pedestrians and cyclists to avoid potential conflicts. Most participants were supportive of the proposed cycle connections through the site. However they sought to ensure that pedestrian paths and cycle ways are designed in a way that provides both equitable access and safety. Participants identified cyclists speeding through the estate as an existing problem that should be rectified as part of the redevelopment. Participants expressed concern that the boulevard could become a thoroughfare with cyclists “flying through” at high speed, making this space unfriendly and potentially unsafe for pedestrians. Suggestions included dedicated walk/cycle ways, speed limits and signage and other calming measures such as physical barriers.

People who took part in the consultation process also commented on the importance of **connections between the George Street boulevard and the wider Waterloo area**. A pedestrian overpass/ramp at McEvoy Street was suggested to provide good access and to enable a sense of integration between the precinct and wider neighbourhood. Participants also commented that the location of the George Street boulevard should be considered to ensure it is user-friendly. They noted that the boulevard leads to McEvoy Street, with one commenting “there’s nothing down there!”.

“The cyclists and the pedestrians, how are they going to be separated. Because we have had problems with Waterloo Green.”

Feedback on traffic and parking

Current and future traffic congestion was commonly raised as a concern by participants. They commented on the increasing number of vehicles on local roads related to cumulative development in Waterloo and surrounding suburbs. Some raised concern about the **proposal to open up Pitt Street to McEvoy Street**, commenting that this could result in more traffic and adversely impact the village feel of the local area. Additional traffic in this location was identified as a pedestrian safety issue for parents and children visiting Mount Carmel School, the local park and playground.

Participants also raised concerns about **potential congestion in Cope Street** if it were to become a “kiss and drop” style zone for people accessing the Waterloo Station. Other concerns related to increased traffic congestion associated with the redevelopment of Waterloo more generally. Some people welcomed the idea of a ‘car free’ lifestyle (for instance, with improved public transport and community transport options in place), while others did not. Differences aside, people highlighted the importance of a functioning local road network to enable residents *who need to drive their own vehicle* to get to and from the precinct by car.

Onsite carparking for social housing residents specifically and other residents of the future precinct, was viewed as an important priority. Participants were supportive of the proposal for car parking to be provided underground at the redeveloped Waterloo. However, there were mixed views on the proposed level of provision. Residents of the estate were generally supportive of the proposed 'no loss of parking for social housing residents'. However, some people who took part in the consultation process commented that more than 'one parking space per two apartments' should be provided to meet the needs of future residents and visitors. Some suggested that storage space for residents should be provided alongside car parking spaces and that buildings should be future-proofed to ensure basement parking areas can adapt to changes in technology, such as a future with driverless cars.

Participants also commented on **increased demand for on street parking** in the local neighbourhood related to the redevelopment of Waterloo estate and the Metro Quarter and Waterloo Station. They expressed particular concern that residents of Waterloo suburb would have to compete with users of the Metro Quarter and Waterloo Station for parking.

Feedback on other issues to be considered under this theme

Good access to the Waterloo precinct for **emergency services and community transport services** was also raised.

6.2. Towards a preferred master plan

There was strong support for the following *common elements* of the three redevelopment options: **making Waterloo a pedestrian priority precinct; access to the majority of local needs within 200 metres of homes; and slow to shared streets.** While there was limited discussion relating to the specific idea of an **accessible local movement route** for people of all ages and abilities within the precinct, feedback suggests that safe and pleasant connections throughout the local neighbourhood are widely regarded as important. People identified a wide range of activities they would like to be able to do within a short distance from home (see also 'Culture and Community Life' in section 5).

In terms of proposed changes to the local network of streets and roads, concern was raised about the **proposal to open up Pitt Street** which participants believed could result in rat-running and pedestrian safety issues and the treatment of Cope Street to minimise congestion around the Metro Quarter and Waterloo Station. Provision of adequate carparking to meet the needs of new and existing residents was strongly supported, with mixed views expressed on the **level of carparking provision** proposed by the three options of one parking space per two apartments. The preferred master plan should consider and address traffic and parking concerns with reference to the relevant technical study.

Feedback on the *different* elements of the three options indicates that:

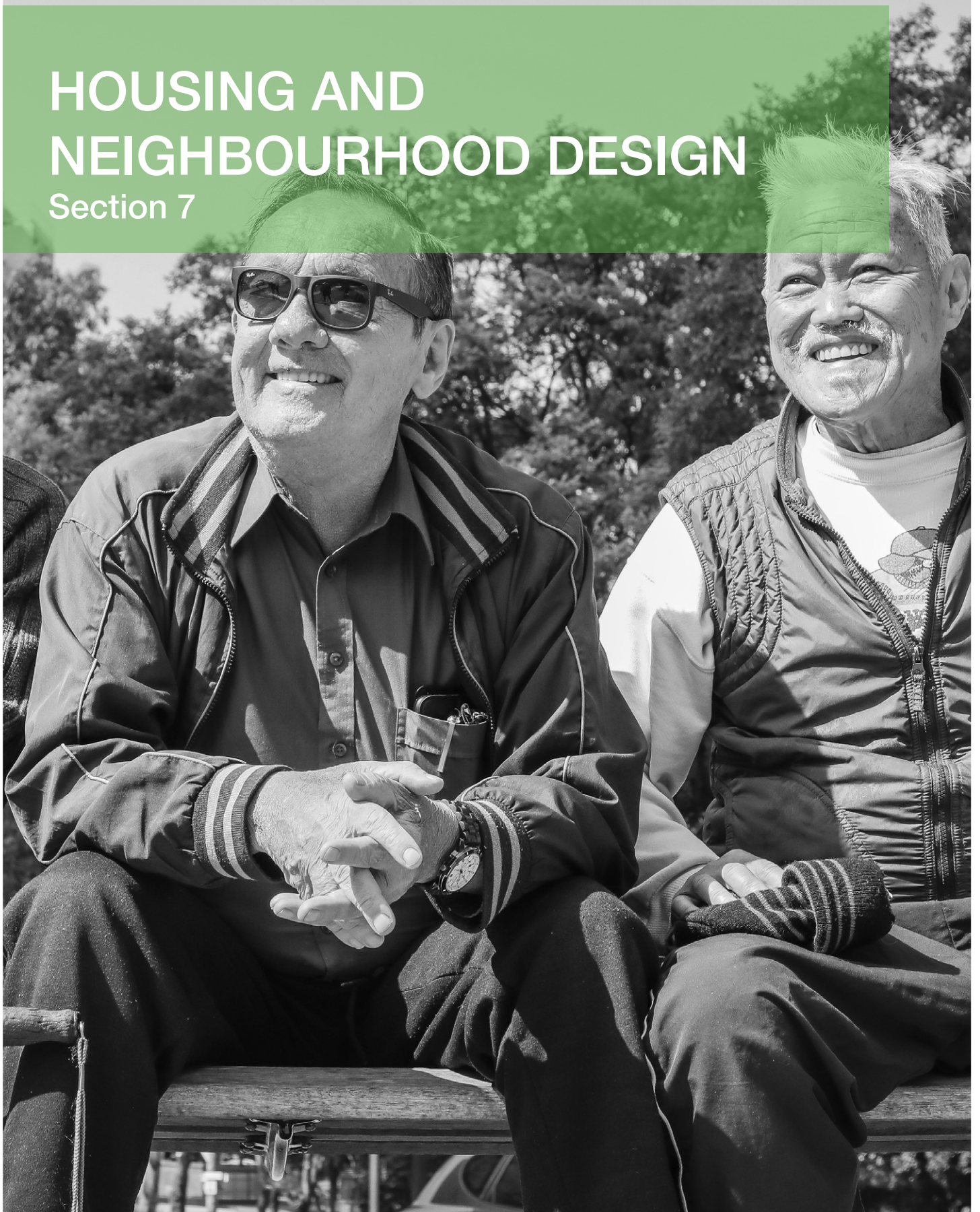
- **Street types and blocks** – There were mixed views on the most appropriate pattern for streets and blocks within the precinct. There was strong support for an accessible public domain for people of all ages and abilities, that provides a pleasant environment and where people feel safe. The highly walkable character of Option 1 was supported by some, particularly for its interest and sociability, whereas others preferred the diagonal lines and direct connections offered by Option 2. The preferred master plan should incorporate multiple ways for people to get around the precinct, offering members of the community choice, and providing opportunities for people to come together as well as to enjoy their own space.

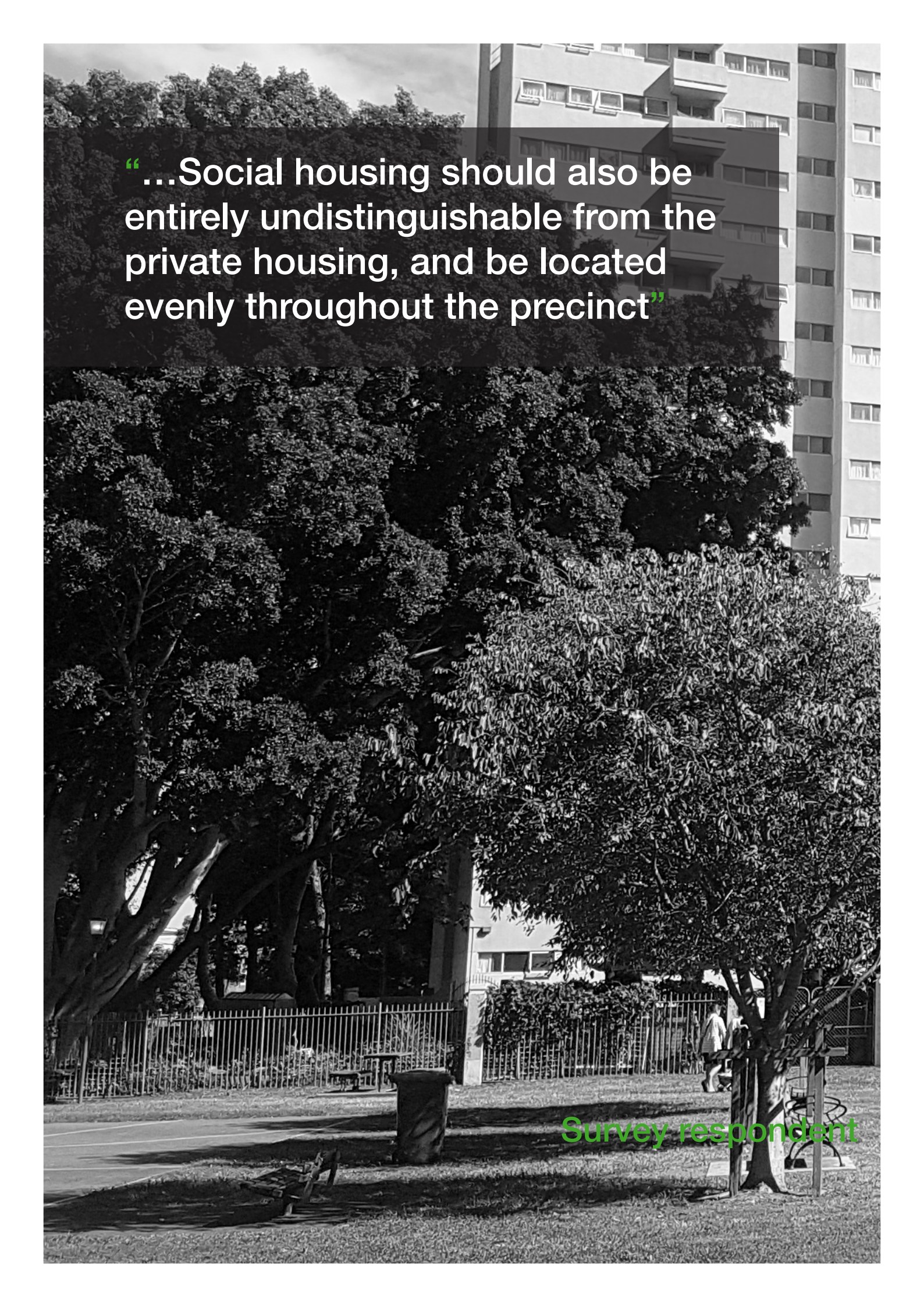
- **George Street boulevard** – Importantly, the preferred master plan should ensure that the George Street boulevard space provides for the needs of both pedestrians and cyclists through adequate separation of these users, best practice design, and slow speed limits for cyclists. See also ‘Environment and Open Space’ in section 10.
- **Location of the accessible local movement route** – See ‘Environment and Open Space’ in section 10



HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD DESIGN

Section 7





“...Social housing should also be entirely undistinguishable from the private housing, and be located evenly throughout the precinct”

Survey respondent

7. Theme: Housing and neighbourhood design

7.1. What we heard at options testing

7.1.1. Detailed feedback

Feedback on the proposed built form

People who participated in the consultation process expressed a wide range of views on the built form proposed as part of the three redevelopment options.

Views on the proposed **building heights and types** were mixed, with many people expressing a preference for the building heights as per Option 1, with a maximum of up to 32 storeys. This includes people who commented that building heights of around 30 storeys, similar to Matavai and Turanga, would be appropriate.⁵ Whereas some regarded 30 storeys as being too tall. There was some support for buildings of 40 storeys in height or taller. Some participants were less concerned with height than with the *number* of taller buildings proposed, expressing a desire for the number of taller buildings to be reduced. There were mixed views on the proposed building types expressed by survey respondents and in qualitative feedback.

Social housing residents commonly saw themselves **living on a similar level within the redeveloped Waterloo**, as where they live now. For those who are currently living on or close to ground level, they expressed a preference to live on or near ground level in future. Those who live on the mid to higher levels of buildings now commonly saw themselves living on these levels in future. People with a preference for mid and higher-level living commented on the importance of having a view / outlook (eg over the district or open space areas) and good access to sunlight. Some said that this style of living offered them a greater sense of security than living on lower levels. Issues raised in relation to higher rise living commonly focused on: ensuring that taller buildings have more than one lift and that these are well maintained; and providing social and affordable housing residents with *choice* to ensure that people who are not suited to living at higher levels are accommodated at the low and mid-levels (such as people with mental health issues).

Feedback commonly focused on the high level of **density** proposed by all three options. Many people including survey respondents expressed a desire for the redevelopment to offer a lower density urban environment (with some noting that Option 1 has a greater number of buildings than Options 2 and 3). Some people commented that they do not support any redevelopment of the Waterloo estate.

“Reduce the density of this proposal and provide greater green space.” (survey respondent)

“Overshadowing will be a significant issue. There is no point having green spaces which are in shadow in winter as the plants will not thrive...” (survey respondent)

“I am fearful that the Waterloo Village Green will lose its vibrant and friendly atmosphere if overbuilt by having larger towers which causes over populating!” (survey respondent)

⁵ Noting that these existing buildings comprise 29 storeys plus two additional levels of plant (ie approximately 31 storeys in total).

People commented on the importance of the redevelopment being done well to ensure the future Waterloo does not become a “concrete jungle” or “forest of towers”. Feedback focused on managing the impacts of taller buildings including overshadowing and wind tunnel effects, and designing the built form around the natural environment. A high quality public domain including sunny parks and streets, mature trees and appropriate community infrastructure were seen as key aspects of the redeveloped Waterloo.

Loss of character was raised as an issue by residents of the estate and wider local area. Private residents commented on the low density nature of the area around the estate, its heritage value and unique character defined by less traffic and greener blocks than other parts of Waterloo. They commented on the importance of not just minimising the impact of the redevelopment, but of ensuring the Waterloo precinct integrates with the surrounding area and existing local community. They expressed particular concern about how the redevelopment will interface with existing terrace homes and buildings located around the site, and measures to ensure a high level of neighbourhood amenity throughout the redevelopment process and following its completion (including access to services, parking and opportunities to minimise traffic impacts on local streets). Participants expressed a desire for new buildings to be well designed, built to last, diverse and visually appealing.

Some commented that the redevelopment, given its proposed density, should deliver a **higher quantum of social and affordable housing** to meet the needs of people currently on the social housing waiting list and to address increasing demand for social and affordable housing in Sydney. For instance, a number of local stakeholders expressed the view that if Option 3 is selected (with 700 more dwellings than Option 1) then all of these additional dwellings should be dedicated social housing. Participants expressed a desire for the redevelopment to include Aboriginal affordable housing.

More spacious and better designed apartments including balconies were commonly identified as being important for residents of the precinct. There was support for the proposed dwelling mix – with all redevelopment options including a mix of studio, one, two, three and four-bedroom apartments. Participants generally wanted to live in a home the same size or larger than their existing home. In particular, the importance of larger apartments was highlighted in order to meet the needs of families. Participants expressed a desire for high quality homes that meet the diverse needs of residents, respond to changing lifecycle needs (including being fully accessible), provide indoor and outdoor space, improved safety and security, and storage space.

“Increased public and affordable housing units that also provide a diversity of sizes (i.e. 1, 2 and 3 bedrooms – not all 1-bedroom units).”

There were mixed views about **retaining and renewing existing buildings** on the site such as Matavai and Turanga. Some people commented that these buildings are important from a heritage and character perspective. While others were keen to see these buildings redeveloped, commenting that apartments in these buildings are too small to meet the needs of residents and lack important features such as balconies, built ins and accessibility.

“[resident of Turanga] I have to eat standing up. There’s nowhere to dry my clothes... Because there is no balcony it feels like my head is going [crazy]...”

“I strongly suggest to remove the two towers [ie Matavai and Turanga].”

Participants were supportive of underground **car parking** for residents at the redeveloped Waterloo (as discussed in section 6 of this report).

Feedback emphasised the importance of the redevelopment supporting new and existing residents as part of a place that is socially, economically and environmentally **sustainable**. New buildings should be designed and delivered to reflect leading practice principles

and provide reduced running costs through good solar access, cross flow ventilation and renewable energy initiatives. Suggestions included installation of solar panels to generate energy for onsite use, thus reducing energy bills for residents. Buildings should be equipped with new technologies including high speed internet and should be future-proofed to respond to emerging technologies as they arise.

Feedback on the mix of social, affordable and private housing

There was strong support for social, affordable and private housing to be **evenly distributed** across the whole of the Waterloo precinct and to ensure that all members of the community are accommodated in high quality new homes. However, there were mixed views on the **appropriate mix of dwellings** within individual buildings as demonstrated in both survey responses and qualitative feedback. Survey responses indicate that approximately 42% of respondents wanted private housing to be provided in separate buildings (ie 26% wanted social and affordable housing separate to private, and 16% wanted all three types of housing separate). Another 45% sought for social and affordable and or private housing to be integrated within buildings. Participants who expressed a preference for social, affordable and private housing to be provided within the same building felt that this would be more equitable and help support social cohesion. Some believed that integrating social and affordable housing could help to enable pathways from social to affordable housing particularly among younger residents. A range of suggestions were made about building design to support an integrated approach to housing.

Conversely, people who wanted social and affordable housing to be provided *separately* from private dwellings highlighted the complexities of meeting the diverse needs and expectations of social, affordable and private housing residents within the same building. Concerns focused mainly on how public and private tenants would get on, how the specific needs of social housing tenants would be addressed, and how building maintenance and strata levies would be managed so as not to result in higher costs for social housing tenants. It was suggested that high care tenants or people with complex needs should be accommodated in particular buildings (or levels within buildings), to ensure their home environment is fit for purpose and they receive the appropriate level of support to meet their needs.

“[A mixed approach with social, affordable and private housing in the same buildings would make it] nicer to live with people of different ages and different backgrounds, as it could teach people better behaviour, manners and hygiene.”

“I just think if it’s mixed, I just don’t know how you guys are going to organise it. If there is a maintenance issue who are we going to call?”

“Social cohesion thrives in mixed communities.” (survey respondent)

“Social housing should be indistinguishable from other housing.” (survey respondent)

Those who wanted to see social and affordable in the same building alongside private housing in separate buildings were in favour of a complete social mix from an equity perspective, but felt that this would be very difficult if not impossible to achieve in reality. Some felt there would be tension between public and private housing tenants, and that social and affordable housing residents would be more likely to be tolerant of any issues arising than private residents. Participants also commented that while all buildings should be well maintained, private residents may have higher expectations – and thus higher strata levies – associated with management of private dwellings which would be unaffordable for social and affordable housing residents.

Whatever the social mix, feedback suggests it is important that public and private housing are indistinguishable from one another and that all residents have equitable access to facilities such as community meeting rooms (in all buildings). Several participants also commented

that all new housing should exemplify 'development done well' and the redevelopment should provide numerous opportunities for residents of social, affordable and private housing to meet and connect.

Feedback on recognising and celebrating Aboriginal culture and heritage

A critical element of the redevelopment of Waterloo is recognising and celebrating Aboriginal culture and heritage. Ensuring Waterloo remains a place where Aboriginal residents feel a strong sense of community connection, pride and belonging was identified as fundamental to the success of the redevelopment. Key to this is the provision of culturally appropriate housing to meet the needs of Aboriginal people and their families. Feedback focused on the need for new housing that is well designed, spacious (to provide for families and visiting relations), provides acoustic privacy (to avoid noise transfer between apartments and related complaints), offers indoor and outdoor space, and ensures balconies are child-friendly. Balcony spaces should be specifically designed to address potential safety issues and to function as usable spaces that can be opened up to let the outdoors in, or closed down to become an extension of the home, to flexibly accommodate the needs of families (for instance, box-style balconies with operable louvres).

Some Aboriginal residents who took part in the consultation expressed a desire to live in lower rise buildings and for buildings to be future-proofed with relevant technology (wi-fi etc). Dedicated Aboriginal affordable housing was also regarded as important to ensure that Waterloo remains a place that Aboriginal residents can call home and to ensure that it does not become another Redfern where it was felt the Aboriginal community has been displaced. Respect for Aboriginal people and a means to address racial intolerance are critical if Aboriginal people living in the redeveloped Waterloo are to feel respected and welcome as the area is transformed through redevelopment.

"We are in a three-bedroom place, we usually have family come and stay with us...the issue is are we going to be sent a two-bedroom place?"

Feedback on communal spaces in and around buildings

There was a desire for communal spaces to be provided as part of each new building including both indoor and outdoor areas. These communal spaces were described as being important places for residents to come together to sit and have a chat, play games, read a book or enjoy some quiet time (eg for meeting up with friends, playing chess, Mah-jong, table tennis and listening to music). They were described as particularly important places in the redevelopment for social, affordable and private residents to meet and socialise and to help create a socially integrated community. People highlighted the importance of communal spaces being appealing, comfortable and well maintained.

Feedback on other issues to be considered under this theme

Another issue raised in feedback on this theme was the critical importance of **ongoing communications** with the community, including social housing residents, private residents and local stakeholders throughout planning and delivery of the redevelopment. Good quality information, clear communication and respectful treatment of residents is paramount.

This includes:

- Communicating with social housing residents about staging of the redevelopment and arrangements for relocations and rehousing – for individuals and across the board.
- Addressing concerns relating to misinformation among social housing residents. This includes concerns: that the northern part of the site would be redeveloped for private housing only and that social housing residents would be relocated to the southern parts of the estate; and that residents would be relocated out of the local area.

“When are we being moved and where are we being moved to...it is important because people are worried”

“The issue is this, that we are all going out to Blacktown”

“People need to know exact times when they’ll be moved back” (survey respondent)

- Ongoing communications with the surrounding community to ensure that community perspectives are given appropriate consideration and construction impacts are minimised. Some private residents and stakeholders who took part in the options testing phase of consultation commented that their feedback from the visioning phase was not adequately reflected in the three redevelopment options. They expressed concern about the 15-20 year timeframe for the redevelopment and how local residential amenity would be ensured during that period (eg to mitigate impacts such as construction noise and truck movements).
- There was concern among private landowners that the Study Requirements indicate the need for two workshops, and that while these workshops have been conducted (one in visioning and two in options testing), this was not regarded as being adequate. They expressed a desire for further detailed technical information (for instance on shadowing, wind and traffic impacts) and an opportunity to comment on the detailed master plan. Residents of Wellington Street also requested additional consultation with specific landowners as they have a variety of different concerns.
- Private landowners raised concerns about the building heights shown on the presentation materials and the development potential of their sites. They queried how the proposed heights and uplift had been established and commented that private landowner needs relating to the redevelopment had not been appropriately considered to date. They were of the view that the proposed floor space ratio (FSR) would not result in the fair and impartial distribution of development potential between private and government-owned land, as set out in the Study Requirements. Comments focused on a desire for greater uplift to ensure that private landowners are not adversely impacted by the redevelopment, and have an opportunity to sell their properties/sites if they choose to.
- There were mixed views among private landowners on the proposed building heights, with some expressing a desire for more and or taller buildings than proposed to ensure that the highest possible development potential of the site is achieved. Conversely other private landowners commented that the proposed building heights were too high and expressed concern about high rise buildings leading to overshadowing and privacy impacts.
- Several private landowners were concerned about parking, commenting that on street parking in Waterloo would be impacted by the new Waterloo Station. The level of proposed parking provision for the Waterloo redevelopment, as per the City of Sydney parking requirements, was regarded as being inadequate to accommodate demand among new and future populations. Participants also queried the proposed mix of public and private housing. They commented that the local area is already over populated and that Government owned land should not be sold for the purposes of private housing development.

It is noted that all stakeholders including private landowners within the State Significant Precinct will have further opportunity to provide comment through formal submissions to the Department of Planning and Environment, as part of the statutory exhibition period.

7.2 Towards a preferred master plan

There was strong support for the preferred master plan to incorporate the following *common elements* of the three redevelopment options:

- **Mix of apartment sizes and types** – the proposed mix of apartments (from studios to four-bedroom homes) received across the board support. There was some support for dual key apartments as homes that would offer flexibility to residents and families. The preferred master plan should incorporate a range of apartment types and sizes.
- **Mix of social, affordable and private housing** – there was strong support for the even distribution of social, affordable and private dwellings across the site. However, there was no overall consensus on the appropriate mix of these types of dwellings within individual buildings (as noted in section 1.3.3). The preferred master plan could offer opportunities to provide tenants with choice – by delivering a range of housing options such as: stand alone buildings that provide social, affordable and private housing; buildings that integrate social and affordable housing together; buildings that provide social housing that is specifically designed to meet the needs of particular groups of tenants (such as those with complex needs). Buildings that integrate social, affordable and private housing together may also be considered. However the challenges identified in relation to this type of arrangement for community cohesion, building management, maintenance and related costs/strata levies would need to be addressed. High quality homes and consistent standards of building maintenance should apply across all new buildings.
- **Appropriate arrangement of taller buildings** – there was support for locating taller buildings to provide good amenity and outlook, access to sunlight and natural ventilation. However, there were mixed views about the extent to which the three options would achieve this. The preferred master plan should maximise views, privacy, solar access and airflow for residents through adequate space between buildings and good apartment design. It should also seek to minimise impacts on the surrounding neighbourhood including overshadowing of homes and the public domain.

Feedback on the *different* elements of the three options indicates that:

- **Building heights** – There were mixed views on the **building heights and types** with many people expressing a preference for the building heights as per Option 1, with a maximum of up to 32 storeys. There was some support for buildings of 40 storeys in height or taller. The preferred plan should seek to maximise amenity and minimise impacts for residents of the site and surrounding area. Key issues for consideration in the preferred plan include maximising solar access to homes and open space areas and addressing potential wind effects.
- **Building types** – Feedback does not provide a clear preference in terms of the slender towers in Option 1, the landscaped terrace-style podium buildings in Option 2, or the courtyard style buildings in Option 3. Green buildings and green spaces around buildings were strongly supported, such as the terrace / rooftop spaces highlighted in Options 1 and 2, and the ground level courtyards in Option 3. The preferred master plan should specify a range of these types of spaces within new buildings.



COMMUNITY FACILITIES, SERVICES AND SHOPS

Section 8

8. Theme: Community facilities, services and shops

8.1. What we heard at options testing

8.1.1. Detailed feedback

Feedback on the different approaches to community facilities, services and shops

Community facilities, services and shops were widely identified as being important by people who participated in the consultation process. Social housing residents emphasised the need for facilities and services that are **welcoming** and meet the needs of all members of the community including **people of all ages and abilities**.

Residents of the estate, private residents and local services were generally very supportive of the proposal to provide people with **more options and greater choice in terms of shops and services closer to home**. Community facilities, services and shops should be located within easy access of homes to create small “villages” and support a walkable neighbourhood. It was commented that “easy walking distance” means different things to different people, noting that the elderly, people with disability and families with children require particular consideration in development of the preferred master plan to support a high level of access across the precinct for all.

Grocery stores, a medical centre, allied health professionals (including dentist, physiotherapist), and other everyday services such as a post office, were widely identified as important for the renewed Waterloo. The preferred master plan should enable residents to live in a way that recognises “we are social *and* solitary”, for instance through initiatives such as seating in parks and ‘social corners’.

Specialist support services should continue to play a strong role in the neighbourhood to provide for the needs of local community across areas including mental health, Aboriginal health, youth and ageing. Facilities, services and shops should be easily accessible and affordable.

“To me the most important thing is to have access to shops and services.”

Participants expressed a desire for community facilities, services and spaces that **bring people together, support social interaction and provide opportunities for learning, growth and leadership**. This includes spaces for existing members of the community to socialise and spend time with their existing friends and networks (as a critical part of maintaining the unique sense of community and people-focused character of Waterloo), as well as spaces that provide opportunities for new and existing residents to interact and get to know one another in ways that are comfortable and make the most of what diverse members of the community have to offer.

There was a preference for there to be **clusters or hubs of community facilities, services and shops but also with some spread throughout the site** for ease of access. Participants expressed mixed views on the proposed options, as shown in the survey and qualitative feedback. A number of participants also suggested integrating retail and services with the environment and open space. Feedback focused on the importance of shops that are affordable for residents of social and affordable housing, rather than catering only to private residents, and people wanted to know how affordability could be “guaranteed” as part of the redevelopment. Gentrification of the area was identified as a key challenge and participants did not want to see things like “generic coffee shops”. Social housing residents were particularly concerned about being priced out of the new shops and services. People commonly expressed a desire for the redeveloped Waterloo to include shops like Aldi and medical services that provide bulk billing.

The need for **social infrastructure** to accompany the redevelopment was raised widely in feedback. Across all stakeholder groups, people expressed a desire for social infrastructure to be provided early, to support members of the local community from the earliest stages of the redevelopment process. Private residents highlighted the importance of a quality public domain and new community facilities to support the needs of social housing residents and those in the wider local area. Participants were supportive of new local facilities such as a public library and school.

“Prior to approving any new buildings the government and local councils need to build the necessary infrastructure...” (survey respondent)

Participants commented that the **economic viability** of new retail and commercial spaces should be carefully considered to ensure they are well patronised and contribute to a lively neighbourhood environment. For instance, some believed they should not be located too close to the Waterloo Station so as to compete with it.

Feedback on recognising and celebrating Aboriginal culture and heritage

Participants expressed a strong desire for the redevelopment to **recognise and celebrate Aboriginal culture and heritage** as intrinsic to the past, present and future of Waterloo as a place and community. Numerous opportunities for Aboriginal cultural expression were identified including an Aboriginal cultural centre, dedicated Aboriginal community garden, Aboriginal museum, and interpretive elements of the redevelopment such as public signage, naming of parks, streets and buildings, and landscaping. Other suggestions included Aboriginal art on building facades and pavements, as well as graffiti spaces.

Facilities and spaces that support **knowledge sharing about Aboriginal culture** among the broader local community and visitors were regarded as providing opportunities for community learning, healing and pride. Some commented that spaces for cultural education and celebration could help to address racial intolerance and support cohesion within the community.

Others believed that initiatives of this type should be developed and implemented in close liaison with the local Aboriginal community and support **local economic development opportunities** that benefit the Aboriginal community at Waterloo. For instance, by supporting members of the Aboriginal community to start up / grow their small business, providing a space for business related speaking events and workshops, providing a retail shopfront for small businesses to sell / market test their products, and attracting visitors to the precinct through a series of (temporary or permanent) activations such as “Black Markets.”

“An Aboriginal cultural centre would be a place to recognise our culture and show respect for Indigenous people and be a place to say sorry.”

“[On an ideas exchange or recycling exchange] Positive things bring positive energy.”

“Small Indigenous businesses is what I’m thinking... [other participant] there are some very talented young people out in the community and not just in art but in other areas.”

“There [should be] small businesses, whether it be [selling] t-shirts or making didgeridoos for the local community, there are plenty of artists around here..... [other participant] like the Black Markets at Bare Island La Perouse.”

“Huge amounts of kids are coming into the area, but where are the schools?”

“We don’t want to feel like we are just an interesting group of people. We want to live here not just have houses here.”

Feedback on educational institutions, programs and employment

Members of the community discussed the importance of a **range of educational facilities and programs** to meet the needs of existing and future residents, commenting on the significant increase in the residential community associated with the redevelopment of Waterloo. Social infrastructure identified by the community to accompany the redevelopment included **a new school** – with emphasis on early delivery to address existing and future demand.

Onsite access to **library services** and **affordable childcare** were also suggested. Chinese residents identified a need for “education programs that help people integrate into the community” such as English language classes.

Participants expressed a desire for **employment assistance and small business support services** to enable residents to access employment and acquire the skills to run their own businesses. Opportunities to boost the local economy were identified as being particularly for social housing residents including young people and Aboriginal people, and to provide older people with opportunities to earn an income. Services and supports should be low or no cost. Other suggestions for education and learning programs included an education centre for people from non English speaking backgrounds, mentoring programs, and job-readiness programs.

Further to this, **Aboriginal employment** in the redevelopment process was identified as a high priority and opportunity to engage the local Aboriginal community. Importantly, employment programs and opportunities should go beyond the mandated targets for government projects. Suggestions included engaging local Aboriginal artists, landscape designers and architects to contribute to future stages of the redevelopment process.

Feedback on programs for health and wellness

Space within the redevelopment area for health and wellness facilities and programs was widely identified as an important aspect of supporting community wellbeing. Participants emphasised the need for facilities and services to be accessible and affordable. Health services identified as being important to respond to the existing and future needs of the local community included: General Practitioner services (including bulk-billing), allied health services (such as physiotherapists and dentists), specialist Aboriginal medical services and mental health services.

The redevelopment was seen as presenting a potential opportunity to **support highly valued existing local services** by providing appropriate space onsite or upgrades to their existing facilities. For instance, services such as The Fact Tree were described as providing a high level of community support but from a space that could benefit from building improvements.

Participants expressed strong support for an **onsite aged care facility as well as age-related support services** to assist elderly residents to age in place. Age related facilities and support services were identified as being critical to the redevelopment process, with a view to maximising the (physical and mental) health and wellbeing of elderly residents and minimising disruptions to their everyday lives. The relocation and rehousing process should ensure that all residents of Waterloo estate, including those who are elderly, are treated with the highest levels of care, respect and respect.

Other facilities and programs relating to health and wellness identified by members of the community included an aquatic centre, indoor recreation facility, outdoor sports courts and exercise equipment, supported by appropriate programming. Children's play areas, basketball courts and dedicated spaces for dogs (separate from children's play areas) were also suggested.

Access for emergency vehicles and community support vehicles (such as service providers, meals on wheels, community bus) should be built into the redevelopment.

8.2. Towards a preferred master plan

Feedback from members of the community and other stakeholders confirmed the high level of importance of **community facilities, services and shops** to support new and existing residents of the Waterloo precinct. There was strong support for the following *common elements* of the three redevelopment options:

- **Provision of learning, health and childcare** – these services received across the board support. People expressed a desire for a range of services to meet the needs of new and existing residents within easy walking distance of homes, as proposed by all three of the redevelopment options. The preferred master plan should consider opportunities for education, spaces for community learning, childcare and health services. Provision of social infrastructure should be undertaken early to support community cohesion as well as accommodating growth in the residential population.
- **Provision of community rooms, creative and multipurpose spaces** – feedback focused on providing a range of community facilities such as meeting rooms, flexible multipurpose spaces, and spaces designed to support the specific needs of particular groups within the community including Aboriginal residents and young people. Support was expressed for a range of spaces of different sizes and within easy walking distance of homes, as proposed by all three of the redevelopment options. The preferred master plan should include a range of spaces to meet the needs of existing and future residents. Provision of social infrastructure should be undertaken early.

Feedback on the *different* elements of the three options indicates that:

- **Focus of community facilities, services and shops** – People were supportive of *clustering* community facilities, services and shops to create a centre of activity, as part of an activated and sociable neighbourhood where people, services, retailers and businesses thrive. However there were mixed views as to whether the centre of activity should be focused around the ‘Metro Quarter and civic plaza’ (as in Option 1), or around the ‘Metro Quarter directly interfacing the Village Green’ (as in Option 2). While there was some support for community facilities, services and shops to be focused around Waterloo Park (as per Option 3), qualitative comments suggested there was less support for these amenities to be arranged along the George Street boulevard (also part of Option 3).
- In addition to the clusters of activity discussed above, there was strong support for further community facilities, services and shops to be *spread out across the precinct*, as in all three of the redevelopment options. In particular, easy access to community facilities, services and shops within easy walking distance (and gradient) from home was regarded as essential for residents of all ages and abilities (and particularly to meet the everyday needs of social housing residents and older residents as they age).
- **Quantum of shops and services** – While there was strong support for a wide range of new shops and services, feedback focused on ensuring the type and mix of shops and services is carefully considered to: support the needs of social housing residents and their families, ensure they are welcoming places for all, provide fresh food to meet people’s daily needs, and include cost effective options. They did not support new shops and cafes that cater for the needs of private residents and where people from low income households feel excluded.

ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACE

Section 9



“I love the idea of social corners
and love the idea of publicly
accessible courtyards.”



Resident living on the
Waterloo Estate

9. Theme: Environment and open space

9.1. What we heard at options testing

9.1.1 Detailed feedback

Feedback on public parks and open space

People who participated in the consultation process highly value the **natural environment and open space** on and around the Waterloo social housing estate, and expressed a strong desire for the redevelopment to **incorporate green space wherever possible**. This was demonstrated in both survey responses and feedback provided through the various face to face activities. Feedback from members of the community and other stakeholders confirmed the high level of importance of **parks and open space areas** as an integral element of the Waterloo precinct. Parks and open space areas were seen as critical to support community wellbeing and enjoyment, to “soften” the appearance of the built environment, and to provide a habitat for birds.

People who took part in the consultation process expressed mixed preferences in terms of the layout of public parks and open space as shown in survey responses and qualitative feedback. Some wanted to see Waterloo Green retained and renewed in Option 1, with new parks provided in other parts of the precinct. They expressed a strong desire for equitable access to parks and open space areas for residents living in different parts of the precinct including the southern part of the Waterloo site. Others preferred the idea of a single large park, primarily to enable the community to hold large scale events and activities. Again there were mixed views on the location of a larger park. Concern was expressed about a park located near the Metro Quarter and Waterloo Station becoming a commuter thoroughfare, being overused by residents from the wider area, and losing its neighbourhood focus / feeling unsafe.

“I like the spread [of parks] because it means if you’re older you can go sit in a smaller area. Four streets are a long way [to walk to get to a park]”

“If you did the bigger park, is that just going to be generic like every other place where hipsters hang out? Or is it going to cater to families and older people? And if so, instead of just having a pond, can we have interactive art and play where kids can play with the water, not just something to sit and look at...?”

“Open space needs to be of outstanding quality for the community to be able to handle such high density. Reducing the density slightly to provide more open space should be considered. Open spaces should provide a good mix of active and passive recreation.”
(survey respondent)

“Nice central park with facilities similar to Prince Alfred Park.” (survey respondent)

Feedback on the George Street boulevard and public domain

Overall the proposed transformation of George Street into a green boulevard attracted strong support in the community survey and qualitative comments. There were mixed views on the most desirable width for the boulevard discussed in qualitative feedback. Some people expressed a preference for Option 3 to achieve the largest amount of open space (40m width), while others supported Options 1 or 2 (20-30m width). People with a preference for Options 1 or 2 often talked about creating a more intimate and user-friendly space along George Street. Key issues raised in feedback focused on:

- Making this a place that feels safe, pleasant and welcoming
- Ensuring the space is accessible and usable for people of all ages and abilities (particularly considering the incline of the site)
- Supporting pedestrian safety in this location through measures such as speed limits for cyclists and a separate cycle path
- Realising the 'boulevard' as a series of interconnected parks rather just a linear accessway.

Feedback on landscaping approach and trees

There was strong support for Waterloo to retain its characteristic green, leafy appeal. People wanted to see significant trees retained, new trees planted and landscaping used wherever possible to soften the appearance and feel of the built environment. They placed emphasis on retaining mature trees wherever possible and not simply replacing them with small trees/saplings. Plantings should be selected to provide shade in summer and allow sunlight through in winter. Many people expressed a desire for productive landscapes and native plantings. Some commented that the buildings should be designed around the trees. For instance, Aboriginal, Russian, Chinese themes across three different parks or landscapes.

Feedback on other issues to be considered under this theme

Water in the public domain was generally regarded as an appealing element of the redeveloped Waterloo, with people commenting on its calming and cooling effects. Public safety, particularly the safety of children, was commonly raised in discussions about the inclusion of water in public spaces. Many people expressed a desire for the preferred master plan to include opportunities for water play that children can enjoy. Other water features were also suggested such as ponds, fountains and more "natural" water bodies. Water features should be safe, attractive, clean and regularly maintained to ensure they contribute to rather than detract from people's use and enjoyment of the public domain. Aboriginal residents highlighted the cultural importance of water as part of the natural landscape at Waterloo.

"You need water. Water is life."

[on water] "It's about [supporting] mental health too, which is the most important thing."

9.2. Towards a preferred master plan

Feedback from members of the community and other stakeholders confirmed the high level of importance of **parks and open space areas** as an integral element of the Waterloo precinct. There was strong support for the following *common elements* of the three redevelopment options:

- **Community gardens / rooftop gardens** – noting that there was a strong desire for community gardens to be located at ground level; and mixed support for community gardens and or other types of garden to be located on the rooftops of low to medium rise buildings. Important considerations for community gardens included ensuring that they: are located in areas that receive good solar access; are protected from strong winds; and are designed to support community pride and ownership, while discouraging vandalism / theft. It is recommended that community gardens are established early and in close liaison with community members, in recognition of their intrinsic importance to many residents of Waterloo estate as highly valued community spaces.
- **Existing and new trees** – participants generally expressed a preference for as many of the existing trees on the site to be retained (in line with Option 3), and for new trees planted to provide shade in summer while maximising solar access to public spaces and homes in winter.
- **Community gathering spaces** – noting that people expressed mixed views about which of the three options would provide the best outcome in terms of spaces for *larger* community gatherings (Option 1 with its three smaller parks or Options 2 and 3 with a larger park).

Other common elements of the three redevelopment options featured less in feedback and or received mixed support. These were:

- **Water features** – water was discussed as being an important and highly valued feature of the public domain by many members of the community. Support for water commonly focused around its cultural significance, its benefits in terms of passive recreation for adults and as an opportunity for children’s play, its visual appeal, acoustic qualities, and benefits in terms of health and wellbeing (for instance as a calming aspect of public spaces for people with mental health issues). Concerns raised by people focused on public safety, mosquitos and odour if water features are not well designed / maintained.
- **Social corners** – these spaces, such as street corners and other informal spaces attracted support – as places for people to rest, relax and gather. The preferred master plan should incorporate multiple spaces of this nature that are both appealing and accessible, to support community interaction and pride.
- **Accessible courtyards** – people liked the idea of a variety of green spaces throughout the precinct including ground level open space areas, such as green courtyards, for use by residents. Key considerations raised in relation to these types of spaces were: the importance of solar access to ensure plants grow and people use and enjoy courtyards; whether these spaces would be accessible to people who are not residents of the particular building, and if so, what security measures would be put in place to ensure residents feel safe and secure; whether these spaces would be provided as part of buildings for social housing residents and if so, what opportunity would these residents have to *choose* which building they live in.

Feedback on the *different* elements of the three options indicates that:

- **Parks** – There was a strong preference for Option 1 among some members of the community in terms of renewal of Waterloo Green and the addition of two new parks. However, others expressed a preference for a larger, central park (Waterloo Village Green as in Option 2 or Waterloo Park as in Option 3). Feedback on these two options suggested a stronger preference for Option 2, mainly due to perceptions that a larger park located near the Metro Quarter and Waterloo Station could create safety issues or serve the needs of the wider community over those of the Waterloo neighbourhood. Support for Option 1 focused primarily on the number of parks it provides and their distribution across the site, rather than on their smaller size. On this basis, feedback suggests that the preferred master plan should incorporate multiple public parks in different locations across the site including the north and south. If possible, at least one of these parks should be larger than those in Option 1 to enable larger community gatherings and events.
- **George Street boulevard** – Overall feedback focused on providing as much open space on the Waterloo site as possible. However, feedback suggests the *width* of the George Street boulevard (ranging from 20 metres wide in Option 1 to 40 metres wide in Option 3) may be regarded as less important to members of the community than its *design*. Key considerations focused on ensuring the George Street boulevard provides an appealing, accessible and safe connection for residents and the wider community. A more “intimate” or narrow boulevard (as in Option 1) could be complimented by a larger public park (ie drawing from the additional width offered by the boulevard in Options 2 and 3).
- **Pedestrian links** – There was strong support for landscaping of pedestrian links and connections and for the incorporation of water (as per the landscaped blue and green pedestrian links in Option 2). Above all, pedestrian connections should be accessible for people of all ages and abilities and should contribute to a walkable neighbourhood providing access to shops, services, parks, the Metro Quarter and Waterloo Station, bus stops, and local destinations. Landscaping of pedestrian links should provide shade, be appealing and incorporate a mix of native and productive plantings. It was suggested that landscaping of different parts of the site could be themed. Some participants also expressed a desire for pedestrian links to include weather protection.