

Kensington Estate Redevelopment Social Impact Study

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Foreword

When the Bracks government came to office in 1999, it faced huge maintenance backlogs across the state and the need to refurbish old and deteriorating public housing stock, particularly in the inner city areas of Melbourne.

In 2000, the Premier Steve Bracks announced a major commitment to upgrade the two remaining high rise towers on the Kensington public housing estate and to deliver new, quality housing on the rest of the site. The new housing would be provided by way of a joint venture with a developer and deliver a mix of public and private housing as well as a range of dwelling types.

The decision to go ahead with the Kensington redevelopment was significant, not only because it was the first large-scale redevelopment of inner city public housing, but also because it was the first to introduce a mix of public and private tenures on an estate that was previously all public housing

From the very beginning of the project, a Community Liaison Committee (CLC) was set up consisting of representatives from the Kensington public tenants, local community organisations, the Office of Housing, Department of Human Services and Melbourne City Council in order to oversee the process. Early on, the CLC came to the view that the Kensington redevelopment was not just a physical rebuild of a public housing estate but an exercise in community building on a significant scale.

The Office of Housing allocated additional resources and appointed an experienced Project Team to manage the relocation process. The CLC paid close attention to the process to ensure that the many needs, including extensive consultation, were met in a sensitive way, as over 370 families were dislocated and moved off the estate to allow demolition and then reconstruction to take place.

Now, in August 2004, stage one of the redevelopment has been completed. Public tenants are making choices about whether to return to Kensington, and private owners and tenants are shifting into the new housing. The CLC has turned its attention to the strategies for building a strong and supportive community, integrated into the greater Kensington area.

With such significant change underway at Kensington, the CLC saw how important it was to monitor, document and assess its social impact of the changes. We urged the Director of Housing to fund a Social Impact Study (SIS) which was carried out over about 12 months from mid-2003 to mid-2004. The preference was an action research approach in order to learn about the impact of the redevelopment processes and to take action to manage or change any adverse social effects. As the SIS progressed, the CLC was able to respond to emerging issues highlighted by the research team and to anticipate and plan for future challenges.

As the Chairperson of the CLC, I believe that this Report highlights the complexities involved in managing a project where a community encounters the impacts of dislocation. The action research methodology enabled all parties to be ready for emerging issues and to plan strategies for addressing them.

The Report's conclusions and recommendations are reflective of the research team's independence in conducting its research and analysis. Overall this is an excellent resource for governments, policy makers, planners and local communities involved with social renewal projects, as it highlights many of the challenges faced by public

housing authorities as they tackle issues associated with change on high density public housing estates.

This Report is only one part of ongoing evaluation of this project which will continue over the remaining stages of the Kensington redevelopment.

I thank the Swinburne project team and the Project Steering Committee members, particularly the community representatives from the CLC, for their efforts in completing this project.

According to the Swinburne research, the majority of the relocated tenants and current tenants still living in the high rise towers at Kensington have positive views about the redevelopment and the prospect of living in a mixed public/private development. The challenge in the next phase of the project, as people come back on to the site, is to make sure that their expectations are fulfilled.

*Glenyys Romanes MP
Member for Melbourne Province
Chair of the Community Liaison Committee*

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Preface

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- Residents in areas of Kensington near the estate;
- People involved with local schools, community organisations and service agencies;
- Traders and business operators in Macaulay Road and Bellair Street, Kensington.

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Disclaimer

This publication represents the views of the authors based on research into the social impacts of the Kensington estate redevelopment. It does not necessarily reflect the opinions of either the CLC or the Department of Human Services, both of which will consider the Report's findings.

Authorship

Kath Hulse, Tania Herbert and Karyn Down of the Institute for Social Research, Swinburne University of Technology, are the authors of this Report.

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Executive Summary

A. Purpose, objectives and research method

This is the Report of a Social Impact Study (SIS) of the redevelopment of the public housing estate in the inner Melbourne suburb of Kensington. The SIS was an initiative of the Kensington Redevelopment Community Liaison Committee (CLC), commissioned and funded by the Victorian Department of Human Services. The Institute for Social Research at Swinburne University of Technology undertook research for the SIS.

The overall purpose of the SIS was 'to monitor, document and assess the social impact of the redevelopment of the Kensington public housing estate', using an action research approach. This required the Swinburne project team to work with, and feed back information to, various stakeholders throughout the SIS on the past, current and projected social impacts of the redevelopment. The objectives of the SIS were to:

- Identify the impact of the redevelopment process on the people and communities involved;
- Develop strategies and measures to manage or change any adverse social effects of the redevelopment;
- Contribute to community building required for a successful redevelopment.

Specific research methods included face-to-face interviews with public housing tenants remaining on the redevelopment site, tenants during the redevelopment, a survey of surrounding residents, interviews with local service providers and those involved with community agencies, and interviews with local traders and business operators. The research also involved analysis of secondary data from a number of sources.

The action research approach means that stakeholders have already had an opportunity to assess information generated by the research, to raise further questions, to consider changes and begin to act on them, where relevant. This Report is the culmination of this process and summarises the social impacts of the redevelopment and key issues to date.

B. Findings

B.1 Social impacts of the redevelopment

General

Redevelopment of the Kensington public housing estate had, for many reasons, a long gestation period. For many of the people living on and around the estate, the long lead-up to the redevelopment created some uncertainty, and a degree of cynicism, about whether it would take place at all. When decisions were made about the redevelopment, relocation of tenants and demolition of buildings seemed to happen very quickly for many of the people interviewed.

The SIS began almost immediately after the demolition of the last of the walk-up flats when the site was a bare paddock and the only people remaining were tenants of the two remaining high rise towers, who were also being affected by major refurbishment works. During the initial interviews for the SIS, in mid-2003, many people were dealing with the immediate impacts of these changes on their own housing

circumstances or their service, shop or business. In this context, they often expressed a sense of 'loss' – of friends, family or neighbours, of clients or customers, or more generally of a part of the Kensington community. As the SIS progressed over a 12 month period, and physical rebuilding began, it was clear from further interviews that some people and organisations had begun to adapt to the new circumstances. Not everyone, however, was in a position to 'move on' in this way.

The estate before the redevelopment

The estate and its residents were an important part of Kensington. Prior to the start of the redevelopment, about 1,800 people, or 30 per cent of the suburb's residents, had lived there. A high percentage of Kensington's families with children lived on the estate and were a very significant part of the student/client base of local schools and services, many of which had developed initially to meet the needs of families living on the estate. Estate residents came from a range of cultural backgrounds, with four in five speaking a language other than English at home; there was a large Vietnamese community and also significant communities from countries in the Horn of Africa.

Thinking back to what the estate was like before the redevelopment, current and former residents liked its proximity to public transport, shops, facilities and health services, and the people who lived there. Some residents of neighbouring streets liked the diversity that estate residents gave to Kensington. Both people who lived on the estate and those who lived around it disliked the 'drug problem' in Kensington in 1999-2000 and the state of the buildings, although people currently living in the high rise towers were less likely to nominate either of these as something they disliked about living on the estate.

Relocation of tenants from the walk-up flats

Approximately a thousand people were directly affected by the redevelopment when they were relocated to other accommodation prior to the demolition of the walk-ups (2000-02). Most of those who moved spoke a language other than English, with three in ten being Vietnamese speakers and 16 per cent speaking African languages such as Somali and Tigrinya. Four in five households were able to be relocated within five kilometres of Kensington, which was a significant achievement, given the demand for public housing and the difficulty in obtaining additional properties due to escalating property prices during the period.

Most of the relocated tenants interviewed were satisfied with the information they had been given and the amount of notice of moving, and with the practical assistance given by the Office of Housing, although some were not. Relocated tenants relied on both formal means of communication, such as letters from the Office of Housing, and informal networks to get information about the relocations. Most felt, however, that they had had minimal or no involvement in making decisions about moving, although not everyone did want to be involved. Four in ten households would have preferred to stay on the estate during the redevelopment if this had been offered.

Relocated tenants differed in how they felt about leaving Kensington; some felt sad and a sense of loss, others happy or relieved, whilst others again had mixed feelings. Some reported that the move had had a particularly negative effect on their children. Overall, about half of the relocated tenants interviewed said that they were better off in their new place than when they lived in Kensington. The most critical factor in determining satisfaction with relocation was the type of housing offered. Those who moved into accommodation that was newer, bigger or had more amenities were more likely to be satisfied overall. The aspect of living on the estate that most relocated tenants missed was its proximity to public transport, shops and other facilities.

Local services and community agencies reported a number of problems with the relocation process, particularly for families with children and for Vietnamese people and people from countries in the Horn of Africa who had settled on the estate and whose communities were largely dispersed. These included disruption to children's schooling and support services for children and families, and the relative powerlessness of their clients in negotiating relocation options.

Impact on people and families

For relocated tenants, moving meant a distinct lessening of social connectedness, both informal support and from community agencies and organisations. Some families continued to return to Kensington, particularly to see a family doctor or health service. Some friendships continue, although people have been separated by the relocations.

Public tenants remaining on the site reported lower levels of social connectedness than relocated tenants when they lived on the estate, perhaps because they were older and less likely to have children living with them. Current tenants were concerned with the noise, dust and dirt associated with the refurbishment of the high rise towers. These concerns were very immediate and pressing, leaving little opportunity to reflect on broader changes due to the redevelopment. Half of the current tenants interviewed would, in retrospect, have liked the opportunity to move out of their flats during the refurbishment.

The redevelopment also directly affected many local residents, particularly in streets immediately adjoining the estate. Half of those responding to the survey reported at least one negative effect from the redevelopment, mainly concern about changes to the Kensington community, such as loss of socioeconomic and cultural diversity. Local residents were also affected by the noise, dust and dirt associated with living near a building site and by traffic and parking problems. Some reported positive effects, mainly in terms of improved safety, fewer problems with drugs and higher property values.

Impact on local community

The number of people who left Kensington as a result of the relocations was more than offset by an increase in people living in the rest of the suburb. The profile of those moving into the suburb, however, differed substantially from that of the public housing tenants who left. Those who left were predominantly families on low incomes who spoke a language other than English at home; the 'newcomers' were typically young adults, some with children, who had significantly higher household incomes than those who left, and relatively few of whom spoke a language other than English at home.

This movement of people into and out of a small suburb like Kensington over a short period changed its demographic and social composition in a way that is often referred to as 'gentrification'. The change in socioeconomic and cultural profile had an impact on shops and businesses. Those providing basic necessities suffered a downturn in trade estimated at between 15 and 70 per cent, with some having to lay off staff. Others were able to adapt to the requirements of higher income households moving into the suburb. Others again prospered because they were aiming at a higher socioeconomic demographic which was increasing.

The changes also affected Kensington's schools, services and community organisations, many of which had been geared to the needs of low income households with children living on the estate. Initially, some were quite adversely affected, with the primary schools losing students and the services losing many of

their clients. After the initial impacts of the relocations, some have been able to refocus on different groups to reflect the changes in the Kensington population or have extended their geographic catchments. For some types of services, such as childcare agencies, the process of adjustment has been rapid due to an acute shortage of childcare generally. For others, the process has been slower and is more difficult, depending on their values and mode of operation.

B.2 Strategies for addressing adverse social effects of the redevelopment (current and projected)

The SIS identified a number of specific impacts of the redevelopment which were fed back to, and discussed with, relevant stakeholders.

Residents' issues

About a half of the relocated tenants interviewed were interested in returning, particularly those with children, a higher level of interest than is expected for relocated tenants generally. Relocated tenants wanted to have more certainty about when they could return and what type of accommodation they would be offered. Local schools, services and businesses wanted information on returning and new tenants and the timing of this.

Most current tenants want to stay on the site, particularly in the refurbished high rise units. The small size of bedsitter accommodation remains an issue for some, particularly in view of larger and more modern accommodation being built for older people as part of the redevelopment.

Local residents continue to be concerned about noise and disruption from the building works as well as changes to the local community. There are specific concerns about the appearance and density of the new units and related concerns about traffic and parking.

Changes to the number and type of public housing units in Kensington

Under current plans, there will be a decrease in 150 units on the redevelopment site as a result of the demolition of the walk-ups and subsequent new construction. This has been offset in part by some increase in public housing units in the rest of Kensington and other nearby inner city areas. There is a concern that the redevelopment, in conjunction with other changes in the surrounding suburb, will reduce opportunities for low income people to live in Kensington, an area valued by the low income households interviewed for its proximity to public transport, schools, services and facilities.

The amount of smaller accommodation for public housing tenants in Kensington will increase, particularly for older people, whilst the amount of larger accommodation for families will decrease substantially. The latter raises issues about the ability of relocated families with two or more children to return to the site, of new families to move in, and the long-term impact of the redevelopment on local schools and services for families and children.

Changes to the profile of people and households living on the site

Based on current plans for public housing stock and current allocation practices, it is estimated that about 800 people will live in public housing on the site at the end of the redevelopment. These are likely to be about a third each: children and young people, adults aged 20 to 54, and older people aged 55 and above.

The final configuration of new private units is unknown. Many of those in the first stages of the new development will be small (one and two bedroom), and predominantly apartments rather than townhouses. Analysis of available evidence from other inner city areas with a predominance of this type of accommodation suggests that many of the people moving in will be younger adults, with few children.

Planning to meet the needs of older people

The number of public housing units on the site for older people will double as a result of the redevelopment, comprising almost half of all public housing units. There will be a need to plan for personal security and safety, support services and, in the longer term, the ability of older residents to age in place.

Planning for families with children and young people

The number of children and young people living on the site will build up slowly and, based on current plans, is expected to be considerably less at the end of the redevelopment than before the demolition of the walk-ups. This presents challenges for community building as well as for local schools, services and agencies who have focused on children and young people.

B.3 Looking to the future: community building

Tenure mix/social mix

At this stage, it appears that the tenure mix will be predominantly public rental and private rental, although this may change during later stages of the redevelopment. This has implications for the degree of social mix on the site. One of the biggest challenges anticipated for community building is in responding to the turnover of tenancies.

Types of community

A further challenge in community building is in recognising and celebrating past achievements and the efforts of many people over the years in working towards a strong and cohesive community in Kensington, whilst adapting to change and moving forward. It is also important to recognise that people identify with different types of community, for example, those based on common language or culture, and that the significance of community based on place may vary for different people.

Building on positive sentiments

Many relocated and current tenants interviewed for the SIS have positive views about the new development. Two-thirds of relocated tenants, and more than seven in ten current tenants, thought that it would be better overall for those who live there. There was also support for living in a mixed public and private development, particularly amongst current tenants. Local residents are very positive about Kensington as a place to live and as a community. Views on Kensington after the redevelopment were mixed, with many seeing benefits but some local residents voicing concerns about a lessening of socioeconomic and cultural diversity in the suburb generally, as well as specific concerns about traffic, parking and the appearance and density of the site, as noted above.

Laying the foundations for community building

Community building involves many people and organisations and is essentially an organic process. The Kensington Management Company (KMC) is a new 'player' in terms of Kensington and has a number of distinct roles: its role in relation to community building can perhaps be described as a catalyst.

Community building strategies

Immediate priorities are welcoming returning and new residents to the site and building trust and informal connections through community activities. As well as running some community activities on site, a complementary strategy of inviting site residents to participate in existing community activities in Kensington is also desirable, as some local residents are already involved in local organisations and do not have the time for 'new' activities. Some people will not want to participate in community activities and this should be respected.

In the medium term, efforts to reactivate strong local networks will facilitate community building, as will service system development to ensure that those living on the site have access to the support and services they require. The challenge for local schools, services and agencies is to adapt to the demographic and other changes in Kensington and perhaps change their geographic focus, whilst attempting to ensure that their services remain inclusive and appropriate for lower income residents, including those from different cultural backgrounds.

For the longer term, the goal of 'sustainable community' requires elaboration and the development of a range of strategies. It is important to set clear objectives and measure progress towards meeting these.

C. Recommendations

An action research approach is designed to enable learning and to facilitate improvements to policy and practice. There are three main types of recommendations:

- Recommendations to the Office of Housing/Department of Human Services and other major stakeholders about *good policy and practice for any future redevelopment projects*, based on learning about the social impacts of the Kensington redevelopment to date, summarised in B.1 above (and detailed in Chapters 2-7 of the Report);
- Specific *recommendations for the Kensington redevelopment project* based on current and projected future social impacts and issues around community building, summarised in B.2 and B.3 above (and detailed in Chapters 8-9 of the Report); and
- Recommendations on *key principles for any future redevelopment of public housing estates* based on overall learning from the SIS; as well as recommendations for continuing social research as the Kensington redevelopment proceeds (Chapter 10 of the Report).

C.1 Recommendations about good policy and practice for any future redevelopment of public housing estates

Chapter 2: Social impact analysis

R01 That an action research methodology is adopted in future social impact studies of redevelopment projects, where there is an emphasis on sharing of information and findings to facilitate improvements during the course of the redevelopment.

R02 That a social impact study commence prior to relocation of tenants so that comprehensive baseline data can be collected on the profile of estate residents and their views on the estate and the local community.

R03 That prior to relocation, tenants are asked to consent to being contacted directly by independent researchers, with an invitation to participate in social research about the project.

R04 That future social impact studies on major redevelopment projects employ suitable tenants and other local residents to undertake aspects of the research as a means of drawing on, and further building, community capacity.

R05 That the Office of Housing extends the income exemption provision for tenants who are temporarily engaged to work on social impact research on a designated redevelopment project in the same way as for designated 'neighbourhood renewal' projects.

Chapter 4: Benchmarking an estate prior to redevelopment

R06 That, in any future redevelopment, the Office of Housing in conjunction with the relevant local council compiles and makes available a current and consolidated statistical profile of dwellings and people/households on an estate and in the surrounding suburb before any relocation of tenants, to provide a benchmark against which to assess the subsequent impacts of redevelopment.

R07 That, in any future redevelopment, a survey of residents living on and around an estate is conducted just prior to any relocation of tenants to benchmark views about the positive and negative aspects of living on, and near to, the estate, enabling comparison with views at the end of the redevelopment.

Chapter 5: The relocation process

R08 That the Office of Housing, where practical, stages estate redevelopment projects, giving tenants an option to stay on site, if this is their preference, enabling tenants to have more control over decisions affecting them.

R09 That the Office of Housing, in conjunction with tenants' associations, continues to consult, and to explore other ways of consulting, with affected ethnic communities during planning and implementation of a relocation/redevelopment process, building on what has been learned from the Kensington relocations, such as:

- Acknowledging tenants' previous experiences of forced relocation, as well as specific language and cultural issues;
- Recognising the importance of both informal networks and more formal community organisations;
- Consulting with small groups of people with common interests, taking place in a non-threatening environment in which people feel able to raise issues of importance to them.

R10 That the Office of Housing or other designated body provides information in an accessible and easy to read format and from an early stage about the 'big picture' of a redevelopment and planned relocations, to assist local services and workers in providing better client service and planning and developing their services for the future.

R11 That the Office of Housing provides *all* tenants on an estate with clear and accessible information about the scope and timing of a redevelopment project at an

early stage, acknowledging that tenants may wish to be informed even if they do not have to relocate or will be relocated in later stages.

R12 That, building on the experience of the relocation of tenants from the Kensington estate, the Office of Housing provides information about relocation/redevelopment by letter personally addressed to tenants and via interviews, supplemented by other methods, recognising that tenants may wish to receive information from more than one source.

R13 That, as identified in both the SIS and Office of Housing client satisfaction surveys, the Office of Housing ensures coordination with offices in areas to which relocated tenants will be moving to enable maintenance and other problems to be addressed in a timely manner.

R14 That the detailed suggestions made following the previous evaluation of relocation of tenants from 72 Derby Street (Project Partnerships 2001: 66-75), as refined by the findings of the SIS, be adopted and written up as a 'good practice guide' for relocations associated with estate redevelopment, to be made publicly available to guide other relocation projects both in Victoria and more generally.

Chapter 6: Impact on people and families

R15 That, in recognition of the emotional responses evoked by relocation, the Office of Housing, in conjunction with the relevant local council(s), continues to develop improvement strategies for communication with tenants at a time when they also face many practical issues around moving, including:

- Training for staff, tenant groups and others in communicating with people who are experiencing a range of emotions such as anger, distress and sadness;
- Providing relocated tenants with opportunities to 'debrief' in groups shortly after moving, using trained and experienced facilitators;
- Resourcing local community organisations, including tenants groups and ethnic community organisations, to run social functions to which groups of relocated tenants are invited, enabling informal discussion of the effects of moving as well as maintaining social connections;
- Securing funding for an arts or similar project in which relocated tenants, if they wish, can record their experiences of leaving the estate, as in the successful 'relocated' arts project at Kensington, and also relate what happened to them in the first year after moving to their new place.

R16 That the Department of Human Services continues to provide, and improve, training in cultural awareness for its staff and other people involved in relocations to enable better understanding of the particular impacts of involuntary relocation upon those who have come to Australia as migrants and refugees, sometimes having already experienced forced relocation.

R17 That the Department of Human Services engage an experienced person for a short project to develop and recommend best practice for situations where children and young people relocate with their parents or other family members but may have little or no say in decision making, having due regard to cultural and other issues. This might include:

- Advice from local schools about children's experiences and behaviours during a relocation process;

- Assistance available for children and young people and their families in dealing with issues around moving;
- Recommendations on timing of relocations involving children, such as at the end of a school term or school year;
- Practical advice on how to change schools;
- Means of inviting and encouraging tenants to bring their families with them to discussions about relocation.

R18 That the Office of Housing and other agencies involved in relocations continue to develop practical means of enabling relocated tenants to keep in touch with their friends and neighbours after moving, if they wish. These could include but are not restricted to:

- Social functions and celebrations on the estate, including some for specific groups such as young people;
- A website providing current information about progress on the redevelopment, information about social events, opportunities to see display units etc.;
- Use of e-mail where people give their permission to be included in a distribution list, to provide information about opportunities for relocated tenants to come to social and other events, and for relocated tenants to post their own messages.

R19 That the Office of Housing provides information (in major languages, where relevant) to tenants who are to be relocated about the practical implications of moving to different accommodation types, including:

- Arrangements for payment for water and other utilities,
- Services provided by local governments such as rubbish collection and recycling, including the provision of local government 'information packages';
- Availability of relevant support services in their new area, particularly in respect of health and general practitioner services, including how to change to another service.

R20 That the Office of Housing develops tools to assess individual preferences about moving or staying during a major renovation or redevelopment project, such as a brief summary of factors that tenants may wish to consider in making their decision that could be informed by asking some relocated tenants, with the benefit of hindsight, to outline factors that they consider to be important.

R21 That people living in buildings which are to undergo major renovations be given an opportunity to move out temporarily, if practical and if they wish, prior to works commencing, and that they be given clear and accurate information about the works, including likely noise levels, disruption to lifts and expected duration, to assist in making a decision.

R22 That the Office of Housing or other designated body provides regular information to all those directly affected by building works (including current tenants and surrounding residents), from an early stage, about the nature of the work (renovations, demolitions or new construction), how long it will take, likely disruption to residents, and who to contact if there is a problem from the beginning of a redevelopment project.

Chapter 7: Impact on communities

R23 That local businesses and traders be given information about the likely changes to the estate population during a redevelopment, detailing the number and type of households who will be relocated and the timing of the relocations, so that they can anticipate the impact on their customer base and turnover and adapt accordingly.

R24 That local schools, services and community agencies continue to be given advance notice about the timing and extent of relocations from an estate, detailing the profile of those who will move in terms of age, household type, cultural background, and estimated number of pre-school and school age children.

R25 That all local services, organisations and businesses be given information on the expected number and profile of people who will leave an estate, including the timing of this, and anticipated movement (back) of people onto the site, to facilitate their business and service planning.

C.2 Recommendations that refer specifically to the Kensington project

Chapter 8: Change strategies relevant to current issues

R26 That the Office of Housing, in implementing its reallocation policy, continues to discuss the policy and process for returning to Kensington with services, agencies and community networks, particularly among the Vietnamese and various Horn of Africa communities.

R27 That the Office of Housing, in implementing the reallocation policy for Kensington, clarify with relocated tenants, on an individual basis, whether an offer of accommodation at Kensington will be made, what they will be offered, and the likely timing of the offer so that they can plan their lives.

R28 That in implementing the reallocation policy and resettlement of tenants on the redeveloped site, the Office of Housing, in conjunction with KMC and the KPTA, identifies the service needs of households and provide assistance with reconnecting local schools, services and agencies, if required.

R29 That the Office of Housing supplies KMC with aggregate information on households accepting offers of public housing and the timing of return to Kensington so that this can be combined with information on households moving into the private units and conveyed to schools, services and agencies, as appropriate, so that they can plan for any increase or change in their client base and conduct outreach as necessary.

R30 That the Office of Housing provides, and the CLC monitors, accurate data on all relocated tenants and their status in terms of returning to Kensington. This should include reasons why households do not return, including failure to contact, no interest in returning, ineligible (income or assets), ineligible (other) or no appropriate size housing available.

R31 That the Office of Housing enables people currently living in bedsitter accommodation on the Kensington site to transfer to one bedroom accommodation once offers of re-housing have been made to older relocated tenants.

R32 That the Office of Housing maintains accurate data about, and regularly reports on, stock changes as part of the Kensington redevelopment project including information on dwelling type and size, to enable monitoring of the impact on public housing stock on the site, elsewhere in Kensington and in the inner urban area.

R33 That the CLC, after reviewing the anticipated profile of returning tenants, considers recommending to the Office of Housing an increase in the number of larger (three and four bedroom) units for families on the Kensington site.

R34 That the Department of Human Services, the Melbourne City Council and other relevant parties develop proposals for support services for older people living in public housing on and around the Kensington site and that funding be obtained and the service be in place when older tenants move into the new accommodation.

R35 That the Office of Housing, the Melbourne City Council and KMC, in conjunction with other relevant bodies such as the local Police and Citizens Consultative Committee, work together to develop measures to improve personal safety and security for older and frail residents in the two blocks designated for older persons on the redeveloped site.

R36 That the Department of Human Services and the Melbourne City Council develop strategies to enable older residents to age in place on site, including consideration of some hostel type accommodation and high level care beds in a residential facility.

R37 That the CLC and the Melbourne City Council support additional childcare places in Kensington to cater for increased demand, including from returning tenants and other residents of the redevelopment site.

R38 That KMC and the Melbourne City Council continue to share information on a regular basis about the number of children and young people expected to move into public and private units on the site in order to provide local schools, services and agencies with up to date information about the projected number of children and young people in the area.

Chapter 9: Community building

R39 That the CLC and KMC, in consultation with others, specify in more detail what is meant by 'sustainable community' so that, as the redevelopment proceeds, progress in achieving this can be monitored and corrective action taken if necessary, and a full evaluation can be made at the end of the project to assess whether this has been achieved.

R40 That the Office of Housing, in consultation with KMC, considers the introduction of a local allocations policy for the site to ensure a mix of households eligible for public housing.

R41 That the CLC asks the joint venture partners, Becton and the Office of Housing, to investigate options to increase the mix of households on the site, such as a component of social housing targeted at households in segment four of the public housing wait list.

R42 That the Office of Housing and KMC monitor the size and type of households moving into both public and private housing on the site and provide this information

to the CLC to enable an overview of the mix of households and any implications flowing from this.

R43 That the Office of Housing and KMC acknowledge the contribution of, and continue to work with, different types of communities in community building.

R44 That KMC continues to engage the assistance of local services and businesses in welcoming and settlement of residents returning to, and moving onto, the site, with a particular focus on their age and likely needs and contributions.

R45 That KMC continues to work with the KPTA and other interested parties to develop meaningful ways in which residents can be involved in site management in the longer term.

R46 That KMC continues to work with relevant people and organisations to specify the objectives of longer-term strategies for community building, ways of implementing these, and indicators by which progress can be measured.

C.3. Key principles for any future redevelopment projects

Chapter 10, Section 10.1: Implications of the SIS

R47 That, in planning for a redevelopment, priority is given to minimising uncertainty about it proceeding and the timelines for redevelopment.

R48 That redevelopment of large public housing estates proceeds in stages, where practical, to minimise disruption to people, families and communities.

R49 That estates are benchmarked prior to redevelopment to facilitate assessment of the impact of subsequent changes.

R50 That redevelopment of public housing estates is planned within the context of changes occurring in the surrounding area.

R51 That consultations take place with those who will be affected by the redevelopment, in ways that are relevant and appropriate.

R52 That information is provided at a variety of levels, in a number of ways and from the start of a redevelopment to those who will be affected.

R53 That social planning, involving the relevant local council(s), is conducted in parallel with physical planning for a redevelopment.

R54 That opportunities are provided for people living in buildings undergoing major refurbishment to move out if they wish during the building works.

R55 That the Office of Housing develops, maintains and makes publicly available comprehensive information on changes to public housing stock, including the number and type of dwellings, as a result of a redevelopment and for other reasons: on the site, in the suburb surrounding the estate, in the region (to be clearly defined) and on public housing stock overall.

C.4 Recommendations on the SIS and future social research about the Kensington project

Chapter 10, Section 10.2: Future directions for social research about the Kensington project

R56 That the SIS Report is made publicly available to interested parties, including posting on the websites of the Office of Housing, the CLC and KMC.

R57 That a brief summary of the SIS, based on the Executive Summary, is made available to all research participants, indicating the availability of the full Report if requested.

R58 That further social research is undertaken to address the types of questions outlined in Section 10.2.2, as people start to move (back) onto the site.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 The Social Impact Study

This is the Report of a Social Impact Study (SIS) on the early stages of the redevelopment of the Kensington public housing estate in inner Melbourne. Sometimes known as the Holland Park estate, this is an area bounded by Kensington Road, Altona Street, Ormond Street and Derby Street in the suburb of Kensington, about four kilometres to the north-west of the Melbourne Central Business District.

The SIS was commissioned and funded by the Victorian Department of Human Services. The purpose was 'to monitor, document and assess the social impact of the redevelopment of the Kensington Public Housing Estate'. The Institute for Social Research (ISR) at Swinburne University of Technology was engaged to undertake this research after an open tender process. The ISR has had many years of experience in undertaking research and teaching in housing and urban development.

1.2 Objectives

The specific objectives of the SIS were to:

- Identify the impact of the redevelopment process on the people and communities involved;
- Develop strategies and measures to manage or change any adverse social effects of the redevelopment;
- Contribute to community building required for a successful redevelopment.

These objectives meant working across all three levels of social impact analysis: *retrospective* in terms of identification of social impacts that had already occurred; *concurrent* in contributing to addressing any adverse social impacts; and *prospective* in contributing to community building for the future.

1.3 Background to the SIS

Redevelopment of the Kensington public housing estate began in 1998 and is expected to be complete in 2008. To date, this has occurred under two Victorian state governments and comprises four separate stages:

- *Stage one*
Relocation of all tenants from 108 flats in the high rise tower at 72 Derby Street (1998), demolition of the building (1999), preparation of an estate redevelopment strategy (1999);
- *Stage two*
Confirmation of redevelopment strategy (2000), relocation of all tenants from 378 walk-up flats (2000-02), demolition of all walk-up¹ blocks (2000-03);
- *Stage three*
Refurbishment of two remaining high rise towers at 94 Ormond Street (2001-04) and 56 Derby Street (2002-present);
- *Stage four*
Construction (2003-08) of public and private housing on the site, and occupation of the new units (2004-08).

¹ Walk-up flats are apartment buildings with stairs rather than lifts.

In 2001, an evaluation was carried out of the relocation of tenants in 1998 prior to the demolition of 72 Derby Street stage one (Project Partnerships 2001). This centred on the process itself, rather than the impact on remaining tenants or surrounding residents. The evaluation informed the current SIS, the emphasis of which was primarily on the social impacts of stage two (the relocation of tenants from the walk-ups and demolition of buildings) and planning for stage four (resettlement of tenants, occupation of the new units and community building). The post-relocation evaluation and the SIS were envisaged as part of a series of related social research studies on the Kensington estate redevelopment (DHS 2002: Section 4.4).

Tenders for the SIS closed in February 2002 but the ISR was not engaged to carry it out until February 2003, with research commencing in April 2003. By this time, all tenants from the walk-up flats had been relocated, the blocks demolished and the site cleared. This meant that a survey of tenants in the walk-up flats, as proposed in the original brief, was not possible. Although site works and some building works commenced during the 12 months of the SIS, none were completed and occupied by the end of the study. For these reasons, changes were negotiated to the scope and methodology to place more emphasis on the retrospective and prospective elements of the SIS. In terms of methodology, this meant greater emphasis on individual interviews with relocated tenants and those who remained on the site, rather than working with focus and other groups,² as originally planned.

Whilst the redevelopment can be divided into separate stages for government and project management purposes, this is not necessarily how those affected have experienced it. The SIS also reports, to some extent, on the social impact of the refurbishment of the two high rise towers (stage three) which was of primary concern for public tenants remaining on site, and, where relevant, on the cumulative effect to date of the redevelopment.

The SIS concerns the social impacts of the redevelopment; that is, the impacts on people, families and the Kensington community. It did not set out to evaluate the financial, physical, environmental, management and other aspects, although some of these issues were touched upon by some of the people interviewed for this study.

1.4 Methodology

An important feature of the SIS was the requirement that the researchers work with public tenants and local residents and employ an action research methodology rather than an 'arms length' approach:

*The purpose of including an action research methodology is to ensure a **collaborative process of inquiry** that empowers the affected communities to participate in the changes to the Estate that lead to an improved social and community environment (DHS 2002: 3.3 (authors' emphasis)).*

An action research methodology differs from conventional research in which 'independent experts' examine an issue and make their recommendations at the conclusion of the study. It entails a process of collaborative inquiry involving the ISR researchers, those who commissioned the research (Department of Human Services and Community Liaison Committee), those whose views are key to the research (remaining public tenants, relocated tenants, surrounding residents, local

² The original tender brief envisaged that both relocations and some resettlements would occur during the course of the research. In practice, only about 150 households were on the site during the year of the research living in the remaining high rise towers.

organisations, services and agencies, and local traders) and others who might benefit from the research (for example, local councils and other government departments).

Use of action research signals an intention not just to report upon social impacts but to facilitate improvements. This involves working with participants to address any negative impacts that have occurred to date, as well as learning from positive impacts, and to anticipate likely future impacts so that these can be planned for or changes made, as necessary. In an action research process like this, researchers facilitate *reflection* by participants on the current situation, assist in the formulation of key *questions*, *inquire* through research to find the answers to these questions, *analyse* findings from the inquiry stage, and *feed back* findings to participants enabling further reflection, and so on through a cycle of improvement (Wadsworth 1997). The inquiry fieldwork phase may draw on conventional research techniques such as surveys, as well as more ethnographic methods such as observation and informal discussions.

The action research approach means that the research team fed back a great deal of requested information to participants during the year of the SIS. This involved both bringing together existing information to form a bigger picture and the production of new information and findings. Action research is built on the power of shared information, and participants have had an opportunity to assess a great deal of the information generated by the SIS, to raise further questions, to consider changes and to begin to act on them.

The Report summarises the various detailed elements of this methodology and highlights some of the key issues raised. It also provides an account of the social impacts of the redevelopment to date, which pieces together different perspectives and sources of information. At times a single and consistent account was not possible, and the Report highlights where this is the case. In simple terms, the process has been one of putting together pieces of a jigsaw puzzle but acknowledging that, although a valuable picture may emerge, there may always be extra or missing pieces.

1.5 Management of the SIS

The Kensington Redevelopment Community Liaison Committee (CLC), chaired by Glenyys Romanes MLC, provided general oversight of the SIS as well as being a primary forum for consideration of information which it generated. The CLC comprises representatives of the major stakeholders in the redevelopment.

A sub-committee of the CLC, chaired by Pravin Ram, Kensington Project Manager, Department of Human Services, formed the specific steering group for the SIS. It included representatives from the Kensington Public Tenants Association, Kensington Residents Association, Kensington Management Company and Tenants Union of Victoria.

The SIS team leader was Kath Hulse. Team members were Tania Herbert, Karyn Down (who was based on the estate), Yoland Wadsworth, Liss Ralston and Jenny Walker (who was also based on the estate).

The SIS began in April 2003 and concluded in June 2004.

Chapter 2

Research Methodology

The SIS methodology was based on an action research approach involving cycles of reflection, questioning, inquiry, analysis and feedback to participants, as discussed in Chapter 1. This chapter outlines the specific research techniques used within the methodology for the inquiry stage, as well as the key action research processes employed. Further details are available in Appendix 1.

2.1 Specific research methods

A variety of research methods in the inquiry phase were employed to meet the objectives of the SIS, after discussion with the CLC sub-committee.

2.1.1 Review of previous reports, surveys and literature

The SIS team interviewed staff of the Office of Housing and Department of Human Services and reviewed a number of previous reports. The purpose was to understand the background to the redevelopment, to clarify what was already known and not known about the project in order to avoid duplication, and to pull together key themes, issues and questions for further exploration. Reports reviewed included:

- Kensington Estate Redevelopment Strategy Final Report (Kensington Estate Redevelopment Advisory Committee 1999);
- Six issues papers prepared for the Redevelopment Strategy (Perrott Lyon Mathieson Pty Ltd 1999a-f);
- Post-relocation evaluation of the tenants moved from 72 Derby Street (Project Partnerships 2001);
- Reports on client satisfaction surveys (stages 1-4) of tenants relocated from walk-up flats on the estate (Office of Housing 2001-03).

The team also reviewed Australian and overseas literature on public housing redevelopment. Details of all reports, surveys and literature are included in the Bibliography.

2.1.2 Audit of existing services and community agencies

An audit of key agencies and service providers in Kensington was conducted between May and August 2003. This involved 42 interviews with schools; services for families and children, young people and older people; legal, health and welfare organisations; churches; residents' groups; and staff of local and state government agencies, including Victoria Police.

The interviews were face-to-face and semi-structured and covered the following: perceptions of the estate and the community prior to the redevelopment; impacts of the redevelopment to date on their organisations; and expectations and issues about the future of the redevelopment project. The interviews were also used to collect information and data about the redevelopment process and the identified needs of current and future residents.

2.1.3 Interviews with local businesses and traders

Interviews were conducted with business operators and traders in Macaulay Road and Bellair Street between July and September 2003. These were also face-to-face and semi-structured, covering similar topics to the interviews with agencies and service providers. The 38 completed interviews provided a good insight into the impacts of the redevelopment on local businesses and traders, and their views on the estate and its redevelopment.

2.1.4 Interviews with relocated tenants

After consultation with the CLC sub-committee, the SIS team decided to conduct detailed face-to-face interviews with a sample of tenants relocated from the walk-up flats.

Due to recently introduced privacy legislation,¹ the team could not have access to the Office of Housing database giving details of relocated tenants nor could it contact them directly. Instead, the team provided sufficient written information about the research, translated into four main community languages (Chinese (traditional), Somali, Sudanese Arabic and Vietnamese), to enable relocated tenants to give their informed consent to be contacted by a team member to arrange an interview. The Office of Housing sent this information to relocated tenants with its own covering letter.

As is common in other research after the introduction of privacy legislation, the necessity to approach relocated tenants in this indirect way resulted in a much lower response rate than originally anticipated. There are other possible factors as well, including tenants feeling 'researched out' as they had also been invited to participate in previous surveys.²

Concerted attempts were subsequently made to improve the response rate:

- Through contact with local groups and networks, such as the Elderly Indo-Chinese and Vietnamese Group;
- By inclusion of a flyer in the Kensington Public Tenants' Association newsletter inviting relocated tenants to contact the SIS team if they wished to participate and enclosing a permission slip and return envelope;
- By two multi-lingual interviewers using informal networks within communities from the Horn of Africa.³

Interviewers, including those proficient in community languages (Cantonese, Somali, Sudanese Arabic, Tigre, Tigrinya and Vietnamese), were recruited and trained, with interviews taking place between July 2003 and February 2004. Interviewers used a questionnaire that included both pre-coded and open questions. The questions were

¹ As the evaluation of the relocation of tenants from the high rise tower at 72 Derby Street occurred prior to the new privacy legislation, researchers were able to access the Office of Housing tenancy database to obtain contact details and ring relocated tenants directly to explain the research (Project Partnerships 2001: 17-18). Even with this approach, only 39 interviews were completed, far fewer than the 70 to 80 originally envisaged.

² For example, 150 residents on the estate were interviewed in the late 1990s for the preparation of the 1999 Kensington Estate Redevelopment Strategy (Perrott Lyon Mathieson Pty Ltd 1999c) and the Office of Housing had contacted tenants relocated from the walk-up flats for customer satisfaction surveys, soon after relocation (Office of Housing 2001-03).

³ The Horn of Africa refers to the countries of Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan.

designed to obtain tenants' views on the relocation process, perceptions of the 'old' Kensington estate, their integration into their new community, attitudes to the 'new' Kensington development, and their interest in returning.

There were 47 completed interviews (57 per cent in languages other than English). Despite a disappointing response rate (14 per cent), they did reflect quite well the profile of relocated tenants in terms of age, gender, length of residence on the estate and cultural background, as indicated in Appendix 1. In particular, interviews were completed with tenants from Horn of Africa communities, who had a significant presence in the walk-up flats⁴ but had not previously responded to a client satisfaction survey by the Office of Housing immediately after the relocations. The interviews also generated good qualitative information.

As a result of the difficulties with contacting relocated tenants, the time that had elapsed since relocation, and the fact that many tenants did not wish to participate in this type of research for a variety of reasons, it was decided not to hold any focus groups. The SIS team notes that the evaluation of the relocation of tenants from 72 Derby Street also reached this conclusion (Project Partnerships 2001: 19).

2.1.5 Interviews with current tenants

Interviews were conducted with current tenants living in the two high rise towers on the estate between November 2003 and February 2004. Interviewers doorknocked 153 flats recorded as being occupied, inviting residents to participate in interviews, telling them about the survey, and leaving written information in either English or one of four community languages (Chinese (traditional), Somali, Sudanese Arabic and Vietnamese). Interviewers were based in a flat at 56 Derby Street supplied by the Office of Housing during the period of the interviews.

This was a positive process and many residents wanted to talk about the redevelopment. Interviews were completed with 61 tenants, a satisfactory response rate of 40 per cent.⁵ Many lived in the 12 storey tower at 94 Ormond Street designated as accommodation for older persons, as there were quite a number of vacant flats at 56 Derby Street (family accommodation) due to reconfiguration of some of the accommodation. For 40 per cent of the sample, interviews were conducted in several community languages (Arabic (Egyptian, Lebanese and Sudanese), Oromo, Somali, Tigre, Tigrinya, Turkish and Vietnamese). The profile of those interviewed provided a good representation in terms of age, gender, length of residence on the estate and cultural background.

2.1.6 Survey of residents in streets surrounding the estate

It was important to obtain the views of as many surrounding residents as possible about the redevelopment and whether, and to what extent, this had affected them and their families. Approximately 450 copies of a brief questionnaire (14 questions) were dropped off in letterboxes. 97 completed questionnaires were returned by mail, giving a response rate of 22 per cent which is considered satisfactory for this type of survey. Many contained very detailed responses and provided a valuable contribution to the SIS.

⁴ 15 per cent of relocated tenants spoke either Somali or Tigrinya, with a few speaking other languages used in the Horn of Africa, such as Amharic or Oromo (see Table 5.5).

⁵ Interviewers were told by other residents when doorknocking that a few of the flats recorded as being tenanted were unoccupied, so the effective response rate may have been higher.

2.1.7 Secondary data analysis

Detailed analysis was carried out of Census data from 1986, 1991, 1996 and 2001 at collection district level to chart changes in the defined 'estate' area in comparison with the rest of Kensington. The purpose was to look at how the redevelopment has affected, and is likely to affect, the social composition of the area, in the context of changes occurring more generally in the Kensington community. Further detail about use of Census data is provided in Appendix 2.

Secondary data was also used to make projections about the likely profile of people living on the site at the end of the redevelopment. This involved two sets of estimates.

Firstly, in terms of public housing, the SIS team compiled the details of anticipated stock numbers and configuration, analysed the profile of relocated and current tenants, considered the likely effects of the special allocation policy for the redevelopment and current allocation practices of the Office of Housing, and reviewed other Office of Housing administrative data on the profile of households occupying similar housing.

Secondly, in terms of the private housing component, it was originally intended to use a very short mail-out survey of purchasers to develop a profile of incoming residents and to facilitate community building. Interviews with the private developer (Becton) and the Kensington Management Company indicated that many of the purchasers in the first stages of construction are investors who do not intend to live in the units. It was important to examine the likely profile of private tenants, thus the survey of purchasers was replaced with a detailed analysis of households moving into apartments in similar density, inner city areas using collection district data from the 2001 Census. Areas selected included parts of Port Melbourne, Southbank and St Kilda.

2.2 Action research processes

The emphasis on 'collaborative process of enquiry' has been maintained throughout the research by a variety of means. The research design has been iterative such that, for example, the views of local agencies and service providers informed what questions were asked in the interviews with current tenants, and issues raised by the CLC about communication were incorporated into the survey of surrounding residents. Some further examples of the action research processes employed are outlined below.

2.2.1 Feedback of responses for checking, review and further reflection

The SIS team fed back responses and research findings to participants, which enabled them not only to check their own responses but to review the responses of others to gain a bigger picture of the past and likely future impacts of the redevelopment. For example, after the community audit, the team provided notes of the interviews back to those who had given the information for checking, as well as information on the responses of other agencies and the issues that appeared to arise from this. Feeding back information in this way led to a further round of interviews and provided the springboard for further reflection, leading in some cases to agencies reviewing their own practices and service planning and in others to requests for more information from the team.

2.2.2 Regular feedback of information on findings of the SIS to participants

The SIS team provided regular briefing papers to the full CLC and the sub-committee on preliminary findings, such as:

- Interviews with Kensington Businesses: Report on Progress to Date (August 2003)
- Interviews with Relocated Tenants: Preliminary Findings (November 2003);
- Survey of Local Kensington Residents: Summary of Preliminary Findings (December 2003).

Team members also gave presentations on the SIS and its draft findings in a number of forums, including the Kensington Agencies Network, the Kensington Neighbourhood House and the Kensington Residents Association, and to senior officers of the Office of Housing.

2.2.3 Identification of issues coming out of the research for further reflection and, where applicable, change in practice

In addition to the briefing papers and presentations on research findings outlined above, the SIS team also prepared a number of working papers on specific issues for consideration by the CLC, including:

- Issues of Significance Arising from Community Agency and Business/Trader Interviews (September 2003);
- Older Persons and Service Delivery (November 2003);
- Children and Family Services in Kensington (December 2003);
- The Impact of the Redevelopment on the Future Profile of People Living on the Kensington Site (February 2004); and
- Should Tenants Be Relocated Prior to Major Redevelopment and/or Refurbishment Works? (March 2004).

This feedback gave the CLC new information, a bigger picture or sometimes a different perspective on existing information, which enabled reflection, further questioning and, in some cases, the development of strategies to address issues raised. For example, in response to feedback about the projected increase in older people on the redevelopment site, the CLC was proactive in arranging a briefing of local Primary Care Partnerships on the changing population mix as a consequence of the redevelopment.

2.2.4 Engagement of local people as interviewers

Consistent with good practice in action research and principles of community building, the SIS team sought to identify, train and employ current and relocated tenants as interviewers. Recruitment proved difficult as potential interviewers were concerned that any money they earned would disappear in increased rent and decreased Centrelink payments. The team requested that temporary income from interviewing be exempted from rent calculation, but the Office of Housing rejected this. The team was able to recruit two relocated tenants, three tenants living in other public housing in the inner city (one elsewhere in Kensington), two local residents, and two people who lived elsewhere but had very strong connections to Kensington.

Whilst the inability to recruit current Kensington public housing tenants was disappointing, and restrained hopes for community building, the interviewers who did

participate were community minded people who would like to continue to have an involvement with the redevelopment project. A pool of people like this who have an active interest in, and knowledge of, the issues around the redevelopment will be critical to building or further strengthening local community capacity.

2.2.5 Action research groups

The SIS identified a number of people, for example, from individual interviews, who said that they would like to continue to be involved in some way. Two meetings (one afternoon and one evening) were arranged in late January and early February 2004 for interested people to come together to comment and provide feedback on the information and data coming out of the SIS and to make recommendations on what community building strategies or processes would be needed for the future, including welcoming people back to the area. Attendance at the meetings was disappointing and can be attributed in part to the timing of the SIS which occurred well after the relocations but before the new housing was finished and people would return to the site. The meetings did, however, provide a forum to discuss issues such as the changing nature of the local community as other new housing areas were developed (for example, Kensington Banks) and the impact of the 'new' Kensington on local shops, schools and services.

2.2.6 Coordination with Melbourne City Council community consultations

At the same time as the SIS, the City of Melbourne began to develop an action plan for Kensington over the next five years. Two community workshops were held in early February 2004 as part of this process, one of which was attended by an SIS team member. The SIS team and the Melbourne City Council officer responsible for developing the action plan shared information about the two studies, which have different objectives but some common areas of interest.

2.3 The Report

The purpose of this Report is to summarise the findings of the SIS, to discuss their implications both for the Kensington redevelopment and any future redevelopment projects, and to suggest how the findings can contribute to community building as redevelopment proceeds. Where appropriate, the Report also indicates strategies that have been adopted, particularly by the CLC, to address current and projected social impacts of the redevelopment.

The findings of the interviews are reported in three ways:

- Direct quotes are given throughout the report to enable the voices of many of the people interviewed to be heard directly (without breach of confidentiality);
- Themes and issues, which emerged from analysis of open questions,⁶ are presented either in a textual discussion or in tables. Households may have made no, one or more comments, and responses do not sum to 100 per cent;
- There is quantitative analysis of answers given by all interviewees in response to questions in which interviewees generally had to give one answer from a number of possibilities. In most cases, unless multiple responses were allowed for, the responses sum to 100 per cent.

⁶ Open questions are those for which interviewers wrote down verbatim what people said. These responses were analysed for key themes and issues discussed in this Report.

2.4 Recommendations

The experiences of conducting this research suggest the following recommendations about methodology.

R01 That an action research methodology is adopted in future social impact studies of redevelopment projects, where there is an emphasis on sharing of information and findings to facilitate improvements during the course of the redevelopment.

R02 That a social impact study commence prior to relocation of tenants so that comprehensive baseline data can be collected on the profile of estate residents and their views on the estate and the local community.

R03 That prior to relocation, tenants are asked to consent to being contacted directly by independent researchers, with an invitation to participate in social research about the project.

R04 That future social impact studies on major redevelopment projects employ suitable tenants and other local residents to undertake aspects of the research as a means of drawing on, and further building, community capacity.

R05 That the Office of Housing extends the income exemption provision for tenants who are temporarily engaged to work on social impact research on a designated redevelopment project in the same way as for designated 'neighbourhood renewal' projects.

Chapter 3

A Brief History of the Kensington Public Housing Estate and the Redevelopment Project

This chapter gives a brief history of the Kensington public housing estate and the redevelopment project. This historical context is critical to understanding the subsequent social impacts of the redevelopment. The account is based on a review of relevant documents, interviews with longer-term Kensington residents, community agency workers and local traders, and Office of Housing administrative data.

3.1 The public housing estate and Kensington: historical context

The public housing estate and its residents have been an important part of Kensington for more than four decades. This section briefly outlines its history and the ways in which the estate and its residents helped shape the Kensington community. It also indicates other social and economic factors, not connected to the estate, which contributed to changes in the suburb.

3.1.1 A working-class industrial suburb

Prior to the construction of the public housing estate, Kensington was an industrial suburb with industries located on the low-lying areas near the Maribyrnong River including cattle saleyards, abattoirs, and glue and other factories (National Centre for Australian Studies 2003):

Many people from outside called the whole suburb a slum because it had the abattoirs, a glue factory, a skin factory etc. There were fumes, it smelt, and you had to close your doors and windows when the wind blew from the direction of Footscray (long-term Kensington resident).

Kensington was also a residential suburb, home to many people who worked in the local yards, factories and stores. Long-term residents commented on the depressed house prices due to the noxious industries and the small size of many houses relative to the size of families who lived in them:

I was born in Wolseley Street in 1917 and was the second youngest of eight children. My father worked in the Treasury building but Kensington had a lot of labourers then because there was the flour mills, the cattle yards, the skin stores, the wool stores. Lots of engineering places came later too, along Macaulay Road. Back then most people lived and worked in Kensington, especially the slaughtermen (long-term Kensington resident).

To service this population, there were a variety of shops and businesses in Macaulay Road and in adjacent streets:

We had a shoe shop – selling shoes. And we had several shoe repairer shops. We had two chemists and a Chinese launderer in Gower Street because men wore starched collars. We had a couple of cake shops. And an undertakers, whose stables were up in Gower Street. Then, before the 1940s there was Cobb's Cosy Corner Library. That became the ANZ Bank (long-term Kensington resident).

As in many other Melbourne suburbs, migrant families moved into Kensington in the postwar period (1940s to 1960s), particularly those from southern Europe. The men worked in local industries or set up businesses:

Before the Italians, Kensington was all white Australians. Oh, it was very white. It was only in the 50s that the Italians came to Kensington. The local baker sponsored a lot of Italians here and rented out properties to them. They'd come out just with their suitcases and nothing else. That was the biggest change, when the Italians came (long-term Kensington resident).

Kensington was full of Europeans: Italians, Maltese, Greeks – more so than the Anglos – and a lot of the shopkeepers were Italian. There used to be soldiers come from the army depot who, by regulation, had to have their hair cut short, so that was good for business (long-term Kensington resident and trader).

Community life centred around the schools and churches, such as the Kensington Primary School in McCracken Street, open since 1881, and the pubs such as Hardiman's Hotel in Macaulay Road (National Centre for Australian Studies 2003; Hoatson et al. 1996: 11):

Hardiman's Hotel was a landmark. The ones from the cattle yards used to go to the Doutta Galla Hotel; they called it the 'blood house' (long-term Kensington resident).

By 1961, when building on the main part of the estate commenced, Kensington was a working-class community of about 5,000 people (Hoatson et al. 1996: 7) which had already accommodated a significant number of migrants from southern Europe. Long-term residents interviewed for the SIS considered that the suburb had had a very strong sense of community over many decades and that this had continued through the changes associated with the arrival of the postwar migrants.

3.1.2 The public housing estate

In the late 1950s and early 1960s the Housing Commission began a program of 'slum clearance' in inner urban areas of Melbourne, including Kensington (Howe 1988). Houses in Altona, Derby and Ormond Streets were compulsorily acquired and then demolished. The edge of the former swamp at the bottom of the scarp (Altona Street) was also prepared for development. The cleared site comprised about six hectares of land bordered by Derby Street, Kensington Road, Altona Street and Ormond Street, together with a small parcel of land on the north-eastern side of Derby Street.

As with other 'slum clearance' projects of the era, there was local opposition to the Housing Commission's assessment that the houses were 'slum housing' and should be demolished:

They were good little houses in those streets. Real good. There was Derby Street and Bayview Terrace and Gloucester Road at the back. But then the land dropped away to nothing. Altona Street wasn't even there. It was all vacant land after that and prickles and the flood plains, down where they played footy.

The houses were mostly in the same condition as the Wolseley Parade places. Their excuse [for pulling them down] was 'We don't want slums'. But they were quite nice houses. Double fronted timber and a couple of two storey places in Derby Street. That was a real folly. And knowing the people who lived there...But that's progress, we were told (long-term Kensington resident).

The first walk-up flats were built in 1957-58 on a small parcel of land north-east of Derby Street. In 1961, work began on 378 walk-up flats on the site bounded by Kensington Road and Altona, Ormond and Derby Streets (Hoatson et al. 1996: 8). The estate was completed when three 12 storey towers with lifts were built between 1969 and 1971 on the scarp at the south-eastern end of the estate. All of the buildings were constructed from concrete. The configuration of the estate when completed in 1971 is set out in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Composition of the completed Kensington public housing estate, 1971

Accommodation type	Units for families	Units for older people	Total units
94 Ormond Street – 12 storey tower (132 x bedsitters & 12 x 1 bedroom flats)		144	144
72 Derby Street – 12 storey tower (72 x 2 bedroom and 36 x 3 bedroom flats)	108		108
56 Derby Street – 12 storey tower (72 x 2 bedroom and 36 x 3 bedroom flats)	108		108
100 Altona Street – 8 storey walk-up (112 x 2 bedroom flats)	112		112
28* x 4 storey walk-ups (224 x 3 bedroom flats)	224		224
2 x 3 storey walk-ups (42 x bedsitter flats)		42	42
<i>Total units on redevelopment site**</i>	<i>552</i>	<i>186</i>	<i>738</i>
9 Derby Street 3 storey walk-up (21 x bedsitter flats)		21	21
10 & 12 Durham Street walk-ups (12 x 2 bedroom flats)	12		12
Total flats on the estate***	564	207	771

* Sometimes referred to as 14 blocks although there were 28 different street addresses.

** The redevelopment site is the area bounded by Kensington Road and Altona, Ormond and Derby Streets.

*** The estate also included three walk-up blocks north-east of Altona Street.

Three-quarters of the units (73 per cent or 564 units) were designated for families, and a quarter (27 per cent or 207 units) for older people. Just under half (47 per cent or 360 units) were in three high rise towers, with a little over a half (53 per cent or 411 units) in walk-up blocks around the site, including three blocks on the north-east side of Derby Street.

The estate comprised almost entirely three unit sizes: bedsitters (25 per cent or 195 units), two bedroom family units (35 per cent or 268 units) and three bedroom family units (38 per cent or 296 units). There was a very small number of one bedroom units (2 per cent or 12 units) designated for older people, and no four bedroom or larger units.

The building of the estate brought about significant changes to the demographic and social profile of Kensington. It increased the suburb's population by about 3,000 people, such that the population was more than 8,000 by the time of the 1971 Census (Grace and Hoatson: 6). People living on the estate comprised more than a third (36 per cent) of Kensington residents. In particular, since this was predominantly a family estate, a high percentage of the suburb's children lived there. It is estimated that up to half of the tenants came from non-English speaking backgrounds (Bishop 2000), which brought additional cultural diversity to Kensington. The profile of estate residents posed great challenges initially as local agencies struggled to cope with their needs, particularly those of migrants and other families with children (Hoatson et al. 1996).

3.1.3 A changing estate – a changing suburb

The population of the estate declined over time from a high of around 3,000 in 1971. There were a number of reasons for this, including ageing of residents, children leaving home, families having fewer children, and smaller household sizes due to an increase in sole parent families and more non-elderly single people with mental health or other issues.

The population became increasingly culturally diverse, reflecting changes in the size and type of migration flows, government policies on refugees and the housing allocation policies of the Housing Commission and its successors. After the southern Europeans came people from Vietnam and South America from the late 1970s, from the former Yugoslavia and Turkey in the early 1980s, from China in the late 1980s, and from Horn of Africa countries such as Somalia and Eritrea in the 1990s.

The rest of the suburb surrounding the estate also changed. In the mid-1980s, the saleyards and abattoirs closed and planning began for the redevelopment of that land, thus reducing traditional labouring jobs. This deindustrialisation not only affected employment opportunities but also brought changes to housing provision. The site of the saleyards, now known as Lynch's Bridge, was redeveloped to produce a mixture of private housing, public housing, two housing co-operatives and a hostel for elderly persons. In 1995, development began on the site of the abattoirs, renamed Kensington Banks.

From the late 1970s, more affluent households had begun buying and renovating houses in the established areas of Kensington as part of the 'gentrification' of the suburb. The population declined from 1971, reflecting smaller household sizes and demographic factors. By the mid-1990s, it had begun to increase again, albeit slowly, reflecting the occupation of new housing in redeveloped areas such as Lynch's Bridge.

The changing population, together with broader economic factors, resulted in changes to the local shopping centre. Three of the major banks moved out, leaving the post office as a Commonwealth Bank agent and the Macaulay Credit Co-op. Several businesses closed, including a pharmacy, the last surviving butcher, a milkbar-cum-takeaway in Ormond Street, the bookshop, a hardware store, a second-hand clothing shop and the chicken shop. As recently as five years or six years ago, the suburb had only one café.

Josie's café was an institution. Now it's gone. All the Kensington locals went there and it was a community hub (local service provider).

A number of community organisations had been established in Kensington, many focused on the needs of families and children, including migrant families, living on the estate. Some public housing tenants took part in the development and management of these services. For example, an active tenants' group developed from the 1960s that became the Kensington Public Tenants' Association (KPTA), and women from the estate began the Kensington Women's Group (1975) that founded the Kensington Neighbourhood House in McCracken Street and associated childcare service (initially for long day care and subsequently occasional care). Residents from the estate were also involved in the establishment of the Kensington Community Centre (1975) and the Kensington Adventure Playground, 'the Venny' (1982).¹ State and local government services also responded to changes in the area. For example, the Altona Street Infant Welfare Centre developed new ways of responding to the diverse needs of estate residents that were influential in rethinking this type of service provision in Victorian maternal and child welfare services more generally.

Kensington community agencies, characterised by a very local focus, small scale of operation and community management, were facing challenges even before the beginning of redevelopment of the estate. There had been some amalgamations, for example, in community health and childcare, and a move from community management to other models, for example, the Kensington Community Centre. In 1994, local government boundary changes split Kensington between the cities of Melbourne and Moonee Valley. The boundary was Macaulay Road, the suburb's main shopping strip. Many of those interviewed for the SIS who worked for local agencies commented that this negatively affected social planning capabilities as no data was collated for the whole of Kensington.

3.2 Brief history of the redevelopment project

The redevelopment of the Kensington estate had a long gestation period. Politicians and bureaucrats (although not necessarily tenants or local communities) had seen such inner city high rise estates as problematic since the late 1970s. Some of the problems were seen as housing not meeting current standards, inadequacy of common areas and services, unsuitability of high rise for families with children (in the Australian context), and lack of suitable accommodation for some people on the waiting list, such as non-elderly singles (Housing Commission Victoria 1980: 60-1). Various options had been canvassed over the years, including sale of individual flats and whole buildings, and conversion to non-residential uses. For example, the Liberal Party's housing policy for the 1986 state election proposed to sell high rise flats either to sitting tenants or on a commercial basis and to convert some towers for office accommodation (Liberal Party of Victoria 1985).

3.2.1 Upgrade or redevelop?

The preferred strategy of the state Labor government in the 1980s was improvement rather than redevelopment, although the latter was considered (Ministry of Housing 1985). Significant upgrading works were carried out on the Kensington estate, particularly on the high rise towers, including enclosure of open walkways, installation of security doors and security lighting, changes to foyer areas and upgrading of communal laundries (Ministry of Housing 1985: 25). Some work was also carried out on the eight storey walk-up block in Altona Street and later on other walk-up blocks. Some bedsitter units were converted to larger one bedroom units, resulting in a nett

¹ Kensington residents and workers produced a publication detailing the development of community organisations 1975-95, *Celebrating Community Memory* (Hoatson et al. 1996).

reduction of 53 units on the estate by 1998 (prior to the redevelopment), as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Type and size of housing on the Kensington public housing estate, 1971 and March 1998

Unit type/size	Redevelopment site			Walk-ups north-east of Derby Street		
	1971	1998	Change	1971	1998	Change
Bedsitter flats (older people)	174	86	-88	21	0	-21
1 bedroom units (older people)	12	56	44		12	12
2 bedroom family units	256	256	0	12	12	0
3 bedroom family units	296	296	0	0	0	0
Total units	738	694	-44	33	24	-9

3.2.2 A start to redevelopment: the Liberal government

Redevelopment of the Kensington public housing estate had been mooted since the late 1980s, according to some local residents and agency workers. In the early 1990s, the Victorian government received approval for federal funding for redevelopment projects at North Melbourne and Kensington under the federal Labor government's Better Cities Program. Redevelopment proceeded at North Melbourne and a report was prepared by the private architects and planners Perrott Lyon Mathieson on the redevelopment of the Kensington estate, including the walk-up blocks north-east of Derby Street. There was 'extensive community consultation' with residents and a planning permit was obtained to redevelop the walk-up flats (DHS tender 2001: Section 4). A small number of tenants were relocated, but the planned redevelopment did not proceed.

The state Liberal government subsequently considered other options for inner city public housing estates such as Kensington, including sale to private developers.² By the 1996 election, it had pledged to demolish the first of the inner city high rise towers at Kensington (Hoatson and Grace 2002: 430). During the government's second term, the Minister for Housing announced in March 1998 that the high rise tower at 72 Derby Street would be demolished. A few days later, the Minister announced the establishment of the Kensington Estate Redevelopment Advisory Committee, chaired by Robert Doyle MLA, to consider strategies for the redevelopment of the rest of the estate, with the demolition as the catalyst (Office of the Minister for Housing 1998).

The first stage of the redevelopment was carried out under the Liberal government, and involved relocation of all tenants from 72 Derby Street in 1998 and demolition of the building, completed in 1999. Research conducted three years later evaluated the relocation process (Project Partnerships 2001).

² The Liberal government commissioned a report on options for the future of inner Melbourne public housing estates, including sale to private sector developers and identification of sites that would be most attractive for sale (Office of the Premier 2000, cited in Project Partnerships 2001: 10). This report was never made publicly available.

The Kensington Estate Redevelopment Advisory Committee met monthly during 1998-99 to consider strategies for the rest of the estate, although not including the two high rise towers which were to be retained. Perrott Lyon Mathieson were commissioned to develop options leading to a development plan for the estate. The consultants prepared six detailed Issues Papers to assist the Advisory Committee in its deliberations.³

In May 1999, as a result of this work, the Advisory Committee finalised the Kensington Estate Redevelopment Strategy Final Report. This designated the 6.08 hectare site bounded by Kensington Road and Altona, Ormond and Derby Streets for redevelopment (Kensington Estate Redevelopment Advisory Committee 1999: 1), excluding the three walk-up blocks north-east of Derby Street.⁴ To avoid confusion in the rest of the SIS Report,⁵ 'the Kensington estate' or 'the estate' refers only to the redevelopment site unless otherwise specified.

The main features of the 1999 redevelopment strategy were:

- Achievement of the highest possible dwelling yield on site, subject to a number of criteria including urban design and site planning principles;
- Most of the new public housing dwellings on site (81 per cent) to have one or two bedrooms,⁶ with flexibility to accommodate those with disabilities and different types of households;
- Overall density to be higher than the surrounding area;
- Mix of public and private dwellings, with 30 to 40 per cent of new housing to be public housing;
- A yield of about 650 new (additional) dwellings;
- Integration of new public and private units;
- Complementary stock acquisition to maintain public housing numbers in the region (Kensington Estate Redevelopment Advisory Committee 1999).

The recommendation that almost half the newly constructed public housing was to have one bedroom and a further third was to have two bedrooms indicated a change of focus from families with children to other household types. It was based primarily on the composition of the waiting list for public housing in the western region following the introduction of a 'segmented waiting list' in 1997. Priority went to people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness, or people with special needs such as those associated with a disability (Kensington Estate Redevelopment Advisory Committee 1999: 8-10). The segmented waiting list increased the need for accommodation for smaller households, often without children (Office of Housing

³ The Issues Papers were prepared by Perrott Lyon Mathieson in association with Maxine Cooper and Associates: no. 1 *Existing Demographic Profile*, no. 2 *Projected Housing Needs*, no. 3 *Community Networks*, no. 4 *Integration of Public and Private Housing*, no. 5 *Housing Models* and no. 6 *Conditions for Private Sector Joint Venture*.

⁴ One view expressed to the SIS team was that these blocks were not included as they had been upgraded, although some other blocks on the redevelopment site had also been upgraded.

⁵ In the reports reviewed for the SIS there are often discrepancies in the number of units said to be on the estate at different times. For example, the Kensington Estate Redevelopment Strategy Final Report refers to 731 units on the redevelopment site in March 1998 (Kensington Estate Redevelopment Advisory Committee 1999: 1). This appears to include the three walk-up blocks which were not part of the site.

⁶ The Strategy recommended that new public dwellings be one bedroom (48 per cent), two bedroom (33 per cent), three bedroom (17 per cent) and four plus bedrooms (2 per cent) (Kensington Estate Redevelopment Advisory Committee 1999: 45-6).

2001c). In view of the history of the estate, this recommendation foreshadowed a fundamental change to the profile of people living on the redeveloped site.

In August 1999, the Liberal Minister for Housing announced endorsement of the key recommendations of the Final Report, describing this as 'a historic day for public housing in Victoria – the next step in an inner-city estate redevelopment which started with the demolition of the high rise tower' (Office of the Minister for Housing 1999). The commitment was for 650 new units on the site, with about 220 or just over a third to be public housing. The redevelopment of the estate was part of the Liberal party's platform for the 1999 state election.

3.2.3 Implementation of redevelopment: the Labor government

Following a close election in September 1999, a Labor government took office. The new government reviewed the Kensington Estate Redevelopment Strategy and, in August 2000, confirmed that it would proceed.

The Minister for Housing stated that the Melbourne City Council had endorsed the Kensington (Holland Park) development plan following community input and that the next stages would be:

- Relocation of all tenants from the walk-up flats on the site (stage two);
- Major refurbishment of the two remaining high rise towers at 94 Ormond Street and 56 Derby Street (stage three);
- Construction and occupation of new housing comprising a mix of public and private units⁷ (stage four) (Minister for Housing 2000).

The Minister also announced in August 2000 that the Kensington Redevelopment Community Liaison Committee (CLC) chaired by Glenyys Romanes MLC was being established to enable 'ongoing public feedback' (Minister for Housing 2000). The CLC includes representatives from the Office of Housing/Department of Human Services, the Melbourne City Council, the Kensington Public Tenants' Association, the Kensington Residents Association, relocated and current tenants, the Kensington Management Company and local schools and community organisations. It has met monthly since that time and been actively involved in design review, community consultation and negotiation of various issues with the Office of Housing and other stakeholders in the redevelopment.

Stage two

Relocation of tenants from 378 walk-up flats began in September 2000 and was completed in October 2002. The buildings were progressively demolished until the site was cleared by February 2003.

Stage three

The refurbishment of 94 Ormond Street tower commenced in May 2001 and included two new lifts, 12 new one bedroom flats and other changes such as improvements to security. A contract to upgrade the 56 Derby Street tower was awarded in September 2002 to a different company (Minister for Housing 2002). This also involves

⁷ The Minister announced that in addition to 220 units in the high rise towers after refurbishment, there would be 230 newly constructed public units. The total number of units on the site (including the two towers) was said to be 870, implying 420 new private units (Minister for Housing 2000).

installation of two new lifts and substantial upgrading works, as well as conversion of some existing three bedroom flats into 43 one bedroom units.⁸

Stage four

In September 2000, the Office of Housing put out a brief for registration of interest by private developers for a public/private redevelopment of the estate,⁹ seen as a 'test bed for future inner city housing management for the Office of Housing' (DHS 2002: Section 4.1). The Premier announced in December 2001 that the Becton Group had been selected to redevelop the estate with 195 new public units and 421 new private units in addition to 241 existing units in the two towers, a total of 857 units on the site (Office of the Premier 2001).

The Director of Housing and Becton at Kensington Pty Ltd, a Becton subsidiary, subsequently signed a Development Agreement for the project. Part of this Agreement was that arrangements be negotiated for the site in terms of 'place management', facilities management, housing management and a community building strategy, within six months of signing (KMC 2002). An Office of Housing/Becton Kensington Redevelopment Joint Negotiating Team subsequently worked out the detailed arrangements.

The 'place manager' is a not-for-profit company established to manage the site, the Kensington Management Company (KMC). This is legally a fully owned subsidiary of Becton, due to the inability of the Office of Housing to be a shareholder in a jointly owned company. The Board of KMC comprises at least two directors appointed by Becton. Under an agreement between Becton and the Office of Housing, an Advisory Committee sets overall policies, objectives and procedures. This comprises an independent (non-voting) chair, two Becton directors and two Office of Housing representatives, with an observer from the CLC and other observers as appropriate.

KMC has three main roles:

- *Facilities management*: This includes responsibility for the grounds, external fabric of the multi-unit buildings, internal common areas and building services (such as lifts) and security services;
- *Body corporate management*: KMC will be the body corporate manager for each private apartment building, with the responsibilities associated with this role in terms of insurance and internal and external maintenance;
- *Community building*: KMC will work with residents of the site, whether living in public or private units, to develop a cohesive and sustainable community and with other local residents and organisations to enable integration of site residents with the Kensington community more generally (KMC 2002).

The Office of Housing will continue to be responsible for tenancy management of the public housing on site, including allocation and internal maintenance. Its staff will work from the KMC premises to carry out these functions.

⁸ In May 2004, The Minister for Housing announced \$2.2 million of additional works on the two towers, including installation of solar hot water panels and insulation systems to both towers, and new windows and an upgrade to the facade of 94 Ormond Street (Minister for Housing 2004).

⁹ The Office of Housing brief refers to up to 260 public dwellings and up to 455 private dwellings (up to 715 new units) over a four to five year period (Office of Housing 2000: 1).

KMC began operation in February 2003 with an acting chief executive officer, a community development manager and a receptionist/administrative support person. Other staff were subsequently appointed, including a chief executive officer and facilities manager. In October 2003, KMC took over facilities management of the site.¹⁰

Construction of new housing on the site commenced in May 2003, with expected completion in late 2008. A summary of the plans, relocations and building works in each stage of the redevelopment is given in Figure 3.1.

3.3 Summary

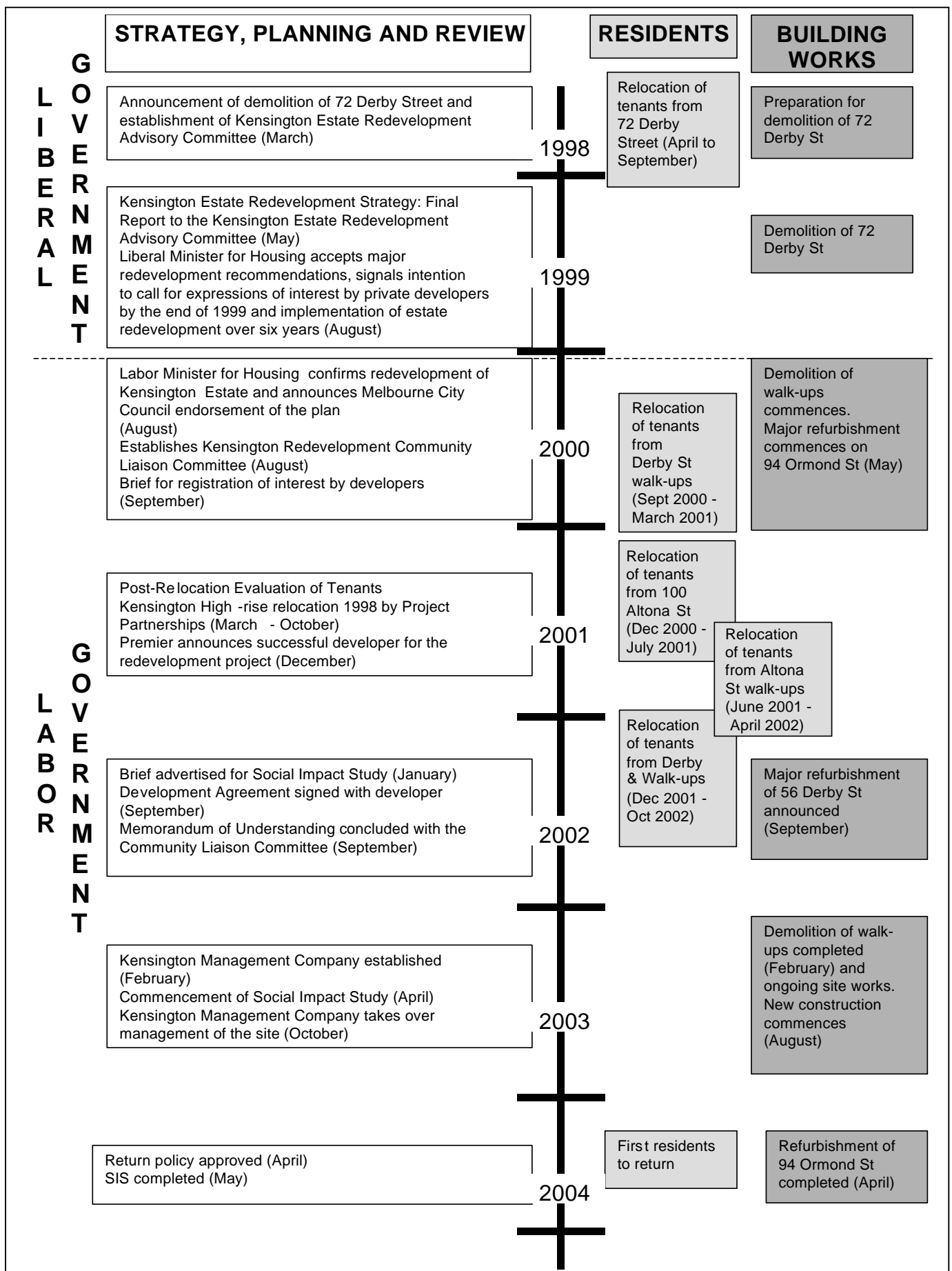
The public housing estate has had a major impact on the suburb of Kensington for over 40 years, adding substantially to its housing stock and population. In particular, it brought many families with children and additional cultural diversity to the suburb. A range of community organisations developed, many with an active contribution by estate residents, to address the needs of migrant and other low income families with children living on the estate. Kensington was also affected by social and economic factors not connected to the public housing estate: decline in local industries, redevelopment of old industrial sites and the saleyards, higher income people moving into established homes and renovating them from the late 1970s, and another wave of higher income people moving into newly built townhouses from the 1990s.

Redevelopment of the Kensington estate had been under active consideration since the late 1980s and has taken place under two governments, with a number of 'stops and starts'. It was about to start in the early 1990s but was then cancelled. In 1998, the state Liberal government decided to demolish one of the towers on the estate; tenants were relocated and the building was demolished. A redevelopment strategy was then prepared and endorsed in 1999 (stage one). In 2000, the new Labor government confirmed that it would proceed with the redevelopment. Subsequently tenants were relocated from 378 walk-up flats and the buildings were demolished (stage two). Work commenced on a major refurbishment of the high rise towers (stage three) and construction has begun on a mixed public/private development on the rest of the site. A new entity, the Kensington Management Company, has the role of place manager for the site (stage four).

An appreciation of the history of the estate and the redevelopment enables a clearer assessment of the social impacts on people, families and communities. The SIS focuses mainly on the social impacts experienced as a result of stage two and the projected impacts of stage four. It also reports more briefly on stage three, since many current tenants have also been affected by the physical refurbishment of their buildings.

¹⁰ Although, at the time of writing (June 2004), the Office of Housing was still responsible for facilities management contracts.

Figure 3.1: Timeline for redevelopment of the Kensington public housing estate



Chapter 4 Benchmarking: The Estate Prior to the Redevelopment

One of the key objectives of the SIS is to 'identify the impact of the redevelopment process on the people and communities involved'. To do this, it is necessary to have a clear picture of the estate and its housing, the people and families who lived there, and the surrounding community prior to the redevelopment, as a benchmark against which to monitor and assess the social impacts. This chapter provides both a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the estate prior to the redevelopment. Firstly, it reports on the number and type of dwellings and the profile of people and households. Secondly, it gives the views of people living on the estate and in the surrounding area about the estate at that time.

4.1 Accommodation and people

This section draws on available quantitative data, Office of Housing administrative data and ABS Census data to provide a benchmark of both the housing and people/households living on the estate prior to the redevelopment. Data from the 1996 Census, at collection district level, enable a detailed profile of the estate and its residents about 18 months prior to stage one. Unfortunately, for the purposes of the SIS, the 2001 Census took place part way through the relocation of tenants from the walk-ups and the data cannot be used to benchmark the estate prior to stage two. Where possible, estimates are given for dwellings, households and population on the estate prior to stage two using Office of Housing administrative data.

4.1.1 Housing on the estate

The demolition of 72 Derby Street in 1999 reduced the number of units on site from 694 to 586, a reduction of 108 units (72 two bedroom units and 36 three bedroom units). Table 4.1 shows the stock numbers and configuration before and after the demolition.

Table 4.1: Number and configuration of units on the redevelopment site, 1998 and 2000

Size/type of accommodation	1998 before demolition of 72 Derby St	2000 after demolition of 72 Derby St	% 2000 after demolition of 72 Derby St
Bedsitters (older people)	86	76*	13%
One bedroom units (older people)	56	61*	10%
Two bedroom units (family)	256	184	32%
Three bedroom units (family)	296	260	45%
Total	694	581	100%
Change in stock*		-113	

Source: Office of Housing administrative data

* These changes result from an ongoing program of conversion of bedsitter units to one bedroom units for older people which was not a part of the redevelopment project.

A third of units (35 per cent or 203 units) were in the two remaining towers, with two-thirds (65 per cent or 378 units) being in walk-up blocks. A quarter (24 per cent or 137 units) were for older people and three-quarters (76 per cent or 444 units) for families, as shown in Table 4.2. This refers to the designation of stock, rather than who lived there. In some cases, due to lack of other accommodation, younger singles occupied units designated for older people, and some older people lived alone or with their partner in family units after their children had left home.

Table 4.2: Summary of stock changes on the redevelopment site, 1998-2000

Stock type	1998 before demolition of 72 Derby Street – no. of units	2000 after demolition of 72 Derby Street – no. of units
Family units	552 (80%)	444 (76%)
Units for older people or younger singles	142 (20%)	137 (24%)
Total units	694 (100%)	581 (100%)
High rise units	316 (46%)	203 (35%)
Walk-up units	378 (54%)	378 (65%)
Total units	694 (100%)	581 (100%)

By 1996, other public housing had been purchased or constructed off the redevelopment site. The redevelopment of the saleyards in Lynch's Bridge in the early 1990s included about one third public housing, and other housing was spot purchased in Kensington, including some units to enable the relocation of tenants from 72 Derby Street.¹

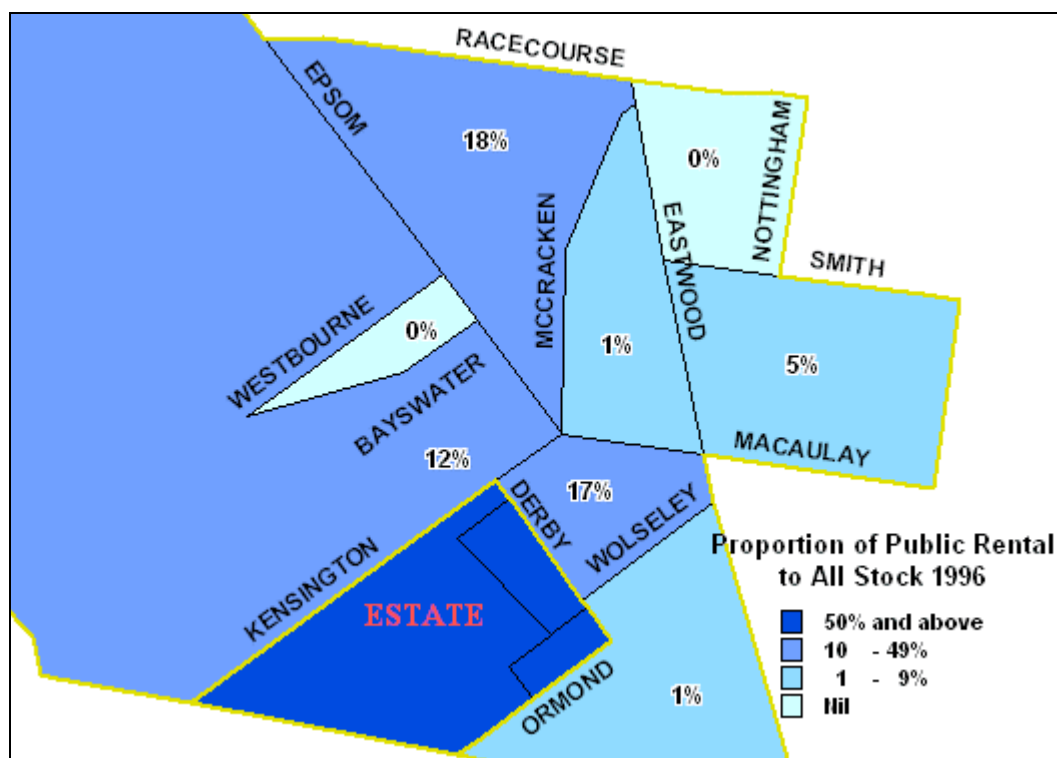
Census data for 1996 indicate that there were at least 150 public housing units in the rest of Kensington, outside of the redevelopment site (ABS 1996).² Map 4.1 shows public housing as a percentage of housing stock in each area of Kensington at the time of the 1996 Census³. The highest percentages can be seen in the area north-east of Derby Street, containing part of the original Kensington estate, and in the area including part of the development at Lynch's Bridge.

¹ To date, the Office of Housing has been unable to locate records of the number of units spot purchased in Kensington for the relocation of tenants from 72 Derby Street.

² This figure is based on self-reporting, i.e. people who state that they rented from a state housing authority. Self-reporting in this way has been found to result in under-reporting of public housing.

³ A collection district is the smallest area for analysis of Census data, each typically containing 220 to 250 households.

Map 4.1: Public housing as a proportion of all occupied private dwellings in Kensington by collection district, 1996



Source: ABS 1996 collection district data

Note: The redevelopment site comprises three collection districts marked 'Estate'

4.1.2 People and households living on the estate

The population of the estate had declined slowly to 1,826 at the time of the 1996 Census. More than a third (655 people) were children and young people. Half (903 people) were adults aged 20 to 54, and 268 were aged 55 and over, as illustrated in Table 4.3. Those aged 55 and over thus exceeded the bedsitter and one bedroom units designated for older people (142 units) at the time. Interviews for the SIS indicated that some younger singles occupied units designated for older people and that some people aged 55 and over lived in family units.

Table 4.3: People living on the redevelopment site in 1996 by age

Age group	Number of estate residents	% of estate residents	Estate residents as % of Kensington residents
Children and young people (0-19)	655	36%	47%
• Pre-schoolers (0-4)	(230)	(13%)	(48%)
• School age children (5-14)	(292)	(16%)	(51%)
• Young people (15-19)	(133)	(7%)	(38%)
Working age adults (20-54)	903	49%	25%
Older people (55 and over)	268	15%	29%
Total	1826	100%	30%

Source: ABS 1996 collection district data

In 1996, estate residents were 30 per cent of the population of Kensington, down from 36 per cent in 1971, but still a very significant proportion. Of particular importance were children and young people living on the estate who comprised almost half of Kensington's 0-19 year old age group. Half the suburb's preschoolers and children aged 5-14 years lived on the estate, as shown in Table 4.3. In contrast, working age adults living on the estate (20-54) constituted about a quarter of Kensington residents in this age group, whilst the estate's older people (aged 55 and over) were under a third of the suburb's older residents.

Two-thirds of the households (430) living on the estate in 1996 were families, predominantly sole parents and couples with children. Almost three in ten (187) were people living alone, as shown in Table 4.4. As there were only 142 units designated for people living alone (bedsitters or one bedroom flats), some lived alone in two or three bedroom units.

Estate households comprised a quarter (640) of Kensington's households in 1996. Family households living on the estate comprised three in ten of all family households in Kensington, and estate families with children constituted more than four in ten of all sole parents and couples with children living in the suburb.

Table 4.4: Households living on the redevelopment site in 1996 by household type

Household type	Number of estate households	% of estate households	Estate households as a % of Kensington households
Family (total)	430	67%	31%
• Couple only	(43)	(7%)	(9%)
• Couple with children	(176)	(28%)	(37%)
• Sole parent with children	(166)	(26%)	(51%)
• Other family	(30)	(5%)	(32%)
• Multiple family	(15)	(2%)	(71%)
Group	23	4%	10%
Lone person	187	29%	23%
All households	640	100%	26%

Source: ABS 1996 collection district data

These figures indicate the importance of families with children living on the estate to local schools and other services for children and young people.

Interviews for the SIS indicated that most primary school age children on the estate attended either the Kensington Primary School or the Holy Rosary Catholic School, both of which are within easy walking distance. Census data indicate that the percentage of primary school age children living on the estate attending a Catholic primary school was higher than for children of this age group living elsewhere in Kensington, as shown in Table 4.5. At a secondary level, older children living on the estate were more likely than other children of this age living elsewhere in Kensington to attend a government school.

Table 4.5: Type of school attended by children living on the estate and children living in the rest of Kensington, 1996

School type	Number of children living on the estate and attending school	% of children living on the estate attending school	Number of children living in rest of Kensington attending school	% of children living in the rest of Kensington attending school
Total Primary	186	54%	183	56%
• Government	(79)	(23%)	(113)	(34%)
• Catholic	(91)	(27%)	(61)	(19%)
• Other	(16)	(5%)	(9)	(3%)
Total Secondary	157	46%	145	44%
• Government	(112)	(33%)	(84)	(26%)
• Catholic	(39)	(11%)	(46)	(14%)
• Other	(6)	(2%)	(15)	(5%)
Total	343	100%	328	100%

Source: ABS 1996 collection district data

People living on the estate had diverse cultural backgrounds. In 1996, more than four in five (81 per cent) spoke a language other than English at home. This was greater than the percentage who had been born overseas (68 per cent), indicating that, in many cases, Australian-born children of migrants or refugees spoke a language other than English at home. Estate residents also were more diverse in religious affiliation than other Kensington residents. A quarter (24 per cent) from non-English speaking backgrounds⁴ nominated Buddhism as their religion in 1996 compared to 3 per cent of other Kensington residents, reflecting the significant Vietnamese community on the estate.

Many households living on the estate had low incomes. In 1996, six in ten estate households had incomes in the lowest quartile for Melbourne households, and three in ten in the second lowest quartile. This was largely due to their labour force status. More than half of estate residents were not in the labour force due to age, disability or caring responsibilities, and almost one in five were unemployed. Just over one in five adults were in paid employment in 1996, compared to more than 60 per cent of adults in the rest of Kensington, as illustrated in Table 4.6. Of those estate residents who were employed, one-third were in part-time work.

Table 4.6: Labour force status of estate residents and residents of the rest of Kensington 1996

Labour force status	% of estate residents	% of residents of rest of Kensington
Employed	22%	61%
Unemployed	18%	7%
Not in labour force	55%	30%
Not stated	4%	2%
Total	100%	100%

Source: ABS 1996 collection district data

Finally, a significant proportion (44 per cent) of estate residents in 1996 had lived at their current address for at least five years. This stability of housing was slightly greater than for other Kensington residents, 40 per cent of whom had been living at the same address five years previously. These figures suggest that many estate residents had had the opportunity to develop social connectedness both within the estate and with Kensington more generally.

In summary, prior to stage one of the redevelopment, estate residents were more likely to live in families with children and young people, much more likely to come from a non-English speaking cultural background, and had lower household incomes than residents of the rest of Kensington, as illustrated in Table 4.7.

⁴ Those born in Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States were counted as English-speaking and were not included in this analysis.

Table 4.7: Summary profile of estate residents and residents of the rest of Kensington before the redevelopment, 1996

People	Estate (%) (n=1,807)	Rest of Kensington (%) (n=4,148)
Children and young people aged 0-19 years	36%	18%
Older people aged 55 and over	15%	16%
Sole parent and two parent households with children	54%	27%
Lone person households	29%	35%
People speaking a language other than English at home	81%	24%
Household incomes in the lowest quartile	61%	27%
Household income in the highest quartile	1%	29%

Source: ABS 1996 collection district data

How did stage one of the redevelopment (1998-99) change the profile of estate residents, as outlined above?

Table 4.8 provides estimates of the estate population and its composition at the end of stage one, using Office of Housing administrative data on tenants who were relocated from 72 Derby Street during 1998. These suggest that there were a maximum of 1,545 people and 543 households living on the estate after stage one.

The relocation of tenants from 72 Derby Street reduced cultural diversity on the site as relocated tenants had been born in 22 different countries, including almost a third who were born in Vietnam. 40 per cent spoke Vietnamese and a further 16 per cent Somali, with the others speaking a variety of languages (Project Partnerships 2001: 15-16). The tenants relocated in stage one do not have a 'right of return' to the site once the redevelopment has occurred, in line with the policy of the government of the day.

It is likely that the number of people/households on the estate decreased between the end of the relocation of tenants from 72 Derby Street in September 1998 and announcement of stage two in August 2000, due to continuing demographic change, the number of single people housed from the top segments of the waiting list, and people leaving the estate of their own accord. Interviews conducted for the SIS suggest that some households left during this period due to uncertainty about the redevelopment and concerns about drugs, crime and safety, and that some flats were not re-tenanted. It is likely that the numbers on the estate immediately prior to the implementation of stage two were less than shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Estimates of people and households living on the redevelopment site after the relocation of tenants from 72 Derby Street in 1998

People/households	August 1996 (Census data)	Change due to 1998 tenant relocations from 72 Derby St (administrative data)	1999 after tenant relocations from 72 Derby St (estimate)
Children and young people (0-19)	655	-112	543
Working age adults (20-54)	903	-126	777
Older people (55 and over)	268	-43	225
Total population	1826	-281	1,545
Couple only	43	-9	34
Couple with children	176	-29	147
Sole parent with children	166	-25	141
Other family (including multiple)	45	-1	44
Group	23	-17	6
Lone person	187	-21	166
Total households	640*	-102**	538

Sources: ABS 1996 collection district data and Office of Housing administrative data (unpublished) reported in Project Partnerships (2001: 15-16)

* Refers to the number of households at the time of the 1996 Census (640) rather than the number of units (696).

** Also refers to households not units. Six of the 108 units in 72 Derby Street were vacant at the time of the relocation of tenants.

4.2 Views of estate residents and other Kensington residents on the estate prior to the demolition of the walk-ups

Many Kensington residents, both those who lived on the estate and surrounding residents, saw the buildings as old and in poor condition. However, views of the estate and the role it played in the Kensington community before the demolition of the walk-ups were much more complex than simply the physical appearance, with many people interviewed for the SIS articulating aspects which they had liked and disliked. This section reports on the views of three groups: estate residents who were relocated from the walk-ups in stage two ('relocated tenants'), residents who have remained on site in the remaining high rise towers during stage two ('current tenants') and residents of the surrounding area ('local residents').

Both relocated tenants and current tenants were asked in face-to-face interviews to say what they liked and disliked about living on the estate prior to the demolition of the walk-ups. The questions were open-ended, allowing those interviewed to nominate likes and dislikes in their own words. Their comments were then reviewed to identify common themes and to develop an overall account of tenants' perspectives. Local residents were also invited to give their views in a mail-out survey. This enabled residents to articulate what was important to them rather than reacting to a series of predetermined responses.

4.2.1 What did residents like about the public housing estate before the redevelopment?

Relocated tenants nominated proximity and facilities/amenities as the features they liked most about living on the estate, with some saying that they like the people and community and the area/aesthetics, as shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Relocated tenants' 'likes' about living on the Kensington estate prior to the demolition of the walk-ups

'Likes' nominated by relocated tenants	Number*	Percentage
Proximity	39	62%
Facilities and amenities	25	53%
People and community	12	28%
Area/aesthetics	12	28%
Aspect of own flat/building	5	11%
Generally liked it (no specific comment)	2	4%
Fine/OK/used to it (no specific comment)	2	4%
Liked nothing	3	6%

Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04; n = 47.

* Refers to the number of people interviewed making a comment on this aspect of living in Kensington. The table groups the types of comments made in response to open questions. Relocated tenants could nominate more than one 'like'.

The aspect of living on the estate liked by almost two-thirds of relocated tenants was proximity, particularly to public transport and shops and facilities and to health care services such as hospitals:

Everything was available: school, shopping centre, health centre, good public transport, good recreational places for children – park, swimming pool.

Spoiled rotten with shops in walking distance.

More than half also nominated the local facilities and amenities as something they liked about living on the estate, commenting favourably on services for children, such as schools, and shops, facilities and services. A number mentioned the parks and the river. There were also several who liked aspects of their own flat or the building:

Easy transport, close community, health centre, shopping centre, banks, washing machines, recreation facilities and good public transport.

I liked my flat and I like the parks and my surroundings.

More than a quarter of relocated tenants nominated the people and community as something they liked about living on the estate, seeing residents as friendly, helpful, supportive and family-like:

We had a very close-knit friendship with our neighbours. Their children were similar ages, they were a great support. I have lived in the North Melbourne/Kensington area since I was six.

Surprisingly quiet. Private. People were very friendly. Sense of community. Everyone was very friendly and outgoing. People also knew to mind their business.

A few years back, like a big happy family. Everyone watched out for everyone else. Kids all stayed at each others' houses, had a good time, no trouble.

Relocated tenants also liked the area generally, with more than a quarter mentioning this at least once. Comments were made about generally liking the area, the look of the suburb or the pleasant surroundings. Smaller numbers also mentioned that it was a quiet place to live in, and that it was cheap or affordable:

Was in Altona Street. Very quiet and peaceful, except for trains and trucks, almost like living in the country. Gardens outside were lovely – birds singing.

Current tenants who had remained on the estate throughout the redevelopment were the most positive about the estate prior to the demolition of the walk-ups. Of those who made specific comments about what they had liked, the main aspects nominated were proximity, area/aesthetics, facilities and amenities, and people and community, as shown in Table 4.10. Another quarter of tenants said that they generally liked living there and 8 per cent said that they thought it was all right.

Table 4.10: Current tenants' 'likes' about living on the Kensington estate prior to the demolition of the walk-ups

'Likes' nominated by current tenants	Number	Percentage
Proximity	24	49%
Area/aesthetics	15	31%
Facilities and amenities	7	14%
People and community	7	14%
Aspect of own flat	6	12%
Generally liked it (no specific comment)	11	22%
Fine/OK/used to it (no specific comment)	4	8%
Liked nothing	2	4%

Source: Interviews with current tenants 2003-04; n = 47

Note: Open questions and more than one response could be nominated.

As with relocated tenants, the highest percentage of current tenants (49 per cent) nominated proximity to shops, facilities, public transport and health care:

Convenience to the main things. So central to the city. It takes 20 minutes to get to the city.

Like it. Handy to doctors and shops, and hospital.

A third of current tenants also liked the appearance and aesthetics of the area. There were a large range of comments about this, including that the area was 'good', quiet, affordable and safe, the look of the suburb, and the compactness of the estate:

Good room, no-one bothered you. It was quiet.

When I came here I realised I couldn't afford anything else so I made it my home. It's been good.

A quarter of current tenants liked the local facilities and services including the shops, parks and river, and facilities and services for children:

Very nice estate. Near to park, swimming pool, car parks. Living in a high rise was a privilege in other countries than Australia. Away from street noise.

The shopping centres, the school is close to the area, childcare, maternal and child health centre, community centres and others.

Current tenants did not make specific comments about liking the people and the community as often as relocated tenants, although it should be noted that many of those interviewed were older people who lived on their own and some said that they did not leave their flats all that often. Several mentioned that people on the estate had been friendly, helpful and supportive and that there had been good diversity and a sense of community:

Smaller group of people. Seemed to get together at the time. Would pull up chairs and have a chat. Stronger sense of community than in high rise.

Multicultural, a lot of friends and neighbours always happy to say hello. Understand different cultures better than you would normally do. The friendliness of the people, the community.

Few **local residents** who had lived in the area prior to the demolition of the walk-ups nominated specific aspects of the estate at that time that they had liked. Of the third who made a positive comment, most concerned the people and community, as indicated in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Local residents' 'likes' about the Kensington estate prior to the demolition of the walk-ups

'Likes' nominated by local residents	Number	Percentage
The people increased diversity	14	18%
People/families were great	8	11%
An essential service/served people well	7	9%
People increased sense of community/part of the community	5	7%
More kids and families around	3	4%
Liked them/good	2	2%
Pleasant surroundings/space	2	2%
Safer	1	1%

Source: Survey of local residents 2003; n = 76 (the number of local residents who had lived in the area prior to demolition of the walk-ups).

Note: Open question and more than one response could be nominated

These local residents liked the increased diversity brought by estate residents and the presence of families and children on the estate:

The people living in the buildings increased the sense of community and diversity of population. The social stigmatising of groups of people because of their accommodation was unjustified in our experience.

It brought a diverse mix of people to the area. The kids living there were close to playmates, so kids were always playing in the common areas.

They were a part of Kensington and enhanced the cultural mix of our community.

It is worth noting that, whilst two-thirds of local residents did not specifically comment on what they had liked about the estate prior to the redevelopment, many value highly the people and community of Kensington, including the cultural and socioeconomic diversity which is brought by the estate. These perspectives on the Kensington community *now* are discussed further in Chapter 9.

Overall, taking the views of all three groups into account, what residents liked about the public housing estate prior to the demolition of the walk-ups was proximity, amenities and facilities, and the people and community. Many of these 'likes' concerned the location of the estate and the facilities and amenities of the suburb generally, as shown in Table 4.12. In general, these findings correspond with earlier research undertaken for the Kensington Estate Redevelopment Strategy 1999 (Perrott Lyon Mathieson Pty Ltd 1999c: 16-20).

Table 4.12: Kensington residents’ ‘likes’ about the public housing estate prior to the demolition of the walk-ups?

Ranking	Relocated tenants	Current tenants	Local residents
1	Proximity to public transport	Proximity to shops/facilities	No positive comment made
2	Proximity to shops/facilities	Proximity to public transport	People and community (diversity)
3	Good for children (services)	Proximity to hospitals/health care	
4	Proximity to hospitals/health care	Friendly/supportive people	
5	Friendly/supportive people	Facilities and services (general)	

4.2.2 What did residents dislike about the public housing estate before the redevelopment?

Relocated tenants nominated crime and safety concerns and the state of the buildings as their main dislikes about living on the estate prior to the redevelopment, as shown in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Relocated tenants’ dislikes about living on the estate prior to the redevelopment

‘Dislikes’ nominated by relocated tenants	Number	Percentage
Crime and safety	30	64%
The physical buildings	15	33%
Other negative view	12	26%
Disliked nothing	5	11%

Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003; n = 47

Note: Open question and more than one response could be nominated.

Almost two-thirds of relocated tenants made comments about crime and safety issues, almost all of which referred to issues around drugs, drug users, abandoned needles and associated criminal activity. Some also had unpleasant stories about being the victims of harassment or violence:

Children not safe. Criminals, drugs etc. Lack of protection for children.

I was bashed by druggies twice. They took over the flats and I was harassed by men.

Problems with drugs and people using drugs. They injected in front of your door, would harass you if asked them to move.

A bit frightened because of the drugs, fights, people getting attacked. Had to lock the door all the time.

Nearly a third of relocated tenants disliked the buildings. These comments referred to the state of the flats, the dirt or smell in the buildings, dampness and the high concentration of people on the estate. A few also disliked the behaviour of their neighbours, noise and occasionally people from particular migrant communities:

Dirty, neighbours don't mind their own business, smell permeate from other flats, laundry – too much anger.

Cold, humid, high stairs with no lift.

Current tenants made fewer negative comments. Of the 49 who had lived on the estate prior to the demolition of the walk-ups,⁵ more than half said that there was nothing at all they disliked about living there, as shown in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Current tenants' dislikes about living on the estate prior to the redevelopment

'Dislikes' nominated by current tenants	Number	Percentage
Crime and safety	14	29%
The physical buildings	4	8%
Disliked nothing	26	53%

Source: Interviews with current tenants 2003-04; n = 49.

Note: Open question and more than one response could be nominated.

Of those who did nominate something that they disliked, crime and lack of safety was the main issue, particularly in relation to drugs. Three in ten of current tenants nominated this as a dislike, compared to two-thirds of relocated tenants, suggesting that drug-related activities caused more problems for estate residents in and around the walk-up blocks than in the high rise towers:

The drugs, the drug problem was the only thing I disliked about this place.

Drugs. They had a huge drug problem here. Huge, huge problem. I even caught people shooting up in the laundry and in the stairwell.

Only four current tenants made comments about disliking the physical condition of the flats and buildings prior to the demolitions, unlike the relocated tenants who made quite a number of comments about this.

In contrast, **local residents** expressed quite strongly their dislikes about the estate prior to the redevelopment, focusing on the physical buildings to a greater extent those either relocated or current tenants, as well as issues of crime and safety, as shown in Table 4.15.

⁵ Those who disliked nothing were evenly spread across those who lived in the walk-ups and those who lived in the high rise at that time, comprising approximately half of each group.

Table 4.15: Local residents' dislikes about the estate prior to demolition of the walk-ups

'Dislikes' nominated by local residents	Number	Percentage
The physical buildings	42	55%
Crime and safety	25	33%
General negative view	12	16%

Source: Survey of surrounding residents 2003; n = 76 (local residents who had lived in the area prior to the demolition of the walk-ups)

Note: Open question and more than one response could be made.

More than half of surrounding residents who had lived in Kensington prior to the demolition of the walk-ups had at least one negative comment about the buildings, commenting on their unattractiveness, need for repair, poor quality, too high density, not suitable to live in or not suitable for children and young people:

They were in need of either repair or demolition urgently, as unfit for people to live in, especially older persons, children and families.

An eyesore, badly designed, with a limited lifespan, a cheap way to house people.

Eyesore, separation of haves and have-nots, crime and drug centre. Too high, should have been replaced by houses on larger blocks.

Too many people in small area.

A third of the local residents made negative comments about incidents of crime on the estate, safety issues, that the estate had attracted 'bad people', and the presence of drug use, drug traffickers and related problems such as abandoned syringes:

Not great. Drug trafficking was pretty disturbing, though most of the people and families were great, small element caused problems.

Attracted a rough crowd. Gangs, drugs, crime. It was not a safe area.

I was highly aware of heroin trade based there from traffic and activity in our street, and from my own observations of blatant trafficking in Derby Street

Some local residents (16 per cent) also disliked the estate generally, saying that it had an awful or a negative atmosphere, it was 'not great', it should not have been built, it was noisy, and it had a negative impact on property prices:

Thought they were unattractive and attracted trouble. Bad reputation. Happy to have them demolished.

Brought the value of the suburb down.

Overall, across all three groups of residents, crime and safety, particularly in relation to drugs, was nominated most often as the main dislike, as shown in Table 4.16. This was the most mentioned dislike by relocated tenants and to a considerably lesser degree by current tenants.⁶ Local residents were most concerned about the buildings themselves, with crime and safety drawing fewer comments.

Table 4.16: Residents' dislikes about the public housing estate prior to the demolition of the walk-ups

Ranking	Relocated tenants	Current tenants	Local Residents
1	Crime and safety	Nothing	The buildings
2	The buildings	Crime and safety	Crime and safety
3	General	The buildings	General

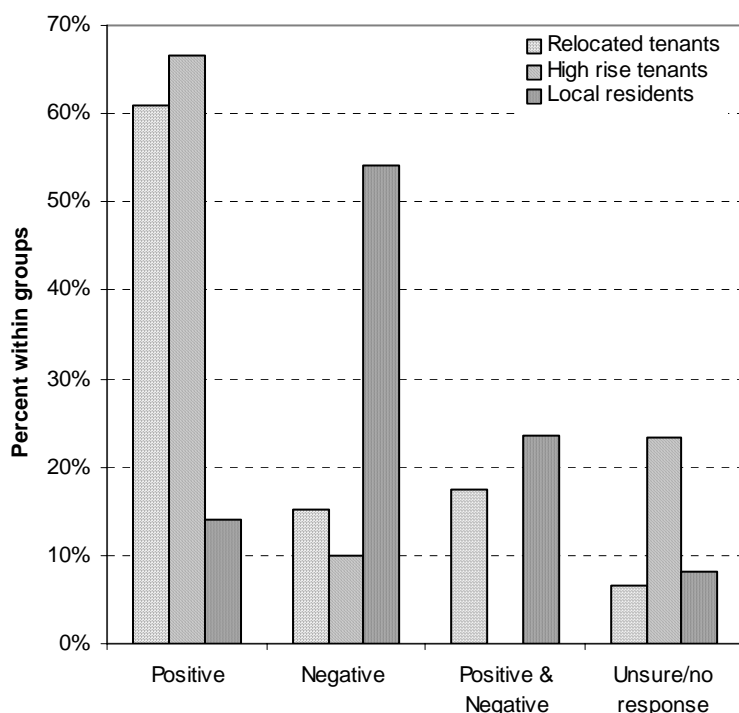
4.2.3 Overall views on the estate in 1999-2000 prior to stage two of the redevelopment

In addition to being asked what they liked and disliked about living on the estate, relocated and current tenants were asked what they thought about the estate **overall** prior to the redevelopment. In these basic terms, most had a positive view. This contrasts with local residents who overall had negative or mixed views about the estate, as shown in Figure 4.1, although they had very positive views about Kensington more generally as a place to live (as discussed in Chapter 9).

Relocated and current tenants were asked why they thought the walk-ups were demolished and the estate was being redeveloped. Two-thirds of relocated tenants said that this was because the buildings were old and rundown, with 13 per cent suggesting other reasons including sale to private developers. Current tenants were less concerned about the condition of the buildings, as seen above, with over a third saying that it was because the buildings were old and rundown and a third saying that they didn't know why the estate was being redeveloped, as shown in Table 4.17.

⁶ This difference in perception appears to be due to the problems associated with drug-related activity around the walk-ups rather than the high rise and perhaps due to timing, since the drug issue in Kensington reached a peak in the winter of 2000, immediately before the relocation of tenants from the walk-ups.

Figure 4.1: Overall perceptions of the Kensington estate prior to stage two of the redevelopment



Sources: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04; n = 47, interviews with current tenants 2003-04; n = 49, survey of local residents 2003; n = 76.

Note: The numbers for current tenants and local residents refer to those who had lived in Kensington prior to the demolition of the walk-ups.

Table 4.17: Reasons why relocated and current tenants thought that the walk-ups were demolished and the estate redeveloped

Reasons for demolition/ redevelopment	Relocated tenants		Current tenants	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Old/rundown	31	66%	23	38%
Don't know why	3	6%	21	34%
To sell to private developers	6	13%	7	12%
Make room for new development	2	4%	5	8%
Too many complaints/too much maintenance	4	9%	0	0%
Other	6	13%	9	15%

Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04; n = 47, interviews with current tenants 2003-04; n = 61

Note: Tenants could make more than one comment.

Both relocated and current tenants outlined their views on the state of the buildings:

Asbestos. Walls cracking, falling down. About time for an update (relocated tenant).

They needed to be changed. They were not healthy flats nor fit for residence (relocated tenant).

It's pretty old, there was a lot of trouble, they needed to do something (current tenant).

Reached their use-by date. Had served their purpose (current tenant).

Some tenants wanted to know why the redevelopment was taking place:

I know they were getting old. But I can't understand, when there are so many people waiting for housing, why they couldn't just do them up (relocated tenant).

No idea, but would like to know (current tenant).

I don't know. They looked alright from the outside. Over here was a big block, like it was superior to this one, but they pulled it down. That's their business. I know nothing about that (current tenant).

There were several in both groups who thought the reason for the demolitions was to enable private developers to take over the land:

At beginning – because built a long time ago and make a better place. But later on – to sell to private because Kensington more popular (relocated tenant).

Greed. Privatisation and humbug. It was a 70 per cent sell-out (relocated tenant).

All about money, for private development (current tenant).

There were a number of other views as to why the walk-ups were demolished and the estate redeveloped:

They were old and out of date. Becoming very high maintenance. Lack of privacy issue as noisy – people's expectations of privacy have changed (relocated tenant).

Because of the riffraff in it. Good idea I thought. Too much trouble, people smashing it up (current tenant).

I believe a policy of the Labor government. It's a general trend. It's obsolete architecture and looks like slums – creates a crime culture. That's my understanding (current tenant).

Some were in very bad condition. 100 Altona Street was always very good, but some still needed to be done up. This is an experiment, to see if it will work (current tenant).

Current tenants living in the high rise towers were also asked why they thought the towers were being refurbished. The main reasons suggested were to modernise the buildings and because they were old, dirty or rundown, as shown in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18: Reasons why current tenants thought that the high rise towers were being refurbished

Reasons for refurbishment	Number	Percentage
Don't know	18	30%
To update/upgrade/modernise	17	28%
Old/dirty/rundown	13	21%
Housing need for people/ to improve living for people	6	10%
Because of the lifts	4	7%
For security/safety reasons	4	7%
To change the size of units	4	7%
For privatisation	1	2%
Other reason	6	10%

Source: Interviews with current tenants 2003-04; n =49
 Note: could give more than one answer

Almost a third of current tenants interviewed who had lived on the estate prior to the redevelopment (18 people) said that they did not know why the buildings were being refurbished:

I don't know really. Actually they don't change many things inside the building. They change the outside. They change laundry to smaller.

We do not know, never asked.

I don't know. I don't like how they're making the apartments smaller.

4.2.4 Other perspectives on crime and safety (drugs) prior to the redevelopment

Interviews with the three groups of Kensington residents highlighted concerns with crime and safety, particularly related to drugs, immediately prior to the demolition of the walk-ups. This was explored further during interviews with Police, and other local community organisations and services.

Many community agency workers and traders acknowledged that there had been a period when the drug issue became unmanageable. Some linked this to the public housing estate, but not necessarily to estate residents, whilst others saw it as a wider Kensington problem, affecting a number of areas within the municipality. Others again linked the problem to the needle exchange program then operating from the Community Health Centre:

The drug issue in Kensington is an old one and part of a health issue which, by and large, had been manageable until the mid- to late 1990s (local service provider).

The needle exchange program had begun in 1989. This was a small program that by 1995 gave out about 100 to 150 syringes per month. Many local service providers saw the on-site service within the Centre as ideally placed also to provide education, as well as the potential to reconnect drug users into other services and programs if

they desired. The service saw people from all walks of life and socioeconomic groups, from 'suits' to the 'apparently homeless':

All sorts of people came to the needle exchange – carpenters, plumbers, people in suits, some tenants. It was an eye-opener. But shooting up and selling was very, very public and not just on the estate (local service provider).

By 1996, the program faced greater problems with syringes left on the streets, attributed in part to cheap heroin flooding the market. There was particular concern about syringes left in the area around the nearby Holy Rosary Primary School. By April 2000, the number of syringes supplied by the needle exchange increased to 400 a month; and by October 2000, 1,400 clean syringes a month were being given out, according to a former program worker.

In 1999-2000, Victoria Police were running a big drug operation out of their Russell Street headquarters that targeted locations including nearby Footscray. The drug problem was pushed out of these areas and appeared to settle in Kensington:

Kensington had been a relatively sheltered backwater prior to this, and the problem with drugs was really a result of pressure from other operations. Stick your finger in the jelly and it will bulge somewhere else (senior police officer).

The police suggest that the main reasons that the problem moved to Kensington was proximity to the city and easy entry and exit via two railway stations and a couple of main roads:

Real estate agents and criminals like a place for the same reasons: location, location, location. Traffickers and customers were coming from a huge range of suburbs, not just local and not just the western suburbs (senior police officer).

People were known to gather on the housing estate and around the Kensington railway station and Bellair Street, and dealers came from as far away as Brighton:

People came and used in their cars right in the street (Gower Street resident).

Tenants on the estate asked the Office of Housing at a meeting in June 2000 to provide security guards because of the 'drug problem', along with a program to pick up and clean syringes. Many traders interviewed said that they found this a frightening and intimidating time; with some mentioning how sorry they felt for many of the users. In August 2000, the Community Health Centre held a large public meeting at which diverse views were expressed. Some supported the maintenance of the needle exchange program, but wanted it relocated and for syringes to be retractable. Others blamed the service for the drug problem. The program was closed down in April 2001 and the Inner West Outreach Service, a car-based service as part of the organisation Youth Projects, took over a replacement program.

Concerns about the drug issue peaked in 1999-2000, at a time when the future of the Kensington estate was being discussed. By and large, however, people interviewed for the SIS saw this as having a number of causes and did not suggest that the estate or most public housing tenants caused the problem, although many were aware that some of the estate's public areas became venues for deals and drug use, along with areas near the stations and needle exchange, as well as some streets.

4.3 Summary

There were 581 public housing units on the redevelopment site in 2000, a decrease from the original 738 units as a result of some conversions of bedsitters to one bedroom flats and the demolition of 72 Derby Street in 1999. The number of public housing units in other parts of Kensington had, however, increased over the years, particularly due to the redevelopment at Lynch's Bridge which included about one third public housing, as well as some spot purchase of properties.

The number of people living on the site had declined from over 3,000 in 1971 to around 1,800 in 1996 due to demographic factors such as smaller households and changes to allocation policy. In 1996, they still comprised one-third of Kensington's residents and almost half of its children and young people. Many children from the estate went to local schools, particularly at a primary level. People living on the estate had low household incomes, with many out of the labour force. They came from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds, with four in five speaking a language other than English at home. The relocation of tenants from 72 Derby Street further reduced numbers on the estate, and some of the cultural diversity, with an estimated 540 households and over 1,550 people living on the estate by 2000.

Tenants who moved from the walk-ups and tenants who remained in the two high rise towers had positive views overall about living on the estate prior to the demolition of the walk-ups. They liked its proximity to transport, shops and health care services, the amenity and facilities of Kensington, and the people and community. The main aspects they disliked were crime and safety issues, particularly associated with drugs, and the physical condition of the buildings. Local residents generally had a more negative view, disliking the physical buildings and, to a lesser extent, issues around crime and safety.

Interviews with police and community organisations suggested that the drug problem was at its worst in Kensington in 1999-2000, immediately prior to approval for the redevelopment of the site to proceed. Those interviewed identified a number of causes, not specifically connected to the public housing estate. The behaviours of people using and dealing in drugs at this time affected residents of the estate, particularly in the walk-up flats, and people living in some local streets.

4.4 Recommendations

R06 That, in any future redevelopment, the Office of Housing in conjunction with the relevant local council compiles and makes available a current and consolidated statistical profile of dwellings and people/households on an estate and in the surrounding suburb before any relocation of tenants, to provide a benchmark against which to assess the subsequent impacts of redevelopment.

R07 That, in any future redevelopment, a survey of residents living on and around an estate is conducted just prior to any relocation of tenants to benchmark views about the positive and negative aspects of living on, and near to, the estate, enabling comparison with views at the end of the redevelopment.

⁷ In the case of the Kensington redevelopment, the views of residents were obtained via research conducted by Perrott Lyon Mathieson Pty Ltd (1999c) and during the evaluation of the relocation of tenants from the high rise tower at 72 Derby Street (Project Partnerships 2001), as well as retrospectively via the SIS.

Chapter 5 The Relocation Process

This chapter looks at the relocation of tenants from walk-up flats on the Kensington estate, examining who left and where they went, and the perspectives of relocated and current tenants, Office of Housing staff and community organisations on the relocation process. The focus here is on the relocation process rather than the impacts of the redevelopment on people and families more broadly, which is covered in Chapter 6.

The findings in this chapter are based on detailed interviews with 47 relocated tenants, 49 current tenants,¹ community agency workers and Office of Housing staff, discussions with community groups and analysis of administrative data. Research for the SIS built on some of the issues raised in a prior evaluation of the relocation of tenants from 72 Derby Street in 1998 (Project Partnerships 2001) and Office of Housing client satisfaction surveys that sought the views of relocated tenants on specific issues shortly after moving into their new accommodation (Office of Housing 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003). The research also explored issues around involvement in decision making and responses to the relocation process.

The findings should enable a better understanding of what worked well and what improvements could be made if similar relocations are carried out in the future to enable the redevelopment of older public housing estates.

5.1 The relocation process

Following the announcement of stage two of the redevelopment in August 2000, the Office of Housing established a project team to relocate tenants from the 378 walk-up flats into other public housing. The team comprised experienced Office of Housing staff: a senior housing manager, a housing team leader, two (and sometimes three) project officers and a field services (technical) officer.

The relocation project team communicated with tenants about the relocations through a number of means, including letters to households, interviews, public meetings, provision of information to community agencies and a website.

Based on experiences of relocations in other areas, team members interviewed every household on the estate who had to move because of the redevelopment. This interview enabled an assessment of tenants' needs, what they were looking for in their housing and whether they wanted to stay in the area. Following the interview, tenants were made offers of accommodation. The stock available was:

- Existing public housing stock held vacant for relocation purposes, especially in the northern and western suburbs;
- 100 units spot purchased specifically for the relocation of walk-up tenants;
- 14 units leased by the Office of Housing from the private sector (Office of Housing 2002: 10).

After tenants had accepted an offer of accommodation, the project team arranged, and paid for, removalists to move tenants' belongings to their new place and for the disconnection and connection of utilities and phone services.

¹ 49 of the 61 current tenants interviewed had lived on the estate prior to stage two of the redevelopment and are included in this analysis.

The relocation team was informed in its work by the evaluation of the relocation process for tenants who had moved from the high rise tower at 72 Derby Street in 1998 and which was carried out in 2001, partway through the relocation of tenants from the walk-up flats.

A redevelopment project worker² was funded by the Office of Housing to assist both individual tenants and the Kensington Public Tenants Association (KPTA) during and after the relocation process. The worker, who is managed under a tripartite arrangement by the Tenants Union of Victoria (TUV), KPTA and Office of Housing, supported individual tenants, often sitting in on their interviews with members of the relocation project team. The position also advocated on behalf of tenants more generally and resourced the KPTA and tenants' representatives on the CLC.

The TUV³ and KPTA (as well as the project worker) were located in a flat in the high rise tower at 56 Derby Street, and provided support to, and advocacy for, tenants during the relocation process. Issues arising from the relocation, either affecting individual tenants or about the implementation of policy, were resolved by regular meetings of the Redevelopment Relocation Liaison Group comprising representatives of the Office of Housing, TUV and KPTA and the project worker.

In April 2001, the City of Melbourne initiated the 'reLOCATED' project in collaboration with the TUV, the KPTA and the Office of Housing redevelopment worker. This was a cultural/arts project that aimed to document the emotional, physical and social elements of the redevelopment, and to celebrate the contribution of Kensington tenants to their community. The information gathered was displayed through performance, exhibition and publication of the reLOCATED book (Costi and Bailey 2003), and was regarded by all involved as a very successful and meaningful project.

The relocation process overall was monitored by the CLC, which included representatives of various stakeholders, including the KPTA and TUV, as well as tenant representatives on behalf of ethnic communities, relocated tenants and current tenants.

5.2 Profile of households who moved from the Kensington estate as a result of the relocation process

Relocation commenced in September 2000 and concluded in October 2002. During this period, 333 households comprising 957 people were relocated in four stages to other public housing, as shown in Table 5.1. In addition, 14 households moved into leased properties.

² Initially called 'redevelopment access worker'. The worker was a case worker seconded from the TUV who commenced work in October 2001, partway through the relocations. The position was originally for 12 months but was subsequently extended.

³ The TUV also employed a part-time Vietnamese-speaking worker on the estate.

Table 5.1: People and households moving from the walk-up blocks to other public housing, September 2000 – October 2002

Tenant relocations from walk-ups	Number of units in walk-up blocks	Households relocated	People relocated
<i>Stage one</i> (Sept 00 to March 01)	80	65	284
<i>Stage two</i> (December 00 to July 01)	112	105	225
<i>Stage three</i> (June 01 to April 02)	82	70	168
<i>Stage four</i> (December 01 to October 02)	104	93	280
Total all stages	378**	333*	957*

Sources: Office of Housing, 2001-03, Client Satisfaction Surveys Stages 1-4, Kensington Estate Redevelopment; and Office of Housing administrative data.

*Does not include 14 households relocated to private rental accommodation.

** 31 of the 378 flats were vacant, abandoned by tenants, or tenants made their own arrangements or were evicted.

The Office of Housing offered these 347 households a 'relocation agreement'. This was a signed agreement between the Office of Housing and the tenant that confirmed the tenant's right to return and their housing preference, subject to continued eligibility and the availability of suitable housing. Tenants who abandoned their properties, found their own accommodation in the private sector or were evicted for reasons such as non-payment of rent or causing a nuisance were not offered a relocation agreement and do not have the right to return.

20 households were relocated to other accommodation on the Kensington estate, either in the two remaining high rise towers or in walk-up blocks on the old part of the estate, north-east of Derby Street, that was not included in the redevelopment. A further 26 households were relocated elsewhere in Kensington. The other 301 households moved to a range of other suburbs, primarily in the northern and western suburbs, as shown in Table 5.2 and Map 5.1.

Table 5.2: Relocated tenants by area of new accommodation

Location	Number	Percentage
Kensington	46	13.3%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 94 Ormond St and 56 Derby St 	(17)	(4.9%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durham/Derby Sts walk-ups 	(3)	(0.9%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elsewhere in Kensington 	(26)	(7.5%)
North Melbourne	40	11.5%
Footscray	36	10.4%
Ascot Vale	22	6.3%
Maidstone	19	5.5%
Flemington	16	4.6%
Carlton	14	4.0%
Essendon	13	3.7%
Braybrook	12	3.5%
Footscray West	8	2.3%
Other*	121	34.9%
Total	347**	100%

Source: Office of Housing administrative data

* Includes a range of northern and western suburbs.

** Includes 14 households living in leased properties who have a right to return to Kensington.

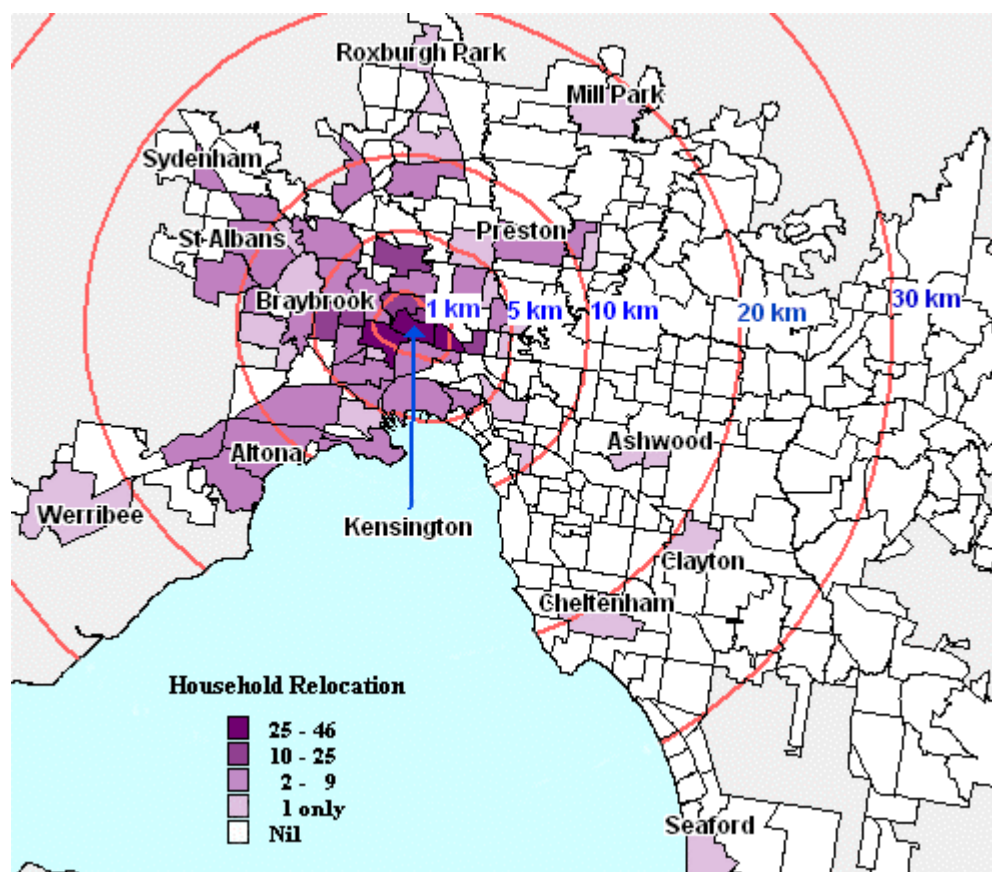
Most relocated tenants (79 per cent) moved to housing within five kilometres of Kensington, with 21 per cent moving further away, as shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: New suburb of residence of relocated tenants, by distance from Kensington

Distance	Number of Households	Percentage
Kensington	46	13%
Less than 2 km	42	12%
2 km and under 5 km	186	54%
5 km and under 10 km	36	10%
10 km and under 30 km	31	9%
30 km or more	6	2%
Total	347	100%

Source: Calculated from Office of Housing administrative data

Map 5.1: Areas that relocated tenants moved to, with distance from Kensington



Source: Office of Housing administrative data.
Note: The circles mark distances from Kensington.

As the walk-ups were family units, the relocation involved large numbers of both adults and children: 585 adults (including non-dependent children aged 16 and over) and 372 dependent children (141 pre-schoolers and 231 school age children). Almost a thousand people moved to other public housing, as shown in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Tenants relocated from walk-ups to other public housing with 'right of return' to Kensington, by age

Age of people in relocated households	Number	Percentage
Adult tenants (people with names on the lease)	477	50%
Adults aged 18 and over not on lease and children of tenants aged 16-18	108	11%
Children (sub-total)	372	39%
• Children aged 13 and under 16	(58)	(6%)
• Children aged 5 and under 13	(173)	(18%)
• Children aged under 5	(141)	(15%)
All people*	957	100%

Source: Office of Housing administrative data.
* Excludes members of 14 households who moved to leased properties.

Relocated tenants were a very diverse group culturally. Six in ten spoke, or wished to communicate in, a language other than English, mainly Vietnamese and Somali, as indicated in Table 5.5. Overall, they spoke 26 languages, including English.

Table 5.5: Languages spoken by relocated tenants

Language	Number	Percentage
English	134	39%
Vietnamese	99	29%
Somali	33	10%
Tigrinya	16	5%
Cantonese	14	4%
Spanish	10	3%
Arabic	7	2%
Other Chinese	6	2%
Other*	27	8%
Total	347	100%

Source: Office of Housing administrative data.

* Includes a further 18 languages: four with more than one speaker (Amharic, Indonesian, Oromo, Turkish) and 14 with one speaker.

The rest of this chapter outlines the perspectives of relocated and current tenants, Office of Housing staff, and community agencies and groups on the relocation process.

5.3 Views of relocated tenants

The relocation process most directly affected tenants who had to move from the walk-up flats. Interviews conducted with 47 relocated tenants⁴ indicated that the impact varied considerably; for some it caused few difficulties, whilst for others it was a time of considerable stress. All of the tenants interviewed were willing to share their experiences, positive and negative. By exploring these views, it is possible to gain insights into which aspects of the relocations worked well, and which aspects could have been improved upon.

5.3.1 Information and assistance

Most of the relocated tenants interviewed found out about the relocations from a letter from the Office of Housing (83 per cent), with a few also hearing from meetings or the local newspaper. 26 per cent heard first from friends or neighbours who had already received letters or as a rumour, which was a source of frustration for some. This can be attributed in part to the relocations taking place in four stages:

They [Office of Housing] notified us, first of all on the grapevine, but have heard that before. Then people started to move – THEN I got a letter.

⁴ The findings from the interviews with relocated tenants should be considered in the context of difficulties in recruiting the sample, discussed in Chapter 2.

They started sending letters to other people. Some other friends had received letters – first stage – I was second.

Tenants said that they had been given varying amounts of notice about the need to relocate.⁵ At one extreme, nine people said they moved within one month of being notified whilst, at the other extreme, people said that they were notified 18 months before moving. The average (mean) amount of time was five months. Most thought they were given enough notice, with only 6 people (13 per cent) disagreeing.⁶ Those who were dissatisfied had all moved within less than a month of first being notified.

Two-thirds (64 per cent) believed that the Office of Housing had given them the information that they required about the redevelopment and how it would affect them, and one third said that they needed further information. Several said they needed more information but did not know, or did not specify, what this was. A few also said that they needed 'any information' that became available. Other comments included wanting more information about available properties, the new houses being built on the site, time lines, return policies, how the redevelopment would affect them, insurance for moving and translated material:

I wanted to know how long it would take and if I am going to come back or not.

Information on redevelopment was given, but not how it would affect us.

Needed to know what was going to happen. Would they build a better house? Would it go to a private sale? What choices did we have?

There were letters and pamphlets and meetings, but meetings weren't at a good time. We were really lost, we didn't know where we were going.

The main way in which people kept in touch with the relocation process was by letters from the Office of Housing, with many also getting information from their neighbours. Other methods of keeping in touch for about a quarter of relocated tenants were newsletters and meetings, as shown in Table 5.6.

⁵ Six people were unsure of dates and were not included in this analysis.

⁶ Four people moved within one month of getting their initial letter, and two moved within one month of getting a specific offer of accommodation.

Table 5.6: Methods used by residents to keep in touch with redevelopment plans whilst living on the estate

Method used	Number of households	Percentage
Letters from the OoH	27	57%
Neighbours	20	43%
Newsletters	12	26%
Meetings	12	26%
Local agencies/local paper	9	19%
Tenants Association	8	17%
Other	3	6%
Internet	1	2%
No ways of keeping in touch	5	11%

Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04; n = 47.

Note: Relocated tenants could nominate more than one method by which they kept in touch with the redevelopment plans whilst living on the estate.

There was no one method which informed all tenants, with two-thirds nominating more than one way in which they got information about the redevelopment. A small percentage (11 per cent) said that there was no method by which they kept in touch with redevelopment plans whilst living on the estate, for a number of individual reasons including not receiving anything and a lack of translated material.

Only 20 per cent would have preferred to receive the information in some other way. Of these, seven people wanted to sit down and talk with someone either through an interview process, a discussion or an information point for queries, presumably in addition to their initial interview. Two people also wanted more information through the mail, and one wanted more translated material:

Preferred to have been interviewed before the relocation process began. Everyone should have been interviewed to ask them about their individual need, like family, connections with sport, school etc. The long-term residents should have been given preference to stay.

Sit-down discussion to explain what was happening. Wasn't very tactful.

All of the respondents reported having had assistance with moving, being provided with removalists. Some also reported assistance with the provision of boxes, with connection of amenities such as gas, electricity and telephone, and one person had had assistance with packing.

Three-quarters (74 per cent) found this assistance with moving useful or very useful, and many were grateful for it:

Good, could not fault them.

They were wonderful helping me.

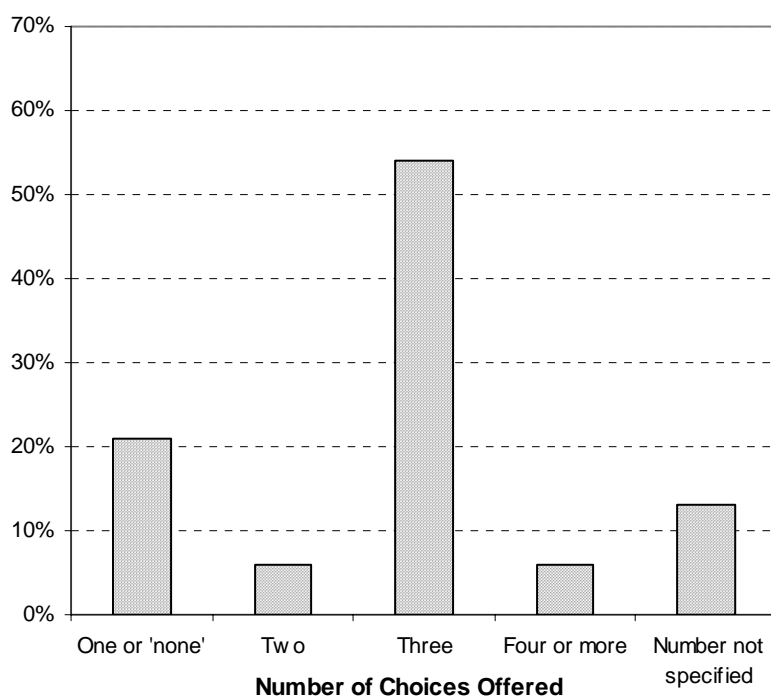
Six people reported that the removalists had broken furniture and other belongings.

A quarter (26 per cent) of relocated tenants interviewed said that they had needed other assistance. Most of these related to maintenance issues at their new housing which had not been attended to, such as a broken stove, no hot water, a broken security door, painting and carpet repairs. A few said that they had incurred extra removal costs for which they had not been reimbursed, such as transporting pets and assistance with packing and unpacking due to poor health. A few also wanted additional information about their new area, such as what facilities and services were available locally and assistance with the job market.

5.3.2 Choice and involvement

Most of the relocated tenants (60 per cent) said that they had had three or more choices of alternative housing, with just over a quarter stating that they had had fewer than three choices, as shown in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Number of offers of accommodation made to relocated tenants



Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04; n = 47.

Half of those interviewed (49 per cent) said that they did not feel they had adequate choice, although this perception appears to relate to the type of housing or area offered rather than the number of choices. Table 5.7 outlines the reasons people thought the choice(s) they were given was not adequate.

Table 5.7: Reasons why relocated tenants thought the choices offered to them were not adequate

Reasons nominated by relocated tenants	Number of households	Percentage
Did not get what was requested (area, building type)	7	30%
Unsuitable/does not fulfill needs	5	22%
Felt forced to accept what was offered	3	13%
Limited choice	3	13%
Loss of child services (school, childcare)	2	9%
Remote area	2	9%
Not enough notice/time to look at places	1	4%

Source: Interviews with relocated tenants; n = 23

Notes: Refers only to people who felt that the choices offered to them were inadequate. Relocated tenants were able to nominate more than one reason.

Because I have a disabled child and they offered me a townhouse with many stairs where the child could not use it.

Because they left me to last. Not much choice to pick from. Wanted to put me in a high rise. I have a dog. Can't walk up and down all those stairs.

Too small. Told I had one other choice and if I refused I'd be taken to the tribunal.

I wanted to stay in Kensington. My little boy was in childcare and my other son in school. I was happy here, it was my home.

The size, type and quality of housing offered was the most important factor for relocated tenants in deciding what offer to accept, although a number of other aspects were also important to some people, as shown in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8: What was most important to relocated tenants in deciding what housing to accept?

Factor	Number of households	Percentage
An aspect of the house (e.g. size, quality garage, backyard)	25	53%
Area	13	28%
School/child related	7	15%
Public transport	7	15%
Facilities	6	13%
Other	6	13%
Community	5	11%

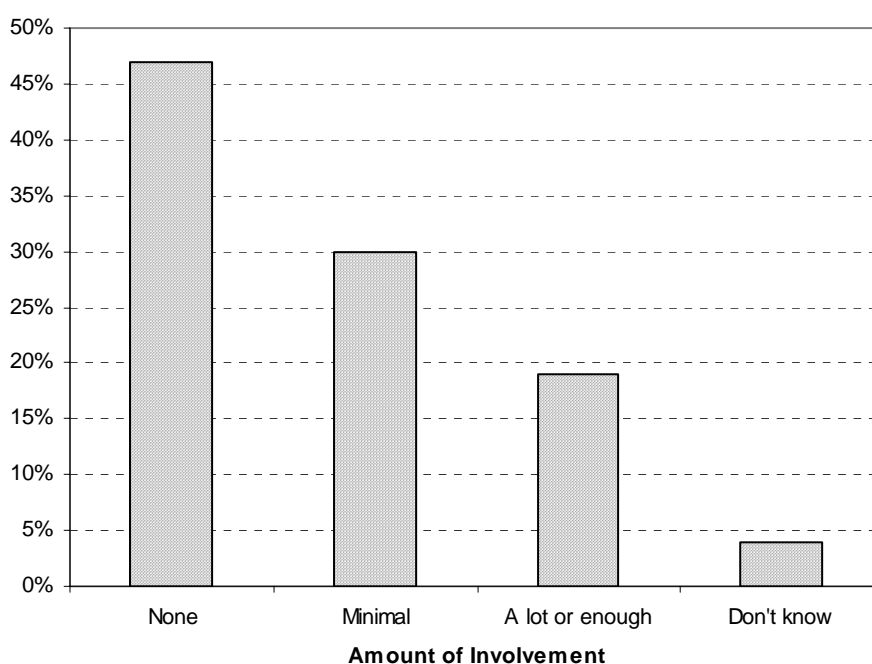
Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04; n = 47

Note: Relocated tenants could nominate more than one factor.

Four in ten (41 per cent) of relocated tenants interviewed said, when asked, that they would like to have stayed on the estate during redevelopment if that had been an option. Most of these (80 per cent) said that they would have done so even if it had meant moving to temporary accommodation. Discussions with community organisations, particularly ethnic groups, reinforced this point, with some relocated tenants expressing considerable distress about having to move from the estate at all.

Whilst most relocated tenants were satisfied with the information and assistance given during the process, 77 per cent of those interviewed felt that they had minimal or no involvement in decisions affecting them, as illustrated in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2: Relocated tenants' views of their involvement in the decisions affecting them



Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04; n = 47

Despite the high percentage who felt that they had no or minimal involvement in decision making, not everyone wanted more involvement: 35 per cent wanted to be more involved, 45 per cent did not want to be more involved and 20 per cent were unsure. The main way people wanted to be involved was by having more choice in housing, or having housing which better met their needs, with six saying that they would have liked the opportunity to express or discuss their ideas more generally:

I wanted Kensington, but they were all taken. If I'd been first or second call-up, I could have been located where I knew somebody. After so many years, didn't want a bedsitter.

I would like them to listen my choice of housing because I have four children and I want somewhere good and somewhere safe.

Relocated tenants were asked whether anything could have been done to make things easier for them. Nearly half (45 per cent) said there was nothing, or nothing they could think of. Some of the suggestions for improvement were more information

or involvement in decisions (21 per cent) or better treatment by the Office of Housing (15 per cent):

Involved in more than the actual relocation. How to pack up everything. What's involved in moving. Many people had been here for 20 years and so packing everything up was quite traumatic.

Surety that we can move back in after redevelopment, more information, temporary accommodation until redevelopment finished.

More information sooner – started off as dribs and drabs. Early transfers had it easier who knew earlier.

Several people (11 per cent) suggested more choice of location or housing. Other suggestions included moving people more quickly, more assistance with moving, more assistance with orientation to their new location, temporary accommodation while new units were being built, more effort to make sure maintenance was completed in the new house, and more time to prepare for the move:

Could have made the moving quicker – not so much in stages. People were left there alone.

First we needed school and childcare to be prepared before the moving.

5.4 Impact on tenants remaining on site

The relocation process also affected tenants who remained on site in the two high rise towers. The discussion in this section is based on interviews with 49 current tenants who had lived on the estate prior to the demolition of the walk-ups, including nine who had moved from the walk-ups in the relocation process. Current tenants had, like the people who had moved away, heard about the redevelopment primarily through letters from the Office of Housing, while some current tenants also learnt through other means such as 'word of mouth' or meetings. Most current tenants (61 per cent) said that they were not told whether they would have to move out or not:

At one stage we were told we may have to move and come back.

Nothing straightforward, just talk.

A quarter (25 per cent)⁷ said that they were given the choice of moving from the estate and were given specific offers, with some reporting limited choice, such as moving to Flemington, and others having a range of choices:

Three choices. Anywhere I wanted to go. Western suburbs.

Those who were offered other places chose to stay mainly because they wanted to be near family or people they knew, or they liked living in Kensington:

I love it here. I didn't see any sense in relocating somewhere else when I know everyone here and I've got my bank and everything.

⁷ Includes the nine tenants who moved from the walk-up flats at this time plus some others.

Because I want to take care of my parents.

I wanted to live here because the people are good. Everything is so close so I didn't want to move. I don't mind the noise.

Current tenants who were not offered the option of moving were asked whether they would have liked to have had this option. A half (50 per cent) said yes, they would have liked the choice, and another 11 per cent were unsure. If they had been given a choice, just under half (48 per cent) would have liked to have moved, and one person was unsure, whilst the other half said that they would have stayed:

Did not want to move, but it would have been nice to be asked.

Yes, at any time. Because my flat is not suitable for human living.

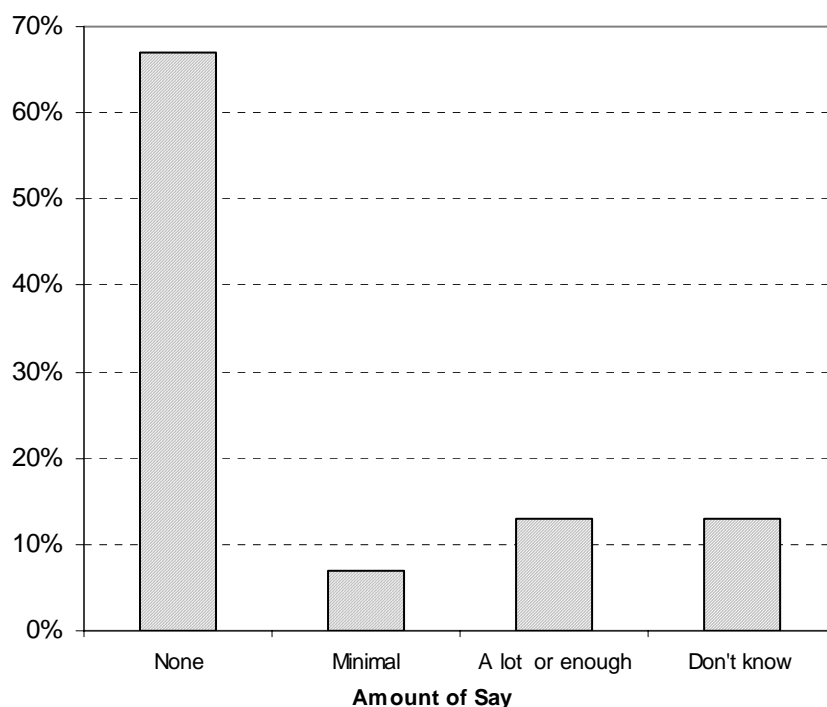
Yes, because if I'm still living there while they are demolishing it, very noisy and can't concentrate.

No. My friends are here, my doctor is here. I'm 74 years old and I am happy here.

No. Because would be offered a one bedroom.

The majority (74 per cent) of current tenants who had lived on the estate prior to the redevelopment felt they had very little or no say in decisions affecting them and their families, as shown in Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3: Current tenants' views of their involvement in decisions affecting them



Source: Interviews with current tenants 2003; n = 49 (current tenants who had lived on the estate before the redevelopment started).

Like the relocated tenants, not all people wanted to have more say in these decisions. About a third wanted more say, a third didn't want any more involvement and a third were unsure or had never considered this before:

Just feedback. If they'd just asked what you would have liked to have done.

Yes- if they [Office of Housing] wanted input, then residents would have offered it – lack of consultation.

No. Quite happy with the way things are going.

5.5 Office of Housing perspectives

Office of Housing staff reported that tenants were initially extremely sceptical that the redevelopment would go ahead at all, as it had been mooted since 1988. Staff believed that the individual interview process was a good way to establish trust, as well as to talk about housing requirements, the relocation process and choice of alternative properties.

There was a recognition that not all people wanted to move from the estate and that some had lived a major part of their lives there. Staff attempted to understand people's connection to the area and attempts were also made to distinguish between what different members of a household wanted in terms of housing and area and to allow time for household members to resolve any differences. Interviews for stage one took quite a while but, later in the project, people wanted to be interviewed even before the stage that affected them.

The project team found that tenants' requirements fell into three main categories: type of property, location and access to services. The Office of Housing held housing stock vacant for relocation purposes, especially in the northern and western suburbs. It was recognised from prior relocation processes that the more properties there were to choose from, the smoother the process.

Office of Housing staff felt that the properties held aside were of a good standard and that tenants, in this situation, had more choice than would normally be the case. Generally two offers of accommodation were made but some households were given more than this, with up to nine offers for one household. The project team also enabled people to look at properties outside of their preferred areas without this affecting their two offers. They considered that tenant expectations' of properties were initially high but that as people moved out, some remaining tenants felt isolated and expectations were lowered. Staff reported that they tried to be honest about where 'new' housing was located and about the time likely to elapse before people could return (at least three years).

Staff identified some difficulties in the relocation process. Firstly, it was sometimes difficult to predict the timing of relocation for any one household since this depended on the availability of a suitable property. The quickest relocation was four weeks but often it took three months to organise a move. Secondly, some tenants experienced difficulties in transferring their children to new schools as some schools had closed intakes. When this problem was discovered, the Office of Housing sought to notify the affected schools in advance. Thirdly, staff were aware that parents sometimes made decisions for the whole family, and young people felt powerless in this situation. In some cases, older members of an extended family were not consulted either and some families split up because older people chose to stay in Kensington.

The Office of Housing project team also surveyed relocated tenants six months after their move to gauge their satisfaction with the process. These surveys highlighted a number of areas for improvement, including dealing with maintenance and other issues and provision of better information on services and facilities available. Based on these surveys and anecdotal information, a return rate in the order of 20 to 25 per cent was anticipated (Office of Housing 2003).

5.6 Community agency perspectives

Interviews with people working for local community agencies and services and discussions with community groups took place in the months immediately following the end of the relocation process in mid-2003 and raised a number of issues. Firstly, there was concern at the effect on communities on the estate, particularly the well-established Vietnamese community and newer communities from the Horn of Africa. As indicated in Table 5.5, most relocated tenants spoke a language other than English. Many had come to Australia as migrants or refugees, making a home and developing strong community networks on the estate. For some, this was yet another forced relocation:

This was the first and often only home for many migrants and refugees who have grown into living here. You can't underestimate the association with the area. There were instances too where people were happy with their new housing. But there was nothing in the process to allow neighbours to move or be relocated side by side or near each other (community project worker).

When we heard about the demolition and the moves, it was shocking. It was earth-shaking news for us. We asked why they had chosen Kensington when the flats had just been done up. It was not rational. Not good planning. A waste of public money. We believe the government has a hidden agenda; to get rid of low income people out of the inner areas. We are tenants, they are our landlord. No matter what we say, they already have plan (view expressed at meeting of a Vietnamese community group).

There is a triangle of Somali communities between Kensington, Flemington and North Melbourne. They have been here less than ten years and felt the most isolated and the most reliant on their current community. They felt most disenfranchised (community worker).

Secondly, many of those interviewed raised concerns about the relocation process as it affected families with children. These centred on the disruption from moving and difficulties in connecting children with new schools and services:

It was a disruptive move for many of the children. New kids moving into an area and new school tend to be 'high risk' anyway, for the adjustment period. Many had changed schools before and had had interrupted learning. This disruption for children also strains resources and welfare services within schools (local school).

There was lots of work done by our school to connect families up with another school. But, for sure, many did not get the schools they wanted. They had warning. We all knew they would be going, but we didn't know where they going to for a long time. It was hard to tie into schools and services (local school).

The move has been very disruptive to children's schooling, where they need to maintain community connection. This has been a consistent message that has not been heard. Clearly there is not a commitment to bringing back families (community agency worker).

People were absolutely distressed. In the 2000 art exhibition we had, all the kids' pictures were of houses. Some were excited about moving and having a back yard but many were scared and didn't want to leave at all. They knew us and everything here (community agency worker).

Thirdly, there were issues about the lack of power which relocated tenants had in the process, particularly in negotiating better outcomes for themselves and their families:

The expectation was very high. The Office of Housing was offering 'paradise' and tenants were waiting for 'paradise', that is, they would be given three offers to move. But people struggled with the negotiations and the offers. Social workers had to go with them to the Office of Housing. There was a lot of to-ing and fro-ing. Then the Office got tough. It was a big rush and there was no time to link them to services before they moved (community agency worker).

People were worried about speaking up about their housing in case they lost it altogether. The Office of Housing ended up telling families that they only had two offers – it went from three offers to two offers in 2001 – and if they did not take one they would be taken to the Tribunal (relocated tenant).

Finally, a number of workers in community agencies felt unprepared for the eventual relocations. They felt that while people knew of it for many months and even years (especially in stage four), the relocation, when it did in fact occur, happened as if overnight and with too little time for planning and preparation. These workers felt that there was often insufficient information and time to link relocated tenants to services in their new area. An alternative offered by some was to stage the redevelopment so that not everyone would have to move from the estate:

We often didn't know people had moved before they'd gone. This meant that community planning often didn't happen. There are possibly people who've been sitting on our service waiting list for two years who did not receive any advocacy to be allocated a similar position on a waiting list elsewhere. We needed better exit processes. You can't rely on the families to alert services. They have too much going on. We needed more assertive advocacy and linking for them (community worker).

The moving-out phase happened very quickly. If people could stay and maintain their ties with the area, then housing appropriate for them would more likely be built. It would have been good to have had it happen in a more staged way. People moved out in stages and it is preferable to offer those who move out a permanent transfer. Then demolish, build, and retain the people who want to stay. This way was harsh and distressing – the involuntary and forced nature of it. People were living around construction anyway (community worker).

Overall, many of the local community agencies and services struggled to deal with the relocation of so many tenants. This could reflect a number of factors, including a disbelief that the redevelopment would actually happen after being discussed for so many years, disagreement about its direction (including the relocation of all tenants prior to building works) and more practical factors such as a lack of information about either the 'big picture' or specific information about the relocation process. SIS researchers and tenant interviewers were often asked for information about what was happening with the redevelopment.

Many of the agency workers interviewed remarked in positive terms on the availability and responsiveness of the Office of Housing staff member who managed the relocation process. Some commented that their agencies had their 'head in the sand' or had their own internal problems at the time. Still others commented that, whilst their chief executive officers had been on committees concerning the relocations and the redevelopment, the information had not filtered down to staff at an operational level. Others were simply opposed to a process that involved the loss of so many people and so much housing that had been a large part of the Kensington community for over 30 years.

5.7 Summary

347 households and about a thousand people were relocated from the walk-up flats to other housing, over a period of two years, to enable the demolition of the buildings. This involved both adults and children, and most of those affected spoke a language other than English. Almost four in five were relocated within five kilometres of Kensington, mainly in northern or western suburbs, including 13 per cent who remained in Kensington

Relocated tenants were generally satisfied with the information that they had been given and the amount of notice about leaving. They relied on both formal means of communication, such as letters from the Office of Housing, and informal means such as networks of friends and neighbours. Most of those interviewed were also satisfied with the practical assistance given by the Office of Housing with moving, with the main area of dissatisfaction raised by some being maintenance and other issues in their new housing.

Most relocated tenants also appreciated the number of choices of housing that they were offered. The main factor in terms of tenant satisfaction appears to be the type of offer (housing and area), rather than the number of offers. Those who felt that they did not get what they needed were most dissatisfied with the degree of choice offered. The most critical factors in tenants accepting an offer of accommodation were the type/size of housing and then factors relating to the area.

Relocated tenants interviewed were less positive about their involvement in decision making. Two-thirds felt that they had minimal or no involvement in decisions affecting them, although not everyone wanted to be involved. Four in ten would have preferred to stay on the estate during the redevelopment if this had been offered, even if this had meant living in temporary accommodation.

Many of the current tenants remaining on site did not know initially whether they would have to move out or not. Most were not given the option of moving out, although some were. About half of current tenants interviewed would like to have been given the option of moving out. Like the relocated tenants, most current tenants

felt that they had little or no involvement in the decisions that affected them, although only a third said that they would like to have had more involvement.

Office of Housing staff felt that they had gone to considerable lengths to provide relocated tenants with suitable accommodation within the confines of stock available to the project. They had also done their own assessment of client satisfaction through surveys of households shortly after they had moved into their new places that picked up on issues such as outstanding maintenance items. Staff identified some issues for improvement in terms of timing of relocations, children moving between schools, and understanding the dynamics of family decision making about relocation.

Community agencies raised a number of issues about the relocation process: the impact on established communities, particularly Vietnamese and Horn of Africa communities, disruption to children and services for children, and the powerlessness of their clients in negotiating about options. They were also concerned about a lack of follow-through to ensure access to services by relocated tenants in their new areas. Some of these issues are explored in more depth in the following two chapters that look more broadly at the impacts of the redevelopment on people and families (Chapter 6) and community connectedness (Chapter 7).

5.8 Recommendations

The following recommendations for future relocation projects build on reflection and learning about both what worked well at Kensington and suggested improvements.

R08 That the Office of Housing, where practical, stages estate redevelopment projects, giving tenants an option to stay on site, if this is their preference, enabling tenants to have more control over decisions affecting them.

R09 That the Office of Housing, in conjunction with tenants' associations, continues to consult, and to explore other ways of consulting, with affected ethnic communities during planning and implementation of a relocation/redevelopment process, building on what has been learned from the Kensington relocations, such as:

- Acknowledging tenants' previous experiences of forced relocation, as well as specific language and cultural issues;
- Recognising the importance of both informal networks and more formal community organisations;
- Consulting with small groups of people with common interests, taking place in a non-threatening environment in which people feel able to raise issues of importance to them.

R10 That the Office of Housing or other designated body provides information in an accessible and easy to read format and from an early stage about the 'big picture' of a redevelopment and planned relocations, to assist local services and workers in providing better client service and planning and developing their services for the future.

R11 That the Office of Housing provides *all* tenants on an estate with clear and accessible information about the scope and timing of a redevelopment project at an early stage, acknowledging that tenants may wish to be informed even if they do not have to relocate or will be relocated in later stages.

R12 That, building on the experience of the relocation of tenants from the Kensington estate, the Office of Housing provides information about relocation/redevelopment by letter personally addressed to tenants and via interviews, supplemented by other methods, recognising that tenants may wish to receive information from more than one source.

R13 That, as identified in both the SIS and Office of Housing client satisfaction surveys, the Office of Housing ensures coordination with offices in areas to which relocated tenants will be moving to enable maintenance and other problems to be addressed in a timely manner.

R14 That the detailed suggestions made following the previous evaluation of relocation of tenants from 72 Derby Street (Project Partnerships 2001: 66-75), as refined by the findings of the SIS, be adopted and written up as a 'good practice guide' for relocations associated with estate redevelopment, to be made publicly available to guide other relocation projects both in Victoria and more generally.

Chapter 6

Social Impacts of the Redevelopment on People and Families

This chapter charts the social impacts of the redevelopment to date on residents of Kensington: those who moved away during the relocation process ('relocated tenants'), those who continue to live on the estate ('current tenants') and residents of surrounding areas ('local residents'). These were affected in varying degrees by different components of the redevelopment: relocation of, demolition of the walk-up flats, refurbishment of the remaining high rise towers, and the start of construction on the new units. The research findings are based on detailed interviews with relocated and current tenants and the survey of local residents. The focus here is very much on individual people and families. Chapter 7 examines the social impacts of the redevelopment more generally on the Kensington community.

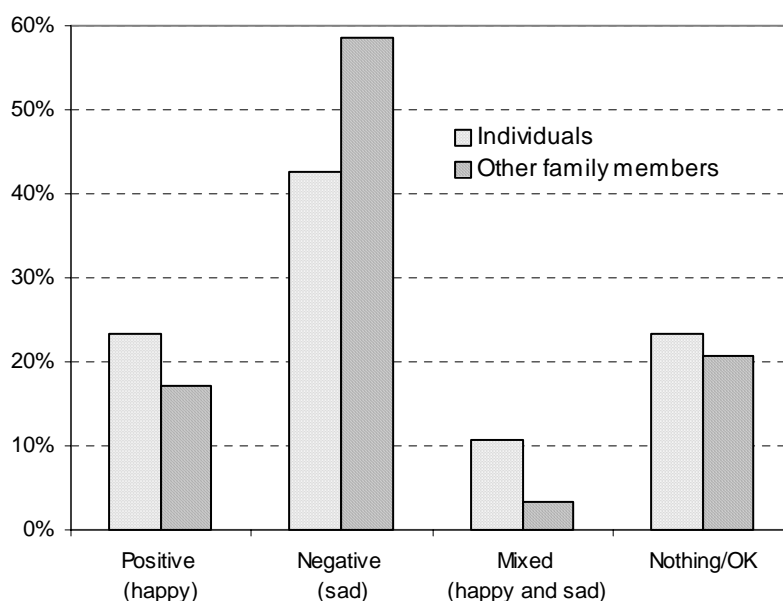
6.1 Relocated tenants

The previous chapter reported on the views of relocated tenants and others on the relocation process. This chapter investigates what it was like for tenants and their families leaving the estate, their experiences of living in their new place, and what it is like living in their new place compared to living on the Kensington estate.

6.1.1 Feelings about leaving

Relocated tenants expressed differing feelings about moving from the Kensington estate. A quarter had positive feelings about leaving, more than four in ten reported negative feelings, and one in ten said they had mixed feelings, as shown in Figure 6.1. A quarter said that they had no strong feelings about moving.

Figure 6.1: Feelings expressed by relocated tenants about leaving the Kensington estate



Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04; individual respondents: n = 47; other family members: n = 29.

Those who said that they had had positive feelings explained this in a number of ways, including moving on with their lives and leaving behind people and a place associated in their minds with drugs and safety problems:

I felt like thanks God because making it better – horrible people not come back. Better than it was before.

Look forward to another adventure.

Those who expressed negative feelings used words like 'sad', 'loss' and 'miss' to describe how they felt:

I was sad. Been half my life on the estate. Didn't have many friends on the estate, but had been there for so long.

Sad because for me it was not only moving but my sister and other relatives moved into different areas.

Very sad, I miss the feeling living there with friends, the surrounding park.

Some also spoke about how other family members felt about moving, particularly their children. Of those who talked about how other members of their family felt, most (58 per cent) said that they had experienced negative feelings. The most common words used to describe their feelings were 'sad', 'upset' and 'unhappy':

Kids were so sad. Still daughter says she wishes she could come back.

My daughter cried. She was sad. She had trouble adjusting and wants to go back.

My daughter was devastated. One son moved to North Melbourne. He wasn't impressed – he wanted to stay in Kensington. Both sons had been so involved in Kensington. They wanted to be in Kensington.

Unhappy. They missed friends, school and the environment.

They [sons] were excited about the house, but by the second week they missed their friends and the way it was in Kensington.

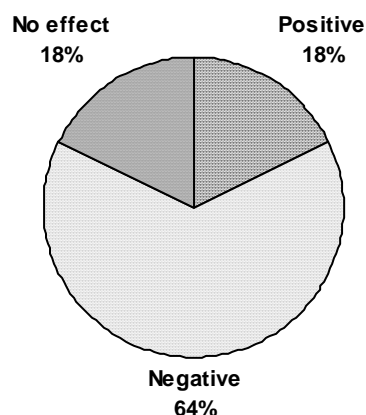
Six (13 per cent) said that relocation had led to a change in their living arrangement, with their partners or children now not living with them as they had done on the estate:

My family has been torn apart. If we had stayed there we would have been together.

6.1.2 Effects of moving

Relocated tenants were also asked about the effects on them and their families of moving. More than six in ten nominated at least one negative effect, 17 per cent reported a positive effect and a further 17 per cent reported no particular effect, as shown in Figure 6.2. Many talked about their feelings rather than the practical effects of moving to their new place.

Figure 6.2: Relocated tenants' views on the main effects of moving to their new place



Source: Interviews with relocated tenants; n = 47

Positive effects were primarily associated with the type, size, quality or amenity of the new accommodation or were about people, either moving away from those on the estate who were seen as undesirable or liking the people living around them in their new place. People reported feeling 'happy' about these effects of moving:

For me I was happy to move here. New house is comfortable. Also the children were happy to move here.

Much better – more quiet, more friends around you.

Happy to be with other families.

Happiness to be out of there.

Those who reported negative effects most commonly talked about 'loss' of something or someone that they had valued, as outlined in Table 6.1. The most common loss concerned people, mentioned by almost half, referring both to loss of friends at Kensington and living amongst people now whom they do not know or find unfriendly:

Table 6.1: Negative effects from being relocated

Negative effect	Number	Percentage
Loss because of people – lost friends, family, unfriendly people, don't know people	13	45%
Loss in services/facilities	8	28%
Emotional or physical health problems (including unhappiness)	7	24%
Loss because of change in location (proximity to things)	6	21%
Loss because loss of contact with groups/community	4	14%
New house unsuitable/worse than previous	3	10%
More expensive	2	7%
Other negative effect	6	21%

Source: Interviews with n = 29 people reporting negative effects due to the relocation
 Note: People interviewed were able to nominate more than one negative effect

I try to talk to people here – don't even smile back. I go back to Kensington all the time.

I came here [Kensington] when I was six. The whole surroundings, my children had grown up here, it was my home.

I moved to a lonely area. I lost the family doctor I used to go to, I lost friends. I feel depressed.

Not comfortable for all of us – school, shopping, childcare, health services and transport.

Relocated tenants were asked specifically about the financial effects of living in their new place. 70 per cent said that they had extra expenses compared to when they lived on the Kensington estate. This referred mainly to having to pay bills, particularly for water, which tenants did not have to pay for on the estate, but also bills for electricity and gas. A third reported that they had had to purchase new fittings, furniture or appliances, particularly a washing machine and a dryer. A third also reported that they had additional transport costs, because of using more petrol or being in a different zone for public transport.

6.1.3 Living in current housing/area compared to the Kensington estate

There were significant differences between what relocated tenants liked about living in their new place and what they had liked about Kensington, as outlined in Table 6.2. Relocated tenants nominated a number of aspects of living in their new place which they liked. Very few, however, mentioned that they liked its proximity and, of those who did so, all but one were living in inner city suburbs: Kensington, North Melbourne or Carlton. No-one mentioned the facilities and services available, whereas many had liked these in Kensington. Fewer mentioned liking the people and community in their new location compared to when living in Kensington.

Table 6.2: Relocated tenants' 'likes' about living in their new place compared to the Kensington estate

'Likes' nominated by relocated tenants	Before relocation (Kensington estate)		After relocation (new place)	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Proximity	39	62%	5	11%
Facilities and amenities	25	53%	0	0%
People and community	12	28%	3	7%
Area/aesthetics	12	28%	14	30%
Aspect of own flat/house/building	5	11%	23	50%
Generally liked it (no specific comment)	2	4%	3	7%
Fine/OK/used to it (no specific comment)	2	4%	2	4%
Liked nothing	3	6%	7	15%

Source: Interviews with relocated tenants; n = 46 (one person did not respond).

Note: Relocated tenants were able to nominate more than one aspect of living in their new place that they liked.

On the other hand, relocated tenants were much more likely to say that they like their accommodation now (50 per cent) compared to when they lived in Kensington (11 per cent). They commented positively about the increased size and having larger or more rooms. Other 'likes' about the new accommodation were that it was cleaner, newer, had a backyard, a garage or a laundry. People from large families were often pleased with the size of their new home, and there were also a few cases of singles liking their one bedroom accommodation, rather than the bedsitter they lived in on the Kensington estate:

We were lucky enough to have a brand new unit with three bedrooms. We like it very much.

Better accommodation now, better living environment.

Backyard – grandsons can visit – can sit outside.

Has own laundry. Washing machine and dryer supplied here. No drugs.

It is close to all facilities, buses, shops, trams. It is more private. I like the situation out the front, the trees.

Several commented specifically on the new area being quieter, safer and having more privacy. There was also an increase in the number who liked 'nothing', from 6 to 15 per cent.

Table 6.3: Relocated tenants' 'dislikes' about living in their new place compared to the Kensington estate

'Dislikes' nominated by relocated tenants	No of households	Percentage
Inconvenient (far from shops, public transport, facilities etc.)	14	30%
Children dislike/not good for children	10	21%
No community/friends	7	15%
Aspect of the flat/house	7	15%
People in new area	6	13%
Generally dislike	3	6%
More expensive	3	6%
Noisy	2	4%
Other	3	6%
Disliked nothing	10	21%

Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003 –04; n = 47.

Note: Relocated tenants were able to nominate more than one dislike.

What relocated tenants disliked about their new place was also quite different to their dislikes whilst living on the estate. Before moving, the most disliked features concerned crime and safety, particularly drug related issues, and the physical state of the buildings, as highlighted in Chapter 4. After moving, the main dislikes were lack of proximity to shops, public transport and facilities, and the area as not being good for children, as shown in Table 6.3. Ten people disliked nothing about where they live now, compared to five who said this about living in Kensington:

Far from transport, shopping centre and schools. Lost families and friends.

I dislike the traffic, I feel isolated, because it's not close to a lot of amenities – the parks, the city. It's too far from everywhere.

The only family person with kids – no kids in the area. Have to take tram for someone to chat or play with.

Issues of proximity made a difference to forms of transport used by relocated tenants for their day to day living. All except one (98 per cent) made use of at least one form of public transport while living on the estate, whereas after moving this reduced to 75 per cent. More said that they travelled by car and fewer said that they walked or used the train or the bus, as shown in Table 6.4. Relocated tenants were more likely to own a car than current tenants¹ both before and particularly after relocation, which can in part be attributed to being younger and having to take children to various places.

¹ 21 of the relocated tenants (49 per cent) owned a car when they lived on the estate, with two more owning a car after relocation (53 per cent). Only a quarter of current tenants (26 per cent) own a car.

Table 6.4: Relocated tenants' use of different forms of transport for day to day activities before and after relocation, compared with current tenants' transport use

Transport type	Relocated tenants before relocation		Relocated tenants after relocation		Current tenants (present use)	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Walked	27	57%	15	33%	23	38%
Car	14	30%	28	60%	11	18%
Tram	21	45%	21	46%	14	23%
Train	32	68%	18	39%	36	59%
Bus	39	83%	31	67%	36	59%
Taxi	1	2%	4	8%	5	8%
Bicycle/scooter	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%

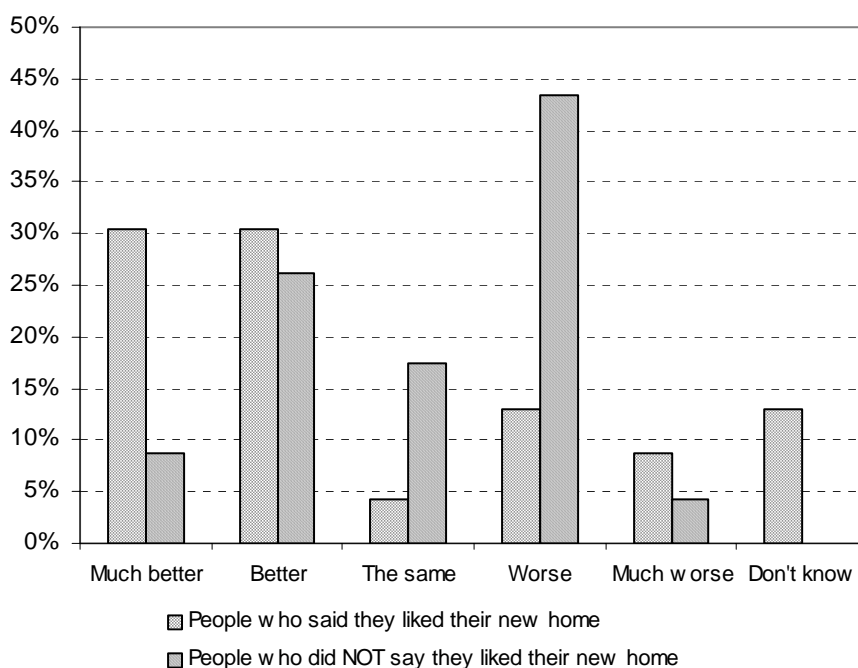
Source: Interviews with relocated tenants and current tenants 2003-04; n = 47 for relocated tenants before relocation and n = 46 for relocated tenants after relocation (one person did not answer this question); n = 61 for current tenants.

Note: More than one mode of transport could be nominated.

6.1.4 Overall assessment of living in current place compared to the Kensington estate

We also gave relocated tenants an opportunity to comment on whether, taking all things into account, it is better for them and their family now than when they lived in Kensington. Despite the negative effects and experiences associated with moving related by many relocated tenants, almost a half said that overall they were better off or much better off, with more than a third saying that they were worse or much worse off, as shown in Figure 6.3.

Figure 6.3: Relocated tenants' overall assessment of living in current place compared to when they lived on the Kensington estate



Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04; n = 47

The main factor associated with whether people considered themselves better off overall was whether they liked their current flat or house. Those who liked it (50 per cent) were generally positive about their current place, particularly those who had moved from a flat to a house or from a smaller to a larger dwelling. Those who did not mention that they liked their flat or house were much more likely to say that it was worse for them living where they were now, as illustrated in Figure 6.3.

6.2 Current tenants

Current tenants who remained on site were also directly affected by the redevelopment. In this section, we examine the effects on current tenants of the demolition of the walk-ups, the refurbishment of the two high rise towers, and site and building works on the rest of the cleared site. The impacts on current tenants of the relocation of tenants from the walk-ups in terms of changes to friendships and social interaction are discussed separately in section 6.4.

6.2.1 Demolitions, refurbishment, site and building works

Nearly half of current tenants said the **demolition of the walk-up flats** had had no effect on them, with two saying that the demolitions had been positive, improving the area and giving better views from their flat. Just over a half of all current tenants who had lived on the estate prior to the demolitions reported a negative effect, mainly due to dust, dirt and noise, as shown in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5: Current tenants' comments on whether they were affected by the demolition of the walk-ups

Effect of demolition of walk-ups	No of households	Percentage
No effect	22	47%
Positive effect	2	4%
Negative effect	24	51%
<i>Types of negative effect:</i>		
• <i>Dust/dirt</i>	17	35%
• <i>Noise</i>	13	27%
• <i>Emotional/physical health effect</i>	3	6%
• <i>Had to move flats</i>	2	4%
• <i>Other</i>	4	8%

Source: Interviews with current tenants 2003-04; n = 47.

Note: Current tenants could nominate more than one effect:

Dusty – need to clean inside flat and common hallways frequently to keep clear of dust.

I went doorknocking in stage three, and some people just hadn't thought about it – thought it wasn't really going to happen even though units were being demolished. The first block came down – I used to live in – I just sat there crying – that was my home.

Current tenants were much more likely to report having been affected by the **renovation work on the high rise towers**² rather than the demolition of the walk-ups, with 75 per cent saying that this work had negative effects on them. The main problem reported was noise, and then dust and dirt. Some also reported other negative effects that stemmed from these factors, such as effect on health, having to leave during the day and not sleeping, as shown in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6: Negative effects reported by current tenants due to the renovation works on the high rise towers

Effects of high rise renovations	Number	Percentage
Noise	37	61%
Dust/dirt	18	30%
Emotional/mental/physical health effect	6	10%
Have to leave during the day	5	8%
Affects sleep	3	5%
Problems with lifts	3	5%
Unsafe	2	3%
Other construction issue	2	3%
Other	10	17%

Source: Interviews with current tenants 2003-04, n = 61

Note: Current tenants were able to nominate more than one effect of the renovation works.

Many current tenants felt strongly about the impacts of the renovation:

Affected sleep. Access to building – getting in and out more difficult. Would spend all day in park regularly to escape noise during first six months. Noise – especially early in morning. Disruption by remodelling inside affected ability to socialise.

My children can't go outside alone, the dust is giving us a hard time. The whole estate looks bad.

The noise, the racket was horrific. This place was a mad house. I'd never go through that again.

For some, the effects were less severe:

A little bit noisy, but do not complain.

Sometimes noisy – mother gets a bit stressed at times – occasionally.

Current tenants were asked if anything could have been done to make things easier for themselves or other residents. 40 per cent said that there was nothing that could have been done better, a further 35 per cent said they were unsure or thought that

² Substantial building works are being carried out to refurbish the remaining two high rise towers. Many of the current tenants interviewed live in 94 Ormond Street where the works included two new lifts and lift lobbies, new foyer and entry porch, new communal laundries and a guard/concierge post (Minister for Housing 2002).

perhaps some things could have been better but could not think of anything specific, and 12 per cent thought that everyone should have been moved out of the building and moved back after the works were finished. Specific suggestions were for more information and consultation, better handling of work on the lifts and laundry, and a later start to construction works:

Community laundry could have been done better. Machines out of order and haven't been serviced for months.

Consulting the residents that are living here. The new lifts were confusing at first.

I think so. I don't think they're being upfront about what's going on. Could tell us what's going on – like when they're going to move us back.

It would have been better to move everybody out and redo and bring everybody back. It wasn't right. Where have they gone, the people from the high rise that they knocked down?

In contrast to the strong negative impacts of building works associated with renovation of the high rise, current tenants were relatively unaffected by **building works on the adjacent site** (i.e. the new units). 75 per cent said that these had no effect on them. Only 12 people reported negative effects, mostly dust, dirt or noise.

6.2.2 Living on the estate before the redevelopment compared to now

We asked current tenants what they liked and disliked about living on the estate before the redevelopment and now, and compared the responses, as shown in Table 6.7. Current tenants were more likely to report liking the area and aesthetics now compared to before the redevelopment with almost half (47 per cent) making comments about this. A few more current tenants mentioned liking the people and community now compared to before the redevelopment:

Table 6.7: Current tenants' 'likes' about living on the estate now compared to before the demolitions

'Likes' nominated by current tenants	Before demolition of the walk-ups began		What tenants like now (at the time of interview)	
	No of households	Percentage	No of households	Percentage
Proximity	24	49%	13	22%
Area/aesthetics	15	31%	28	47%
Facilities and amenities	7	14%	9	15%
People and community	7	14%	11	18%
Aspect of own flat/house/building	6	12%	6	10%
Generally liked it (no specific comment)	11	22%	8	13%
Fine/OK/used to it (no specific comment)	4	8%	8	13%
Liked nothing	2	4%	5	8%

Source: Interviews with current tenants 2003-04; current tenants living on the estate prior to the demolition of the walk-ups was n = 47; current tenants living on the estate now n= 60.

Note: Current tenants could nominate more than one 'like'.

I have a very nice comfortable flat here. I have some very nice friends. I have my pet. I'm never lonely.

I like the area, the surroundings, community centre and many other things. It is nice to live in Kensington estate, especially if the flat is new.

I like the landscape. I like the view. I like the atmosphere of Kensington, it's nice. People are friendly, there is a sense of community. Creates a positive view – you have the sense things are improving.

Before the redevelopment, current tenants had nominated crime and safety and the physical state of the buildings as the aspects of the estate they disliked most, as highlighted in Chapter 4. When asked what they disliked about living on the estate now, construction issues were by far the most pressing issue, as illustrated in Table 6.8. A third disliked nothing about the estate. Those who disliked something now referred mainly to the noise, dirt or dust associated with the renovation works and the state of their own flat:

Table 6.8: Current tenants' dislikes about living on the Kensington estate now

'Dislikes' nominated by current tenants	Number	Percentage
Their own flat	10	17%
Dirt/dust	9	15%
Noise	9	32%
Other dislike about the redevelopment	7	12%
Problems with the Office of Housing	4	7%
People on the estate	3	5%
Maintenance issues	2	3%
The empty estate	2	3%
Other	9	15%
Nothing	20	33%

Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04, n = 60

Note: Current tenants could nominate more than one dislike about living on the estate.

Architecture; inconvenience – for example, shutting lifts down. Cut down trees for redevelopment. Flat too small. Older people being harassed to move. House – constant works. Redevelopment taking too long. Effect on old people – noise echoes through building.

I don't dislike the neighbourhood, it's just the noise and the dust we have a hard time with.

Don't like walking down the street. Dislike room. Bedsits are the dregs in comparison to other forms of units.

Many people living here are old people, I am young. Worn carpet creates dust by itself. If you have one guest dining here, where is your dining room? I collect my bed, put it there [on the floor] because I have no place.

Twelve people had moved onto the estate during the redevelopment, and their experiences the redevelopment varied. Most were positive about the estate, describing it as 'good' or 'great', whilst others made comments similar to those of the current tenants who had lived there prior to the redevelopment:

Depressed – too much noise – jackhammers. Almost asked to be moved – had to leave during day to escape noise.

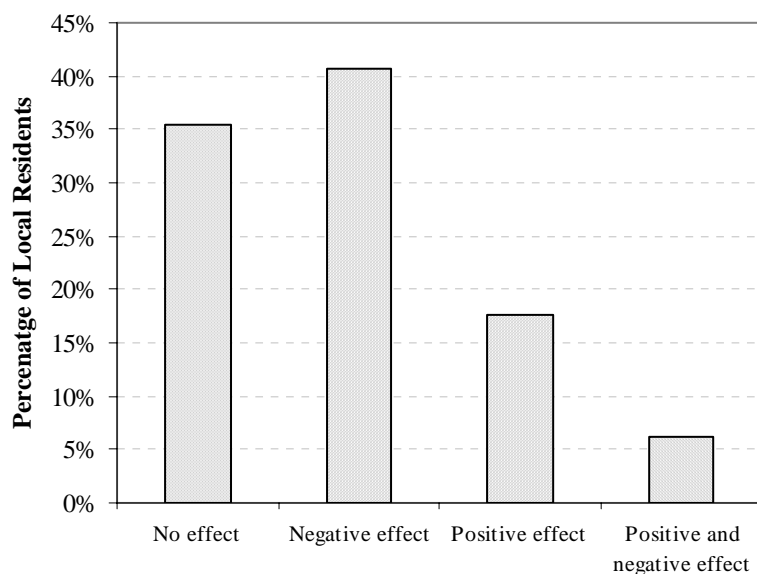
I said they should change people's accommodation until they had finished the job. I'm not against development but I think they should think about people living here.

Lifts – couldn't get access. At first glad to be housed, then raw sewage through toilet and shower [pipes not connected properly]. Angry, frustrated – affected mental health – led to collapse. Thick dust on window sills. Hard to keep windows closed. Cough.

6.3 Local residents

Almost two-thirds of local residents said that the redevelopment had directly affected them or their families, with just over a third reporting no direct effect. More than four in ten reported only negative impacts, almost one in five only positive impacts, and a few (6 per cent) a mixture of positive and negative effects, as indicated in Figure 6.4.

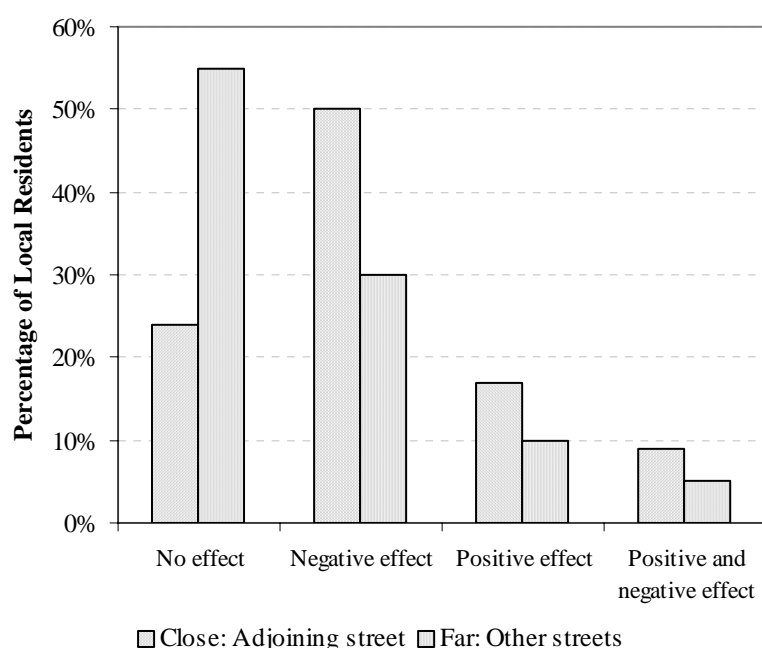
Figure 6.4: Local residents' comments on how the redevelopment has affected them and their families



Source: Survey of local residents; n = 98

People living in streets adjoining the estate were more likely to report that the redevelopment had affected them or their family, as shown in Table 6.5. Adjoining streets were defined as either those that border the estate (Kensington Road, Altona Street, Ormond Road, Derby Street) or those that will be continued into the new estate (Henry Street, Gower Street, Wolseley Parade).

Figure 6.5: Impact of the redevelopment on local residents by street location



Source: Survey of local residents; n = 96 (two people did not give a street address and have been excluded).

Note: An independent samples t-test also demonstrated that those living close were significantly more likely to have had an affect on their lives ($F = 17.05, p > 0.05$).

Half of local residents who responded to the survey (47 per cent) nominated at least one negative effect of the redevelopment on them and their families. Negative effects centred on four aspects: changes to people and community, construction activities, environmental effects, and impact on traffic and parking, as illustrated in Table 6.9. For some local, these were relatively minor impacts such as hearing distant noise, whereas for others the impact was much more dramatic such as having to leave the house during the day, disrupted sleep patterns, or high levels of stress or distress.

Table 6.9: Local residents' views on whether and how the redevelopment has affected them or their families

Negative effects on local residents and families	Number	Percentage
Changes to people/community	26	27%
Construction Issues	21	22%
Changes to surroundings	11	11%
Effects on traffic	10	10%

Source: Survey of local residents, n = 96

Note: Local residents could make more than one response.

More than a quarter of local residents mentioned a negative impact on people and community, such as loss of community or loss of diversity, Kensington becoming another 'yuppie' suburb, loss of families with children and effect on schools, and loss of business for local traders:

Some friends, community characters have been forced to move out of the area.

The relocation of families has meant that the primary school where my daughter attends has reduced numbers. This will result in a funding cut next year which means class sizes will increase.

Yes, our school numbers have decreased and the fantastic diverse cultural mix has dwindled.

Almost a quarter of local residents said that they had been negatively affected by construction on the site. The most common complaint was noise, with almost all people who reported noise problems living on streets immediately adjoining the site. Dirt and dust were also problematic for some, and a few mentioned the number of trucks in the area because of the construction:

The noise emanating from the development has at times been unbearable.

The renovation of remaining towers has been extremely noisy, which we find stressful.

Living directly opposite the noise and dirt has been an inconvenience. Heavy vehicles and power tools early in the morning on weekends.

Other negative impacts concerned changes to the appearance of the area and environment. Several commented that the new buildings look ugly, and comments were also made about loss of trees and open space:

I think it's a bit sad that they are replacing it with a boring housing estate that looks like everywhere else.

I'm disappointed with the high density of redevelopment and poor taste of the redevelopment. The place is going to be an eyesore.

Only in minor ways – sad to see so many mature trees sacrificed [after promising to keep]. The buildings going up don't seem to conform with the original vision.

Proposed Altona Street development will impact on Kensington crèche – overshadowing plus noise while children trying to sleep – parking will become a real issue by the crèche and community centre.

A number of people also mentioned problems of traffic and parking:

It is now impossible to get a park close to my home. Having recently had a baby this has become a major problem. Will parking for the redevelopment be implemented?

24 per cent of the residents said that the redevelopment had had a positive impact on them or their families, mainly fewer problems with drugs, safer, and increased property values. A few had young children who enjoyed watching the construction, and one found that the television reception had benefited from the removal of the high rise tower:

Since the demolition the trouble makers and drug users have gone – yippee!

Made streets safer. Removed drug issue.

Not really – the building creates a lot of free entertainment for our three year old.

I believe it's a really positive step for the whole community. I feel much more comfortable taking walks around the suburb.

6.4 Friendships, support and social connectedness

This section examines whether, and to what extent, the relocations affected friendships and social connectedness both for those who moved and those who continued to live on the estate. Social connectedness refers both to informal networks and support (family, friends, neighbours) and more formal support from community and other agencies.

6.4.1 Social connectedness: relocated tenants

Relocated tenants were asked about the type and level of support they received whilst living on the Kensington estate and what sort of support they receive now. Most reported significant levels of informal support from other people when living on the estate, but this appears to have decreased dramatically after moving away, as shown in Table 6.10.

Table 6.10: Relocated tenants reporting receipt of informal support before and after relocation

Type of informal support	% of those interviewed receiving support whilst living on the Kensington Estate	% of those interviewed receiving support now (living elsewhere)
Help with babysitting [^]	69%	26%*
Help with everyday tasks like shopping and laundry	65%	28%*
Support with social or recreational activities	81%	43%*
Having someone to talk to if need this	83%	49%*
Knowing someone well enough locally to help out in an emergency	81%	39%*

Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04; n = 47

[^] Several people reported that their children had now grown up or moved away

* Highly significant reduction (<.01) (based on results from paired samples *t*-tests)

Relocated tenants also reported reductions in getting support, or feeling that they could get support, from local organisations or agencies in their new area, with the exception of a number who maintained contact with ethnic community organisations. The greatest loss of support was from churches, services for children, community health and government agencies. Some relocated tenants still returned to Kensington to use services, most notably community health or GPs, services for children and community welfare agencies, as indicated in Table 6.11.

Table 6.11: Relocated tenants reporting support from agencies and organisations before and after relocation

Agency	% of relocated tenants reporting support when on the Estate	% of relocated tenants reporting support after relocation	% of relocated tenants still accessing support from Kensington services*
Church	30%	11%**	9%
School	38%	26%	15%
Other services for children	26%	7%**	30%
Community health or GP	81%	41%**	70%
Government agency	38%	9%**	21%
Community welfare agency	28%	13%	27%
Ethnic organisation	30%	22%	22%

Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04; n = 47

* It must be kept in mind that 11 per cent of relocated tenants were still living in Kensington after relocation

** Highly significant difference (<.01) (based on results from paired samples t-tests)

Prior to their move, 49 per cent said that they belonged to local organisations whereas, after they had moved, only six people belonged did so, two of these being people who had moved within Kensington and four living in North Melbourne where they belonged to groups for people from Horn of Africa communities. 58 per cent considered overall that their involvement with local people and organisations was less or much less, with only 8 per cent having more or much more involvement.

6.4.2 Keeping in touch after the relocations

62 per cent of the relocated tenants still maintain contact with people living on the estate or other parts of Kensington. Of those who keep in touch in this way, 24 per cent maintain contact with people on the estate only, 44 per cent keep up with people living elsewhere in the Kensington area, and 31 per cent maintain contact with both.

60 per cent of relocated tenants said that maintaining contact with people in Kensington was very important to, and 28 per cent said it was somewhat important. Only 12 per cent said that this contact was not important to them.

53 per cent of relocated tenants still kept up with other relocated tenants, and for 75 per cent of these people, this contact was very important to them:

I look forward to it every week – have outings and afternoon tea at neighbour's house. My husband's friend lives down the road. Since they've moved here, have become my friends – [they] also dislike how unfriendly it is here.

It is important to me and I am sorry to lose the contact with some friends.

Very important. With migrants – have a lot of difference from the white community. Important to have communication with community.

Fewer than half (43 per cent) of relocated tenants were able to keep up with other relocated tenants as much as they would like. The main reasons cited were the increase in distance, not having their contact information, and having difficulty finding time with a family:

Lost touch with a lot of people. Because before I would walk to people or places or bump into at the shops. Now phone is necessary but relationships were not phone based.

Because of the distance. Both sides are discouraged by the idea of travelling to visit each other.

Could visit after work – but now it's hard – kids go to sleep and I'm alone.

30 per cent of relocated tenants had lost touch with people who were important to them. When asked what this had meant to them, all these people said that they missed the people they had lost touch with, or that they had lost friends, with the exception of one person, who said it was OK, and one other person who was not bothered by it:

Absence of people who were friendly to me and accept me as I am.

It means much to lose friends.

Lack of company, lack of child minding facilities and support.

Several people had suggestions as to how keeping in touch could be made easier for them, with most suggestions centring around a means of obtaining people's contacts:

Advertising that I would like to be contacted by some other residents, with the same interests.

Provide a book that contains name and address or new contact number of the residents so that when somebody wants to keep in touch, they know how to find the information.

Many of the current tenants living on the estate were elderly (see Appendix 1) and some appeared to have fewer social connections than the relocated tenants. Nevertheless, 43 per cent of current tenants who had lived on the estate prior to the redevelopment said that they still keep in touch with some of the people who left. This contact was mainly with friends, with a few keeping in touch with family members or both friends and family. For 55 per cent of those still in contact, this meant keeping in touch with people who moved nearby, although 25 per cent kept in touch with people who had moved elsewhere, and 20 per cent maintained contact with both those who lived close to them and people who had moved elsewhere.

Most of the current tenants (70 per cent) who kept in contact with people who had left the estate said that this was very important or somewhat important to them, whilst just under a third of those keeping in contact with relocated tenants said that this was not important to them.

6.5 Summary

The research found that moving from the Kensington estate evoked strong emotions for many relocated tenants in addition to their perspectives on the practical aspects of the relocation process, discussed in the previous chapter. Some expressed positive feelings of happiness or relief, whilst more expressed negative feelings of sadness, loss or unhappiness. A few had mixed feelings. Relocated tenants reported that their children had been particularly affected, with many feeling sad or unhappy.

In more practical terms, about a half of relocated tenants liked their new accommodation, particularly if this was bigger, newer or had extra facilities. Their main dislikes were lack of proximity place to transport, shops, facilities and services compared to living in Kensington. Some had also incurred unanticipated additional expenses. Overall, almost a half of relocated tenants said that they were better off now than when they had lived in Kensington. This was much more likely if their new accommodation was bigger, of higher quality and had more amenities. Those who were unhappy with moving missed family, friends or neighbours and also the proximity and services/facilities available in Kensington.

Tenants remaining on the estate reported mainly negative effects from the building works, although this was primarily from renovation of the high rise towers rather than demolition of the walk-ups or construction of the new units. They were particularly affected by the noise, dust and dirt associated with construction activities, which sometimes had led to mental or physical health problems. These concerns were very immediate and pressing, leaving little opportunity to reflect on broader changes.

The redevelopment has also directly affected about two-thirds of local residents, particularly those living in streets immediately adjoining the estate. Half of the local residents reported at least one negative effect, mainly concern about loss of people due to the relocations and concern about changes to the Kensington community, such as loss of diversity. Others were also affected by the noise, dust and dirt associated with living near a building site. Some reported positive effects, mainly in terms of improved safety, fewer problems with drugs and higher property values.

For relocated tenants, moving meant a distinct lessening of social connectedness, both informal support and from community agencies and organisations. Some continued to return to Kensington, particularly to see a family doctor or health service. Some friendships continue, although people have been separated by the relocations. More than six in ten relocated tenants keep in touch with people who had remained on the estate or who live in Kensington. A lower, although still significant, percentage of current tenants keep in touch with those who left, particularly those who still live nearby.

Some of the issues raised by residents are explored in greater detail later in this report, particularly the impact of redevelopment projects on community (Chapter 7) and issues around staying or moving during major refurbishment and redevelopment projects (Chapter 8).

6.5 Recommendations

The following recommendations for future relocation projects build on reflection and learning about what worked well at Kensington and about areas for improvement raised during the SIS.

R15 That, in recognition of the emotional responses evoked by relocation, the Office of Housing, in conjunction with the relevant local council(s), continues to develop improvement strategies for communication with tenants at a time when they also face many practical issues around moving, including:

- Training for staff, tenant groups and others in communicating with people who are experiencing a range of emotions such as anger, distress and sadness;
- Providing relocated tenants with opportunities to 'debrief' in groups shortly after moving, using trained and experienced facilitators;
- Resourcing local community organisations, including tenants groups and ethnic community organisations, to run social functions to which groups of relocated tenants are invited, enabling informal discussion of the effects of moving as well as maintaining social connections;
- Securing funding for an arts or similar project in which relocated tenants, if they wish, can record their experiences of leaving the estate, as in the successful 'relocated' arts project at Kensington, and also relate what happened to them in the first year after moving to their new place.

R16 That the Department of Human Services continues to provide, and improve, training in cultural awareness for its staff and other people involved in relocations to enable better understanding of the particular impacts of involuntary relocation upon those who have come to Australia as migrants and refugees, sometimes having already experienced forced relocation.

R17 That the Department of Human Services engage an experienced person for a short project to develop and recommend best practice for situations where children and young people relocate with their parents or other family members but may have little or no say in decision making, having due regard to cultural and other issues. This might include:

- Advice from local schools about children's experiences and behaviours during a relocation process;
- Assistance available for children and young people and their families in dealing with issues around moving;
- Recommendations on timing of relocations involving children, such as at the end of a school term or school year;
- Practical advice on how to change schools;
- Means of inviting and encouraging tenants to bring their families with them to discussions about relocation.

R18 That the Office of Housing and other agencies involved in relocations continue to develop practical means of enabling relocated tenants to keep in touch with their friends and neighbours after moving, if they wish. These could include but are not restricted to:

- Social functions and celebrations on the estate, including some for specific groups such as young people;

- A website providing current information about progress on the redevelopment, information about social events, opportunities to see display units etc.;
- Use of e-mail where people give their permission to be included in a distribution list, to provide information about opportunities for relocated tenants to come to social and other events, and for relocated tenants to post their own messages.

R19 That the Office of Housing provides information (in major languages, where relevant) to tenants who are to be relocated about the practical implications of moving to different accommodation types, including:

- Arrangements for payment for water and other utilities,
- Services provided by local governments such as rubbish collection and recycling, including the provision of local government 'information packages';
- Availability of relevant support services in their new area, particularly in respect of health and general practitioner services, including how to change to another service.

R20 That the Office of Housing develops tools to assess individual preferences about moving or staying during a major renovation or redevelopment project, such as a brief summary of factors that tenants may wish to consider in making their decision that could be informed by asking some relocated tenants, with the benefit of hindsight, to outline factors that they consider to be important.

R21 That people living in buildings which are to undergo major renovations be given an opportunity to move out temporarily, if practical and if they wish, prior to works commencing, and that they be given clear and accurate information about the works, including likely noise levels, disruption to lifts and expected duration, to assist in making a decision.

R22 That the Office of Housing or other designated body provides regular information to all those directly affected by building works (including current tenants and surrounding residents), from an early stage, about the nature of the work (renovations, demolitions or new construction), how long it will take, likely disruption to residents, and who to contact if there is a problem from the beginning of a redevelopment project.

Chapter 7

Social Impacts of the Redevelopment on the Kensington Community

This chapter examines the impacts on the shops and businesses, schools and services, and community organisations that constitute the social infrastructure of Kensington, as well as the perspectives of Kensington residents on how the project has affected the community. As the redevelopment project will not be completed for another four years (2008), the research can only look at the impacts that have occurred so far, which are mainly attributable to people moving from the estate.

The research findings set out in this chapter are based on interviews with relocated and current tenants, the survey of local residents, interviews with traders in the local shopping strip, interviews with people working with a variety of community groups and agencies in Kensington, and Census and administrative data. The purpose of the chapter is to improve understanding of the social impacts that a large redevelopment project can have on an inner suburb like Kensington and to highlight some issues for consideration as the project proceeds. The findings should also enable formulation of strategies to address negative impacts in any redevelopment projects in the future.

7.1 Changes to the number of households and people living on the redevelopment site 1996-2003

Stage two of the redevelopment project involved the demolition of 378 dwellings (flats) and relocation of 330 households¹ off the site, households that included more than 900 people. Some additional households and people also moved off site due to reconfiguration and renovation of the two high rise towers.² A few households also left, making their own arrangements. Overall, there was an estimated decrease of about 390 households and 1,276 people on the site between 2000 and 2003 during stages two and three of the project, as shown in Table 7.1. The cumulative effect of all stages of the redevelopment 1996-2003 is estimated as a decrease of about 500 households (over 1,500) people from the site.

¹ There were 347 relocated households, but 17 were relocated to the two high rise towers and are included in the figures on site in 2003.

² No accurate data are available on the number of households/people relocated in this part of the redevelopment.

Table 7.1: Profile of households and people living on the redevelopment site, 1996-2003

Date	Households	People
1996 (prior to demolition of 72 Derby Street).	640*	1826
2000 (after demolition of 72 Derby Street).	538	1545
2001 (midway through relocation of tenants from the walk-ups).	286*	705
End 2003 (after stage two – relocations and demolition of walk-ups).	153**	250 (est.).
Change 2000-2003 (stage two).	-385	-1295 (est.).
Cumulative change 1996-2003 (stages one and two).	-487	-1576 (est.).

Sources: Data for 1996 and 2001 are from the ABS Census of Population and Housing. Data for 2000 and 2003 are calculated from Office of Housing administrative data.

* Census data on households in public housing typically under-enumerate such households.

** Office of Housing administrative data indicated 153 tenanted properties in late 2003. Some units in 56 Derby Street and 94 Ormond Street were vacant due to the renovations and reconfiguration of the accommodation in these buildings.

Some households were relocated to accommodation in other areas of Kensington in both stage one and stage two of the redevelopment, but accurate data are only available for stage two in which 29 households were relocated to other public housing in Kensington off the redevelopment site. This implies that 301 households were relocated from the walk-ups to other suburbs.

Reductions on this scale, although temporary, in the number of public housing tenants and their families living in Kensington could be expected to have a large impact on local businesses, schools and services and the local community more generally. The situation is complicated, however, by quite rapid changes in the rest of Kensington at the same time.

7.2 Changes to people and households living in the rest of Kensington during the redevelopment project 1996-2001

In the five years to 2001, the number of households living in the rest of Kensington increased by almost 900 and the population by 2,000 people, as shown in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2: Profile of households and people living in the rest of Kensington, 1996-2001

Date	Households	People
1996	1822	4148
2001	2707	6154
Change 1996-2001 (rest of Kensington)	+885	+2006
<i>For comparison only</i>		
Change 1996-2003* redevelopment site (stages one and two).	-487	-1576(est.).

Source: ABS collection district data 1996, 2001

Increases in the number of households and people in the rest of Kensington 1996-2001 were mainly due to additional dwellings in new developments such as Kensington Banks. In raw numbers, increases in the number of households and people living in the rest of Kensington were greater than the decrease in households and people who moved from Kensington due to the redevelopment project.

The biggest increases were in the number of households living in semi-detached and attached housing and, to a lesser extent, in flats and units rather than separate detached houses, as shown in Table 7.3. In terms of tenure, the largest increases were in the number of households buying with a mortgage or renting privately. Not surprisingly, in view of the number of households moving into new developments such as Kensington Banks, the percentage of those who had lived at the same address for five years or more decreased significantly.

Table 7.3: Summary of changes in housing type and tenure, rest of Kensington, 1996-2001

Housing type and tenure	Number	1996 (%)	Number	2001 (%)
Households by dwelling type:				
Separate houses	846	42%	925	29%
Semi-detached etc.	797	39%	1,511	48%
Flats/units	182	9%	369	12%
Tenure:				
Owned outright	464	26%	601	21%
Households purchasing with mortgage	537	30%	900	32%
Households renting privately	577	32%	968	34%
Transience:				
Lived at same address five years ago	1,504	40%	1,725	31%

Source: ABS collection district data

There were, however, substantial differences in the profile of those who left the estate due to the relocations and those moving into other areas of Kensington. Prior to the redevelopment, there had already been differences in the profile of estate residents compared to residents of the rest of Kensington, as discussed in Chapter 4. The key differences were greater percentages of families with children, much greater cultural diversity and a higher level of economic disadvantage experienced by those living on the estate.

Between 1996 and 2001, significant changes occurred in the rest of Kensington, not connected to the redevelopment, highlighted in Table 7.4.

Table 7.4: Key changes in the rest of Kensington, 1996-2001

Key changes	1996 (N = 4,148)	1996 (%)	2001 (N = 6,134)	2001 (%)
Population:				
Pre-schoolers aged 0-4	247	6%	365	6%
Children and young people aged 5-19	494	12%	682	11%
Young adults aged 20-34	1,569	38%	2,582	42%
Adults aged 35-54	1,153	28%	1,731	28%
Older people aged 55 and above	670	16%	774	13%
Type of household:				
Sole and two parent family with children	500	27%	817	28%
Couple without children	429	24%	770	27%
Other family	58	3%	100	3%
Group	206	11%	348	12%
Lone person	629	35%	833	29%
Cultural diversity:				
People born overseas	1,144	29%	1,533	25%
People speaking a language other than English at home	921	24%	1,311	21%
Employment and economic status:				
Household incomes in the lowest quartile	452	27%	464	19%
Household incomes in the highest quartile	490	29%	930	38%
In paid employment	2,238	61%	3,777	70%
Out of workforce or unemployed	1,359	37%	1,360	25%
In managerial/senior positions	1,206	54%	2171	58%
Education level:				
Completed university level education (as % of adults aged 20 year and over)	1,036	31%	1,782	35%

Source: 2001 Census collection district data

In summary, the main changes in the rest of Kensington were:

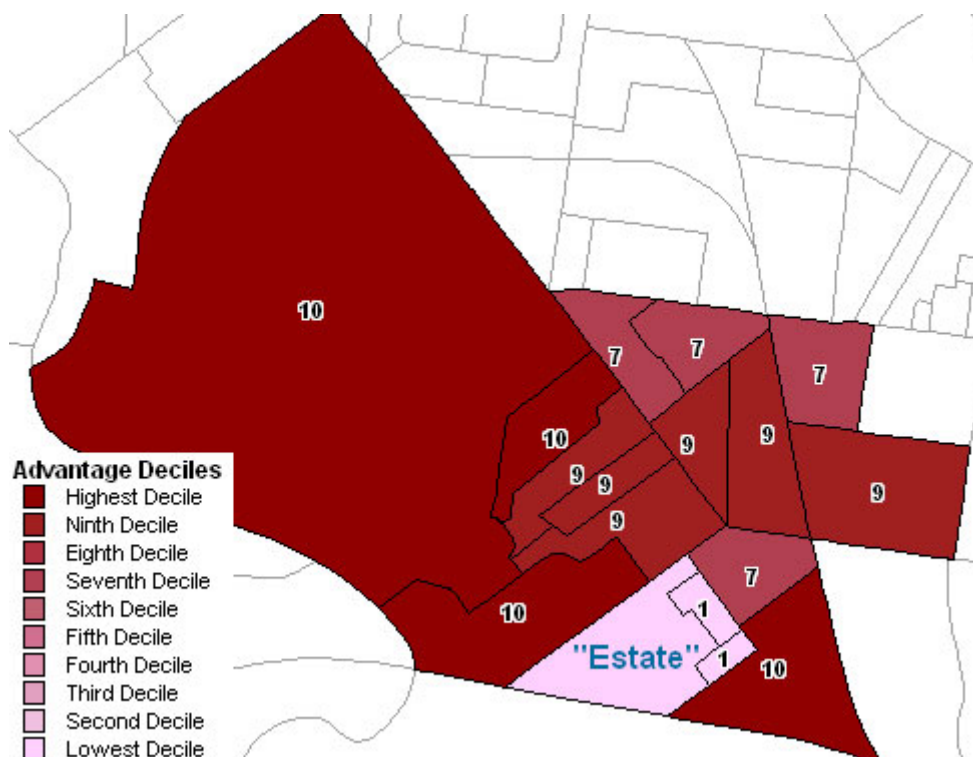
- An increase in young adults (aged 20 to 34) and a corresponding increase in the number of couples without children and some increase in families with pre-school children;
- A decline in cultural diversity;
- A sharp decline in low income households and a corresponding increase in households with high incomes;
- An increase in people with university qualifications and in professional and managerial jobs.

In other words, the demographic and socioeconomic profile of people moving into the suburb was very different to that of the public housing tenants who moved out of Kensington as a result of the redevelopment. Local shops and businesses, schools,

services and community organisations were thus faced with two major changes affecting the suburb at the same time:

- Reduction in households living in public housing (characterised by families with children, significant cultural diversity and lower household incomes);
- Increase in households in the rest of Kensington (characterised by young adult couples, some with children, less cultural diversity and higher household income).

Map 7.1: Relative socioeconomic advantage/disadvantage for collection districts in Kensington, 2001



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2001, collection district data.

Notes: The Index of Relative Socioeconomic Advantage/Disadvantage is calculated by ABS and ranks collection districts in terms of both advantages and disadvantages. A collection district with a low decile in this index indicates higher proportions of people in low skilled jobs, on low incomes, etc. than those with higher skilled jobs and incomes.³

The effect of these changes is shown graphically in Map 7.1 which indicates that by 2001 the estate area ranked in the lowest decile in terms of relative socioeconomic advantage/disadvantage (this was part way through the relocations), whilst all other areas of Kensington ranked in the upper deciles of this index. The remainder of this chapter assesses the social impacts of the redevelopment on the social infrastructure of Kensington, within the context of changes to the rest of the suburb.

³ The median index number for the Melbourne Statistical District in 2001 was 1035 while Kensington has a higher median of 1141 (which, as an aggregate for Kensington, falls into the ninth decile). The only collection districts that fall below the midpoint are the three that comprise the public housing estate; other collection districts in Kensington are well above the median for the Melbourne Statistical District. In 1996, the median index score for the Melbourne Statistical District was 1007 and for Kensington was 1039, which placed it in the seventh decile.

7.3 Impacts of the redevelopment on local traders and businesses

Kensington's businesses and shops are located in a strip shopping centre along Macaulay Road and Bellair Street. It is a small, local shopping centre, and many of the businesses are owner occupied. The main shopping centre includes a number of cafes that have opened over the past five years, three small supermarkets, takeaway food outlets, a fresh fruit and vegetable shop and a service station/car repair workshop. There are a number of gift shops, a couple at the top end of the price range and one at the lower end. Relatively new to the area are the increasing number of real estate agents, with three in Macaulay Road and a property information and display centre. East of the railway line along Macaulay Road and away from the main shopping strip are other small businesses such as car smash repairers, a small industrial estate and wholesalers.

7.3.1 Public housing tenants' use of the local shops

Previous research for the Kensington Estate Redevelopment Strategy indicated that about half of both estate residents and residents of the rest of Kensington used the local shops. It also reported the shopping patterns of estate residents were more local and less dispersed than for other Kensington residents, although 43 per cent of estate residents shopped at Footscray (Perrott Lyon Mathieson 1999c: 40).

Interviews for the SIS found that a higher percentage of relocated tenants (79 per cent) than in the previous study said that they had used the local shops when they lived on the estate, with many shopping at Footscray (68 per cent) and Racecourse Road Flemington (53 per cent), as shown in Table 7.5. Current tenants also shop at these three locations, but lower percentages in each case.

Table 7.5: Shopping patterns for tenants living on the Kensington estate

Shopping precinct	Relocated tenants – then		Current high rise tenants – now	
	N	%	N	%
Kensington shops	37	79%	36	59%
Footscray	32	68%	29	48%
Racecourse Rd, Flemington	25	53%	23	38%
Moonee Ponds	1	2%	3	5%
Victoria Market	10	21%	1	2%
Other (Aldi, Gower St, Brunswick, City, Ascot Vale, estate milk bar).	2	4%	4	7%

Source: Interviews with relocated and current tenants 2003-04; Relocated tenants n = 47, current tenants n = 61

Note: People were able to give more than one response and everyone gave at least one response.

Although higher percentages of relocated tenants said they shopped at Kensington when they lived on the estate, they had more dispersed shopping patterns than current residents, with 64 per cent saying they shopped at more than one place whilst living on the estate, compared to 39 per cent of current tenants. Only 17 per cent of relocated tenants shopped only at Kensington when they lived on the estate, compared to 30 per cent of current residents. This difference can be attributed to many relocated tenants being families with children, whilst many of the current

tenants were older and lived on their own. It is likely that relocated tenants were more mobile and had to go to different places anyway in association with their children's activities, needed to buy in larger quantities at affordable prices, and needed dietary and other items to meet cultural requirements that were not available locally.

Relocated tenants reported a very high level of usage (92 per cent) of the Kensington shopping centre for other day-to-day business such as using the post office, compared to 77 per cent of current tenants, as shown in Table 7.6. Relocated tenants had also used Footscray and Racecourse Road Flemington for other business but not to the same extent as for shopping.

Table 7.6: Use of centres for daily business other than shopping by tenants living on the Kensington estate

Business precinct	Relocated tenants – then		Current high rise tenants – now	
	N	%	N	%
Kensington shops	43	92%	47	77%
Footscray	20	43%	17	28%
Racecourse Rd	18	38%	10	16%
Moonee Ponds	0	0%	2	3%
Ascot Vale	3	6%	0	0%
City	1	2%	3	5%
Other (North Melbourne, Brunswick, Union Rd, Collingwood, Carlton).	3	6%	3	5%

Source: Interviews with relocated and current tenants 2003-04; Relocated tenants n = 47, current tenants n = 61

Note: People were able to give more than one response and everyone gave at least one response.

Relocated tenants had a slightly more dispersed pattern for doing other day-to-day business compared to current tenants. Half of relocated tenants (51 per cent) said that they had done their other business only in one place, mostly in Kensington (41 per cent). Almost seven in 10 current tenants (69 per cent) said that they used only one place for other business, mostly only in Kensington (53 per cent).

Given these patterns of usage, what impacts did the relocations have on local shops and businesses?

7.3.2 Impacts of the relocations on local shops and businesses

Interviews were conducted with 39 businesses in Macaulay Road and Bellair Street. Most had been trading in Kensington between five and 13 years, with a quarter having been trading for less than three years.

A significant number of business operators said that the number of customers had dropped since the demolition of the flats and relocation of tenants. This was felt most by the milk bar on the estate, food stores, small supermarkets, a fresh fruit and vegetable shop, takeaways, and a couple of car repair workshops that had had a significant number of local customers. Estimates of this downturn in custom ranged from 15 to 70 per cent:

In 2000 I had four to five people working here. Now there are only two and still there is not enough work. The majority of my business was from the flats. People had old cars. Also the maintenance people on the estate came here. But no-one spoke to me about the flats coming down or what impact it would have on my business. Someone should have taken this into account (car repairer).

When we lost the butcher it made a huge difference to fruit and vegies. Then the public housing people were among our best customers. We dropped about \$300 to \$400 per day. Kensington Banks has not helped business. They don't seem to come this way. We're just breaking even now. We had to take a drop in our wage and it's almost the same level as a pension (fresh food shop).

Our shop has been here about 20 years. Business certainly went down over the last couple of years. We used to have one full-time as well as part-time staff. Now we are just a husband and wife team. We received a letter from the Office of Housing that people would be relocated. But there was no consultation about any potential business problems (takeaway food shop).

We have had a 15 to 18 per cent drop in business which has been dramatic. We used to do a lot of home deliveries to the flats but not any more. They used to be our regular shoppers. Everyday little things. Deliveries during pension week used to be about 12. Now it's only about six. Milk has dropped. You can really tell with milk (small supermarket).

Other businesses had noticed a change in demand associated with the relocations but had been able to adapt their businesses to the changing population:

There has certainly been a downturn in business that is just picking up in the last few months. Before, on pension day, people would do big shopping. Now people only do bits and pieces. Buying habits have changed along with the customers. We used to get big families and pensioners. Now we get workers on the way home from work (small supermarket).

The street and business is a lot quieter now. We have a lot of corporate clients – a side which has grown – while the welfare accounts have dropped off (post office).

We thought there would be a severe downturn in the script area but it was not as big as we thought. About five years ago we used to do about 30 home deliveries in that area but now there are only a few. The change has been less in the volume of custom than in buying habits (pharmacy).

People come back here, even from St Albans. How frequently they come depends on the issue. But there are definitely changes to the area though. Two to three years ago some of the shops were empty. They could not rent them out. Now they are all filled. It is lively and busier now because of the cafes. And it's busier at night too (Chinese medicine clinic).

A third group of businesses, notably the cafes, had only been established within the last five years and were not reliant on public housing tenants and so were not affected by the relocations.

7.3.3 Shops, businesses and a changing community

The local shopping centre was, and still is, important for public housing tenants who do not have public transport or who, for other reasons such as age or disability, find it difficult to get around. A number of businesses said that they had had long-term, free home delivery systems for people living on the estate. One still does free home deliveries to some relocated tenants in Footscray and other western suburbs.

Some local business operators considered that a combination of the relocations and other changes in the rest of Kensington were affecting not only the nature of their business but also the local community. Some missed the 'old' Kensington:

Thirty-five years ago the flats were built. They were not rich people who lived there but they spent their money in Kensington. The relocation affected every business. People may have been poor but they still spent here, locally. They may have only spent a small amount of money each time but they still spent it here. Since they have pulled the flats down, something is missing. There is less money around and we also miss the people. The community was very, very close. Thirty-five years is a long time (hairdresser).

Others have adapted to the changes. For one local hotel, about 40 per cent of its clientele was public housing tenants but this has now changed:

The clientele base has changed. When I first started here six years ago there were no wine glasses. It shut at 7 pm. It was a mess. Grilles on the windows, they were small and opaque, hardly any furniture, the beer was too dirty to drink, no food was served and hardly any women drank here. The change in the [hotel] was written up in a newspaper article once as, it 'used to be bars on the windows and blood on the footpath. Now it's all food and jazz on a Sunday'. That's the change. And now there's a high percentage of locals coming here from all over (hotel proprietor).

The cafes, particularly, appear to have benefited from the changes in the rest of Kensington. Nearly all are open at weekends, with one saying that they employ two floor staff during the week but four of five over Saturday and Sunday.

A number of businesses did not feel that the changes to the rest of Kensington over the last decade have benefited their business. For a few, this was because the changes had brought increased competition:

Kensington began to be seen as a 'fashionable' area but the increase in real estate agents in the area has reduced the slice of the pie for some and so business has declined a bit (real estate agent).

Others felt that new people coming into Kensington are more mobile and less likely to shop locally. A business that closed during 2003, one of several, was concerned that people with higher disposable incomes were not spending their money locally. In response to this, a participant at an SIS meeting held in February 2004 suggested that Kensington residents needed to start a program of 'shop local or lose it'.

7.4 Impacts on community agencies and services

Kensington has a variety of community agencies and services, many of which were originally established in response to the needs of people living on the public housing estate, particularly migrants and other families with children (Hoatson et al.1996). Work for the Kensington Estate Development Strategy (1999) suggested that the redevelopment would have implications for many local services and agencies. In particular, concern was expressed about the viability of neighbourhood children's services and the two local primary schools (Perrott Lyon Mathieson 1999c: 36):

the Holy Rosary Catholic School...attracts the most pupils from the estate. Some 112 or 56% of the 200 pupils attending this school live on the estate and some 34 from elsewhere in Kensington. It is too early to tell yet whether the school will attract newcomers' children in private housing. Young families moving into the area, along Bayswater Road, go out of the area to school...

The Kensington Primary School attracts some 65 or 35% of its 200 pupils from the Estate and another 29 pupils live elsewhere in Kensington (Perrott Lyon Mathieson 1999c: 31).

Chapter 4 of this Report highlighted the number of children living on the estate prior to the redevelopment. It could be anticipated that the relocations would affect agencies and services in the area, particularly those serving the needs of families and children and those from non-English speaking backgrounds.

7.4.1 Immediate impact on services/agencies

Schools

The two local primary schools had been an important part of the community for many, many years.⁴ Kensington Primary School was known for, and celebrated, its cultural diversity and, in particular, had accommodated children from families from Horn of Africa communities who had moved onto the estate during the 1990s. It was a focal point for the local community, with families using the school grounds on the weekends and adult classes held there at night. The Holy Rosary Catholic Primary School was likewise a very important part of the community. It attracted many children from the public housing estate from diverse backgrounds, particularly children from Vietnamese families. During interviews for the SIS, many people spoke spontaneously of their high regard for these two schools.

Both schools had small enrolments and were thus vulnerable to sudden changes. Prior to the relocations, Kensington Primary School normally had a population of about 220 students and the Holy Rosary Catholic Primary School had about 210 students. Approximately a quarter of the students at Kensington Primary School were affected by the relocations, mainly during 2002, and numbers at the Holy Rosary School decreased to 140 for the beginning of 2003. Kensington Primary School was also affected by families transferring a number of children to Islamic schools in the aftermath of the events of 11 September 2001. These decreases posed challenges for both schools since the number of enrolments determine budgets and staffing levels, and more resources are allocated for students with special needs.

⁴ Kensington Primary School was established in 1881 (National Centre for Australian Studies 1989) and the Holy Rosary School in 1915 (Perrott Lyon Mathieson 1999c: 31).

At the instigation of the CLC and, in particular, its chairperson, Kensington Primary School was given transitional assistance by the Education Department. Instead of losing two or three teachers, as had been feared, there was a reduction of only half a teaching position. The school community experienced a period of uncertainty whilst waiting for enrolments to improve:

There has been a perception that the school is under threat. Parents have fears about the impact of this upon their children. There was a sense of the school community feeling more fragile and open to negative perceptions. We have had to work hard to turn that around (Kensington Primary School).

The Holy Rosary School is dependent on federal funding, which is allocated on a per student basis, and fees from families, and did not get any special financial assistance. It lost funding due to the relocations, as well as many intangibles including continuity of teaching:

For three years we have had people on contract, which is unusual for our system. We just did not know what each year would bring and what we could offer the teacher. Part-time teachers wanting full-time work left for secure full-time positions. It also depleted our skill level because staff moved on where they could to more secure employment. More time and money has also had to be put into professional development in order to skill up new staff (Holy Rosary Primary School).

Services for children and young people

Work for the Kensington Estate Redevelopment Strategy highlighted the important role of the **Altona Street Maternal and Child Health Centre**⁵ in providing advice, assistance and referral, particularly for disadvantaged new families living on the estate. This suggested that 360 children from the estate used the centre (60 per cent of all children assisted), many of whom came from a non-English speaking background (Perrott Lyon Mathieson 1999c: 29). Not surprisingly, the centre reported a substantial drop in clients as a result of the relocations, including about three-quarters of its Horn of Africa families. The service was reduced from four to three days early in 2003.

The **Kensington Turkish Childcare Cooperative** was founded in 1983 to meet specific needs of Turkish and other non-English speaking families. It operates a small service, licensed to take 29 children. Families belonging to the cooperative came from the estate and nearby areas such as Footscray, North Melbourne and Fitzroy (Perrott Lyon Mathieson 1999c: 29). Children from the estate contributed to the high level of cultural and linguistic diversity that was at the heart of the service's philosophy; parental contribution to the centre had also been high.

The number of children using the centre decreased to around 18 during the period of the relocations. This stems from both the relocations and more general changes to

⁵ The Melbourne City Council had established this service in 1966 specifically in response to the arrival of families in the walk-ups on the public housing estate (Perrott Lyon Mathieson 1999c: 29; Hoatson et al. 1996). Several small childcare services supported by Melbourne City Council, including the Henry Street Childcare Cooperative, have since amalgamated and moved to the premises in Altona Street.

childcare regulations and government assistance.⁶ The service receives its funding on a per capita basis, such that a loss of children results in a funding decrease:

Change is rapid in such situations and services are often unable to maintain a continuous or quality service, making it hard to ride out the rough patches. There are also implications for resources and for maintaining quality staff and programs. You throw a small pebble into the pond but the ripple effects go on and get bigger (Turkish Childcare Service).

The cooperative attempted to use its available people more efficiently. A cook/cleaner position was removed and the remaining staff took on this extra work. The agency began to make more use of permanent staff rather than taking on casuals. Fees also had to be increased, although only slightly.

The **Kensington Community Children's Cooperative** ran a two-sessional kindergarten and daycare service.⁷ Half of the kindergarten children and many of the 105 children in daycare came from the estate prior to the redevelopment. Many parents from the estate used the daycare whilst they attended English classes (Perrott Lyon Mathieson 1999c: 29). The number of children attending the kindergarten dropped to 15 by the end of 2002 due to the relocations, and there was also a temporary drop in children in daycare:

The majority of the families from the flats were in our kinder. Culturally for many it was not OK to leave babies, but kinder was OK because it was considered as educational and as advancing language skills. More than 50 per cent of our kinder children came from the flats, but now it's different and the make-up of the centre has changed substantially (Kensington Community Children's Cooperative).

The kindergarten and daycare adjoins the estate (in Altona Street) and was also affected by the demolition works:

The noise was bad. The dust was a major factor. Asthmatic children were kept inside. And many of the parents were panic stricken about asbestos during the demolition. Also we had to brief the drivers of the long trucks with diggers who often had to back down our street (Kensington Community Children's Cooperative).

The **Kensington Adventure Playground** ('the Venny') offers a free, creative, supervised play space with risk taking for children five to 12 years of age, and was the 'backyard' for many of the children from the estate. It was established in 1981-82 primarily for children for the estate and is open 348 days of the year. Prior to the relocations, 80 per cent of children using the playground were from the estate, with a core group of about 42 coming up to four times per week. Now few of these are able to return and maintain links with this service:

⁶ There is now a 20 hour per week limit for those who are not studying or working, and nett fees payable have increased despite the introduction of the Childcare Benefit.

⁷ In 1997, the Henry Street Childcare Cooperative, which had been established in the 1980s and supported by the Melbourne City Council, amalgamated with other smaller childcare services and relocated to new premises to become the Kensington Community Children's Cooperative in Altona Street.

When the flats came down, the most telling for the kids was the unknown. They were concerned that there would be no adventure playground where they'd be going. Some were absolutely distressed (Kensington Adventure Playground).

Young people from the Kensington estate made up the majority of the **Doutta Galla Community Health Centre's** Youth Worker's workload. This position provided a service for people 11 to 24 years of age for North Melbourne, West Melbourne and Kensington. This workload dropped significantly during the relocation process, with some groups halving in number or even dropping by up to two-thirds. The youth worker had to renegotiate work plans and agreements with various funding bodies as most of his work and objectives had featured working with youth from the estate. This change in direction also brought about closer work with schools:

We weren't able to have a process for linking the youth into new services. Kids left the programs virtually overnight. No-one asked the tenants whether or not they wanted to continue contact with services or continue to be on mailing lists. We had homework programs, drop-in programs and arts programs, and the estate young people had made up the majority of my workload. The teenage holiday program is about half now [mid-2003] and the homework program is about a third now of what it was (youth worker).

The **Kensington Community Centre** had been established since 1974-75 and was originally managed by a community committee (until late 2000), with quite a number of estate residents involved over the years in management. In recent years, not connected to the redevelopment, management of the centre was tendered out and the YMCA now operates the facility as a recreation centre. It still runs after-school programs, free homework program for primary and secondary students, low cost music lessons and sculpture and pottery. The relocations appear to have affected the number of teenagers, in particular, using the centre:

The after-school programs such as soccer and basketball are more popular now than they were two years ago, although there has been a severe drop in teenagers' numbers. The areas of build-up have been in the adult area (18 years and older) and in the pool area. There was once an exercise class for elderly but that has been put on hold for lack of numbers and an inability to compete against Ascot Vale leisure centre's 'Pryme Movers' (Kensington Community Centre).

The **Kensington Neighbourhood House** was established by a group of women from the estate and was a focus for many community activities, including regular meetings of an Elderly Indo-Chinese and Vietnamese Group, made up primarily of residents from the estate. Other activities include a Friday morning walking group, 'Do Weights' for older people, a Wednesday afternoon women's group and activities such as quilting and art. The house also runs an occasional childcare program (initially a long daycare service).

Others

Other services that did not have such a specific focus on the Kensington estate appear to have been much less affected by the relocations.

The **Macaulay Community Credit Cooperative** covers a broader area than most of the services discussed above. The impact of the relocation of tenants was minimal,

with perhaps a 1 per cent decline in general membership, but no major adjustments were required to the services provided. The cooperative operates as a not-for-profit bank which enables low income families to conduct their everyday banking without incurring fees or charges. There may, however, have been an effect on relocated tenants if they had to transfer their banking to mainstream financial institutions.

The **Flemington/Kensington Community Legal Service** also covers a broader area than some of the services discussed above. They are involved in individual casework and, while a significant part of their client base comes from public housing, they were not significantly affected by the relocations and have enough work covering the Flemington area.

Wombat Housing Support Service had a number of flats on the Kensington estate that served as transitional accommodation for single people and families. Many families who were recently arrived in Australia occupied these flats. Wombat provided support and sometimes monetary assistance to these households as well as others from the estate. The relocation of households has not resulted in a substantial shift in issues or service users for them, possibly due to the emergency and crisis nature of their work.

7.4.2 Adaptation and change: beyond the immediate impacts of the relocations

The last families were relocated from the walk-ups in October 2002. After the initial impacts, agencies and services have started to adapt and, in some cases, have broadened their services to cover either a different geographic area and/or a different socioeconomic group than previously, to accommodate the 'new' households moving into Kensington. For some this involves a fundamental change in direction and, whilst this type of adaptation enables them to maintain financial and service viability, it has posed its own challenges in terms of their values and service focus.

Kensington Primary School appears to be slowly increasing enrolments again, although this is a challenge for a number of reasons. During 2003, for example, the school lost another 10 children to Islamic schools. In 2003 there were 26 enrolments for Prep and in 2004 this increased to 37. Most of the enrolments are coming from within Kensington, and the school was able to extend the special agreement about funding with the Education Department to the end of 2004. The school has also done a lot of work in promoting itself to the local community and working in conjunction with organisations such as the Kensington Management Company. It is hopeful that some families from Kensington Banks are beginning to filter in, although the school's impression was that many of the households living there are dual income couples who do not (yet) have children.

Holy Rosary Primary School is confident that its numbers will rise. It looks forward to growth and knows it can cope as it has the buildings and amenities already there. For 2004 it has had an increase in Prep enrolments to 32, all coming from around the Kensington area. There are still challenges as the school expects to be affected in 2004 by some continuing small-scale relocations to enable the refurbishment of the high rise tower at 56 Derby Street. The school's experience of previous relocations is that Vietnamese families, in particular, are likely to take the offer of accommodation in the outer area rather than remain within the high rise. Holy Rosary Primary School has had to raise its fees by a quarter (\$100 per annum), which they consider to be very significant for low income families.

The Maternal and Child Health Service indicated that its number have remained fairly stable. There were 48 new births for 2003 but not a sense of a dramatic increase. The service also gets quite a few first time mothers (about 10 per cent) who move to other areas because their houses are too small once they have a baby.

The Turkish Childcare Centre is attracting increasing numbers of people from public housing in Ascot Vale, feeling that this is possibly due to its multicultural focus, its provision of halal meat and the fact that it is a small centre with high levels of interaction between parents and staff. Enrolments have increased to 26 for 2004, reflecting in part a shortage of childcare places more generally. Of these children, 10 are from Kensington, five from Ascot Vale, two each from North Melbourne and Moonee Ponds and then one each from other suburbs, mainly in the Western region.

Of major concern for the Kensington Turkish Childcare Cooperative is a threat to its core values: community based and multicultural. The feeling is that cultural and linguistic diversity is diminishing,⁸ which is quite confronting for a service based on this as its primary service aim:

Children from the flats used to mix well together – Turkish, Vietnamese, Spanish, Anglo. The parents were also very involved with the cooking and activities at the centre. That is not so much the case now. They still contribute, but before there were so many and different (Turkish Childcare Cooperative).

The Kensington Community Children's Cooperative has also more than recovered its numbers:

Since January 2002 the waiting list has got out of control. Kensington Banks has young professionals with children living there. Middle-class people who once bought houses cheaply in Kensington but had careers underway are now having families. We're two stops from the city by train and people drop their children off on the way to work. We have 10 to 20 people ringing for places every week. We need another centre (Kensington Community Children's Cooperative).

At the end of 2003, 50 of its kinder children moved onto primary schools, of whom only six did not attend local Kensington schools. For 2004 the centre is at full capacity with 50 enrolled in kinder (two groups of 25), 60 in childcare, and a waiting list of over 240 families for childcare, most of whom live in Kensington. As with the Turkish Childcare Centre, this increase in demand reflects an acute shortage of childcare places generally and, to some extent, the changing nature of the Kensington population, particularly more young couples with babies or toddlers:

In the late nineties there was a high multicultural population around here. Now there's not. Culturally the whole area has changed since the flats came down. Now our waiting list is mainly Anglo and those on quite high incomes (Kensington Community Children's Cooperative).

Following the relocations and its loss of young service users, the Adventure Playground sought to promote its facilities and programs in Ascot Vale and other

⁸ Of the 26 children at the centre following the period of relocations, 10 were from an Anglo background, seven from Horn of African, four from Vietnamese, two from Middle Eastern, two from Italian and one from Turkish backgrounds (interview with centre manager).

surrounding areas. By late 2003 the number of users was building up again, although the usage from those within Kensington had not reached previous numbers. The profile of children and young people had also changed:

It used to be all estate children. Now there are also middle-class children without backyards or whatever (Kensington Adventure Playground).

The Kensington Community Centre continues to develop its focus as a recreational centre. The YMCA which manages the centre understands this change to be consistent with moving with the industry, and is catering for more people from Kensington Banks. A gym may be built at the centre in two years time:

There is a loss of diversity to the community centre – as there is in the general area. The recreation centre tends to be mostly Anglo now and less representative of cultural diversity (local community worker).

In summary, the agencies and services that were most affected in Kensington were those which were very local and had specifically targeted estate families. By late 2003 and early 2004, it appeared that most agencies and services had begun to recover, some slower than others, by extending the geographic catchment for their services or altering service focus, or both.

Many of the people interviewed, however, talked about a sense of irrevocable change to Kensington, its residents, the users of services and the relationships between those services and residents. They talked about a 'loss' of socioeconomic and cultural diversity and an increase in people from an 'Anglo' and 'middle-class' background using their services now. Whilst the agencies themselves will survive, many of the people working with them regretted this change. The relocation of public tenants appears to have contributed to, and speeded up, fundamental change in the profile of service users.

7.5 Residents' perspectives on changes to the Kensington community

This section examines to what extent to the changes discussed above resonate with the people who live in Kensington, and their perspectives on whether, and to what extent, the relocations/demolitions have changed the Kensington community.

We asked public tenants who had lived on the estate before the demolition of the walk-ups and still lived there how they thought that the suburb had changed, if at all. 14 per cent had not noticed any changes and a further 27 per cent either said that they did not know or that things were different but did not specify what these changes were. Six in ten current tenants gave their views on changes to Kensington after the walk-ups were demolished. These referred mainly to changes in people, the surroundings and the local community as shown in Table 7.7.

Table 7.7: Changes to the suburb of Kensington noted by current tenants

Changes noted by current tenants	Number	Percentage
Changes to people	17	59%
Changes to surroundings	15	52%
Changes to local community	6	21%
Crime and safety issues	1	3%
Less drugs/drug related difficulties	1	3%

Source: Interviews with current tenants 2003-04, n = 29

Note: Current tenants were able to make one or more comments

Current tenants talked in terms of the lack of people around and loss of cultural and other diversity. Some talked about higher income and ‘yuppies’ moving into the area:

Yes. Since the Banks – say, in the last 10 years – there have been subtle changes in the community. Especially since the demolition. We don’t have so many different cultures and it is more Anglo-Saxon now. It has taken away that vitality.

Because of the name – Kensington. Three years ago, houses were below \$100,000, now over \$500,000. And because it belongs to the City of Melbourne now everything is refurbished – new park built. Lot of money. Younger generation want to come back here.

Half of those who commented noted differences to the area, with a number saying that the suburb is now quieter, and that the houses and surrounding were changed, or looking nicer. One also said that the area was looking ‘greener’, while another said that the surroundings were looking poorer than they had before:

Oh yes. It's getting neater. See, with all the drug dealing gone, it's nice – peace and quiet.

Less people, it's bit scary at night.

Views are becoming very terrible. Environment not clean. Not many tenants.

A few current tenants talked about changes to the local community, mentioning changes to the shops, and a couple felt a loss of sense of community:

When I first came here we had three shoe shops, butchers, two chemists. Now we have no shoe shops, one chemist, no butcher. We've lost that. Kensington is a dead loss. All these things were bad. Now they have coffees, so close together.

More than two-thirds (68 per cent) of local residents commented that there had been changes to Kensington, with the rest seeing no change or not commenting at all. Comments were made mainly about changes to people and local community, with some about change to the area and crime and safety issues, as shown in Table 7.8:

Table 7.8: Changes to the suburb of Kensington noted by local residents

Changes noted by local residents	Number	Percentage
Changes to people	35	55%
Changes to local community	27	42%
Changes to surroundings	17	27%
Crime and safety issues	10	16%
Construction Issues	5	8%
Other change	5	8%

Source: Survey of local residents 2003; n = 64

Note: Includes only those people who thought that there had been a change and who commented on what this was. Local residents could nominate one or more comments.

Local residents commented on the loss of public housing tenants, families, children and diversity, as well as gentrification and 'less friendly' people moving in. Two gave positive comments about there being more families and children:

Most of the housing estate people have moved out. Ethnic make-up of kids in the crèche has changed dramatically. Now mostly white Anglos.

Not so many people around – particularly miss some of the older people who used to live in the walk-up blocks.

In general, the friendliness seems less. Gentrification leading to less community cooperation and general civility and charity.

Yes. Far more hustle and bustle – power-dressed people who don't involve themselves with the Kensington Association unless it has direct effect on them only.

Another main area of comment was the changes to the local shops and shopping strip generally. Some of the comments were negative, such as shops struggling from the loss of people; others were positive about the cafes and other businesses setting up. Some talked about the negative impacts on crèches and schools, and a sense of 'loss of community' or 'community feel':

Enrolment reduction at local primary school. Few Somali residents in community.

Quieter. Less migrants – this is unfortunate that the communities were relocated.

Traders complain business is slipping. Less cultural diversity.

Shopping centre changes – different client group, quieter during week, few older people possibly. Lots and lots of pregnant women and young children now. Different type of shops, non-essential shops, which is OK.

Some local residents noted changes to the surroundings more generally, including that the suburb is quieter, the loss of trees and grassy areas, and the increase in new developments:

The redevelopment is short-sighted and absolutely no improvement realistically on the previous housing estate.

Crime and safety issues were mentioned by 10 people, primarily positive comments about a reduction in drug users and drug related people and an increase in safety:

Drug dealing has lessened. Family community feel has increased as people feel safer.

7.6 Summary

An estimated 500 households (1,500 people) moved from the Kensington estate between 1996 and 2003, as a result of different stages of redevelopment. Some moved to other parts of Kensington but most moved out of the suburb, although some will return in later stages. In raw numbers, the reduction was more than offset by a growth in the rest of Kensington, mainly attributable to new developments such as Kensington Banks. Underlying these aggregate figures, however, are fundamental changes to the socioeconomic profile of Kensington residents during the period.

The relocation of households and people on such a scale affected local shops and other businesses, although not all were equally affected. Those supplying basic goods and services required by low income households were most badly affected, with estimates of between 15 and 70 per cent downturn in business. Some were able to change their focus to meet the requirements of 'new' households moving into Kensington. There was also a group of businesses, particularly the growing number of cafes, which were either new or had not attracted clientele from the estate and were unaffected by the relocations. Some business operators missed the 'old' Kensington, whilst others focused mainly on other segments of the community.

Kensington had a number of services and agencies for children that had been established to meet the needs of families on the estate or for whom estate residents were a very important client group. Most experienced immediate and adverse impacts from the relocations, with the two primary schools amongst the hardest hit. Impact included reduced student/client numbers, loss of funding, increased fees, and need for cost savings such as reduced staff or hours of operation. Some recovered quickly, mainly for reasons unconnected to the redevelopment, such as the acute shortage of childcare places in the area. Others had to extend the geographic area they cover or refocus their service to include other groups in order to survive. By early 2004, all of the local agencies and services appeared to be recovering from the effects of the relocations if, in some cases, quite slowly.

Despite their organisations' survival, many people working with Kensington's agencies and services expressed a sense of 'loss' of community, particularly a lessening of socioeconomic and cultural diversity. They attributed this in part to the relocation of many public tenants out of the area and in part to other factors such as higher income people moving into other parts of Kensington. Local residents, including those who still live on the public housing estate, also commented on changes to the suburb, in many cases expressing regret at a lessening of both socioeconomic and cultural diversity. Some appreciated the safety and relative quietness that they attributed mainly to the relocations.

7.7 Recommendations

The following recommendations, based on learning from the SIS process, are intended to guide future redevelopment projects.

R23 That local businesses and traders be given information about the likely changes to the estate population during a redevelopment, detailing the number and type of households who will be relocated and the timing of the relocations, so that they can anticipate the impact on their customer base and turnover and adapt accordingly.

R24 That local schools, services and community agencies continue to be given advance notice about the timing and extent of relocations from an estate, detailing the profile of those who will move in terms of age, household type, cultural background, and estimated number of pre-school and school age children.

R25 That all local services, organisations and businesses be given information on the expected number and profile of people who will leave an estate, including the timing of this, and anticipated movement (back) of people onto the site, to facilitate their business and service planning.

Chapter 8

Issues Arising from the Redevelopment: Change Strategies

The social impacts of the redevelopment experienced so far, as discussed in previous chapters, have mainly been a consequence of a large number of people and households moving from the Kensington estate to live elsewhere. From 2004 some of these will return, and new households will move into private, and possibly public, housing units on the site. This chapter focuses on some current issues and projected social impacts as households move back to, or onto, the site as new units are handed over for occupancy and the refurbishment of the high rise towers is completed. It is based on interviews with relocated and current tenants, the survey of local residents, and discussions with a variety of people and organisations as a result of feedback on the preliminary findings of the SIS.

8.1 Issues for relocated tenants and people living on and around the redevelopment site

8.1.1 Moving back: relocated tenants

The 347 households who were relocated from the walk-up flats to other accommodation have the 'right of return' to Kensington.¹ This right is subject to reassessment of eligibility for public housing, and matching of the household with the size and type of property that they are eligible for under Office of Housing allocation policies. The order in which housing will be offered will be based on length of tenancy on the estate prior to the relocation (i.e. the longest-term tenants will be offered accommodation first) and special housing needs (Office of Housing 2004a, 2004b). The policy on returning to Kensington was developed in consultation with, and endorsed by, the CLC.

A key question is how many households will want, and be able, to return. This will depend on a number of choice and constraint factors including:

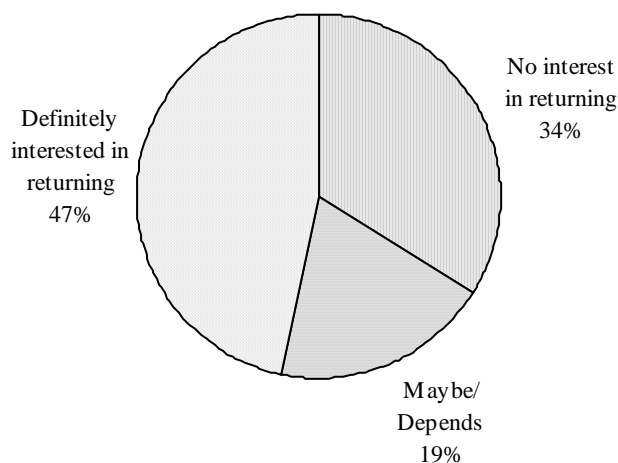
- Moving from the property they were relocated to and not being contactable;
- Not wanting to return because they prefer where they are living now or cannot contemplate another move;
- Being ineligible due to not meeting criteria on income and assets, e.g. having become employed or bought a house;
- Being ineligible for other reasons, e.g. outstanding rental arrears;
- Wanting to return but not able to be matched with properties on the site, e.g. they may require four bedroom or larger accommodation;
- Wanting to return but currently living in larger accommodation than they will be offered on the site under the matching guidelines;
- Change in household composition that affects the size and type of accommodation that they will be offered;
- Not being in a position to move when they receive the one offer of accommodation, e.g. because of children's schooling or health issues.

¹ Households relocated from 56 Derby Street due to the refurbishment and reconfiguration of units are not included in this policy; there will be a separate project for tenants returning to accommodation in this building.

Based on past experience, Office of Housing staff estimate that 20 to 25 per cent of relocated tenants will return to the original site (Office of Housing 2002b). An additional factor in terms of the Kensington redevelopment may be the length of time between relocation and when offers of accommodation can be made. At the time of writing (May 2004), relocated tenants have been living off the site for a minimum of 18 months and up to three and a half years. By the time that the last units are completed in 2008, they will have been away from the site for between six and eight years. It is likely that many households do not see their current accommodation as 'temporary' and will decide to stay, whatever their views on moving there initially.

Just under half of the relocated tenants interviewed for the SIS were definitely interested in returning, with a further one in five saying that they might be interested or that 'it depends', as shown in Figure 8.1. This is expected to be greater than for relocated tenants in general, as those participating in the SIS were likely to self-select based on interest in the redevelopment and returning to Kensington. They also included long-term tenants² who have very strong ties to Kensington, including one who moved onto the estate after it was built in 1963. Perhaps of more interest is which households were more likely to say that they wished to return, what their reasons were, and what issues they raised around returning.

Figure 8.1: Relocated tenants: interest in returning to the redeveloped site



Source: Interviews with relocated tenants; n = 47

Relocated tenants living with their children were more likely to show an interest in returning. The main reasons people were interested in returning were the proximity and facilities of Kensington, which as seen in Chapter 6 were highly valued, and for the sake of their children, as shown in Table 8.1.

² The mean (average) year of moving onto the estate reported by relocated tenants was 1992.

Table 8.1: Main reasons relocated tenants were interested in returning to the estate

Reasons nominated by relocated tenants	Number	Percentage
Convenience	15	48%
Facilities	13	42%
For children/children's services	9	29%
The area (better, more familiar with)	8	26%
Closer to family/friends	6	19%
The community/people	4	13%
Nicer/more attractive housing	3	10%
More suitable house	2	6%

Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04, n = 31 (those interested in returning to Kensington).

Note: More than one reason could be given.

Many of the reasons emphasised how much they liked living in Kensington:

Convenient location, familiar shopping places, more human contact. Hopefully the redevelopment will get rid of the drug traffickers.

I liked living here. Have local friends here, have sister living in Kensington. Just so close to everything – so central.

If it is nice and beautiful. Mum and brothers living there. Kids enjoy it – see uncles and aunties and grandmother. Can stay with family.

My roots. My daughters love it. Love the people around there [shops] – can get credit when down and out.

Amongst those who did have an interest in returning, 60 per cent had some concerns. These were almost all about whether they would be offered housing, and what sort of housing they would be offered:

I am not sure whether they will offer me housing or not because I heard that they are not building a lot of public housing.

Not sure what kind of house. Went to Becton meeting – public and private houses different inside – public housing less facilities – room sizes different. Would like to have same. Feel like not worth it.

There are not enough places for allocation of all of us. The priority would be for the aged and big families.

Of the third who definitely had no interest in returning, the main reasons were that they were living in better housing or did not want to move again:

Bad housing before. I don't want to move again.

I now have a good house with three bedrooms.

I am already established here in my new house.

Two-thirds of relocated tenants who had an interest in moving back said they would like more information about the redevelopment to assist them in making their decision, mainly updates about its progress, as shown in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2: Information wanted by relocated tenants interested in returning to the estate

Information wanted by relocated tenants	Number	Percentage
Updates about the progress of the redevelopment	20	65%
Information about returning/ return policy	8	26%
Information about everything	4	13%
Information about the houses	2	6%
Information about facilities	2	6%
Information about drug users on the estate	1	3%

Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04; n = 31

Note: More than one response could be given

All of the people who required further information wanted to receive this either by letter or by a newsletter. A few made additional suggestions such as face to face or telephone contact, going around display units or a tour.

49 per cent of relocated tenants were aware of what stage the redevelopment was at, having received this information from people still living on the estate, the Office of Housing or newspapers and newsletters, as shown in Table 8.3.

Table 8.3: Relocated tenants aware of progress of the redevelopment, means of getting information about what is happening at the estate

Source of information	Number	Percentage
Family or friends still living on the estate	12	52%
Communication from Office of Housing	11	48%
Newspapers/newsletters	10	44%
Having a look	4	17%
Other	2	9%

Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04; n = 23 (those who were aware of what is happening with the redevelopment)

Note: More than one response could be given.

Of the half (51 per cent) of relocated tenants who had not been keeping up with progress of the redevelopment, about two-thirds said that they would like to do this, mainly through direct communication from the Office of Housing, with a few expressing an interest in going back to have a look, in taking part in community events on the site or through communication from the tenants' group.

Overall, it is unlikely that most of the tenants who were relocated will return to the site as new units are constructed, although some have very strong attachments to Kensington and definitely want to return. For those who do return, and possibly 'new' households moving into public housing, the way in which they are welcomed (back) is an important part of community building and is considered in Chapter 9.

Strategies

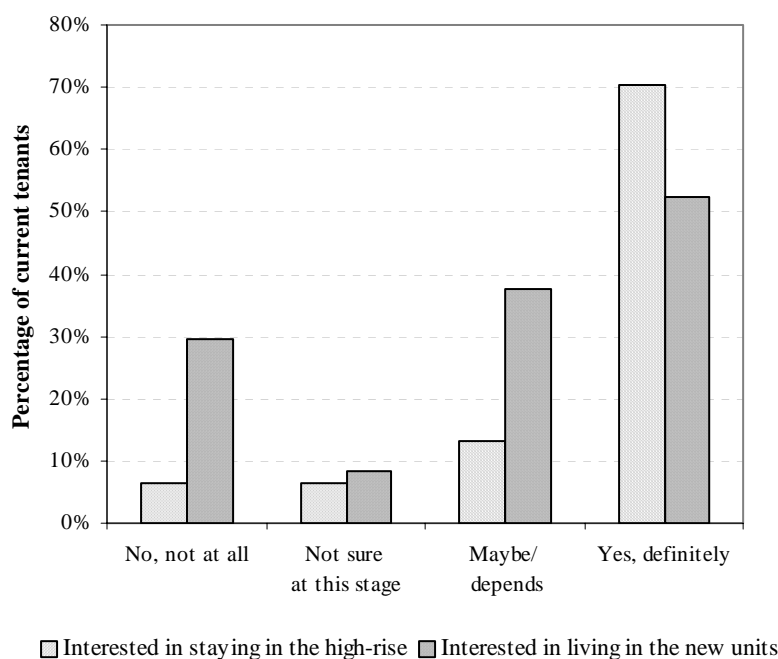
The CLC has endorsed a *Return to Kensington Policy and Process* (Office of Housing 2004a) and a *Return to Kensington Estate – Procedure for Property Offer and Resettlement Process* (Office of Housing 2004b) that should help individual households to clarify their situation.

The Office of Housing project manager held four meetings in April/May 2004 with relocated tenants who are interested in returning to explain the policy and process. Meetings were held during the day and in the evening in Kensington, Braybrook and Ascot Vale, using interpreters in community languages. Questions raised were the same as those raised in interviews for the SIS, that is, what size and type of accommodation would be offered, and when would offers be made.

8.1.2 Staying on site (current tenants)

The other side of the coin, in terms of continuity of residence, is whether current tenants wish to remain after the redevelopment. Overall, they were very positive about remaining in high rise accommodation but somewhat more reserved about living in the new units, as illustrated in Figure 8.2.

Figure 8.2: Current tenants: interest in staying on the site in either high rise and/or the new units after the redevelopment is completed



Source: Interviews with current tenants 2003-04; n = 61

Most current tenants (70 per cent) were definitely interested in staying in the high rise towers. 30 per cent did not want to stay or were unsure for a number of reasons:

*As I need more room, do not like eating in the same room as I sleep.
 It has worsened my depression.*

If could get in one bedroom, but feel powerless that will have no say.

If my economic situation changes, I will go out.

Current tenants had more varied responses about whether they would like to live in the new units, with about half (52 per cent) saying that they would like to do this:

Not noisy. Nice. Very convenient.

Good for my mum's health and exercise.

Because new and clean.

The rest (48 per cent) either did not want to live in the new units or said that 'it depends':

If it's big enough and it is a two bedroom. I don't want a downgrade.

If I was young, but now moving in and out – too much for us.

A quarter of current tenants had at least one concern about living on the redeveloped site, mainly about the size of accommodation and about safety and security:

Firstly I wouldn't live in the high rise. Secondly I would like all people to have at least one bedroom.

I am worried that we might have to move.

How good is security?

Allocation of older people to bedsitters rather than one bedroom accommodation was a point of contention, with some residents of bedsitters wishing to transfer to one bedroom accommodation but not knowing whether this would be possible. Whilst there will be fewer bedsitters and more one bedroom units in 94 Ormond Street as a result of the refurbishment, the older persons' block will comprise one and two bedroom units, highlighting the anomaly in the size and quality of accommodation offered to older people living on their own.

8.1.3 Living near the redevelopment site (local residents)

Building work on the site is expected to continue until the end of 2008 and will continue to affect local residents for another four and a half years. As seen in Chapter 6, many local residents have mixed views about the redevelopment; supporting the demolition of the walk-up flats and redevelopment of the estate but expressing concerns about both the construction works and the type of new units being constructed on site.

66 per cent of local residents had 'other' issues that they wished to comment on,³ concerning the design and appearance of the site, continuing construction activities and changes to the community (the latter is discussed in Chapter 9). The aspects that drew the most comments were construction of high rise buildings, overcrowding and over-development, and the design and appearance of the units:

The nature of the buildings. Pre-formed cement means little change can be done to them, they can't develop any 'character' from future generations. Will they become slums?

³ The question at the end of the survey was 'Do you have any other issues, concerns or comments about the redevelopment of the Kensington estate? What are these?'

The total look. At least there were lines of sight between the towers. This now presents a wall to Derby Street.

Lack of space in front of houses, lack of open space, loss of quiet amenity in local street.

I regard it as short-sighted and mercenary to build townhouses, apartments, homes with so little surrounding space in between the buildings. Our children will not experience space except in public parks.

Why have most of the trees and vegetation been uprooted?

Local residents also raised the continuing impact of noise from the construction and a lack of information about the redevelopment:

Control of noise and building activities. A drill has been operating for the last two hours across the road, cutting metal.

Only to reiterate the distress the work on the Ormond Street high rise has caused me and many neighbours. I had my house on the market but then withdrew it because it was impossible to tolerate the noise.

Better communication of expected completion dates, and possible local traffic delays.

35 per cent mentioned traffic or parking. The comments indicated that there were already problems in the area, but these had been exacerbated by construction activities and could get worse in the future with more units on site:

More people – facilities already stretched to capacity. More cars and more parking problems. Becton are deliberately offering lower-end high density apartments – not attracting families.

'Parking in Henry Street is impossible with Rendine Real Estate [30 workers] and pub [Hardimans] patrons and stuff.

The SIS found that half (49 per cent) of relocated tenants owned a car when living on the estate and 26 per cent of current tenants own a car. The impact on traffic and parking from public tenants would appear to be quite limited, whilst the means of transport used by people living in the private component of the development is difficult to estimate at this stage. Concerns about traffic and parking were a major reason put forward at a meeting of the Kensington Residents Association in April 2004 for opposing an application by the developer, Becton, to increase the number of units by 150.

Strategies

The CLC, although it had no formal role in the planning approval process, was working through the issues around additional density, in consultation with its members and their organisations, when the developer withdrew its application for additional units in May 2004. The CLC also provides periodic newsletters to site and surrounding residents detailing progress on the project, including the construction activities.

The Office of Housing issues monthly 'Project Alerts'⁴ to notify local residents of impending works and timelines. Whilst these do not remove the noise and inconvenience of living near a building site, they do warn of the nature of the work, timing and likely duration. In addition, in future stages the developer will be issuing advice immediately before activities that may disrupt residents, such as restricted traffic access.

More generally, traffic and parking in Kensington were major issues identified at community workshops held by the Cities of Melbourne and Moonee Valley in February 2004 to assist in the development of a community action plan for Kensington. These workshops generated a number of suggestions for improvement that will require coordinated planning and action by both local government areas (City of Melbourne 2004a, 2004b).

8.2 Changes to the number and distribution of public housing units in Kensington and more generally

Current plans indicate that there will be 436 public housing units on the site at the end of the redevelopment project, unless any changes are negotiated. This is a reduction of 145 compared to before the demolition of the walk-ups, shown in Table 8.4, and cumulatively, 253 since redevelopment began in 1998.⁵

The decrease has been offset, to some extent, by increases in public housing stock elsewhere in Kensington.⁶ 11 units were spot purchased and one leased in Kensington to enable the relocation of tenants from the walk-ups. The maximum effect of the redevelopment on public housing numbers in Kensington from 2000 to 2008 appears to be a reduction of 133 units (i.e. minus 145 plus 12). However, this does not include any other changes to stock during this period, such as acquisitions in the Kensington Banks development, for which no administrative data are available.

This lack of data is a concern as it is important to measure the impact of a redevelopment project on public housing in a gentrifying suburb such as Kensington, where there are limited opportunities for acquiring public housing stock in the future and where other opportunities for low income households to live in the suburb have diminished because of higher rents and house prices associated with gentrification.

⁴ These were originally issued by the Kensington Management Company as 'Community Construction Updates'.

⁵ Not including 'loss' of five units as a result of conversion of bedsitters to one bedroom units during the same period, which completed a long-running program and was not part of the redevelopment project.

⁶ This is in addition to units purchased to enable the relocation of tenants from 72 Derby Street in 1998 for which no accurate data are available.

Table 8.4: Comparison of public housing stock numbers on site before stage two of the redevelopment and estimated numbers after the redevelopment

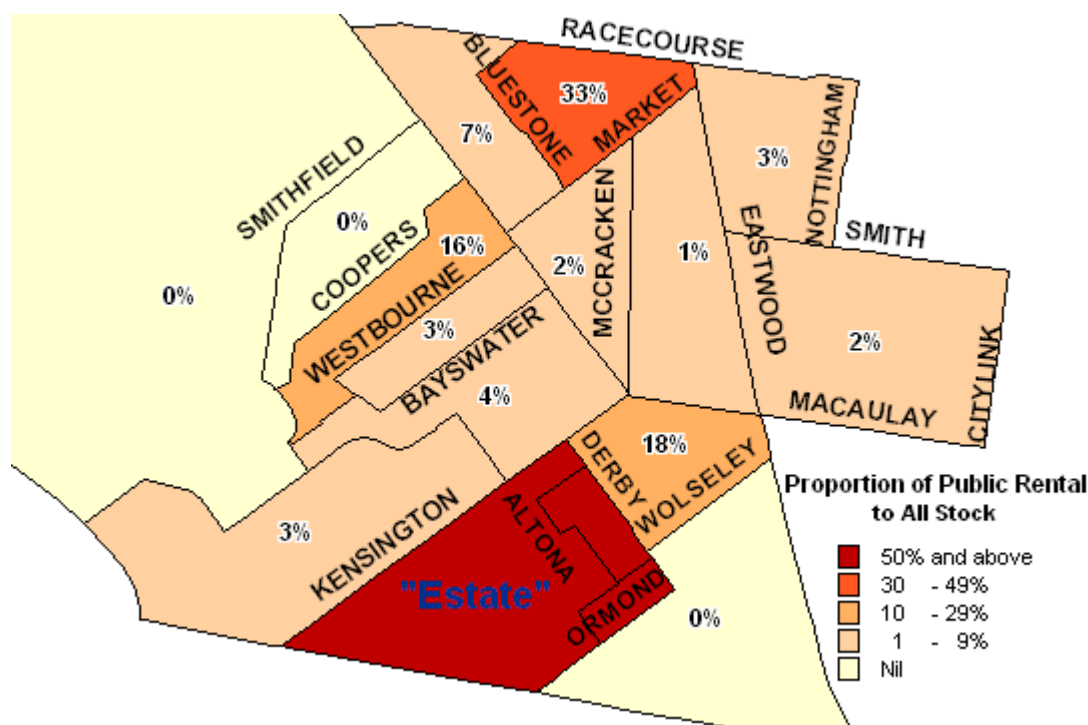
Block	Prior to stage two of the redevelopment – demolition of walk-ups 2000	After completion of redevelopment 2008
56 Derby St	72 x 2BR 36 x 3BR Total 108 units	43 x 1 BR 64 x 2 BR 27 x 3 BR Total 134 units
94 Ormond St	34 x bedsitters 61x 1 BR Total 95 units*	34 x bedsitters 73 x 1 BR Total 107 units
New public housing (Gower and Henry Sts North) – stage 1	Nil	1 x 1 BR unit (apartment) 15 x 2 BR unit (apartment) 2 x 3 BR unit (apartment) 2 x 4 BR terrace houses Total 20 units
New 6 storey older person block – stage 2	Nil	74 x 1 BR 22 x 2 BR 1 x community flat (1 BR) Total 97 units
New public housing Henry St and Gower Sts South – stage 3	Nil	1 x 2 BR 10 x 3 BR Total 11 units
Other new public housing in later stages – replacement for demolished walk-ups	42 x bedsitter 112 x 2 BR 224 x 3BR Total 378 units**	42 x 2 BR 23 x 3 BR 2 x 4 BR Total 67 units
Total public units	581 units	436 units

* The Ormond Street block originally had 132 x bedsitters and 12 x 1 BR (i.e. 144 units) but by 2000 conversions had decreased the number of bedsitters to 34 and increased the number of 1BR flats to 61 plus the original 12 x 1 BR flats.

** The 378 walk-ups comprised 1 x 8 storey block (112 x 2 BR units), 28 x 4 storey (224 x 3 BR units) and 2 x 3 storey for singles (42 bedsitter units).

Using an alternative source, data from the 2001 Census, it is apparent that public housing stock was more dispersed around Kensington than in 1996, as illustrated in Map 8.1. In particular, about a third of all dwellings in the part of the Lynch's Bridge development included in the map were public housing units in 2001.

Map 8.1: Dwellings rented from public housing authority as a percentage of all occupied dwellings, 2001



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2001, collection district data

A further issue is the impact of the redevelopment on the location and level of public housing stock in the inner urban region and on overall levels of public housing. In total, 100 units were spot purchased and 14 were leased to enable the relocation of tenants from the walk-ups. Of these, 89 were spot purchased and 13 leased in areas outside of Kensington. Some were in adjoining suburbs such as Flemington (4), North Melbourne (2) and Footscray/Footscray West (12), with the others elsewhere in the northern and western suburbs. The effect of the demolition of the walk-ups, the refurbishment of the high rise and the construction of new units (i.e. stages two to four of the redevelopment in 2000-08) on the overall level of public housing stock is a reduction of 31 units, i.e. minus 145 on site plus 100 (spot purchase) plus 14 (lease).⁷

Strategies

The CLC is currently looking at possibilities for increasing the amount of public housing on the redevelopment site and, to this end, is monitoring the household profiles of those who have a 'right of return' to Kensington and the take-up of redeveloped properties.

8.3 Changes to the profile of households and people living on the redeveloped site

A wide range of people interviewed for the SIS expressed a concern that the opportunities for families with children and young people to live on the site after the redevelopment in either the public or private units would be significantly less than before, due to a preponderance of smaller one and two bedroom units.

⁷ All the lease agreements expire prior to 2008.

The emphasis on increasing the number of smaller public housing units on the site followed the 1999 Kensington Estate Redevelopment Strategy which recommended that *new* public housing on the site should be as follows: 48 per cent one bedroom, 33 per cent two bedroom, 17 per cent three bedroom, and 2 per cent four bedroom (Kensington Estate Redevelopment Advisory Committee 1999: 38). The main reasons given for this recommended ratio of bedroom sizes were providing more smaller accommodation for people in high needs segments of the waiting list for public housing, many of which were smaller households,⁸ and the availability of other larger 'family' housing in nearby inner city public housing estates (Kensington Estate Redevelopment Advisory Committee 1999: 8-10). This section reports on the projected impacts of this reprofiling, noting that there are issues around the recommended ratio of unit sizes that should be addressed as part of a planned overall evaluation of the redevelopment.⁹

8.3.1 Changes to the size and type of public housing on the redevelopment site

Table 8.5 shows changes to the size and type of public housing on the redevelopment site as a result of the demolition of the walk-ups, refurbishment of the high rise and construction of new units (2000-08), based on current plans.

Table 8.5: Change in size and type of public housing on the redevelopment site 2000-08

Size of accommodation	Before demolition of the walk-ups 2000	At the end of the redevelopment 2008	Anticipated change 2000-08
Bedsitter (older people)	76	34	-42
1 BR older people)	61	148	+87
1 BR (not specified)	0	44	+44
2BR (older people)	0	22	+22
2 BR (not specified)	184	122	-62
3 BR	260	62	-198
4 BR	0	4	+4
Total on site*	581	436	-145

Source: Office of Housing administrative data.

* The table refers only to changes on the redevelopment site. 11 additional units purchased elsewhere in Kensington (1 x 1 BR, 5 x 2 BR and 5 x 3BR) are not included.

⁸ The Office of Housing introduced a segmented waiting list in 1997. Priority is given to people who are homeless or at risk of recurring homelessness and for whom the private rental market is not an option (segment one) and people requiring 'supported housing' due to disabilities or long-term health problems (Office of Housing, *Allocations Manual: Introduction and Overview*, Version 2.10, Sept. 2003).

⁹ The recommended percentages of each size of unit were based on estimates of 'aggregate potential demand of eligible (DSS) Rent Assistance recipients' (Perrott Lyon Mathieson 1999b: 14, Table 3), rather than on waiting list or other data. Data on Rent Assistance recipients is only available by 'income unit', not by household. Households may include one or more 'income units'. No detail is given on how this income unit data was converted to produce estimates of household size and thus dwelling size. Attempts to translate Rent Assistance 'income units' into households have proved difficult and contentious (AIHW 1997: 407). Conflating 'income unit' and household data underestimates household size.

The main changes to the configuration of public housing on the site as a result of stages two to four of the redevelopment are:

- Decrease in the number of bedsitters (- 42);
- Increase in one bedroom units for older people aged 55 and above (+ 87) and provision of two bedroom units for this group for the first time (+ 22);
- Provision of some one bedroom units for people aged under 55 for the first time (+ 44);
- Reduction in the number of two bedroom units for families and groups (- 62);
- Significant reduction (- 198) in the number of three bedroom units for families and groups;
- Provision of a small number of four bedroom units for the first time (+ 4).

The reduction in three bedroom accommodation for families was the cause for most concern amongst those interviewed, in terms of the ability of relocated families with two or more children to return to the site and the effect on local schools and services for families and children. Concern was also expressed about the small number of four bedroom units which could affect opportunities for larger families, such as Somali and other Horn of Africa families, to return to the estate.

Strategies

The CLC is currently investigating options for increasing the amount of accommodation for families with children on the site.

8.3.2 Changes to the profile of public housing tenants after the redevelopment

Changes to the size and type of public housing on the site will lead to a change in profile of tenants. Estimates were made of the age profile of public tenants on site at the end of the redevelopment in 2008 based on:

- The Return to Kensington Policy (Office of Housing 2004a, 2004b);
- Office of Housing (2002b) internal analysis identifying accommodation size and type requirements of relocated tenants who wish to return;
- Office of Housing administrative data on people and households living on other high rise estates in inner Melbourne;
- Discussion with Office of Housing staff about usual allocation policies and practices in terms of particular sizes and types of accommodation.

The estimated profile of people living in public housing units at the end of the redevelopment is shown in Table 8.6.

Table 8.6: Estimates of people who will be living in public housing on the redeveloped site at Kensington by 2008

Block/stage	Number of public housing units	When coming on stream	Adults (aged 20-54)	Adults (aged 55 and over)	Children and young people (aged 0-19)	Total people
56 Derby St	134	End 2006	172	0	92	264
94 Ormond	107	Mid-2004	0	111	0	111
Stage 1 (Henry and Gower Sts North)	20	October 2004	24	0	34	58
Stage 2 (older persons' block)	97	July 2005	0	126	0	126
Stage 3 (Henry and Gower Sts South)	11	End 2005	13	0	26	39
Subsequent stages	67	2006-08	79	0	120	199
Total	436		288	237	272	797

Source: Swinburne SIS team estimates.

These estimates suggest that (if there is no change to current plans for the site and current allocation policies and practices), the age profile of public tenants compared to 1996¹⁰ before the redevelopment began (as discussed in Chapter 4) will be as follows:

- Approximately 800 people will be living in public housing units on the site, compared to about 1,800 in 1996 before the demolition of 72 Derby Street;
- About a third of these (34 per cent) will be children and young people, about the same percentage as in 1996 but fewer in number (272 compared to 655);
- A lower percentage will be adults aged 20-54 years (36 per cent compared to 49 per cent) and the numbers will be lower (288 compared to 903);
- About 30 per cent (237 people) will be older adults aged 55 and over, compared to a lower percentage (15 per cent) and slightly more older people (268) in 1996;¹¹
- About 37 per cent of those in public units (approximately 300 people) will be living on their own, many aged 55 and over.

These estimates have implications in terms of an increased need for services and support for older people, the majority of whom will be living on their own, and the slow build up of children on the site, which are later in this chapter.

¹⁰ Unfortunately, a comparison cannot be made with 2000 before stage two of the redevelopment due to lack of data.

¹¹ Some of the people aged 55 and over living on the site in 1996 lived in family units with their children or, in some cases, where their children had grown up and left home. People living in units specifically designated for older people are expected to be older and may have additional support needs.

8.3.3 Likely profile of households/people living in private units

Current plans indicate that 421 private units will be constructed on the site.¹² At the time of writing, only the size and type of the first 256 are known. Of these, 218 (85 per cent) are apartments and 38 (15 per cent) terrace houses. Most will be smaller accommodation: 32 per cent one bedroom and 59 per cent two bedroom. Only 23 of the units (9 per cent) will have three bedrooms, as shown in Table 8.7. The size and type of the remaining 165 private units will depend on market conditions at the time.

Table 8.7: Size and type of the first 256 private units on the site

Private units	Apartment	Townhouse	Total units	Percentage
1 bedroom	80	3	83	32%
2 bedroom	136	14	150	59%
3 bedroom	2	21	23	9%
All units	218	38	256	100%

Source: Data supplied by Kensington Management Company and Office of Housing.

At the time of writing, none of the new units have been occupied. Many have been sold to investors rather than owner occupiers, so the final composition of occupants will depend on a number of factors including market rent levels for this type of accommodation, household preferences, and the tenant selection practices of a variety of real estate agents and private landlords.

The SIS team analysed data from the 2001 Census on households who had moved into selected, comparable, inner city areas with predominantly apartment type accommodation within the previous 12 months. This analysis indicated that, if the pattern of these other inner city areas is repeated, it is likely that the private units will attract primarily singles and couples, few with children, as shown in Table 8.8.

Table 8.8: Households moving within previous 12 months into inner city areas with high percentages of apartment accommodation, 2001

Household type	Carlton	Port Melbourne	South Bank	South Yarra	St Kilda
Family with children	6%	13%	11%	10%	8%
Couple only	13%	45%	26%	25%	25%
Other family	12%	0%	10%	3%	1%
Lone person	40%	36%	31%	49%	52%
Group household	29%	6%	23%	13%	13%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: ABS 2001 Census, collection district data.

Note: Calculated from data for selected collection districts in inner city areas with predominantly apartment style accommodation, similar in density to that planned for the Kensington site.

¹² The developer had sought approval early in 2004 for an additional 150 units on the site, but subsequently withdrew this application.

8.4 Planning to meet the needs of older people

8.4.1 Planning for more older public housing tenants during the redevelopment

The redevelopment plans indicate that the number of units earmarked for older people will double to over 200,¹³ as shown in Table 8.9, following the construction of a new six storey block. This is scheduled for completion by mid-2005 and will have 97 units. All will be suitable for people with limited mobility and 12 will be fully accessible to AS1428 standard, for example, allowing for people with wheelchairs to move around the units and to use bathroom and other facilities. The building will have two lifts, and a flat on the ground floor will be allocated as a community facility.

Table 8.9: Comparison of accommodation for older people on the redevelopment site before the demolition of the walk-ups and after construction of a new block in 2005

Accommodation for older people	No of units before stage two of the redevelopment (2000)	No. of units after construction of new units (2005)	Change to no. of units (2000-2005)
<i>94 Ormond Street</i>			
Bedsitters	44	34	-10
One bedroom	56	73	+17
<i>New six storey block</i>			
One bedroom	0	75	+75*
Two bedroom	0	22	+22
Total	100	203	+103

Source: Office of Housing administrative data

* Includes a flat on the ground floor to be used as a community facility.

Units for older people will comprise 47 per cent of all public housing units on the redeveloped site, assuming that the current plan for a total of 436 public housing units remains, compared to 24 per cent prior to stage two of the redevelopment. These figures indicate an increased priority given to housing older people on the site.

Based on current allocation criteria and practices, it is estimated that there will be 237 people aged 55 and over¹⁴ living on site: 126 people in the new block and 111 in the refurbished block at 94 Ormond Street. Priority in returning to Kensington will be given to those who had lived longest on the estate, who may well be older, and other tenants will be selected from the waiting list which gives priority to those with the greatest need for housing and support. Whilst the age profile of tenants in the two older persons' blocks will not be known until they are tenanted, it is likely that many will require some additional support, whatever their age. It appears unlikely that there will be many older people living in private units on the site, although this may change.

¹³ There will be an additional 44 one bedroom units on the redeveloped site not earmarked for older people (43 in the refurbished block at 56 Derby Street and one in the first stage of the new units). These are intended for singles aged under 55 but could house older people in the future if required.

¹⁴ This assumes 66 singles and eight couples in the one bedroom units and 22 single people with a carer or couples in the two bedroom units for the new block, and 103 singles and four couples in 94 Ormond Street.

Issues around welcoming (older) people to the site are covered in Chapter 9. The following sections focus on issues of service provision and social planning.

8.4.2 Support services for older persons

The elderly persons' support program, run by the Dousta Galla Community Health Services, provides a support service to older people living in 94 Ormond Street. The service is funded by the Home and Community Care (HACC) Program and supports residents with their health needs, educational activities and information, community service and referral, payments and general support. It is specifically for the residents of this block, and a worker is located in an office off the community facility at the base of 94 Ormond Street.

The Dousta Galla program is not currently funded to provide a full service to other older tenants living in the high rise tower at 56 Derby Street, nor those living in the units off the main site at 9 Derby Street and Durham Street. The construction of a further 97 units for older people in the new six storey block means that attention will need to be given to the needs of older persons living in the precinct. This will require a process for relevant agencies and departments to reach agreement about responsibility for service planning, funding and service delivery.

The existing Dousta Galla program could be extended to residents of the new older persons' block. This might pose some practical issues as, unlike 94 Ormond Street, it does not have space designated for such a service, for example, office space and a room for a visiting doctor or podiatrist, although a ground floor flat will be allocated as a community facility. Extension of the existing program might require more intensive use of the facilities in 94 Ormond Street, which would in turn limit their availability for other public tenants, or all residents of the precinct, as determined by the Kensington Management Company which now manages them.

Other models could be investigated, depending on the expected profile of those to be housed in accommodation for older persons on the site. An example of a different model is the Salvation Army's 'Older Persons in High Rise' initiative in North Melbourne that has been operating for about six years. This provides a service to about 150 residents of 159 Melrose Street. The service works particularly with people from non-English speaking backgrounds and people who are socially isolated and marginalised. Four workers offer support and care packages, low level monitoring (that is, for people in recovery phases, less formal/catch-up process, including an early intervention role) and a coordinating/case management role. As with many of the people at 94 Ormond Street, most people would have been assessed as capable of independent living yet would have been housed from the segmented waiting list, including those who have experienced long-term and chronic homelessness or disability.

The strength of both models (Dousta Galla and Melrose Street) is that they are on-site services, allowing greater opportunities for engagement of a group who often are difficult to make contact with and who often may not access many services, even doctors. Consideration of these issues has begun and it is essential that other health agencies and people such as the Aged and Disabilities Services Social Planner for the Melbourne City Council are involved in these discussions. Early resolution is required to give adequate time for service planning, submissions for funding and detailing how a service would work prior to the new older persons' building being opened in mid-2005. There may also need to be negotiation around the use by such a service of the meeting room, due to competing uses of this small facility.

Strategies

The CLC has asked the Office of Housing to investigate options for extending the existing community facility at the base of the high rise tower at 94 Ormond Street to cater for the needs of older people living both in that block and in the new six storey block. Whilst the primary purpose of the facility will be to serve the needs of older residents of these two blocks, it may also be used for other community purposes. The Kensington Management Company (KMC) will manage the facility.

Primary Care Partnerships (Department of Human Services) in the Western Region are discussing the service implications of these changes with other agencies and service providers. The Kensington Agencies' Network has been briefed on the increased number of older people on site and is discussing service responses and coordination.

8.4.3 Ageing in place: longer-term planning for older people

The development of more accommodation for older people on the site raises issues about options for residents when they move beyond independent living with some support as envisaged above. For example, as residents age, they may fear falling or have other health, safety and security concerns, but installation of a security alarm or personal security system in the older persons' blocks is not envisaged at this stage. The Office of Housing and/or the Kensington Management Company or its successor will also be faced with difficult decisions if older public tenants cannot continue to live independently but do not have family or other support to help them through what is often a very difficult transition to some type of residential care.

The number of aged care beds in hostels and nursing homes in the inner city is decreasing, and interviews with service providers as part of the SIS suggested that some older people are currently staying in hospitals because they cannot access residential care. There are a number of reasons for this, including changes to standards for accreditation such that some smaller operators doubt that they can maintain financial viability. Some, including many church agencies, are closing, considering closing or moving to outer suburbs where land is cheaper and they can develop larger and more financially sustainable facilities. Whilst a planned 100 bed hostel for the Commonwealth Village may address part of this need, one possibility for the future may be conversion of a couple of floors of the new six storey block into hostel accommodation to enable integration of aged care services on the site.

8.5 Planning for families with children and young people

8.5.1 Estimating the number of children and young people living on site

There will be a slow increase in the number of children and young people living in public housing on the site, as shown in Table 8.10. Based on current plans, by the end of the redevelopment, there will be a total of approximately 270.

Table 8.10: Estimated number of children and young people living in public housing on the site

Block/stage	Estimated date of completion	'Larger' accommodation	Estimated number of children and young people*
Stage 1 (Henry and Gower Sts North)	2004	15 x 2 BR 2 x 3 BR 2 x 4 BR	34
Stage 3 (Henry and Gower Sts South)	2005	1 x 2 BR 10 x 3 BR	26
56 Derby Street refurbishment	2006	64 x 2 BR 27 x 3 BR	92**
Subsequent stages	2006-08	42 x 2 BR 23 x 3 BR 2 x 4 BR	120
Total		122 x 2 BR 62 x 3 BR 4 x 4 BR	272

Source: Office of Housing administrative data on planned units and Swinburne project team estimates for number of children and young people.

* Not all larger accommodation will be occupied by families with children. The estimates allow for a small number of units to be occupied by two or more adults, e.g. mother and adult child, based on experience with current public housing.

** Some children are still living in 56 Derby Street but the numbers will build up slowly as the refurbishment is finished.

The SIS team estimated the profile of households likely to move into the first 256 private units based on the analysis of 2001 Census data for comparable inner city areas, as discussed previously. The results should be regarded as indicative only but suggest that these units could house about 409 adults and 53 children, a total population of 462 people, as shown in Table 8.11. The configuration of the remaining 165 private units is unknown and it is impossible even to estimate the profile of people who will live there.

Overall, it appears that a reasonable estimate of the number of children and young people who will move onto the site between mid-2004 and the end of 2005 to occupy units, both public and private, built in the first stages of the project is about 113 people. In the later stages, an estimated 120 children and young people will move into newly constructed public housing units. The size and type of the remaining 165 private units is unknown, thus even rough estimates are not possible for the number of children living in these private units by 2008.

Table 8.11: Estimates of people who will be living in private units on the redeveloped site at Kensington (Henry and Gower Sts North and South)

Accommodation size	Number of units	Adults	Children and young people	People
1 BR single	55	55	0	55
1 BR couple	28	56	0	56
2 BR single	45	45	0	45
2 BR two adults	75	150	0	150
2 BR couple plus one	20	40	20	60
2 BR single plus one	10	10	10	20
3 BR couple plus one	9	18	9	27
3 BR couple plus two	7	14	14	28
3 BR singles sharing	7	21	0	21
Total	256	409	53	462

Source: Swinburne project team estimates.

Note: These are estimates only, based on analysis of 2001 Census data on people who have moved into inner city areas with predominantly apartment housing within the previous year.

8.5.2 Planning for services for children and young people

Relatively small numbers of children and young people are expected to move (back) onto the site, and then only slowly, compared to the numbers on site before the redevelopment. These low numbers will continue to impact on schools and services for children and young people. For the most part, as seen in Chapter 7, these are starting to adapt to a changing demographic in Kensington. Their student/client base is likely to depend increasingly on changes in the rest of Kensington rather than on the redevelopment site.

Work for the Melbourne City Council part of Kensington (which includes the redevelopment site but excludes the area north of Macaulay Road) indicates very little growth in the number of school age children and young people between 2001 and 2011 and a decline in the number of young people but some increase in the number of pre-schoolers as shown in Table 8.12. The biggest population increases are anticipated in the 25 to 39 year old age group (id consulting 2003).

Table 8.12: Forecasts of children and young people living in Kensington (MCC), 2001-11

Age group	2001 Number	2001 % of population	2006 Number	2006 % of population	2011 Number	2011 % of population
0 – 4	344	7.1%	440	7.7%	555	8.4%
5 – 9	215	4.5%	242	4.2%	298	4.5%
10 – 14	173	3.6%	178	3.1%	191	2.9%
15 – 19	234	4.9%	225	3.9%	225	3.4%

Source: id consulting (2003) 'Kensington, What will our age structure be?'

Note: These forecasts are for the part of Kensington that is the responsibility of the City of Melbourne.

The increase in pre-schoolers in the rest of Kensington is particularly affecting demand for childcare. Services in Kensington are at full capacity and all have waiting lists, comprising mainly local residents. It will be difficult for families returning to public housing on the site and 'new' families to access childcare. More long day and also occasional childcare services are now crucial in Kensington. Local residents and people working with community agencies recall that when several childcare services were amalgamated to form the Kensington Community Children's Cooperative in 1997, there was also commitment to a 35 place service within Kensington Banks where the Dousta Galla Community Health Centre Service is currently situated. A number of residents and parents are now calling for a re-commitment to this childcare centre to provide desperately needed places in Kensington.

In interviews for the SIS, some local residents and service providers suggested that the schools and services have to reorient themselves to cater for a higher income and less culturally diverse population. Others feared that Kensington does not have enough larger accommodation to keep growing families in the suburb. According to this view, as soon as children reached primary school age or a second child came along, families leave to go to bigger houses in other suburbs, although sometimes with great reluctance. The development of services to cater for emerging and new families would need to be coupled with a strategy to sustain growing families, in order to provide a strong and stable base population of children for the primary schools as well as to maintain a strong mixed population in Kensington. There is also a risk that local services and agencies may lose their focus on low income and culturally diverse households in this process.

Many workers for local services and community organisations consider that social planning has been handicapped by the division of Kensington between two local governments, a point reiterated at community workshops held in February 2004.

Strategies

The Cities of Melbourne and Moonee Valley are now working more closely together to coordinate planning and service delivery to residents over the next five years through the development of a Kensington Community Action Plan (Kensington Community Action Plan 2004: 3).

The Kensington Agencies' Network has been briefed on issues affecting children and young people as a result of the redevelopments and is discussing service responses and coordination.

8.6 Summary

The SIS team identified a number of current and projected impacts arising from the redevelopment, which were fed back to the various participants in the research. This feedback stimulated additional questions, further discussion and, in some cases, reconsideration of strategies to address issues raised. Whilst this process has been ongoing throughout the SIS, this chapter summarises some of these impacts, outlines issues for consideration and highlights actions currently underway to manage or change some of the impacts identified.

The key issues raised were:

- Issues around returning to Kensington for relocated tenants;
- Current tenants' issues around the new development;
- Local residents' concerns about the new development;

- Changes to the number and distribution of public housing units in Kensington and more generally;
- Changes to the profile of households and people living on the site;
- Planning to meet the needs of older people;
- Planning for families with children and young people.

8.7 Recommendations

The following recommendations relate specifically to the Kensington redevelopment project:

R26 That the Office of Housing, in implementing its reallocation policy, continues to discuss the policy and process for returning to Kensington with services, agencies and community networks, particularly among the Vietnamese and various Horn of Africa communities.

R27 That the Office of Housing, in implementing the reallocation policy for Kensington, clarify with relocated tenants, on an individual basis, whether an offer of accommodation at Kensington will be made, what they will be offered, and the likely timing of the offer so that they can plan their lives.

R28 That in implementing the reallocation policy and resettlement of tenants on the redeveloped site, the Office of Housing, in conjunction with KMC and the KPTA, identifies the service needs of households and provide assistance with reconnecting local schools, services and agencies, if required.

R29 That the Office of Housing supplies KMC with aggregate information on households accepting offers of public housing and the timing of return to Kensington so that this can be combined with information on households moving into the private units and conveyed to schools, services and agencies, as appropriate, so that they can plan for any increase or change in their client base and conduct outreach as necessary.

R30 That the Office of Housing provides, and the CLC monitors, accurate data on all relocated tenants and their status in terms of returning to Kensington. This should include reasons why households do not return, including failure to contact, no interest in returning, ineligible (income or assets), ineligible (other) or no appropriate size housing available.

R31 That the Office of Housing enables people currently living in bedsitter accommodation on the Kensington site to transfer to one bedroom accommodation once offers of re-housing have been made to older relocated tenants.

R32 That the Office of Housing maintains accurate data about, and regularly reports on, stock changes as part of the Kensington redevelopment project including information on dwelling type and size, to enable monitoring of the impact on public housing stock on the site, elsewhere in Kensington and in the inner urban area.

R33 That the CLC, after reviewing the anticipated profile of returning tenants, considers recommending to the Office of Housing an increase in the number of larger (three and four bedroom) units for families on the Kensington site.

R34 That the Department of Human Services, the Melbourne City Council and other relevant parties develop proposals for support services for older people living in

public housing on and around the Kensington site and that funding be obtained and the service be in place when older tenants move into the new accommodation.

R35 That the Office of Housing, the Melbourne City Council and KMC, in conjunction with other relevant bodies such as the local Police and Citizens Consultative Committee, work together to develop measures to improve personal safety and security for older and frail residents in the two blocks designated for older persons on the redeveloped site.

R36 That the Department of Human Services and the Melbourne City Council develop strategies to enable older residents to age in place on site, including consideration of some hostel type accommodation and high level care beds in a residential facility.

R37 That the CLC and the Melbourne City Council support additional childcare places in Kensington to cater for increased demand, including from returning tenants and other residents of the redevelopment site.

R38 That KMC and the Melbourne City Council continue to share information on a regular basis about the number of children and young people expected to move into public and private units on the site in order to provide local schools, services and agencies with up to date information about the projected number of children and young people in the area.

Chapter 9

Looking to the Future: Building Community

This project isn't just about building houses, it's about building sustainable communities where residents are connected to their community (Minister for Housing 2003).

It's easy to destroy a community. They pulled the heart out of a community. But rebuilding a community – that's much more difficult. Change is good for a community, but it's too quick – two years and the community is gone (current tenant 2003).

From this year (2004) until the end of 2008, people will move into accommodation on the Kensington site, both new and refurbished units. They will comprise a mixture of those who have lived on the site through the redevelopment, some who lived there before and will be moving back, and others who are new to the site and perhaps to Kensington. They will form a new and somewhat different community from the one that residents remember from before the demolition of the walk-up flats (discussed in Chapter 4).

This chapter looks at some issues around building community, reports on the views of people who will live on and around the site, and examines strategies for community building as the redevelopment proceeds. It is based on interviews with relocated and current tenants, the survey of local residents, interviews with community organisations and discussions with a variety of people and organisations in Kensington.

9.1 Objectives of the redevelopment

The brief for the Kensington redevelopment (2000) was for a public/private partnership in which the successful private developer would develop the site (not including the two high rise towers) with a percentage of the units to be purchased by the Office of Housing for public housing. There was no reference to community building although interested developers were invited to submit 'innovative methods of delivering the objectives' (Office of Housing 2000: 12).

The successful tenderer, the Becton Group, proposed that the development of a 'sustainable community' was essential to the social and commercial success of the project.¹ Both partners to the redevelopment (Becton and the Office of Housing) subsequently agreed that new approaches were required to avoid repeating past mistakes in terms of 'the physical, economic and social isolation of public housing tenants' (Becton 2001). There were also commercial reasons for making 'sustainable community' the over-arching goal of the redevelopment due to concerns that a negative perception of public housing would deter people from buying the new units.

Three main strategies were developed to reach the goal of ensuring a 'sustainable community' on the redeveloped site:

¹ Becton submitted two tenders: a conforming tender, and an alternative tender that included different arrangements for site management and an emphasis on community building. The Office of Housing accepted the conforming tender but subsequently negotiated with Becton to include aspects of the alternative tender around community building and site management.

- Integration of public and private housing, not just to finance the redevelopment, but as a means of increasing the socioeconomic diversity of estate residents;
- Better site or place management to enable a high standard of physical amenity and social environment to benefit residents on site and in surrounding areas and to encourage prospective purchasers;
- Community building to enable positive social connections between those living in different housing tenures on the site, to build connectedness to the wider Kensington community and to enhance the community in terms of economic and social development (KMC 2004).

Integration of public and private housing included both physical design measures² and strategies to change the socioeconomic profile of households. The key to progressing the site management and community building strategies was the establishment of the Kensington Management Company (KMC). KMC aims to create a sense of place, fostering a sense of belonging for all residents on the site, enhancing the capacity of the community in terms of economic and social development, and building connectedness between site residents and the general Kensington community (KMC 2004).

This chapter focuses on the social aspects of these three strategies, namely, the integration of households of different socioeconomic status on the site and community building processes. The physical design and management of the site will be part of a later and more general evaluation of the redevelopment project that is currently being scoped.

9.2 Community building: challenges and issues

9.2.1 Tenure diversity and social mix

The new development aims to integrate public and private housing. Since all the new housing is being privately constructed, the terms 'public' and 'private' in this context refer to differences in tenure (that is, ownership and conditions under which households occupy the units). Introduction of different tenures (tenure diversification) is expected to help develop a community with 'greater socioeconomic diversity and thereby reduce the concentration of poverty' (KMC 2004).

There are many examples, both in Australia and overseas, of tenure diversification as a means of changing the social mix of older public housing estates, ranging from sale of some existing housing through to major regeneration projects. A review of the literature indicates that the main argument in favour is that tenants who already experience economic and social disadvantage are further disadvantaged by being concentrated on public housing estates, due to low levels of social support, isolation from the wider community, lack of job opportunities and social stigma. Introducing tenure diversity and social mix is believed to promote higher levels of social connectedness, integrate an estate with the surrounding area, open up job opportunities, and reduce stigma based on place of residence (Wood 2003: 49).

Research from the United States, where spatial segregation of households by income and other factors is more entrenched than in Australia, generally supports the

² For example, the site is being integrated into the surrounding area through extension of existing Kensington streets into the new development, rather than designing a disconnected 'super block'.

idea that strategies to generate greater social mix have benefits for both low income households and communities more generally (Schwartz and Tajbakhsh 1997). European and Australian research, however, is more reserved about whether the projected benefits are achieved (Randolph and Wood 2003). For example, a recent review of social mix strategies in public housing regeneration projects in three states (not including Victoria) found that:

- In the current funding climate, such strategies disadvantage low income households by decreasing access to public housing;
- Some of the public housing estates had a strong sense of community prior to regeneration/redevelopment commencing, and tensions were evident when communities were broken up to create new communities composed of different types of residents;
- Dispersing public housing tenants did not address the problems of social and economic disadvantage – it moved them around (Arthurson 2002: 252-5).

It is, however, early days in terms of research into these issues in Australia (Arthurson 1998) and future evaluation of the Kensington project may well contribute to knowledge about the effects of introducing tenure diversification/social mix as a means of redeveloping older public housing estates.

What is significant for the Kensington project is that much of the literature suggests that many of the anticipated benefits come from owner occupiers moving onto a public housing estate, bringing higher household incomes, stability of residence, pride in their housing and the area, and the skills and commitment to form strong local connections. Again there is strong support for this view in the United States where it is suggested that 'mixed' housing developments result in better access to jobs, a decrease in crime as home owners demand better security, and an increase in services due to the presence of higher income households (Brophy and Smith 1997). European studies have more variable findings (Jupp 1999). A new study of tenure diversification in public housing estates in four Australian states (New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia) should provide much needed evidence on its impacts more locally (Randolph and Wood 2003, 2004).

It appears that relatively few owner occupiers have purchased the new private units in Kensington to date, although this may change. In a practical sense, tenure diversity/social mix on the site will come, at least initially, mainly from a mixture of private and public tenants, rather than owner occupiers (although this may change in the future if the initial investors on-sell to purchasers as well as other investors). In terms of community building, therefore, much hinges on the profile of private tenants moving onto the site.

Although a clear profile of households moving into private units will not be available for some time, analysis of data on people moving into comparable inner city areas with high levels of apartments (discussed in Chapter 8) suggests that they will be predominantly singles and couples without children. Many will be young adults, aged 20 to 34, predominantly Australian born, and who do not speak a language other than English at home. If this pattern applies in Kensington, there will be a reduction of cultural diversity but an increase in socioeconomic diversity on the site. It is also worth noting that one of the key drivers of demand for inner city apartments to rent is from tertiary students, including a high proportion of international students looking for

accommodation near their educational institution, which could potentially add another type of diversity to the site.³

A mix of public and private tenants raises a number of issues in terms of community building:

- *Age mix:* About half of the public tenants will be older people, while the rest will be younger, and many of the private tenants are expected to be young adults. There are unlikely to be many adults whose children are older and who may have time to contribute to community activities;
- *Relatively few children:* High percentages of both public and private tenants are likely to live on their own; some public tenants, but few private tenants, are expected to have children. This means that opportunities for community building based on mutual support by parents and through children's activities, including those centred on local schools, will be limited;
- *Lifestyle:* Many public tenants will be around during the day as they are not in the workforce due to age, disability or caring responsibilities, whilst most of the private tenants are expected to be working and not on site during the day. Different patterns of day-to-day living may make forming social connections more difficult;
- *Turnover:* Returning public tenants and older public tenants are likely to be a relatively stable population. New households entering public housing are likely to have shorter periods of residence, as the tenancies of households allocated from high needs segments of the waiting list are more likely to break down. These will be the most disadvantaged households and have the highest support needs, if there is no change to allocation policies for the site. Private tenants move more frequently than home owners (and public tenants overall) for a number of reasons, including stage in life cycle and lack of security of tenure. This 'churning', particularly of private tenants, may make community building more difficult;
- *Location:* Most public tenants (338 or 78 per cent of the public housing units under current plans) will be living in three multi-storey towers in the area bounded by Derby and Ormond Streets. Whilst attention has been given in the design such that each block has a different orientation and different street frontage as local streets are extended into the site, concentration of public tenants in three towers may reduce opportunities for informal connections with other residents on the site. The remaining 98 units of public housing currently planned (22 per cent of public housing units) will be in apartment 'pods' around the rest of the site, mixed in with buildings occupied primarily by private tenants.

It is important that the profile of households and the rate of turnover is monitored closely, although this will be more difficult in the case of private tenants who will deal with a variety of private landlords and real estate agents.⁴ If the mix of households as a result of tenure diversity is not conducive to building a sustainable community, there are some other options. Firstly, a local allocations policy for public housing could be introduced to ensure some mix of incomes, households and circumstances within the general eligibility criteria. Secondly, a component of social housing (owned and managed by a not-for-profit housing provider) has already been discussed and

³ Work by id consulting (2003) for the City of Melbourne notes the reliance of the investor market within the city on a constant source of tenants, notably tertiary students.

⁴ KMC is developing additional services to address some of the issues around multiple landlords and real estate agents being involved in tenancy and property management.

could provide some additional diversity of households. For example, the provider could target households in segment four of the waiting list who might not otherwise be offered housing on the site.⁵

A challenge for community building is to develop a vibrant community involving public and private tenants, and some home owners, who may differ substantially in terms of age, household type, income, lifestyle, cultural diversity and length of time on the site.

9.2.2 Community building: which community?

Many people interviewed for the SIS talked about a strong sense of community both on the estate and in Kensington more generally and were proud of the efforts of residents and workers over the years to build and enhance community, both among estate residents and between estate residents and the broader Kensington community. Some examples were the Kensington Estate Gardening Service, Kensington Catering, the Kensington Community Garden, a cultural participation project run by the Kensington Public Tenants' Association, English classes and arts and crafts activities run by the Kensington Neighbourhood House, and use of the Kensington Community Centre bus to bring older people from Lynch's Bridge to the community facility under 94 Ormond Street for activities.

Interviews suggest, however, that the community that many people remembered, and had worked for, was changing even before the demolition of the walk-up flats:

- The introduction of the segmented waiting list in 1997 gave priority in housing to those with the most disadvantages and support needs. Many of the newer public tenants had to manage their own health and other pressing personal issues, leaving limited capacity to establish connections with other residents;
- Uncertainty about the future of the estate after the demolition of 72 Derby Street in March 1998 diverted time and attention from community building as people tried to find out about, and deal with, plans to redevelop the estate;
- Rapid changes in Kensington more generally (discussed in Chapter 7) raised issues for many people, organisations and businesses.

The demolition of the walk-ups came on top of these other changes, and people and organisations were preoccupied with the dispersal of existing communities rather than building a new one. Many reported that they had to focus on the immediate impacts of the redevelopment on their own housing situation or their businesses, services or organisations, as discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

Another challenge is in recognising and celebrating past achievements and the efforts of many people over the years in working towards a strong and cohesive community in Kensington, whilst adapting to change and moving forward.

It was also apparent from interviews that people identify with different types of 'community' based on country of origin, common culture or language, religious affiliation, and common interests such as a 'school community', or a combination of these. Some of these may overlap with community based on place, but others may not. For example, the Elderly Indo-Chinese and Vietnamese Group has a membership of over a hundred and meets every month at the Kensington

⁵ Segment four comprises households who are eligible for public housing in terms of income and assets but who do not have urgent or pressing support and other needs.

Neighbourhood House, even though many members no longer live in the suburb. Women from Horn of Africa countries living in public housing in Kensington, Flemington and North Melbourne meet regularly in North Melbourne. Whilst many people will have at least some identification with community based on place, other types of community may be more significant.

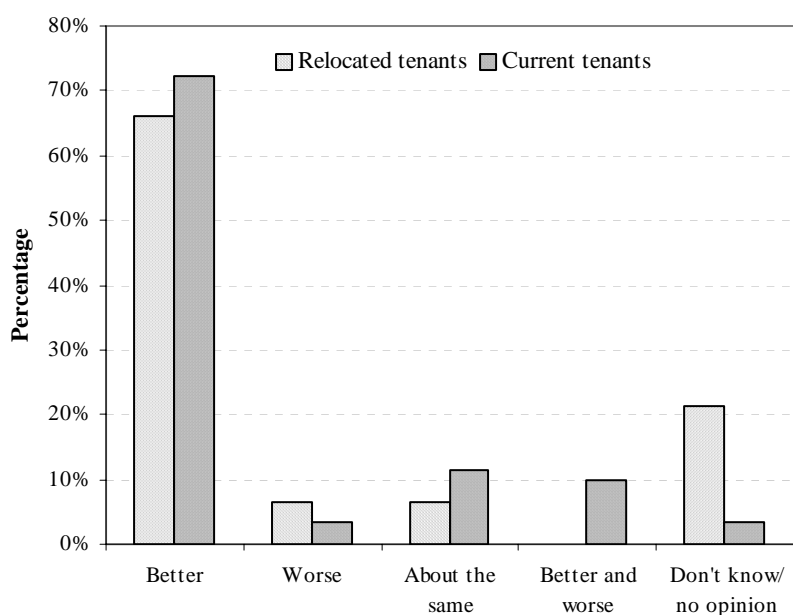
A further challenge in community building is in recognising that people identify with different types of community and that the significance of community based on place may vary.

9.3 Moving forward: residents' views on the new development

9.3.1 Relocated and current tenants

A key issue in moving forward is whether the people who will live in and around the site think that the redevelopment will make the area a better place to live, and why. Many relocated and current tenants interviewed for the SIS have positive views about the new development. Two-thirds of relocated tenants and more than seven in ten current tenants thought that the new development would be better overall for those who live there, as shown in Figure 9.1.

Figure 9.1: Relocated and current tenants' views on whether the new development will be better or worse for those who live there



Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04, n = 47, and interviews with current tenants 2003-04; n = 61.

There were a variety of reasons why the new development would be better:

I think it will be new and more accurately designed and more developed (relocated tenant).

Buildings will be new and modern. People's privacy will be better. People will be more relaxed and friendly (relocated tenant).

Nothing could be as bad, it was pretty appalling (relocated tenant).

I'm sure they will not build bedsits. Buildings will have less problems (current tenant).

Must be because it's a mixed estate, has to be clean and perfect (current tenant).

New buildings. Despite old bureaucracy, think it will be a chance to focus on the positive aspects of the new development (current tenant).

I think the redevelopment is a good idea. Kensington will look more beautiful and nice (current tenant).

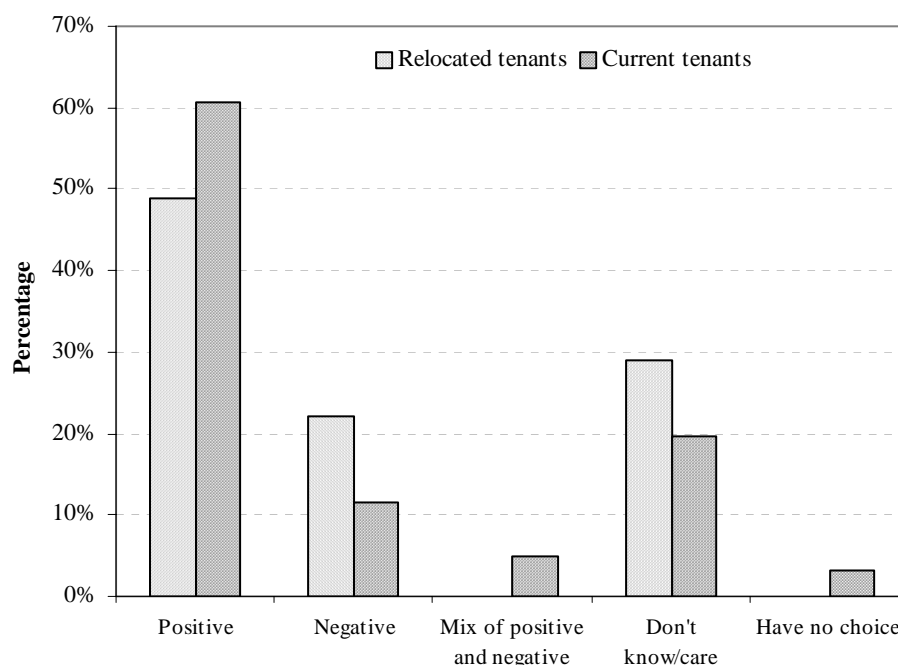
A very small number thought that the development would be worse, mainly relocated tenants fearing that it would be different to when they lived there previously:

Have to plan our lives again. Will be very strange. Won't be the same – just different (relocated tenant).

Because we've been away for three years and we miss what was there (relocated tenant).

Six in ten current tenants and half of relocated tenants also expressed positive views when asked what they thought about living in a mixed development of public housing, private rental and privately owned housing, as shown in Figure 9.2.

Figure 9.2: Relocated and current tenants' views on what they thought personally about living in a mixed public/private development



Source: Interviews with relocated tenants 2003-04, n = 45 (2 people chose not to respond to the question), and interviews with current tenants 2003-04; n = 61.

Some said generally that a mixed development was 'fine' or that they had no problems with it. Others were more specific, such as the area being less stigmatised and that people could learn from role models:

Good for young people to learn other culture. Mix with different race of people (relocated tenant).

I think it's a good idea. Two socioeconomic groups living side by side and both groups can help each other. Public tenants would be encouraged to be better people (relocated tenant).

I think it's the best way to go, to be honest. The mixture will certainly balance it out and there won't be the stigma (current tenant).

Very good. Not like with Housing Commission where there is a bad opinion. Mix can solve that problem. No-one knows who owns or rents (current tenant).

I believe that it's just a start, a positive example for other redevelopments. The towers look ugly, like for the unemployed, and can lead people to look down on others (current tenant).

I think it is a good idea. When finished it will make the place better – upgrade the look of place. Local people used to think this place gave Kensington a bad name. Think redevelopment will improve view of housing estate by locals. Local people will be less concerned about property values (current tenant).

20 per cent of current tenants and 29 per cent of relocated tenants said they did not know if, or how, a mixed development would work or had questions about it:

I don't know how it might work as some people pay more than \$200 a week while some pay \$35 a week to live on the same street (relocated tenant).

Don't know – have to see. It's like that here – it's all right (relocated tenant).

I know nothing about that. I haven't heard anything about that. Good luck to them (current tenant).

I'm worried about the new people moving into the new areas as to what sort of people they will be (current tenant).

While only 22 per cent of relocated tenants and 11 per cent of current tenants had negative views about living on a mixed estate, these were generally expressed in strong terms:

Recipe for disaster (relocated tenant).

I think it is stupid because I don't think there will be enough housing for public housing (relocated tenant).

Land grab going on. Want to see poor, disabled out. See them cringe when you walk past (current tenant).

9.3.2 Local residents

Local residents are very positive about living in the suburb. More than seven in ten made comments about various aspects of the people and community of Kensington that they liked, with many also liking the proximity⁶ of the suburb (77 per cent), as shown in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1: What local residents like about living in Kensington

'Likes' about living in Kensington	Number	Percentage
Proximity	74	77%
People and community	68	71%
Area/aesthetics	42	44%
Facilities and amenities	30	31%

Source: Survey of local residents, n = 96

Note: Open question and residents could nominate more than one aspect of living in Kensington that they liked.

Some of the terms commonly used to describe the Kensington community were that it was like a 'village' or a 'country town', with 24 per cent of local residents specifically mentioning that they liked the cultural and socioeconomic diversity, and a similar percentage commenting about people being friendly and not 'yuppie' or pretentious:

Yes, I love the community we live in. It feels like a small village.

It's a quiet friendly suburb. Great sense of community.

We know all our neighbours and shopkeepers and many residents. The many children and older persons increase the sense of village. A real – and not just 'real estate' – village.

You can always find very nice people to chat to in the street.

The diversity of the community, its pride in the community and the way everyone is welcomed to join and participate.

Community feel. Mix of income groups and people of different backgrounds – not yuppified.

Community atmosphere. Almost country town feeling.

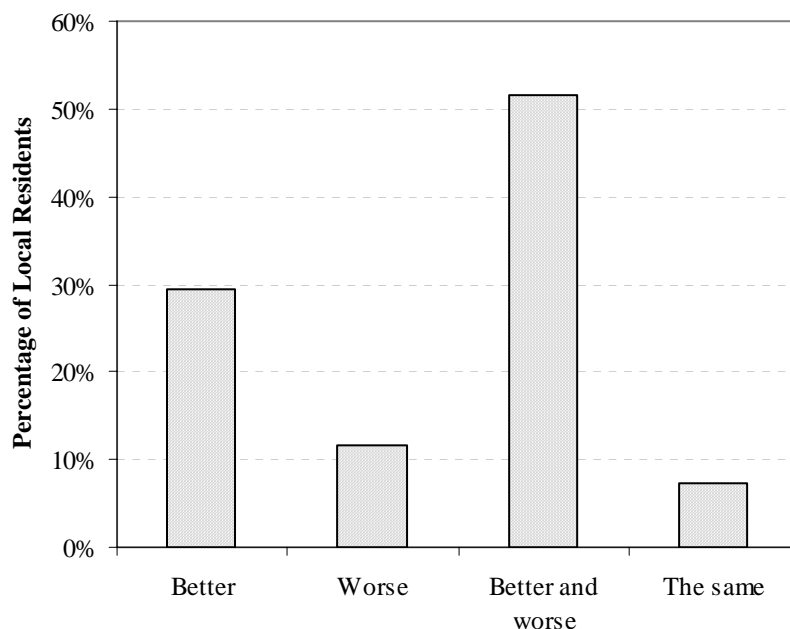
The sense of community – the 'helping' ethic is alive and well here.

The diversity – yuppies, families, students, home owners, renters, migrants – we've got the lot.

⁶ There were some subtle differences in how different groups defined proximity. For relocated and current tenants, this was proximity to shops, facilities, public transport and health care, whilst local residents mainly liked proximity to the city and other inner suburbs (66 per cent of all local residents mentioned this).

Local residents were asked whether they thought the redevelopment would make the suburb of Kensington better, worse, both better and worse, or the same. Three in ten thought that it would be better, half thought that it would be both better and worse, and one in ten thought that it would be worse, as shown in Figure 9.3.

Figure 9.3: Local residents' view on whether the redevelopment will make the suburb of Kensington better or worse



Source: Survey of local residents; n = 96

The main reasons that local residents gave for their view that the redevelopment would make the suburb better were better quality housing, better in terms of safety and property values, and a better mix of people:

It can only make Kensington better with new profile coming in.

It will bring new blood into the Kensington area, giving the place a different face-lift. Not all low income tenants living together – this can cause low self-esteem with some.

The council are maintaining the streets more, cleaning the area. Residents are taking pride in their homes. The class of people has changed. Crimes and drug use will decrease. Property values will keep increasing.

I believe that very careful planning has gone into the new public housing – mix of public/private housing – on the site and I trust the authorities working on this on the community's behalf. I watch the development on a regular basis, and I feel confident it will significantly improve Kensington.

Better – more people to join the community. Greater diversity.

Maybe the public housing will restore more families, less trouble makers.

Local residents gave a number of reasons why they thought that the redevelopment would make the suburb worse, relating to traffic and parking problems and the type of housing being developed, already discussed in Chapter 8. Some also commented on the loss of diversity, due to the loss of public housing tenants, and more general changes to the local community:

The same mix of people will not move into the area. The sense of community will not be the same. It will be a middle/upper class of people.

I think our suburb will change as less families are likely to return. I say it will be worse because I generally liked the way it was.

The cultural diversity was fantastic and engendered a tolerance much needed now. I miss the elderly people. I won't miss the ugly buildings, the drunken fights, the heroin dealers and needles.

Kensington has changed a lot since I moved in. I'm concerned it's becoming monocultural – waspish. Parking has become a real issue, the streets being filled with more up-market cars, yuppies and designer dogs. I'm concerned the redevelopment will add to this.

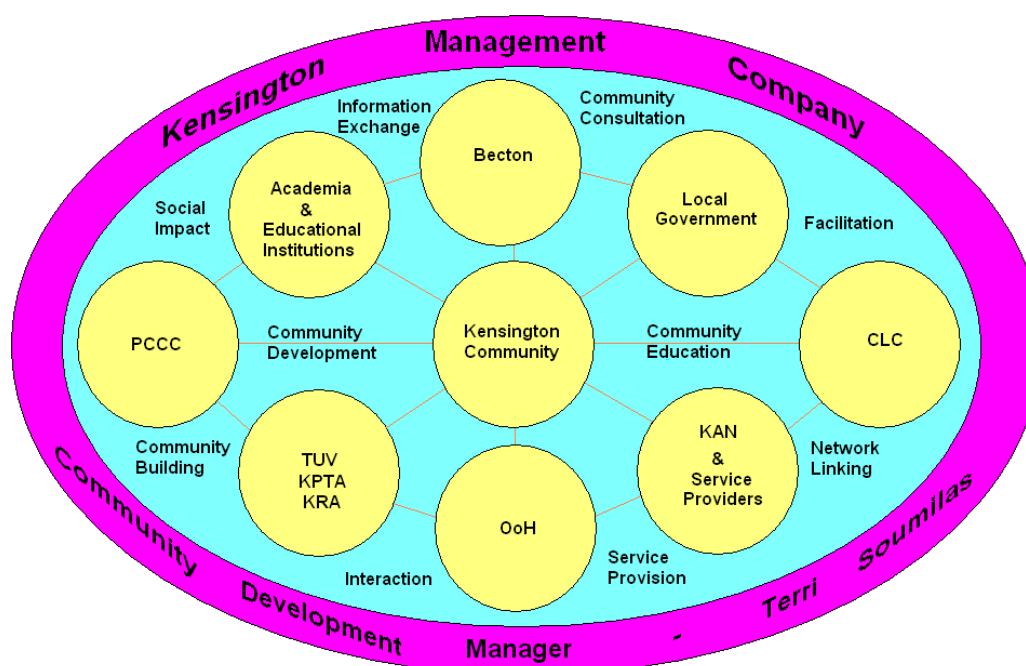
These findings suggest that **overall there are positive views about a mixed public/private development amongst those who are likely to live there and residents of surrounding areas**, although some local residents are concerned that it will lead to a lessening of socioeconomic and cultural diversity in Kensington generally.

9.4 Laying the foundations for community building

Community building involves many people and organisations and is essentially an organic process. KMC is a new 'player' in terms of Kensington and has a number of roles. In terms of body corporate management and site management, the company has very specific responsibilities whereas, in community building, its role can perhaps be described as a catalyst. KMC's 'community development'⁷ model indicates the range of organisations that are likely to have a role in community building as the development proceeds, as shown in Figure 9.4.

⁷ The terms 'community building' and 'community development' tend to be used interchangeably in the redevelopment project, although they have different origins and somewhat different connotations.

Figure 9.4: Kensington Management Company 'Community Development Model'



Source: Kensington Management Company (with permission).

The first person on the site after the formation of KMC in February 2003 was a community development manager, even before the company took over as the site manager in July 2003. KMC has worked with current residents in relation to both refurbishment and development issues, building connections with existing services and community organisations, and organising community activities to build informal connections between current residents of the site and other local residents.

The company has employed a number of strategies to introduce itself and explain its role to current and relocated tenants and local residents. These have included:

- Two public meetings when KMC was first established in early 2003 to introduce the company to tenants (day and evening meetings with interpreters in main community languages);
- Two public meetings when KMC took over management of the site in July 2003 to explain its role and to distribute an information kit to tenants (day and evening meetings with interpreters in main community languages);
- Doorknocking of all flats to introduce KMC to current tenants and distribute the information kit to those who did not attend the public meetings;
- Sponsorship or organisation of community activities to which current tenants have been invited such as a community cafe night and a community safety forum.

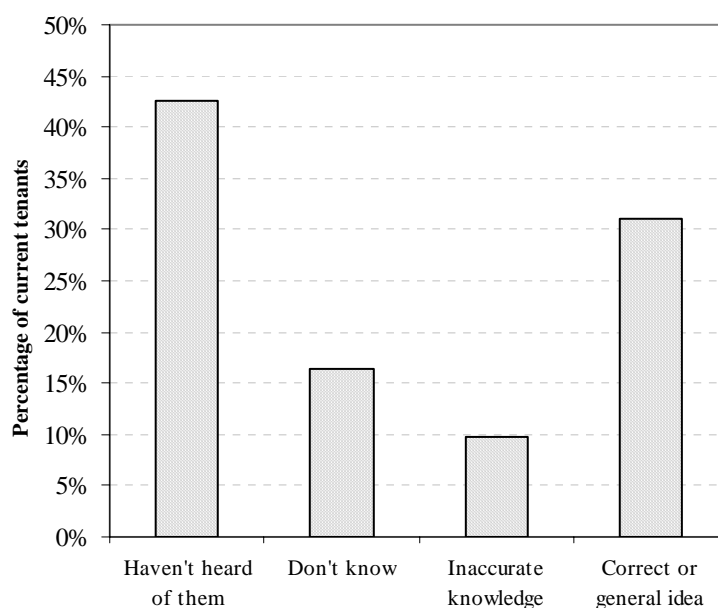
In addition, KMC has provided information about its roles indirectly via local service providers and via the housing officer who carries out tenancy management services from the KMC offices.⁸ Its staff have made presentations at forums organised by the

⁸ As indicated in Chapter 3, housing officers seconded from the Office of Housing work from KMC's offices to provide tenancy management services to public housing tenants, such as allocations, operating within the Office of Housing policies and procedures.

Office of Housing for current tenants, such as to discuss the refurbishment of 56 Derby Street, and at meetings with relocated tenants, as well as in local forums, such as the Kensington Residents' Association.

During interviews for the SIS held between November 2003 and February 2004, 41 per cent of current tenants said, when asked, that they had heard about KMC and 43 per cent said that they had not, as shown in Figure 9.5.

Figure 9.5: Current tenants' views on the role of the Kensington Management Company



Source: Interviews with current tenants 2003-04; n = 61

31 per cent knew what KMC did, or at least had a general idea of some services:

They're supposed to do the maintenance on the outside, but now they've got control of community facilities, the balconies.

I've never had much to do with them. They do all the maintenance around here. As far as I know that's all they do.

In charge of everything to do with the buildings, cleaning and organising cafe nights.

Work in our interests.

A further 10 per cent said they had heard about KMC but saw the organisation as the estate developer (Becton):

They redevelop, renovate.

They would be building the houses and they asked us to notify them of any problems.

Others did not know what the role of KMC was:

Well, I don't know. We are all wondering about what they do.

Current tenants were asked how they felt about the KMC being involved in the management of the estate. 58 per cent said that they did not know or did not care. 33 per cent were positive about the involvement, with only 8 per cent expressing negative feelings. People generally had mixed opinions:

Sounds like could be very good, as long as looking at developing the area properly. Not just buildings – playgrounds, shops, meeting hall – anything that brings people together.

Nothing. Just another body created so they can be paid for something they don't even do.

Not sure – observing. Holding opinion until I see what sort of job they do.

I've got nothing against it. They're nice people. I've met them all.

I don't see why the Housing Commission didn't do by themselves. What's the reason? They couldn't handle that?

The interviews with current tenants suggest that it will take a while for people to become familiar with the new management arrangements for the site and the role of KMC more generally, particularly if they have had long experience of the Office of Housing having this role.

9.5 Community building strategies

Looking ahead, community building at Kensington is likely to involve both short-term and longer-term strategies that may be turned to regularly or intermittently, as required. The rest of this section considers some of these strategies in the context of findings of the SIS, where relevant.

9.5.1 Welcoming new and returning residents to the site

Some older people have already begun to return to the newly refurbished block at 94 Ormond Street and others will be returning soon. A welcoming and settlement program is already being developed by KMC in conjunction with other organisations such as the KPTA, which can be refined and adapted for a larger intake of older people into the new block in mid-2005 and for other types of households moving (back) onto the site. The SIS findings support the following, some of which have been formalised in the *Return to Kensington Policy and Process* endorsed by the CLC in April 2004 (Office of Housing 2004a):

- Adequate notice so that people can come and visit the units and the site, with family and friends if possible, and make an informed decision about their housing;
- Assistance with packing and unpacking, if necessary, and with removalists in the case of returning public tenants;
- Welcome involving both personal contact and provision of written information;
- An opportunity to meet with other residents, 'old' and 'new', in a social setting;
- Introduction to the management of the site (KMC);
- Information about access to, and use of, community facilities on site such as those at the base of 94 Ormond Street;
- Assistance, referral and advocacy in accessing local services;

- Other information relevant to the age group and type of household (for example, for older people, information on podiatry, dental and health services, recreation options, educational activities, transport to the Footscray market);
- Practical tips relevant to the age group and type of household (for example, for older people, tips on day-to-day living such as where to buy small portions and how to get discounts, based on the knowledge of 'locals'⁹);
- Advice to local shopkeepers and businesses about what types of households and people are moving onto the site so that they can plan for this;
- Advice to local services so that they can plan for an increase in older people on low incomes living on the site;
- Access to on-site support services for older people (discussed in Chapter 8).

Different means of providing information and support are desirable, rather than risking overloading people with paper. These could include personal contact, invitations to participate in social activities and, for some people, web-based information. Many new residents may have internet access, particularly if they are younger or have children. The SIS found that, although relatively few current tenants were computer users, half of the relocated tenants had a computer at home, with most using both e-mail and internet.

Other ideas include:

- 'Welcoming back' celebrations, with a multicultural focus, perhaps in conjunction with an arts activity such as the successful 'relocated' arts project when relocated tenants left the estate;
- A brochure or on-site display focusing on the history of people living on the site and in Kensington to give a sense of place and history, perhaps in conjunction with the local historical society;
- Introductory discounts at local shops and businesses (currently being negotiated by KMC);
- A program to provide tenants with second-hand computers and internet access, on the lines of the project underway on the Atherton Gardens estate in Fitzroy, or alternatively an internet café (already raised by KMC);
- A Neighbourhood Watch scheme in conjunction with Victoria Police;
- Activities for children in the public open space on the site.

Whilst many of these activities will be organised for site residents by KMC and the KPTA, it is also important that other Kensington organisations conduct outreach to invite new and returning residents to participate in their activities.

9.5.2 Building trust and informal connections through community activities

Community activities can be an important means of enabling site residents to meet and make informal connections. They also provide an opportunity for people living on the site and residents of surrounding areas to meet. There are a number of examples as part of community building in projects to regenerate/redevelop public housing

⁹ A SIS researcher held a preliminary discussion with the Kensington Neighbourhood House Women's Group in December 2003 on practical tips which generated a lot of suggestions, such as where to get a 'half loaf', where to get 'snack' sizes of foods, and which shops do home deliveries.

estates, such as the Westwood joint venture in Adelaide¹⁰ where activities have included family fun days and summer concerts in the park (Crafter 2003).

KMC has organised or sponsored a range of community activities to enable site residents and other Kensington residents to meet on an informal basis and to develop connections if they wish, often in conjunction with other organisations. These have included a cafe night, a community choir, a dance festival, sausage sizzles, lunches and free Tai Chi classes. Future plans include family based activities such as a jazz night and a community garden. One of the problems faced by KMC has been difficulty in attracting funds to support these types of activities, possibly because funding organisations do not differentiate KMC from the developer (Becton).

Another issue is whether people living on and around the site wish to, or have the time to, become involved in community activities such as this. The interviews with relocated and current tenants suggested that there is quite a degree of interest, as illustrated in Table 9.2, although some prefer not to be participate.

Table 9.2: Interest by relocated and current tenants in different types of activities

Activity	Relocated tenants		Current tenants	
	N	%	N	%
Receiving information about various activities on the new Kensington development	34	72%	34	56%
Getting together with people living at Kensington	26	55%	35	57%
Getting together with (other) people who have moved from Kensington	30	64%	25	41%
Attending and participating in social events on the estate	25	53%	35	57%

Source: Interviews with relocated tenants; n = 47, and interviews with current tenants; n = 61.

In contrast, seven in ten local residents (69 per cent) said that they were not interested in becoming more involved in community activities. Some were already involved, others were too busy or could not get involved at this time. A third (31 per cent), however, had suggestions for community activities they would like to see:¹¹

- Community management (cleaning, sustainability, planning, environmental issues, protesting against large developments);
- Arts activities (local artists);
- Festivals, fetes, markets;
- Musical activities (choir, local music);
- Multicultural activities (events, sister city project, assistance to migrants);
- Child related activities;
- Reading related activities;
- Historical society;
- Outdoor exercise;
- Outdoor movies.

¹⁰ This is a public/private partnership between Urban Pacific Ltd and the South Australian Housing Trust in association with the City of Port Adelaide/Enfield to redevelop an older style estate.

¹¹ These were suggestions made by more than one person in each case.

Anything involving fun for small children – family fun days, open air movies, street parties.

Yes. Anything that draws people together in a spirit of cooperation and tolerance.

Environmental improvements such as native planting days, water conservation days, working bee to clean up along the creek, under the City Link. Dog walking days or shows, for fun, maybe with Kensington vet clinic.

Community events like street fairs or outdoor exercise activities.

The SIS findings suggest that there is some interest amongst relocated and current tenants about participating in community activities on the site. Many local residents were, however, not interested in becoming involved in further community activities, for some due to their current level of community involvement. **As well as running some community activities on site, a complementary strategy of inviting site residents to participate in existing community activities in Kensington is also desirable. Some will not want to do so and this should be respected.**

9.5.3 Linking with other community organisations and networks in Kensington to address issues affecting site residents

There are a number of local networks that are potentially very important to community building as the redevelopment proceeds, particularly the Flagstaff Police Community Consultative Committee. Interviews suggested that safety and security was a very important issue for relocated and current tenants, with some wanting reassurance that previous problems around crime and safety would not reappear. The chief executive officer of KMC is a member of this committee. KMC is also working with traders who are trying to reactivate the local Traders' Association.

The company's community development manager currently convenes the Kensington Agencies' Network, although it is envisaged that this will become self-sustaining. Reinvigoration of this network is essential to service system development in the area, as discussed in the following section.

As more older people move into public housing on the site, it will also be important to work with existing networks around services for older people including, but not restricted to, health services.

9.5.4 Service system development

Another important aspect of community building is to ensure that people living on the site have access to the support and services they require. Kensington already has a broad range of services, agencies and community organisations, although many have had to refocus their activities as a result of the redevelopment and other changes in the suburb (as outlined in Chapter 7).

There are challenges for service providers in adapting to change elsewhere in Kensington whilst providing inclusive services that support diversity. As a Kensington Neighbourhood Audit carried out for the City of Melbourne pointed out, there is a danger that service providers will find outreach to culturally diverse populations more difficult when their numbers decrease (City of Melbourne 2002: 9). It is essential that

they provide appropriate outreach services to connect with people from a range of backgrounds as an integral part of refining and developing their services.

A good example of this process is provided by Kensington Primary School, which has worked to improve community perceptions of the school, to encourage local residents to enrol their children, and to develop a cohesive and inclusive school community. The main ways in which it has done this have been:

- Improving promotional strategies such as better signage, information kits for prospective parents, increasing media profile;
- Employment of quality staff;
- ‘Whole of school’ professional development and an emphasis on student welfare issues;
- Celebration of successes, wherever possible;
- Forums for Somali and other refugee families to improve exchange of information;
- School and social activities with a multicultural focus;
- Increased use of multicultural aide and interpreter service.

The school regards these as successful according to measures such as an increase in enrolments from newer areas like Kensington Banks, an increase in the participation of non-English speaking children in school programs and special activities such as camps, and more involvement by non-English speaking parents in school meetings and activities. KMC has also developed a specific community development strategy with the school and is looking to continue this approach with other services and agencies.

Other agencies are going through, or will need to go through, a similar process in developing inclusive services that support the needs of a new mix of people, both on the redevelopment site and in Kensington more generally.

9.5.5 Longer-term strategies

The redevelopment aims to create a ‘sustainable community’, but this goal need to be further defined and developed so that at some future date there can be an assessment of whether it has been achieved. ‘Sustainable’ in terms of projects to regenerate public housing estates often means that no ‘special’ ongoing funding is required to keep the project going (Arthurson 2003): 368). KMC’s community building objectives for the longer term suggest a broader and more ambitious view of ‘sustainable community’:

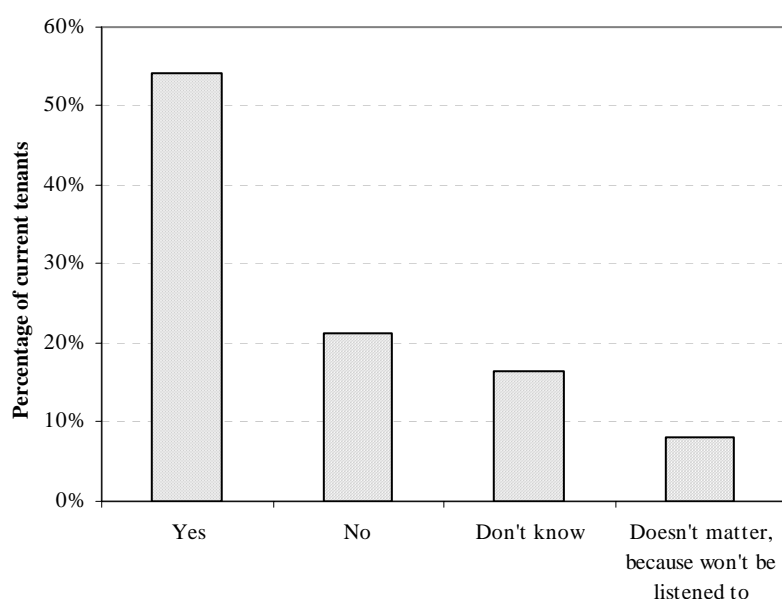
- Empowering residents through effective participation and consultation;
- Building community capacity;
- Retaining community links;
- Strengthening community infrastructure;
- Encouraging local economic development;
- Fostering a sense of place;
- Responding to the needs of residents (KMC 2004).

Further work is needed to refine each of these, develop ideas and identify indicators that can help assess progress. This will require discussion with, and involvement of, people as they move onto the site, as well as a range of other people and

organisations. For example, what does 'local economic development' mean, how can this be encouraged,¹² who would be involved, how would success be measured and who would measure it?

Giving the timing of the SIS, before most people move (back) onto the site, there has only been an opportunity to reflect on 'empowering residents through effective participation and consultation'. This is envisaged as the building or strengthening of representative structures to ensure that they to have a say in the development and its management (KMC 2004). Current tenants (the only people currently on site) were asked what they thought about tenants being involved in management of the redeveloped site. More than half expressed an interest, as shown in Figure 9.6.

Figure 9.6: Current tenants' views on tenant involvement in management of the redeveloped site



Source: Interviews with current tenants 2003-04; n = 61

Those with positive views about tenant involvement in management expressed a number of reasons for this:

I think tenants should be involved. Without tenants I couldn't understand what is the meaning of management. It should be from tenant – like union, but from tenant not from union. They should go inside, see what is happening.

Naturally because they've got to live here, so they should have a say about what goes on in their community.

Yes. Main reason, people who live there understand the place and should have some say in what happens next. For that reason they

¹² For example, the Westwood joint venture in Adelaide has established the Westwood Urban Renewal Fund with \$2 million from Urban Pacific Ltd (the developer) and the local council over the life of the project for local community and economic development initiatives (Crafter 2003).

would do a good job as they would have to live with the results of what their suggestions were.

They should be [involved] somewhere along the line. So people know what's going on. They do need communication. That's their biggest downfall.

Yes. Should have more of a say. If it's affecting their lives, of course they should have a say.

One in five current tenants thought that tenants should not be involved in management because they did not have the necessary expertise:

No I don't. I'm not interested. You have too many people who don't know what they are talking about.

No. I believe these decisions are beyond me.

No. We're not qualified for a start. Can you imagine it?

16 per cent did not know whether tenant involvement was a good idea or not, and 8 per cent said it does not matter if tenants are involved or not, as they will not be listened to:

They should, but then again, who would listen?

These findings suggest that there is support for, and a degree of cynicism about, tenant involvement in management of the redeveloped site amongst current tenants. The degree of interest provides an opportunity for KMC to work with the Kensington Public Tenants' Association and other interested parties towards developing models by which tenants and other residents can become more involved in management.

9.6 Summary

The goal of the redevelopment is to build a 'sustainable community' to ensure the social and commercial success of the project. Three main strategies are envisaged: tenure mix/social mix, high quality site management and community building.

There are a number of challenges. There are early indications that the tenure mix will be predominantly public and private tenants, which raises several issues, most notably about turnover. Other challenges include reviving interest in community building amongst those who have previously made substantial contributions, and supporting and working with other communities in addition to one based on place.

Relocated and current tenants think that the new development will be better overall for people who live there than the estate before the redevelopment, and most are positive about living in a mixed tenure development. Residents of surrounding areas are very positive about the people and community of Kensington and, whilst most think that the redevelopment will make the suburb better, many raised concerns about traffic, parking and the type of housing being developed (discussed in Chapter 8), along with some concerns about reduced socioeconomic and cultural diversity.

Community building is a process that will involve many people and organisations. A foundation has been laid with the establishment of KMC, which has a number of roles. In terms of community building, KMC will have a pivotal role as a catalyst for

community building. It may take a while for some current tenants, and possibly others, to understand the roles played by KMC. Initiatives for building community are already underway. It is important to welcome new and returning residents to the site and to continue to build trust and informal connections through community activities. A variety of community organisations and local networks will play an important role in community building and in the development of service systems to ensure equity of access by site residents and other Kensington residents.

The concept of a 'sustainable community' requires further refinement, as do longer-term strategies for achieving this.

9.7 Recommendations

The following recommendations apply specifically to the Kensington project.

R39 That the CLC and KMC, in consultation with others, specify in more detail what is meant by 'sustainable community' so that, as the redevelopment proceeds, progress in achieving this can be monitored and corrective action taken if necessary, and a full evaluation can be made at the end of the project to assess whether this has been achieved.

R40 That the Office of Housing, in consultation with KMC, considers the introduction of a local allocations policy for the site to ensure a mix of households eligible for public housing.

R41 That the CLC asks the joint venture partners, Becton and the Office of Housing, to investigate options to increase the mix of households on the site, such as a component of social housing targeted at households in segment four of the public housing wait list.

R42 That the Office of Housing and KMC monitor the size and type of households moving into both public and private housing on the site and provide this information to the CLC to enable an overview of the mix of households and any implications flowing from this.

R43 That the Office of Housing and KMC acknowledge the contribution of, and continue to work with, different types of communities in community building.

R44 That KMC continues to engage the assistance of local services and businesses in welcoming and settlement of residents returning to, and moving onto, the site, with a particular focus on their age and likely needs and contributions.

R45 That KMC continues to work with the KPTA and other interested parties to develop meaningful ways in which residents can be involved in site management in the longer term.

R46 That KMC continues to work with relevant people and organisations to specify the objectives of longer-term strategies for community building, ways of implementing these, and indicators by which progress can be measured.

Chapter 10

Lessons for Future Redevelopment Projects

This chapter draws out what has been learned through the SIS process, as reported in previous chapters, for future redevelopment of public housing estates. It also provides suggestions for further social research as the Kensington redevelopment proceeds.

10.1 Implications of the SIS for future redevelopment projects

10.1.1 Minimise uncertainty about redevelopment proceeding and the timelines for redevelopment

Redevelopment of the Kensington public housing estate was mooted from the late 1980s, had a 'false start' in the early 1990s, started in part in 1998 and commenced in full in 2000. By the time the redevelopment is completed at the end of 2008, some people's lives will have been affected by it for up to 20 years.

There are many reasons why the redevelopment took so long to begin, including government policy changes and changes of government. For some of the people living on and around the estate, however, the prolonged period before the redevelopment created some uncertainty, and a degree of cynicism, about whether it would take place at all. Others moved onto the estate or into houses nearby, unaware that there were plans for redevelopment.

Notwithstanding the complexity of redeveloping older public housing estates, it is important that planning and implementation occurs within a shorter timeframe to minimise uncertainty for people living on the site, residents of surrounding areas, local services, and local shops and businesses.

10.1.2 Redevelop in stages

Paradoxically, after such a long delay, when decisions were made in March 1998 to demolish the high rise tower at 72 Derby Street and in August 2000 to demolish the walk-ups and construct new units on the site, relocation of tenants and demolition of buildings seemed to happen very quickly for many of the people interviewed.

The adverse social impacts to date resulted mainly from the relocation of many households over a relatively short period, to provide a clear site for construction. Relocated tenants experienced disruption to their lives and those of their children, even though, for some, the move proved beneficial in the end. The speed and scale of the relocations also affected tenants remaining on the site, local schools, services and agencies, and many local shops and businesses.

This approach to redevelopment dispersed existing communities. Due to the clearance of the site (with the exception of the two remaining high rise towers), and despite attempts to acquire additional public housing in the area, opportunities to stay in Kensington were limited. More than four in ten of those who left would have preferred to remain on site, even in temporary accommodation.

There are two implications of clearing a site during a redevelopment. Firstly, continuity of living there will be broken and a new community will take time to develop. Those who have worked hard to build community over many years may no longer be in a position to, or wish to, continue doing this, particularly for a different

mix of residents. Secondly, the longer that people are away from the site, the less likely they are to return. Many of the benefits of the redevelopment are likely to go to new people moving onto the site rather than those who lived there prior to the redevelopment. Staging of a redevelopment, although it has its own complexities, addresses these two important issues.

10.1.3 Benchmark prior to redevelopment

It is essential to benchmark what an estate is like *before* a redevelopment so that the subsequent effects can be monitored and assessed. The SIS had to establish what the Kensington estate and surrounding area was like prior to the redevelopment, based on Census data and the recollections of those who had lived there. There is always a danger, in looking back, of people's memories being affected by their subsequent experiences.

Benchmarking should include accurate data on stock composition and the profile of people living on the estate in terms of size and type of households, age, cultural background and income level. It is also important to determine the views of residents living on and around the estate about both the strengths and the problems associated with that estate. In other words, both a quantitative and qualitative assessment is required.

10.1.4 Plan redevelopment projects with regard to changes in the surrounding area

The SIS highlighted significant changes that were occurring in the rest of Kensington immediately prior to, and during, the redevelopment, namely, that the population was increasing and becoming more 'gentrified'. These changes were unconnected to, but had implications for, the redevelopment project, which aimed at introducing greater socioeconomic diversity and preventing a concentration of poverty. In these circumstances, the paradox is that, if the redevelopment succeeds in increasing socioeconomic diversity on the site, this will contribute to a lessening of diversity in Kensington as a whole.

Planning for redevelopment should take account of changes in the area surrounding an estate. This does not mean that a strategy of tenure diversification may not be applicable in some situations, such as an outer suburban estate surrounded by low cost housing or where this is necessary as a means of financing a redevelopment, if a 'do nothing' option would have worse outcomes overall. Inevitably, there will be trade-offs, but these should be made with a good understanding of changes in the area surrounding the estate.

10.1.5 Consult with those who will be affected by the redevelopment in ways that are relevant and appropriate

The SIS highlighted the importance of providing clear, accurate and timely information to those who would be affected by the redevelopment. This should be done in ways that are relevant to the people involved.

Local shops and businesses would have liked more details about how many people would be moving out and when, so that they could adapt. They also wanted to know how long the site would be vacant and when people would be moving back. Many of the traders in the local shopping centre were owner-operators who could not afford the time away from their business to attend meetings and preferred to have information in writing or via personal contact.

Many of the people who lived on the estate were migrants and refugees, some of whom had had prior experiences of involuntary relocation. Thus, the redevelopment not only moved households but dispersed communities which had settled in Kensington. It is important to work with relevant community networks and organisations as well as individual households and to listen to, and address, the particular concerns that communities may have.

10.1.6 Provide information to those who will be affected by a redevelopment at a variety of levels and in a number of ways

Many of the people interviewed for the SIS wanted to understand the 'big picture', such as why was the estate being redeveloped, who was doing this, where had the public tenants gone to, when would they return, what would the new housing be like, and how much of it would be public housing. Others wanted to know in detail about a part of the project and how this would affect them. It is important that information is provided at a number of levels, ranging from the conceptual to the very practical.

It is also important to provide information in multiple ways and on more than one occasion. For example, in some cases, there had been consultation with the chief executive officers of various organisations but this information had not reached local workers in Kensington. The SIS found that personal letters, specific newsletters and local newspapers were good ways of communicating with people about the redevelopment and are desirable from the outset of a project. Some wanted to be involved in a more interactive way, for example, through meetings, or may prefer to access web-based information.

10.1.7 Engage in good social planning

The SIS findings indicated that it is important to engage in good social planning in relation to a redevelopment. This includes consideration of people who will be housed on the site and their needs in terms of design of units, site design and the availability of support services both on site and in the surrounding area. For example, if more older people are to be housed, this would involve design of appropriate units and buildings, availability of on-site facilities and services, and planning for necessary facilities and support as they become more frail to enable them to 'age in place'.

10.1.8 Provide opportunities for people living in buildings undergoing major refurbishment to move out

Those who remained on site in the two high rise towers, mainly older people, were most directly affected by the refurbishment works on their buildings rather than the demolition of the walk-ups or the construction works on the cleared site. The major causes of concern were noise, dust and dirt. Half of current tenants said that they would have liked the opportunity to move out, with most indicating that they would have taken up this option if available. Some may wish to move elsewhere on a permanent basis whilst, for those who wish to stay, there could be opportunities to move into temporary accommodation on the site, if a redevelopment is staged.

10.1.9 Ensure high quality asset planning and management

Assessing changes to the type and configuration of public housing on the site, in Kensington and more generally, was sometimes difficult and time consuming, as data were kept by different people and in different places. It is important to develop and maintain a good asset management database so that there is clear and accessible information on changes to public housing stock as a direct result of the

redevelopment: on the site, in the suburb surrounding the estate, in the region (to be clearly defined) and on public housing stock overall. The database should also include changes to stock, if any, which are not connected to the redevelopment for the same areas so that a complete picture of changes can be obtained. Accurate data is necessary to inform discussion of strategies for housing for low income households, particularly in the inner urban area where it is difficult to replace any net reduction in public housing stock as a result of a redevelopment project.

10.2 Future directions for social research about the Kensington redevelopment project

10.2.1 Release of the SIS Report

People living on the estate, relocated tenants, local residents and local services and businesses have been interviewed, surveyed and invited to participate in focus groups over a number of years.¹ Many people generously contributed their time to the SIS, and it is important that this is not a one-way process. Whilst feedback has been given throughout the SIS on interim findings and issues, it is important that research participants can access the complete findings if they wish. Three-quarters of relocated and current tenants said that they would like to receive the findings of the SIS.² Whilst some will be interested in the full Report, others will want a summary outlining the main findings.

10.2.2 Further research

The brief for the SIS suggests that there will be continuing social research as the redevelopment proceeds (DHS 2002: Section 4.4). This is important as the process of (re)building, both physically and in terms of community, proceeds. Some questions for further research are suggested below.

The effects of the reallocation/resettlement on the profile of public tenants

- How many relocated tenants move back, and what types of households are these?
- What was the reallocation/resettlement process like for returning tenants?
- Why did other relocated tenants not move back?
- Are there people who wanted to move back but were not able to do this, and why?

¹ For example, Maxine Cooper and Associates conducted surveys and held focus groups during preparation of the Kensington Estate Redevelopment Strategy (Perrott Lyon Mathieson 1999c); collaborations (a consultancy firm) held focus and discussion groups and carried out a telephone survey of 200 Kensington residents in conducting a Neighbourhood Audit for the Melbourne City Council in 2001-02 (City of Melbourne 2002); and Project Partnerships interviewed relocated tenants and held consultations with local service providers and business operators in 2001 as part of the evaluation of the relocations from 72 Derby Street. Residents and local workers were also invited to participate in community workshops in 2003 run by the Cities of Melbourne and Moonee Valley to help develop a community action plan for Kensington.

² 77 per cent of relocated tenants and 74 per cent of current tenants said that they would like to receive the findings of the SIS.

Immediate effects of settlement/resettlement

- What do people think of their new or newly refurbished accommodation in terms of size, type, location, fittings and suitability to their needs?
- What are some of the immediate challenges in settling/resettling, such as access to schools, services and facilities, links with other residents, and site management?

Progress in (re)building community

- For those who lived on the site previously and surrounding residents, what is different (better or worse) and what is the same?
- Have residents of the site made social connections both on site and with other Kensington residents?
- Are site residents able to access the support and services that they require?
- Have local agencies, services and businesses been able to adapt to and support the needs of the new community? How has the redevelopment affected them in the longer term?
- Is a strategy of tenure mix and social mix working, from the point of view of site residents and surrounding residents?
- What indicators are there that the new community is working or not working, such as indicators of social capital and indicators of dysfunction (e.g. crime statistics and absences from school)?

Changes to community profile (longer-term)

- At regular intervals, what is the profile of residents moving onto the site in different tenure groups, in terms of age, family size and type, cultural background and association with Kensington?
- At intervals, and at the end of the redevelopment, what is the mix of owner occupiers, private tenants and public tenants?
- At intervals, and at the end of the redevelopment, how has the profile of households living on the site changed in terms of age, family size and type, household income and cultural background?
- At intervals, and at the end of the redevelopment, how does the profile of site residents compare with that of the surrounding community?

These suggestions are about research to gauge the social impacts of the redevelopment, that is, the effects on people, families and communities. Research into these questions should form part of a broader evaluation of the redevelopment project that covers other important issues such as: did the project meet the goal of developing a 'sustainable community', did the strategy of tenure diversification meet its objectives, was the public/private partnership a cost-effective means of redeveloping the estate, how well did the arrangements for site management work, and did the partners in the redevelopment (Becton and the Office of Housing) consider that the model was a successful one?

10.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations are *key principles for any future redevelopment of public housing estates*, based on overall learning from the SIS.

R47 That, in planning for a redevelopment, priority is given to minimising uncertainty about it proceeding and the timelines for redevelopment.

R48 That redevelopment of large public housing estates proceeds in stages, where practical, to minimise disruption to people, families and communities.

R49 That estates are benchmarked prior to redevelopment to facilitate assessment of the impact of subsequent changes.

R50 That redevelopment of public housing estates is planned within the context of changes occurring in the surrounding area.

R51 That consultations take place with those who will be affected by the redevelopment, in ways that are relevant and appropriate.

R52 That information is provided at a variety of levels, in a number of ways and from the start of a redevelopment to those who will be affected.

R53 That social planning, involving the relevant local council(s), is conducted in parallel with physical planning for a redevelopment.

R54 That opportunities are provided for people living in buildings undergoing major refurbishment to move out if they wish during the building works.

R55 That the Office of Housing develops, maintains and makes publicly available comprehensive information on changes to public housing stock, including the number and type of dwellings, as a result of a redevelopment and for other reasons: on the site, in the suburb surrounding the estate, in the region (to be clearly defined) and on public housing stock overall.

The following recommendations concern release and distribution of this SIS Report and future social research about the Kensington project:

R56 That the SIS Report is made publicly available to interested parties, including posting on the websites of the Office of Housing, the CLC and KMC.

R57 That a brief summary of the SIS, based on the Executive Summary, is made available to all research participants, indicating the availability of the full Report if requested.

R58 That further social research is undertaken to address the types of questions outlined in Section 10.2.2, as people start to move (back) onto the site.

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Appendix 1

Details of the Interviews with Relocated and Current Tenants and the Survey of Local Residents

A1.1 Questionnaire design, analysis and reporting

Two types of questionnaire were used in the research:

- Detailed questionnaires were designed to be completed in face-to-face interviews with relocated and current tenants. Trained interviewers, including multi-lingual interviewers, conducted the interviews that took between 40 minutes and one hour to complete;
- For local residents, a short questionnaire was dropped off in letterboxes for people to fill out and return by mail.

Both types of questionnaires comprised:

- Pre-coded questions (with a limited number of answers to choose from);
- Open questions (which enabled people to say in their own words what their response was).

The questionnaires contained many open questions to obtain detailed and qualitative information. During data analysis, all answers to each open question were reviewed to see what themes or issues emerged. Where possible, there was some quantification of the number of respondents expressing a particular view to indicate how widespread this was.

As indicated in Chapter 2, the findings of the interviews are reported in three ways:

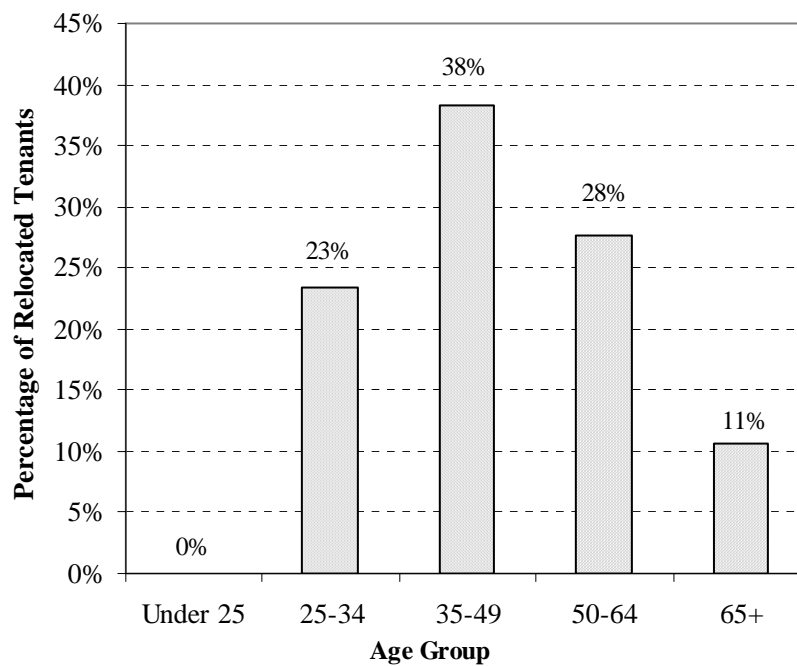
- Direct quotes to illustrate views on the redevelopment in the words of people most affected by it (either as spoken to an interviewer and recorded verbatim or as written by the respondent);
- Themes and issues that emerged from analysis of open questions are presented either in a textual discussion or in tables that show how many of those interviewed made comments around a particular theme or issue. Households may have made no, one or more comments, and the responses do not sum to 100 per cent;
- Quantitative analysis of answers given by all interviewees in pre-coded questions. In most cases, unless multiple responses were allowed for, the responses sum to 100 per cent.

The rest of this Appendix details the profile of each of the three groups participating in the research: relocated tenants, current tenants and local residents.

A1.2 Profile of relocated tenants

Relocated tenants who were interviewed for the research came from a variety of age groups, with most being aged between 35 and 64, as shown in Figure A1.

Figure A1.1: Age of relocated tenants interviewed

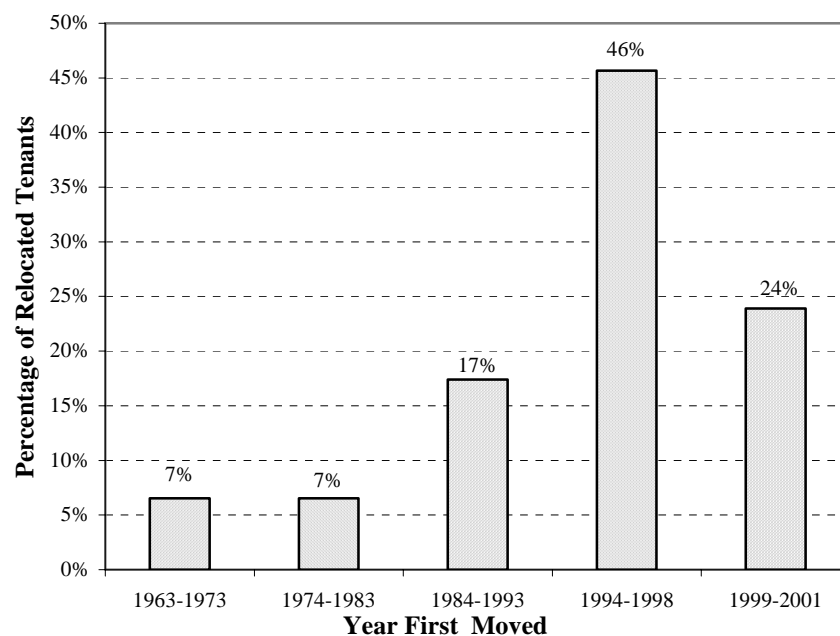


Note: n = 47

Two-thirds of those interviewed (66 per cent) were female, a third (32 per cent) were male, and one family of an elderly couple and their adult son answered the questionnaire together.

People interviewed had lived on the Kensington estate for varying periods of time. The longest-term relocated tenant had moved onto the estate when it was built in 1963, and the most recent had moved there in 2001, as shown in Figure A1.2. The mean (average) year of moving onto the estate was 1992.

Figure A1.2: Year when relocated tenants first moved onto the Kensington estate



Note: n = 47

Almost a quarter of the relocated tenants interviewed were born in Australia and three-quarters overseas in a range of countries as shown in Table A1.1.

Table A1.1: Country of birth of relocated tenants interviewed

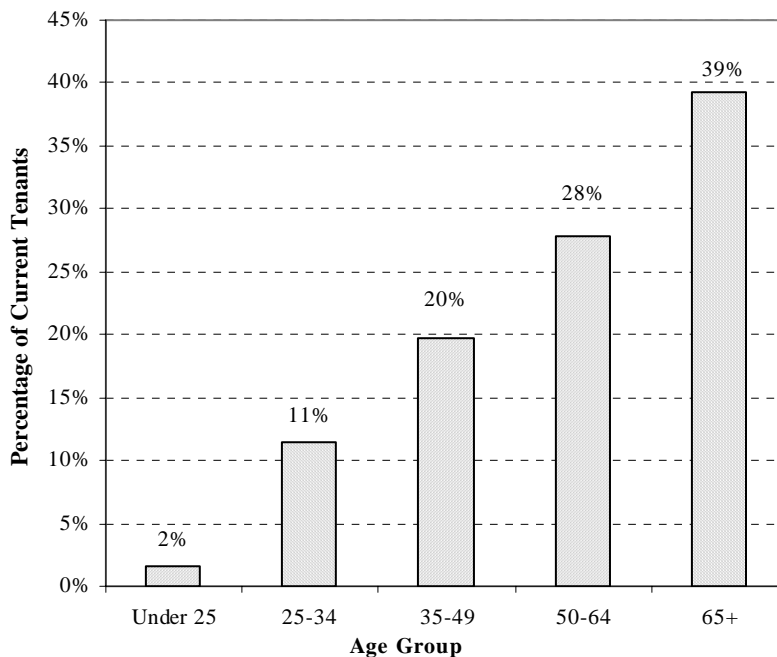
Country	Number	Percentage
Australia	11	24%
Ethiopia	10	21%
Vietnam	9	19%
Somalia	6	12%
Eritrea	5	11%
Austria	1	2%
England	1	2%
Fiji	1	2%
Lebanon	1	2%
Mauritius	1	2%
Turkey	1	2%
Total	47	100%

70 per cent of those interviewed spoke a language other than English at home. Some spoke multiple languages at home, particularly people from countries in the Horn of Africa and from Vietnam. Almost six in ten (57 per cent) of interviews were conducted in a language other than English: Vietnamese, Cantonese, Tigre, Tigrinya, Somali or Sudanese Arabic.

A1.3 Profile of current tenants

Current tenants who were interviewed were typically older than the relocated tenants, with two-thirds being aged 50 and over and almost 40 per cent aged 65 and over, as illustrated in Figure A1.3.

Figure A1.3: Age of current tenants interviewed

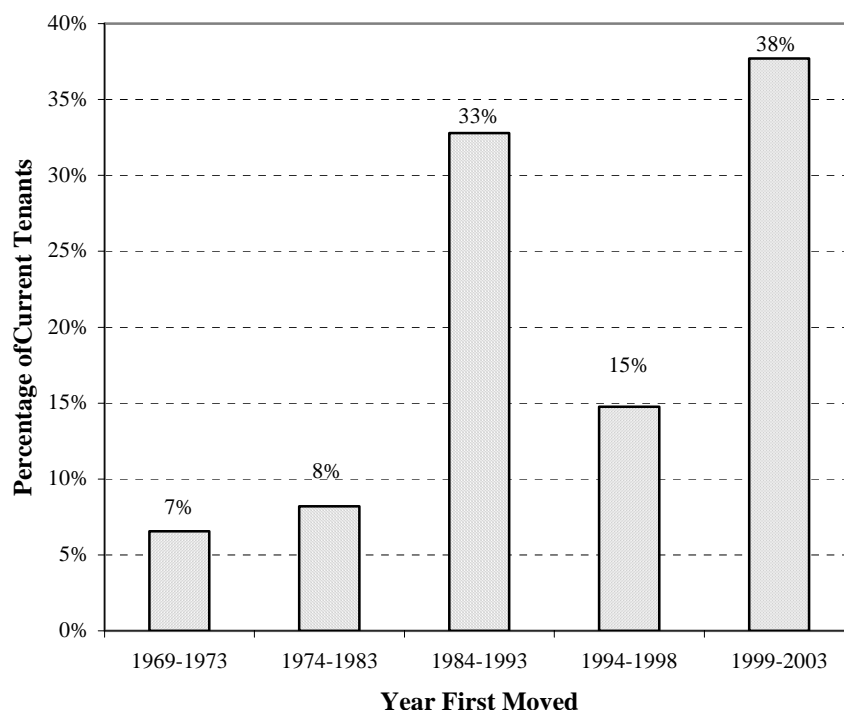


Note: n = 61

Just under half of those who were interviewed were male (46 per cent) and just over half female (53 per cent). There was also one couple who completed the survey together. Most (61 per cent) lived alone, with 21 per cent living with their children, 13 per cent living with a partner or partner and children, and 5 per cent having another living arrangement (living with parents or siblings).

Current tenants had lived on the Kensington estate for varying periods, with the longest-term tenant having moved there in 1969 and the most recent moving onto the estate in 2003, as shown in Figure A1.4.

Figure A1.4: Year when current tenants first moved onto the Kensington estate



Note: n = 61

Of those interviewed, a third had been born in Australia and almost two-thirds in countries from many regions of the world, as outlined in Tables A1.2 and A1.3.

Table A1.2: Country of birth of current tenants interviewed

Country	Number	Percentage
Australia	20	33%
Vietnam	11	18%
Somalia	6	10%
Eritrea	4	7%
Egypt	2	3%
England	2	3%
Ethiopia	2	3%
Poland	2	3%
Other*	12	20%
Total	61	100%

Note: n = 61

* 'Other': One person was born in each of China, Czech Republic, Greece, India, Iran, Ireland, Lebanon, Lithuania, Macedonia, Russia, Scotland and Turkey.

Table A1.3: Region of birth of current tenants interviewed

Region	Number	Percentage
Australia	20	33%
Asia	13	21%
Europe (includes Russia and Turkey)	13	21%
Horn of Africa	12	20%
Middle East (includes Egypt)	3	5%
Total	61	1%

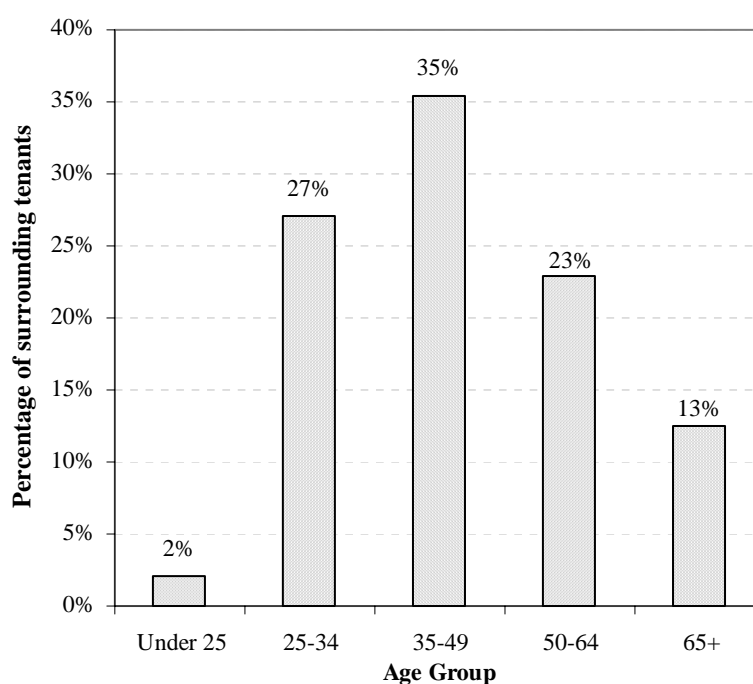
Note: n = 61

Two-thirds of relocated tenants spoke a language other than English at home. Emphasising the diversity of this group, 18 languages were spoken at home: Amharic, Arabic, Cantonese, French, Greek, Italian, Lebanese, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Oromo, Persian, Polish, Russian, Somali, Tigre, Tigrinya, Turkish and Vietnamese. Four in ten interviews were conducted in a language other than English, namely, Vietnamese, Somali, Tigre, Tigrinya, Oromo, Turkish, Egyptian Arabic, Sudanese Arabic and Lebanese Arabic. Spanish and Cantonese speaking interviewers also doorknocked flats where these were the recorded languages but there were only a few people in each case who did not wish to participate.

A1.4 Profile of local residents

The age of local residents responding to the survey varied enormously. The largest group (62 per cent) were aged between 25 and 49 years, as shown in Figure A1. 5.

Figure A1.5: Local residents by age



Note: n = 96

Almost three-quarters of those who responded (72 per cent) were female, with 26 per cent being male and two being male/female couples.

The majority were owner/occupiers (76 per cent). There were a smaller number of private renters (18 per cent), several public housing tenants, and one person who was in a co-op living arrangement, as shown in Table A1.4

Table A1.4: Local residents by tenure

Tenure type	Number	Percentage
Owner/occupier	73	76%
Private renter	17	18%
Public housing tenant	5	5%
Co-op	1	1%
Total	96	100%

Residents lived in a number of streets in Kensington, as shown in Table A1.5.

Table A1.5: Street address given by local residents

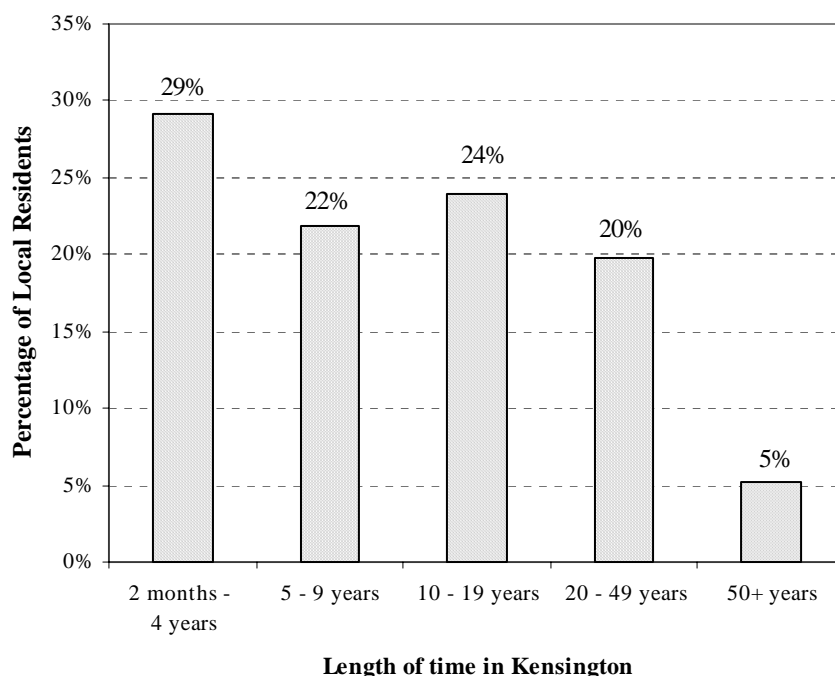
Street name	Percentage
Kensington Rd	16%
Ormond St	12%
Gower St	10%
Henry St	9%
Bangalore St	8%
The Ridgeway	7%
Bellair St	5%
Albermarle St	3%
Altona St	3%
Wolseley Pde	3%
Barnett St	2%
Derby St	2%
Eastwood St	2%
Rankins Rd	2%
Robertson St	2%
Other*	11%
Not specified	2%
Total	100%

* 'Other' includes one person from each of Amy St, Bayswater Rd, Chelsford St, Crichton St, Durham St, Fiskin Walk, Hardiman St, McConnell St, Mclver St and Wright St.

For some of the analysis, the streets were grouped into those which were 'close' to the estate and those which were 'far' from the estate. Those who are considered to be close are the people who live either on a street that borders the estate (Kensington Rd, Altona St, Ormond Rd, Derby St), or a street that will be continued into the new housing estate (Henry St, Gower St, Wolseley Place), comprising 57 per cent of respondents. People who lived in all other streets were placed in a 'far' group for some of the analysis and comprised 43 per cent of respondents.¹

The local resident who had been longest in the suburb had lived there for 81 years, while the most recent arrival had moved there two months before responding to the survey. There was a good spread of residents by length of time they had lived in Kensington, with half of the sample having lived there for 10 years or more, as shown in Figure A1.6.

Figure A1.6: Local residents by length of time they have lived in Kensington



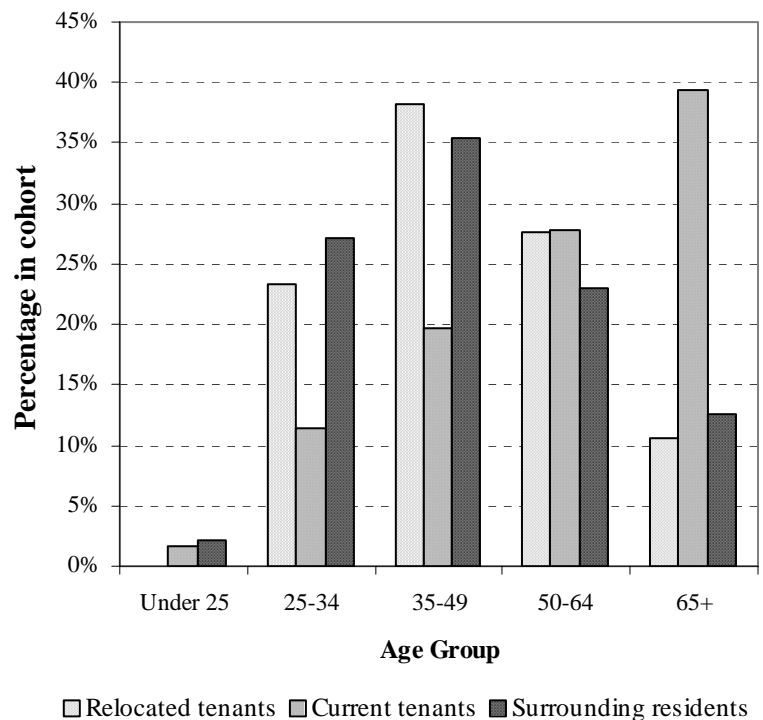
Note: n = 96

¹ Two people did not include their street name, and their responses are not included in analysis requiring this information.

A1.5 Comparison of demographic profile of the three groups of Kensington residents (relocated tenants, current tenants and local residents)

The main similarity between the three groups of residents was in average (mean) length of time they had lived in Kensington, with an average of about 12 years in each case. The major difference between the three groups was in the age profile. Relocated tenants were similar to local residents, with the majority in the 25 to 49 year old age group. Current tenants living in the remaining high rise towers were a much older demographic, as shown in Figure A1.7.

Figure A1.7: Relocated tenants, current tenants and local residents by age group



Note: Relocated tenants n = 47, current tenants n = 61, local residents n = 96.

Appendix 2

Technical Note on Use of Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing Collection District Data

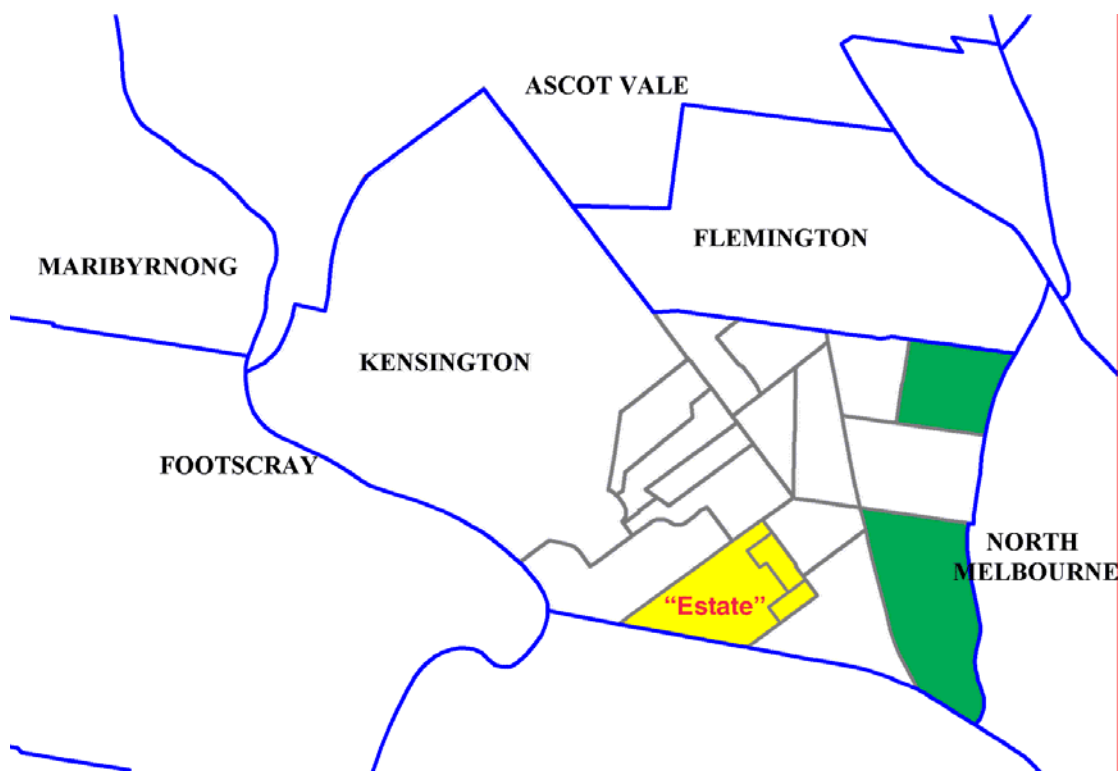
A2.1 Use of collection district data for the estate and the 'rest of Kensington'

The SIS analysed data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census of Population and Housing 1996 and 2001 at collection district level, the lowest level for which data are available. A collection district typically includes 200 to 230 households. There are a number of technical points about use of these data:

- Collection district data is a subset of ABS Community Profile data. The ABS also releases Estimated Resident Population (ERP) data which adjust the Census data to take into account, for example, people who were away on the night of the Census but who are normally resident elsewhere. ERP data are only available for a very small number of demographic variables and only to Statistical Local Area (SLA) level.² ERP data were used, for example, in work for id consulting for the City of Melbourne, which is referred to in this Report, but are not detailed enough to enable a detailed comparison between the estate and the rest of Kensington. The ABS only recommends the use of ERP data in limited circumstances. For the most part, although there is an error rate with both data sets, researchers use Community Profile data, as did the SIS project.
- Collection district data were analysed for the estate and 'rest of Kensington'. The former refers to three collection districts that were unchanged between the 1996 and 2001 Census collections and are unproblematic in that the error rate would be constant. The 'rest of Kensington' refers to the suburb of Kensington, including areas within both the City of Melbourne and the City of Moonee Valley. In 1996 it comprised eight collection districts, but this was increased to 14 in 2001, reflecting the increasing population of the suburb during that period. In order to enable comparability, two collection districts, as shown in Map A2.1, were excluded from the 'rest of Kensington' as in 1996 and previously they had been part of either North Melbourne or Melbourne. Notwithstanding this treatment, the change in number of collection districts in 2001 compared to 1996 increases slightly the probability of error.
- A further issue in using Census data over two time periods is different data outputs. There were additional options in 2001 compared to 1996, for example, Turkey was specified as a country of birth in 2001, but in 1996 people born in Turkey had been counted in 'born elsewhere overseas'. This restricted comparisons for some of the variables such as country of birth.

² In the case of Kensington, the relevant SLA is 'Melbourne C Remainder' which covers a much larger area than Kensington (including North Melbourne, Carlton and West Melbourne). This excludes the part of Kensington that falls within the City of Moonee Valley.

Map A2.1: ABS collection districts in Kensington, Census of Population and Housing 2001



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2001, collection district data
The three collection districts named as “Estate” comprise the Kensington redevelopment site. In 1996, the two collection districts on the south-eastern boundary were part of much bigger collection districts that extended into surrounding parts of North Melbourne and West Melbourne. To enable a direct comparison between 1996 and 2001 collection district data, these areas were excluded from the ‘rest of Kensington’ in both 1996 and 2001.

A2.2 ABS Socio-Economic Indexes for Australia (SEIFA)

The ABS compiles SEIFA, a summary measure derived from a number of questions from the Census of Population and Housing by geographic area. SEIFA has four separate indexes:

- Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage;
- Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage/Disadvantage;
- Index of Economic Resources;
- Index of Education and Occupation.

Established using principle component analysis, these have been standardised to give a mean of 1,000 for Australia, with approximately 95 per cent of all scores falling between 800 and 1,200. SEIFA are an ordinal value so they can only be seen as a ranking measure. They do not measure the degree of difference between area.

Using any of these indexes, there is a substantial difference in ranking between the three collection districts comprising the estate and those in other parts of Kensington. In this Report, the index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage/Disadvantage was chosen to indicate these differences. This allows for any information on a person who is advantaged in terms of socio-economic status to offset information on a disadvantaged person within the collection district.

SEIFA indexes can be distorted by unusual characteristics of certain households within the collection districts and by their derivation from the enumerated population, that is, where people were on the night of the census, rather than where they usually lived. There is no reason to suggest that either of these factors were important in Kensington, unlike, say, collection districts in the Gold Coast which may have a high percentage of people usually resident elsewhere. SEIFA indexes enable an indicative comparison between areas.

A2.3 Analysis of ABS collection district data on inner city areas of Melbourne with a preponderance of apartment style accommodation

The SIS analysed data from the ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing on collection districts with accommodation of a type and density similar to that to be constructed on the Kensington redevelopment site. A radius of six kilometres was drawn from the Melbourne GPO to establish the 'inner city' area, and collection districts were selected if at least 80 per cent of their dwelling stock was in apartment blocks two or more storeys high. Areas with high percentages of accommodation rented from a State or Territory Housing Authority were excluded, as these were part of public housing estates and not relevant for the analysis. Also excluded were collection districts with a low percentage of residents who had moved in within the previous five years (as we were interested in who was moving into these areas). The analysis was thus based on small areas with high density of housing stock comprising owners/ purchasers and private renters who had moved into their current accommodation within the previous five years.

Appendix 3

Tender Brief and Negotiated Changes

This Appendix contains the original tender brief and timeline dated January 2002 and negotiated revisions dated March 2003, following approval of the SIS tender submitted by the Institute for Social Research.

Summary of changes to methodology and timeline negotiated with the Department of Human Services in 2003

The changes below were the result of discussions with the Social Impact Study Sub-Committee of the Kensington Estate Redevelopment Committee Community Liaison Committee held on 17 February 2003 and 13 March 2003. They were necessary in view of the delay of 12 months between tenders closing and notification of the successful tenderer, and were confirmed by letter from the Department of Human Services Project Manager dated 5 April 2004.

1. Review of previous reports and surveys (new stage)

We will insert a stage in which there is detailed analysis of the information in previous reports and data gathered in previous surveys and focus groups. We need to do this to clarify what is already known, what themes and issues emerge and to ensure that we are not repeating previous research, particularly when contacting those who may already have been surveyed or asked to give their views on one or more occasion. Barb Ives will conduct this review.

2. More emphasis on relocated tenants

More emphasis will be given in the research than originally envisaged to public tenants who have moved off site, since there are no longer tenants on site who are to be relocated, one of the main population groups in the original tender. We appreciate that relocated tenants have already been surveyed to some extent and believe that one on one interviews with a sample of relocated tenants with a specific community building objective is a necessary first stage. We propose semi-structured interviews of two groups of relocated tenants: those who have previously indicated that they do not wish to return to the new Kensington development and those who have indicated some interest in returning or are not sure.

3. Perceptions of Kensington, the redevelopment process and the attractiveness of returning

Both groups of relocated tenants will be asked for their views on the relocation process to identify both those aspects that worked well and lessons that could be learnt for future redevelopment projects, as per the original tender. In addition, the interviews will seek former tenants' perceptions of the 'old' Kensington estate, their integration into their new community, attitudes to the new Kensington development and their interest in returning. The aim here is to assess whether relocated tenants perceive that they would be better off in returning to Kensington and if not, why do relocated tenants not see the redeveloped Kensington as an attractive or viable new community. It will also explore what would be important to relocated tenants in making a decision to return to Kensington. This will enable us to identify any programs or actions that must be set in place to build community from the perspective of returnees.

4. Developing groups and networks amongst relocated tenants who have expressed a wish to return or who are undecided

We will try to establish through the interview process to what extent relocated tenants who may return have maintained their links with remaining Kensington residents or other relocatees and identify issues, concerns and questions that people may have about returning. In the interview process we will attempt to identify those who may become part of emergent focus groups (that may range from small, informal 'kitchen table' groups through to larger group interview discussions), building on established and emergent/developing networks. This methodology is more appropriate, given the stage of the project, than trying to run quarterly focus groups.

5. Consistent with good practice in action research and principles of community building, we will investigate whether it is feasible to identify, train and employ some current and relocated tenants to undertake a number of these tasks. Recent research by the ISR for the Office of Housing on neighbourhood renewal projects in regional areas has demonstrated that this contributes substantially to community building and confidence in the research process and did not negatively bias the results. Cultural diversity amongst current and relocated tenants means that this has to be approached with considerable sensitivity.

6. Subject to an assessment of whether people feel over-interviewed, we will interview a sample of remaining tenants face-to-face, again with community building objectives in mind, and, as in the original proposal, identify key informants/community builders. In this process, as with relocated tenants, we hope to build on established groups and networks to develop regular community forums around issues identified by residents, as per the tender proposal.

7. The audit of key agencies and service providers in the area will be retained with an emphasis on perceptions of what was the community like prior to the redevelopment, experiences to date and expectations. In view of the failure of previous attempts at focus groups, the approach will be to identify individuals, conduct one on one selected interviews and in the process identify individuals who may be willing to take a lead role in community building and/or action research activities. These interviews will include local shopkeepers, employers, service providers such as police, teachers, child carers, counselling professionals etc. Again, we will seek to identify and nurture emergent focus groups through this process. The audit will collect and analyse information and data pertaining to the redevelopment process and the identified needs of current and future residents. This information and data will be available, at the discretion of the Department of Human Services, for local agencies, relevant local councils and the Department itself to inform and initiate their respective service planning roles in relation to the new and re-establishing communities. The development of service plans and/or a social plan for the redevelopment is, however, outside the scope of the current brief.

8. Subject to negotiations with the developer, Becton, about privacy and related issues, the project will include a new group, people who have purchased the new units in Kensington off the plan. This would involve a mail-out survey that would try and establish whether they intend to live in the new development or rent out their units. In terms of the former, we would seek to develop a profile of incoming residents, and try to elicit their perceptions of the development, their expectations and any issues they are concerned about. For investors, we would be interested in their expectations about the duration and purpose of their investment, whether they intend to live in their unit subsequently and whether they have any particular group in mind in renting out their properties.

Kensington Social Impact Study: Revised Timeline March 2003

