

4.9 Tasmanian Area Strategies

4.9.1 Western Shores Hobart

4.9.2 Inner City Launceston

4.9.1 Western Shores Hobart Area Strategy



Illustration 4.111 Western Shores Hobart Area Strategy map (The Report, Vol. 1, facing p. 61)

4.9.1 Western Shores Hobart Area Strategy

Background

The Strategy Area is focused on Hobart's western shores and includes the cities of Hobart and Glenorchy. The area contains much of Hobart's urban development and about 60% of its metropolitan population. The presence of a number of publicly owned and under-utilised sites provided redevelopment opportunities. The overall context of the strategy was to achieve effective planning and coordination of urban development including infrastructure and the improved use of services to contain further urban growth. The Western Shores Hobart Area Strategy is a Category 2 initiative.

Objectives

General objectives

- 'To use metropolitan services more efficiently through an urban consolidation program and the redevelopment of underused urban land, and
- to rationalise and reform the delivery of health services to people with psychiatric illness, intellectual disabilities and the aged.'

Specific objectives were:

- 'To improve planning mechanisms, coordination of urban development and provision of infrastructure, services and facilities;
- to reduce urban development costs, to improve use of urban land and urban stock;
- to promote urban consolidation and to improve infrastructure provision and efficiency;
- to provide better access to employment and training opportunities, services and community facilities;
- to provide housing choices for low income groups through public-private joint ventures;
- to facilitate institutional reform for people with psychiatric illness, intellectual disabilities and the aged to reflect contemporary community standards, and
- to implement heritage and environmental standards' (*The Report*, Vol. 1, pp. 60-61)

Urban design evaluation

The Hobart Western Shores Area Strategy was a very dispersed project. It included the following components:

- the relocation of St. John's Park Hospital residents to aged care accommodation together with a purpose-built facility in Hull Street;
- affordable housing in Tolosa Street in accordance with AMCORD principles;
- the redevelopment of outmoded institutional facilities at St. John's Park Hospital;
- medium density in Lefroy Street in accordance with AMCORD principles;

- the redevelopment of Wapping as an inner city residential area with a mix of both private and public housing;
- the conservation and restoration of heritage buildings in Sullivan's Cove including Gas works, Customs House and Henry Jones Buildings in Hunter Street, and
- the acquisition of group housing at various locations in Hobart for people at risk of being institutionalised.

Buildings and their grouping

In heritage areas such as Wapping/Sullivan's Cove any new intrusions should as a minimum position, acknowledge and reference the existing historic urban fabric. Wapping is defined as the area bounded by Brooker Avenue, Liverpool Street, Campbell Street and Macquarie Street. It is named after its historically seedy waterfront London counterpart. (*Illustration 4.112*)

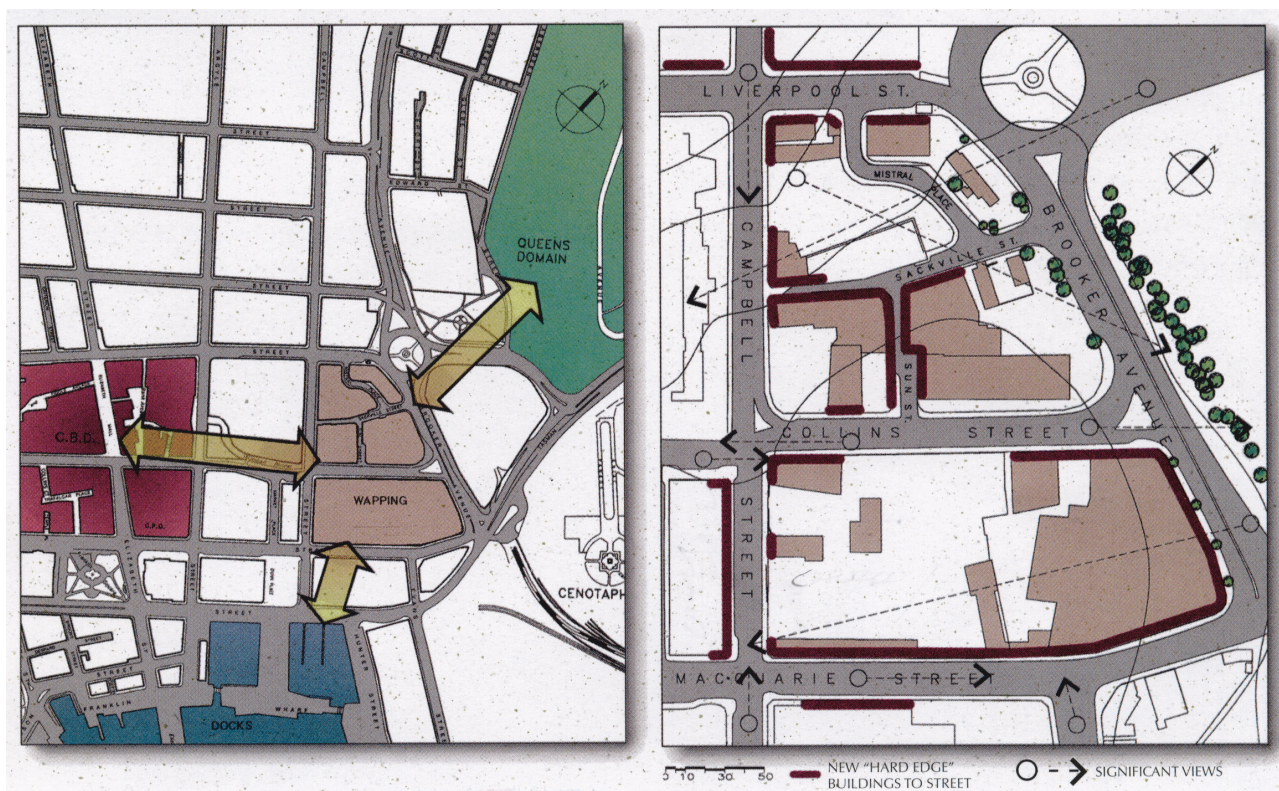


Illustration 4.112 Area map

In its revitalisation the area is now conceived as an urban village, although in its present state of transition it presents a fragmented appearance with vacant sites, works in progress and completed restorations. The introduction of new urban forms needs to be carefully considered as examples of blatantly insensitive infill abound. At Wapping the infill generally achieves a successful congruence with the existing fabric, an example being the Theatre Mews affordable housing. Whilst decidedly modernist in style, the building form follows the curvature of Mistral Place, adheres to the long established modules of terrace housing and references the abundant brick work of the precinct in the high front garden walls. (*Illustration 4.113 overleaf*)



Illustration 4.113 Theatre Mews



It also conforms to presenting a hard edge to the street as required under Tasmania. Department of Environment and Land Management, 1993, *The Wapping Neighbourhood Outline Development Plan - Sullivan's Cove, Hobart* (p. 18). In a more traditional manner the refurbished facade of the Fur Traders remains strongly and politely within the design vocabulary of the period. (Illustration 4.114)



Illustration 4.114 Fur traders

There is considerable development activity in the Wapping precinct. Some is an integral part of the Program's Area Strategy, and the other is what the designers of the Program would probably construe as a demonstration of the catalytic follow-on effect. Examples include the Roberts and Co. Renaissance style building adapted to serviced apartments and the Old Woolstore Apartment Hotel which employs old and new materials to create a fresh but definite external industrial theme (Illustration 4.115 overleaf) .

The faithfully restored Theatre Royal is a further example.



Illustration 4.115 *Roberts and Co.*

The individual housing enclaves, which are referred to further in Activity, were in terms of design and built form, standard response to a broad gamut of accommodation problems, the one exception being the Lefroy Street housing.

Public domain

The new intrusions and conservation work at Sullivan’s Cove benefit greatly from being part of the historical waterfront domain, extending from the southern extremity at Battery Point, sweeping around Sullivan’s Cove, through Salamanca, to the northernmost termination of Hunter Street. In many ways this multi-layered historical domain is Sydney Harbour and the Rocks in miniature. The area is rich both historically and visually. Whilst more associated with Sullivan Cove Redevelopment than part of the Program, a generous, and frequently softly defined, walk takes pedestrians from Salamanca Place through the new Salamanca Square development, via level changes to Salamanca Mews, to the parklands directly adjacent to Hobart’s CBD and then into the heart of the city. (25)

This is public domain at its best, meeting many of the urban criteria of Bentley *et al.* *Responsive Environments*, such as permeability, variety, legibility, robustness and richness. Whilst some of the elements were historically already in place, it is the artful connectivity of both old and new that commands admiration. It is an excellent example of Cullen’s *Townscape* and serial vision. (Illustration 4.116 below and overleaf)



1



2



3

Illustration 4.116 Serial vision



4

Each of the individual and widely spaced separate housing components that go to make up this Area Strategy have their own public domains or connection to wider community domains. The one that merits particular comment is that of Lefroy Street housing.

Safety and security

The public domain outlined above is generally well considered in terms of sight lines, although concentrations of vegetation, substantial portico columns and recessed service entries, as in the Salamanca Inn, provide areas for concealment; however, this area is not strictly part of the Area Strategy, but rather part of the contiguous 'greater area'.

Activity

Most of the activity of this Area Strategy is concerned with housing, designed to meet a range of needs, as described below:

- Tolosa Street housing

Tolosa Street housing is close to the Glenorchy town centre. It contains an after hours child care centre and ten elderly persons public housing units. This affordable medium density housing was required to conform to AMCORD principles. The result is a basic 'no-nonsense' single storey red brick housing development with an unfortunate surfeit of bitumen on site parking and circulation paving. (*Illustration 4.117*).



Illustration 4.117 Tolosa Street housing

- Lefroy Street housing

The Lefroy Street housing is a medium density demonstration housing project designed in accordance with AMCORD principles. It is a good example of contemporary architecture successfully reinterpreting traditional forms and detailing so as to sit comfortably with its older style neighbouring houses. ('Lefroy Housing, Tasmania', 1994, *Constructional Review*, Vol. 67, no. 4, November 1994, p. 32 et seq.) (*Illustration 4.118*)

The development is in the heart of North Hobart where 19th and early 20th century housing meets the Elizabeth Shopping precinct. Most of the existing buildings front the street edge leaving their large rear yards under-used or turned over to light industrial uses. The development aims to initiate revitalisation of the area with infill housing, creating patterns for potential development of adjacent sites including shared pedestrian links and areas for passive recreation alongside the rivulet that runs through the site. Stage 1 of the development consists of thirteen two level and two and three bedroom units with one single-level disabled persons unit. The average unit has an area of 85 m² and Stage 2 will provide similar accommodation.



Illustration 4.118 *Lefroy Street housing*

- Hull Street housing

The relocation of St. John's Park Hospital residents to aged care accommodation in Hull Street required the design of purpose built facilities. The resulting structure is a cheerful and colourful single storey building with 'wavy' parapets, blue-grey rendered walls with blue trim, ochre garden walls, lattice fencing and bright garden beds. Despite its welcoming impression it carries with it concerns as to how effective its long term maintenance prospects will be. (*Illustration 4.119*)



Illustration 4.119 Hull Street housing

- Infill housing at Wapping

The Theatre Mews are described in the section Buildings and grouping.

Conservation and heritage

Sullivan's Cove and Wapping are historic areas of considerable cultural and heritage significance. Whilst there are many early buildings that have undergone, and indeed continue to undergo, restoration and adaptive reuse to new purposes, the outcome in terms of this Area Strategy was that (*The Report*, Vol. 1, p. 61):

Rejuvenation of the historic area of Hobart's Sullivans Cove was facilitated by the enactment of new planning legislation, and preparation of conservation plans for the gas works site, 27-33 Hunter Street and Customs House was restored for reuse as part of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

Besides these important heritage landmarks many other interesting and accomplished restorations and adaptive uses have been carried out in this area and the adjacent city area. These include

Gibson's Mill in Morrison Street, the Old Marine Board building wherein three floors have been inserted where previously two existed - a transformation akin to Boan's Warehouse at East Perth. Further important restorations include the Engineers Building and the earlier mentioned Roberts and Co. and the Old Woolstore Apartment Hotel. Other examples exist but the preceding are sufficient to illustrate that the fabric and integrity of this 'place' is not only respected but also turned to new account. (*Illustration 4.120*)



Illustration 4.120 Gibson's Mill - Morrison Street

Landscape

The pedestrian walk described in Public domain is a fine example of landscaped connectivity. Given the strong likelihood of several design hands along its length, this route, ideal for gentle perambulation, moves through a range of soft and hard-edged built environments, creating variety and mood changes along its terrain-changing length. Wapping and Sullivan's Cove, including Salamanca, permit little contiguous soft landscaping to the streets. The built environment by its very nature, is both hard edged in paved and built form. However, the green island parks at Salamanca Place and the Square and around the Engineers Building provide an appropriate foil to the hard surfaces, and seem sufficient without the ubiquitous street planting. The planting principles for Wapping (Tasmania. Department of Environment and Land Management, *The Wapping Neighbourhood Outline Development Plan - Sullivan's Cove*, Hobart, 1993, p. 20) whilst commendable are ambitious and idealistic when compared with what has been achieved to date, and is likely to be achieved in the future:

Planting should be designed to:

- provide micro-climate comfort;
- provide a residential amenity;
- be hardy and able to be maintained cost-effectively;
- be integrated with lighting to avoid dark spots in open spaces;
- provide a screen to Brooker Avenue and, where security and solar access permits, screen the view of cars, and
- reinforce a recognisable hierarchy of Collins Street as the main street of Wapping.

In response to these principles, planting will primarily be trees including some landmark eucalypts (selected for low incidence of limb droppings) in Collins Street and deciduous

trees in other streets and walkways. Large shrubs should be avoided where security is an issue, and cost-effective irrigation systems should be installed.

Only partial tree canopy closure is acceptable on minor streets with no canopy closure in Collins Street, allowing pollution sweeping by winds. Shade should be provided for walkways, carparking and courts in summer.

Of the various housing precincts, the one that is noteworthy in terms of its landscaping ambience is the Lefroy Street housing, both for its strength and density of planting, although the latter characteristic may be challenged on CPTED principles.

Environment

Generally the architectural design of the various housing groups responded well to protection from the climate in terms of generous overhangs and porches providing protection from the elements. The exception is the Lefroy Street housing with its clipped eaves and virtual absence of protection other than the north to north-east facing first floor balconies, providing some protection to the ground floor below.

The design defence for the absence of these environmental adjuncts might well be that stylistically the building forms of this housing hark back to, and are clearly derivative of, earlier colonial Georgian forms thus conforming to the requirement to reflect the detailing of the surrounding residential area.

Ecological response

Site remediation was required on several sites including the Tolosa Street site. There was no evidence of the implementation of water management techniques or other ecologically aware initiatives in this Area Strategy.

Circulation

There was no documentary or on site evidence of any rerouting of primary or secondary circulation routes to achieve this Area Strategy, nor given the objectives was there seen to be any need for it. Therefore, observations on circulation are necessarily confined to the component sites or the public domain walk as described in that section. The preservation and continuation of pedestrian ways in the Wapping area is further provided for in the Design Guidelines in *The Wapping Neighbourhood Outline Development Plan - Sullivan's Cove*, Hobart, 1993, p. 27, et seq.

Public art

Whilst Salamanca Square can lay claim to a large circular fountain with an abstract centre piece the extended area embracing Wapping appears singularly bereft of a strong public art program. In this extended area rich in history, maritime themes, early industry and social significance the possibilities for markers, sculpture and other works, without being tritely tourist, would seem considerable. Whilst the historical depth of the 'place' and its manifestation in built form is of itself visually rich, it would be enhanced by a vigorous public art program.

Social

There were a number of important and sensitive social programs associated with this Area Strategy, including the following (*The Report*, Vol. 2, pp. 99-104; refer also condensed references, *The Report*, Vol. 1, p. 62):

- St. John's Park

The aged care project included the deinstitutionalisation of St. John's Park which provided a range of nursing home and hostel style accommodation for the frail aged and elderly with psycho-geriatric disorders. The program adopted a number of approaches which included:

- a supported ten-bed accommodation unit at Hull St, Glenorchy, referred to earlier;
 - the purchase of land for a replacement unit for the 43 bed Woodhouse dementia unit;
 - the transfer of rehabilitation services to the Repatriation General Hospital;
 - the engagement of a private developer to manage accommodation of older people with assets, and
 - the upgrading of accommodation at St. John's Park for those that have chosen to remain there.
- Willow Court.

This program aimed at the relocation of Willow Court residents with intellectual disabilities to community group homes managed by private operators and the establishment of group homes for those with such disabilities currently living in the community. As at St. John's a number of approaches were put in place, namely:

- a considerable number were transferred from Willow Court to community houses, while group homes were also provided for a number of residents;
- some residents elected to stay in Willow Court, and
- two ten-bed units were constructed at Lutana and Lenah Valley to accommodate people with severe physical and behavioural problems.

Management processes

The Wapping Neighbourhood Outline Development Plan - Sullivan's Cove, Hobart, December 1993, is an important document in establishing planning and design guidelines. The document includes sections on: sense of place, cultural heritage, buildings to keep, amenity, infrastructure, traffic and parking, sunshine and shadows, open space details, traffic and parking, building envelopes, development parcels and preferred uses, design intent and design guidelines.

Conclusion

In regard to the revitalisation of the waterfront, and in particular the Wapping area, the project shares common outcomes together with other BCP waterfront redevelopments including Ultimo-Pyrmont, Honeysuckle, Geelong, Brisbane and to some extent East Perth. These shared common outcomes are:

- contiguity and integration with previous adjoining water front revitalisation - in the case of Wapping this is the immediately adjacent Salamanca - and the visual and enhanced amenity benefits this propinquity brings;

- adaptive reuse of the substantial number of heritage buildings associated with the history of the area, because waterfront development was almost unfailingly, in the Australian context, well under way in the 19th century, and
- the commendable but expensive site remediation required to clean up the previous industrial activity.

The revitalisation of old and disused waterfront areas is in many ways the most rewarding but challenging of the Area Strategies. The principal difficulty is in establishing a convincing new urban fabric given over to entirely different purposes from those that originally occupied the site and were built up slowly over time establishing their own cohesion and integrity. New purposes include those of residential accommodation, recreation, culture and entertainment.

The present time scale is very much condensed compared with that of the past and the pitfalls of the new development are several including a surfeit of tourist enticements, a fragmentation of architectural coherence in the conjunctions of old and new and the dislocation or even dismembering of established social patterns.

As with other dispersed Area Strategies the individual components have varying degrees of internal coherence but collectively do not contribute to a greater fusion of the Area Strategy as a whole other than the Lefroy Street housing which had objectives of 'fitting-in' and respecting its neighbours whilst establishing its own individual presence.

All these objectives were admirably met. The Theatre Mews, although not of the design quality of the Lefroy Street housing, nonetheless enjoys some degree of success in meeting such objectives.

4.9.2 Inner City Launceston Area Strategy

Background

The objectives for the Inner City Launceston Area Strategy included those of consolidating the CBD's role; the maintaining of industrial activity to designated areas and diminishing the effects of industrial pollution along the Tamar River. There was the further aim of concentrating more housing in the area. Urban consolidation opportunities existed on the site of the Inveresk railway workshops, adjacent to the CBD, and also at the Elphin showground site. The Inveresk site, although heavily contaminated from previous industrial usage, contained a large number of buildings, some 70 in total (*The Report*, Vol. 1, p. 58) that provided a range of conservation and adaptive reuse opportunities. The Elphin site, located a short distance from the city, is the former home of The Show Society which was seeking an alternative smaller site with the opportunity to establish new facilities. Whilst a considerable portion of the Elphin site lies within the ten year flood plain of the North Esk River it found, following its rezoning, new residential and secondary college purposes. Given its incompleteness and wide dispersal this Area Strategy is regarded as a Category 2 project.

Objectives

General objectives were:

- 'To enable a more efficient use of urban land and services through urban consolidation and redevelopment of underused urban land in a sustainable manner for more productive purposes, and
- to provide low income housing choices in areas accessible to established facilities and services.'

Specific objectives were:

- 'to rehabilitate contaminated land for recreational and cultural purposes;
- to release underused urban land for housing and educational purposes;
- to revise planning controls to facilitate medium density housing in serviced urban areas, and
- to improve the environmental quality of the land and water systems of the city.' (*The Report*, Vol 1, p. 59)

Urban design evaluation

The major components of the Launceston Area Strategy form essentially two groups. One group comprised the Inveresk site with the North Esk River and proposed high density housing and the other group, further removed at Elphin, consisted of housing with a site for a secondary college. Both groups inherited a considerable legacy of existing problems, both natural and man made. The Inveresk site suffered from extensive land and ground water contamination from previous industrial activity, with remediation costs too daunting for a city of Launceston's size to fund alone without support. Also, remediation was likely to exceed sensible establishment costs in terms of likely market returns from a range of possible future reuses. (26) A further obstacle at Inveresk, but a natural one in this case, was the need for the completion of flood levees to contain the North Esk River.

Buildings and their grouping

At the Inveresk site, buildings and their grouping are those of the existing, disused but now heritage Railway Workshops. These buildings are progressively being adapted to a range of new purposes including those serving community, academic, convention, exhibition, entertainment and commercial needs. The college at Elphin is an assembly of open pavilion buildings, whilst the housing follows a time honoured side by side, back to back suburban layout. (*Illustration 4.122*)



Illustration 4.122 Elphin College

Public domain

The masterplan of Inveresk indicates that the public domain is a combination of both extensive open space and directionally focused paths. The open space embraces provision for sports, including equestrian events, exhibition spaces, multi-purpose open space and an amphitheatre. The directionally focused paths include the 'railed' pedestrian spine and the pedestrian and cyclist boardwalk. (*Illustration 4.123*).



Illustration 4.123 Pedestrian spine and boardwalk

Because the works are still progressing, none of the public domain objectives were 'reading' well, with the exception of the boardwalk. As the built and landscaped works approach a stage of completeness this shortcoming may recede; however, at present, it is a case of a strong visual master-plan structure on paper not achieving its realisation on the ground.

Safety and security

The openness of the Inveresk Railway Workshop site and the Newstead College Elphin site do much to contribute to excellent sight lines for informal surveillance. However, the dense cluster of existing railway buildings at the elbow of the North Esk River gives cause for concern in terms of potential entrapment spots.

Activity

The major components of the Area Strategy are outlined in the Urban design evaluation section and are clear and discernible both in terms of documentation and on site. The exception to this is the medium density housing at Elphin at the rear of Newstead College which appears as equally disappointing as the Mirvac housing at Carrington Honeysuckle. The vision for the medium density housing and its downward transformation to 'toy town' suburbia is shown in the following illustrations. (*Illustration 4.124*).



Illustration 4.124 'Elphinwood Vision'

This enclave nestled in the corner of Olive and Hart Streets commenced life, on paper, as a disciplined medium density precinct and was stillborn as 'Elphinwood Vision' with its poorly designed, mean spirited, suburban housing devoid of any of its earlier potential promise.

Conservation and heritage

The origins of the Inveresk Railway Workshops go back to 1867, and like other such railway workshops in Australia have suffered from declining technological relevance, reduced efficiencies and as an employment source. The outcome was for AN Tasrail to vacate their extensive premises at Inveresk and to re-establish in a new facility at East Tamar junction. Their departure left a staggering 70 buildings of significant industrial heritage providing a rich source of accommodation for adaptive reuse. Given the extent of the potential accommodation for new purposes, it is not feasible to review the numerous possibilities. One of the most pleasing restorations is the reconstructed Launceston Railway Station and Interpretation Centre set alongside the pedestrian spine.

(*Illustration 4.125 overleaf*)



Illustration 4.125 Interpretation Centre

Landscape

The shared bike and pedestrian boardwalk is a powerful visual element that does much to ameliorate the appearance of the levee banks. The boardwalk serves functionally to connect the site with the river and invite use along its length by pedestrians and cyclists. It is intended that what has now become a river corridor will be 'revegetated with endemic species to provide a contrast with the formal landscape design of the site.' (*The Report*, Vol. 1, p. 60). The works are planned to be extended, as a sign at the start of the boardwalk announces:

'NORTH ESK BOARDWALK

Stage 1 Invermay Road to Black Bridge

This boardwalk is the first link in a planned pedestrian and cycle path between Forster St and Invermay Rd. Further links will be created in tandem with the flood levee reconstruction program.'

This is a pleasing outcome of engineering necessity combined with good landscape design. The landscaped works at the Inveresk site are in many ways in their infancy as the site is still undergoing its major redevelopment. It is simply too early to pass critical comment. If the final landscaped outcome accords with the masterplan then the present 'flatness' of the powerful organising geometry may be redeemed. Similarly, the landscaped works at Newstead College are also at too immature a stage to be assessed in terms of their future success or otherwise.

Environment

The Railway Workshop buildings, by their very origins make few concessions to environmental considerations; however, Newstead College responds well to shielding the occupants from both sun and rain with generous overhangs and covered ways.

Ecological response

From the early preliminary investigations it was clear that the Inveresk site suffered from extensive hydrocarbon and heavy metal contamination, with some of the contamination being compounded by imported land fill. 'The main contaminants (were) copper, lead, and zinc, particularly at several 'hot spots' in the southern segment of the site; and heavier fraction hydrocarbons mainly in the middle segment, in the vicinity of the diesel workshop and fuelling area.

Fortunately, levels of poly-aromatic hydrocarbons were found to be low and ... not a cause for concern.' (Vandenberg, J. , p. 78)

As with other Area Strategies with a similar nature of industrial activity, such as Eveleigh and Honeysuckle, the site remediation required a considerable allocation in terms of both time and money without the benefits of any new works to show for the outlay (*The Report*, Vol. 1, p. 59).

Extensive site remediation at Inveresk was completed using the environmental engineering processes of ground water decontamination and landfarming. An innovative solution was adopted for ground water decontamination, in conjunction with the infrastructure. An existing service pit was converted to perform as a primary holding tank, thereby reducing the volume and increasing the concentration of the solution to be processed by the separator. Areas of the site with heavy hydrocarbon contamination were treated in an on site landfarm which eventually produced unharzardous fill for reuse as bulk fill in the site works.

The other significant ecological response was the work on the new flood levees adjacent to the industrial site on the North Esk River. These are referred to further in Landscape.

Circulation

There was no site or documentary evidence to the effect that primary or secondary traffic routes external to the sites were modified to accommodate the components of this Area Strategy. However, the internal circulation pattern at the Inveresk site is dominated by a powerful pedestrian spine, cutting its undeviating path diagonally through the entire site. (*Illustration 4.126*)



Illustration 4.126 Inveresk masterplan

This powerful organising element, so strong and definite on plan, emerges much weaker on site, as there is limited vertical support by way of buildings and/or landscape to reinforce its definition.

The spine terminates in two significant circles, the larger, known as University Carpark, is defined by parked vehicles, predominantly buses. Vehicles make unsatisfactory edges.

Public art

There was no external evidence that public art was a pressing preoccupation; however, some of the early industrial buildings may invite bold graphics.

Social

The redevelopment of Inveresk was a recognised example of cooperation between the three levels of Government, the private sector and the community. (*The Report*, Vol. 1, p. 60)

Management processes

'The State Government has instituted legislation for the creation of the Inveresk Railyards Management Authority, a statutory authority, to own the land and assume responsibility for its future development.' (*The Report*, Vol. 1, p. 59)

As well, amendments to the Launceston planning scheme have now included Tas(AMCORD) in relation to both building design and residential density.

Conclusion

Whilst the Inveresk site reads strongly in its masterplan, it is disappointingly fragmented in built form. Even allowing for further adaptive reuse of existing buildings and new works, it is difficult to see how the promise of the plan can be realised 'on the ground'. Elphin simply remains as two individual projects: one educational, and the other ordinary suburban housing.

4.10 Northern Territory Area Strategy

4.10.1 Darwin Area Strategy

4.10.1 Darwin Area Strategy

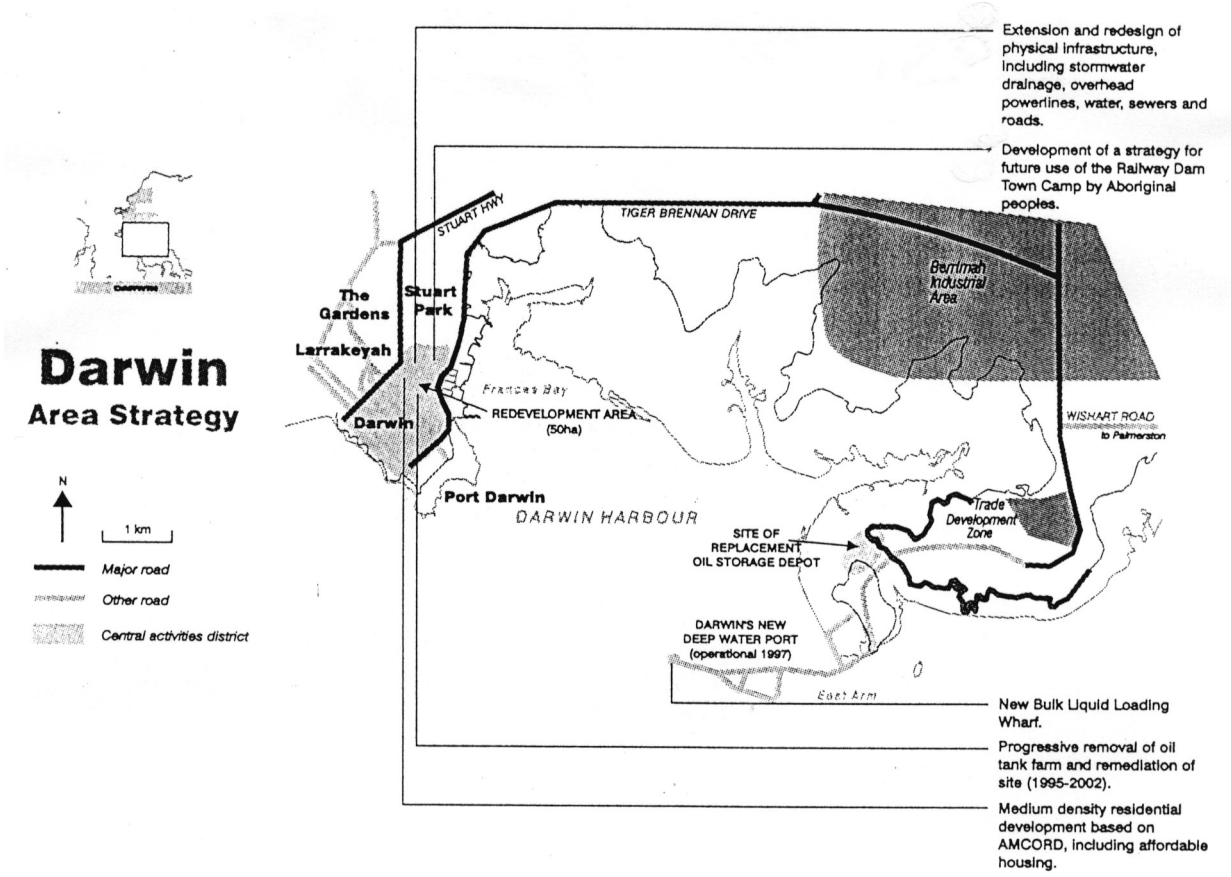


Illustration 4.127 Darwin Area Strategy map (The Report, Vol. 1, facing p. 63)

4.10.1 Darwin Area Strategy

Background

The focus of the Darwin Area Strategy was the removal of unsightly and possibly hazardous petroleum storage facilities from Darwin Peninsula thus releasing land for residential and commercial purposes. The strategy was based on both ecological and economic grounds. Because of its limited nature in terms of this study it is a Category 3 project.

Objectives

- 'To release prime, strategically located land for redevelopment for residential and business purposes to support the central area and other surrounding land use, and
- to remove an unsightly, hazardous land use close to central area and inner city residential areas where its exposure to main road entries to and vistas over the city has a negative aesthetic impact on the Territory's capital, and where the storage vessels and transport of product to and from the sites maintain unacceptable public hazard risks.' (*The Report*, Vol. 1, p. 62)

Urban design evaluation

Whilst infrastructure initiatives, some limited housing proposals and an ecological response are evident, the scope of the undertaking aligns only partially with the urban design evaluation criteria. It is perceived therefore more as a planning project responding to a number of pressing needs rather than as a redevelopment with present or future urban design content.

The scope of the Area Strategy included:

- An area of some 50 ha, including both Darwin and Stuart Park and defined as the Redevelopment Area, where there are planned extensions and redesign of the physical infrastructure, including drainage, stormwater, water, sewer, overhead powerlines and roads;
- a proposed development strategy of the Railway Dam Town Camp, also in the redevelopment area, for future use by Aboriginal peoples;
- a new Bulk Liquid Loading Wharf;
- the staged removal of the oil tank farm, including the remediation of the site, and
- a medium density residential development, including affordable housing, based on AMCORD. A Ministerial commitment has been made for 10% of the Francis Bay precinct to be affordable housing.

Buildings and their grouping

Buildings and their grouping were not an issue in this development.

Public domain

The public domain was not an issue in this development.

Safety and security

Safety was only relevant in terms of oil tank storage removal, reflecting issues of public safety.

Activity

The extent of activity is outlined in the scope of Area Strategy above under 'Urban design evaluation'.

Conservation and heritage

Conservation and heritage were not an issue in this development.

Landscape

The landscape is relevant only in as much as it involves the removal of unsightly oil tanks.

Environment

Environmental aspects were not an issue in this development.

Ecological response

The ecological response was relevant in the staged removal of the oil tank farm, including the remediation of the site.

Circulation

Circulation was relevant to the degree that there are planned extensions and redesign of the physical infrastructure, particularly roads in the 50 ha Redevelopment Area that includes Darwin and Stuart.

Public art

Public art was not an issue in this development.

Social

Social aspects were not an issue in this development, other than the proposed provision of affordable housing.

Management processes

Whilst not strong in urban design terms, a number of management initiatives emerged for this Area Strategy. They were:

- a residential strategy based on the Australian Model Code for Residential Development (AMCORD) was prepared, (and) approved by the Northern Territory Government and put in place;
- a Ministerial commitment to the incorporation of ten percent affordable housing in the Frances Bay precinct was made and publicly released, and

- an amendment to the Darwin town plan to introduce residential zoning to the redevelopment precinct was released as a planning concepts document. It also identified other development opportunities in the central Darwin area. (*The Report*, Vol. 1, p. 63)

Conclusion

The Darwin Area Strategy is limited in any clear response to most of the enduring strands and whilst some positive management initiatives emerged as outlined in Management processes, this Strategy must remain a Category 3.