

Social Baseline Report Preliminary detail issues and comments

The following preliminary comments were prepared by Michael Shreenan of Counterpoint Community Services and supplied to UrbanGrowth NSW Development Corporation and Land and Housing Corporation. The comments draw on feedback provided on an earlier GHD report on community facilities which remain issues in the current GHD report. It also draws on feedback from other Groundswell agency members about the current GHD Social Baseline Report.

Preliminary Review of GHD 2018 Final Social Baseline Report - Waterloo

Potential issues/ Gaps the study might be perceived to have missed

- The report does not detail ownership of current community assets or delineate between (tenants/owners/length of tenure). For example, The Factory Community Centre is a Housing NSW property but run by CCS or that Alexandria Town Hall is a City of Sydney multipurpose hall but used by a multicultural community centre run by Counterpoint Multicultural Services (previously South Sydney Community Aid) and a community theatre organisation; MilkCrate.
- The report doesn't detail the total volume of assets each department has. Would it not be useful to know how many commercial/community spaces LaHC, City of Sydney, Dept of Education etc have?
- The report does not detail the age of the assets or their current physical conditions/ lifespans, maintenance required etc.
- In addition, it has not outlined which properties might require being demolishing /replacing within the study area. For example, CCS's two workshops: the Waterloo Furniture Recycling Workshop and our Cycle Re-cycle Project spaces currently within the high rises garage space owned by LaHC will potentially need re-housing during development.
- It also does not detail volume of Housing NSW community rooms; ones currently used, ones currently unusable and ones underutilised. Maybe to address this recommendation each department should carry out facility an asset audit?
- The report doesn't detail estimated current usage/uptake of said facilities or provided any comment on the suitability of current locations.
- The report doesn't document those facilities that meet current disability and access requirements, WHS requirement's etc; all of which would be important when deciding what asset to retain, replace or upgrade.
- Are any current facilities having any historic issues not yet resolved such as asbestos? Rewiring issues etc.
- The report does not detail or explore the current management structures, governance arrangements and quality of the management of current facilities and services. This may not be important at this stage in the exercise but will be important in looking at future provision nor do doses explore the financial health of service providers and future funding needs (in terms of facility or service).
- It also doesn't document users satisfaction of service providers or facilities.
- The report does not outline the type of function/activities current facilities are used for in great detail. For example, what are the multipurpose hall's capacity and being used for.
- Outdoor events held in open spaces and needs /gaps in infrastructure that may exist for those events. (e.g. Community day, Summer on Green)
- Report doesn't document outdoor equipment condition such as play parks – (which one are up to modern standards or need to be upgraded)
- Lack of information on off leash dog park; no exploration of demand /need/gaps
- Report lack of detail places of religious worship and what their asset being used for/by community
- Report briefly mentioned some recreational space/ pocket parks and basketball courts community rooms, community gardens etc. on Housing NSW land without document of conditions; most of which will be demolished as part of the redevelopment process.
- Report doesn't identify issues of Alcohol-Free Zones verse community issue /debate on the need for safe wet spaces.
- Report doesn't detail currently vacant- derelict underutilised spaces/ facilities
- The report failed to identify community facilities utilised within private precincts and the effectiveness (or lack of) challenges and positive use within private developments such as Merriton complex in Waterloo /Zetland and effect of strata management of those spaces.
- Lack of information on the identified potential of assets such as the local schools to be utilised for community provision when they are not in use or of the pros and cons of co-location as such facilities and to the potential to be delivered on a peppercorn rent.
- Details of current and potential tourist/heritage/street art attraction assets appears missing
- Potentially debatable that public car parks are community facility but it is a contentious and recurring issue might be worth exploring park and ride options.
- Some the maps are a bit unclear/hard to read.

Specific notes

- The baseline report information appears to be outdated; an analysis of the funded contract with FaCS for Sydney and South East Sydney regions should provide clarity.
- Noticed *South Sydney* Community Aid (now Counterpoint Multicultural Services is mislabelled (now at Alexandria Town Hall), Waterloo Recycling Workshop, Cycle Re-cycle, (might also be worth cross-checking with Inner Sydney Voice online map of services) ,
- Weave Youth & Community Services and South Sydney Youth Services are the same organisations; this highlights the lack of understanding of the service providers of the area.
- Marton and Solander Community Garden is part of Waterloo Estate Community Garden; again highlights the lack of understanding of the community group available.
- Centacare no longer exist and were never a CALD specific service providers.
- Noticed child care/ preschools not broken down in terms of capacity to capture gaps/needs.
- Noted not much comment on student welfare support/gap in service provision, e.g., out of school hours care.

- The report didn't talk about challenges faced in current facilities. For example, the different usability of the community rooms. A discussion that would need a lot of further unpacking with community and service providers.
- No comment in the report on the need for supported facilities/services for a range of target groups including new tenants, young homeless, substance misusers, emergency accommodation for victims of domestic violence, ex-offenders released from prison, carers respite, or early intervention accommodation for mental health crisis etc.
- Social housing not broken down in terms of landlord provider i.e.: Government public verse community housing etc. (some residents are sensitive about them being clumped together)
- Technology and communication might be worth also exploring the provision of community services through technology – online community support live etc.
- Note relying on census data in relation to social housing demographic is unreliable due to the significantly low response to census data collection within social housing context.
- No mention of high number of LGBT community residents and service gaps/needs.
- Recommendation should be made to ensure any future of tendering of community facilities management or service provision should not be at risk or demise of existing well-established NGO providers
- Food insecurity and services not identified in the report as a historic issue
- No mention/recommendation of the importance to fund independent community development workers and explore place managers?
- Should the report refer to the need for community transport to local facilities for aged/and disabled
- Report didn't cover any issues in relation to cycleway
- Report didn't identify public gathering spots/nodes
- No reference to RWA employment strategies and human service plans - should be recommended that this is all re-visited and updated.
- Underemployment and economy recommendations post re-development strategies - strata management and landlords could also be encouraged to explore traineeships for keeping local trades /repairs teams/ training schemes
- The report doesn't mention the importance of NGO's and their relationship with the community terms of their management of facilities both internal ones and external spaces and their ability to build cohesion and local ownership through the utilisation of these assets and community preference to deal with NGO rather than Government agencies. Nor is there any comment on the economic value of NGO provision and the cost saved to the government through this provision.
- Lack of recommendation on the need to review how services are financed particularly around true cost recovery. For example, The Factory Community Centre received funding for programs but in terms of ensuring the building has minimum 2 staff at all times this is not directly funded nor is the equipment /furnishing needed to run such facilities.
- Security provision of public housing such concierge project is important and costly part of local infrastructure and will continue to be needed
- Little reference to ensure heritage /history of current community facilities is retained/ documented and celebrated
- While there is some documenting of current human service provision, it is not certain it's a full comprehensive in-depth analysis. It may need to be recommended to be carried out as this development plans are progressed.
- Need for any childcare pre-school space to be near/have access to outdoor space as required under legislation standards
- The difference between balance of leisure, community, social, cultural and commercial infrastructure not clearly articulated
- Any new facilities will have to ensure adequate parking provision for service vehicle's such as community buses, along with adequate storage facilities for such things as event equipment. Outdoor spaces often lack faculties such as power for community events as well.
- The financing model of new facilities also has to be matched with maintenance financing.

Initial comments: Michael Shreenan – Counterpoint Community Services INC (CCS) 12 Dec 2018