Final Report

Developing appropriate exit strategies for housing regeneration programmes

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of a project undertaken by the AHURI Southern Research Centre to review current practices and develop appropriate exit strategy models for housing regeneration programmes. Exit strategies can provide a planning implementation framework for State Housing Authorities to sustain the benefits of housing regeneration expenditure once renewal programmes have formally ended. From the review undertaken for the Positioning Paper, it is evident that community empowerment is the most favoured strategy deployed by Australian State and Territory Housing Authorities to sustain the benefits of regeneration investment. Only in Queensland has the housing authority begun to develop explicit exit strategies including project management arrangements to manage housing estates for the period after the regeneration project has been completed. Australian State Housing Authorities' policies can be contrasted with strategies developed by local housing authorities in the UK where exit strategies are an established tool in the management of housing regeneration projects. However, there is a paucity of research exploring deployment of exit strategies and the problems that can arise at the end of a regeneration project, largely because most renewal programmes are long term and few have been completed to date.

The aim of the research was to look in close detail at specific policy innovations and gauge the perceptions of key housing and regeneration professionals, tenant activists and policy-makers. The specific research questions were:

1. What practices are being deployed by State Housing Authorities to secure sustainability on housing regeneration projects?

2. What are the external and structural factors that can impede the efficacy of housing renewal programmes?

3. What are the key issues that should be considered from the outset in relation to a limited time renewal/regeneration program?

4. How can residents be involved in the development of an exit strategy?

5. What agencies need to be involved in the formulation of an exit strategy?

6. What institutional capacity is required to implement exit strategies?

7. How should exit strategies be evaluated?

8. What are the implications for state housing authorities in not employing exit strategies for renewal programmes?

Five housing regeneration initiatives (all at different stages of development and spread across three jurisdictions) were selected as case studies. The South Australian case studies (Salisbury North and the Parks) are well-established projects at a pre-exit strategy stage. The Tasmanian case study (Bridgewater) typifies a mature project where the regeneration programme has formally ended and a community-based

agency (Bridgewater Urban Renewal Project) has been established to maintain the achievements of the programme. The New South Wales case studies are the Minto project, which has not completed the initial master planning stage and has no exit strategy, and Windale community renewal scheme (which involves community initiatives only, not physical renewal as in the other estates), where there is a clear exit strategy, namely to transfer the effective ownership of the regeneration process to the community. The findings of the research are structured around three thematic areas: exit strategies and objectives; the management of exit strategies; and evaluation issues.

Summary of key findings

Exit Strategies and Objectives

In the case of the longer-term physical renewal projects, although there is only a limited understanding of what exit strategies entail, the value of strategic planning to sustain the impacts of renewal is recognised. However, the demands associated with day-to-day management make it difficult to devote sufficient time to engage in long-term concerns. Some of the key partners have different views regarding the need for specific exit strategies particularly if the objective of the regeneration programme is to transfer the majority of the estate's properties to the homeownership market. Also, there was some uncertainty as to which agencies are best placed to manage core services once regeneration projects are formally completed. There is an expectation amongst some partners that SHAs should be the lead partner responsible for service provision. However, in 'whole of government' community renewal programmes which agency should be responsible at the end of a project was not always apparent. Cross-sectoral working partnerships are generally valued as a way of developing a holistic approach to regeneration, but in practice, these partnerships can be problematic because of an increase in bureaucracy. There is also evidence from those case studies, which had moved into a post-project period to suggest that intra-community tensions are sources of friction.

Development and Management of Exit Strategies

The management of a regeneration project is usually very complex and interviewees suggested that wherever possible decision-making should be devolved to a local level. Individual 'champions' from within the community were often very helpful in maintaining momentum and attracting support, although there are risks that 'champions' may not be seen to reflect the views or interests of some sections of the community.

Ideally, local residents, along with a range of relevant stakeholders and government agencies should be involved in the planning and development of an exit strategy, including the local Council, housing authority and other service providers with a presence in the area. The development of an exit strategy seems to have been most effective where there was a skilled person to do the planning and to link all the elements of the community. The key issues in relation to the institutional capacity to develop exit strategies are to provide enough time and resources to ensure that all the community elements are effectively brought into the process. The findings suggest that the time limited aspect of regeneration programmes is not yet well understood or accepted by stakeholders so exit strategies are not an immediate priority. Another obstacle, when engaging in exit strategy or forward planning is uncertainty about budgets coupled with the difficulties of capturing funds (competition with other localities, budget priorities etc.). In particular, staff working for community development

projects highlighted the problems that can arise from inadequate core funding. Periodic injections of short-term funds make it difficult to plan ahead with any certainty.

Major physical renewal programmes often result in new tenants moving in who may not share a sense of past achievements or 'community'. This can engender a source of tension for long-standing residents and care is needed at the end of a project to address this. Factoring in exit strategy models might prove difficult in complex policy environments and hard to achieve in the context of residualisation processes and limited funds. Coordination across different agencies is identified as a key challenge for effective service delivery once the regeneration programme has ended. In addition, the role of the new owner-occupiers in the community is a further source of uncertainty.

Evaluation Issues

Evaluation is seen as necessary but there is some uncertainty as to how best to proceed and it is often overlooked at the programme development stage because of other important priorities. Measuring the success of a regeneration project is seen as particularly challenging. The obvious indices such as property values, crime statistics, neighbourhood satisfaction and housing management indicators were viewed as useful, but it can be difficult to discern whether improvements are a consequence of the project itself or external factors such as growth in the wider economy. Moreover, evaluations are often viewed as an opportunity to flag up examples of policy success, rather than as objective assessments of outcomes. Consequently, it may be hard to acknowledge policy failure when engaging in evaluative work, primarily because of concerns that information might be viewed negatively and cited as a justification to reduce funds or close programmes.

Conclusions

The complexity of housing regeneration means that no single exit strategy model can be applied since each project has different objectives, funding mechanisms, time scales, physical and community assets etc. However, drawing on both overseas experience and that of the Australian examples reviewed here, it is clear that basic core elements of any exit strategy usually entail a combination of the following activities:

- capacity building and training programmes with residents during the renewal period;

- business planning and project viability testing of appropriate post-renewal service management structures;

- securing longer term funding arrangements for recurrent expenditures, such as the costs of maintaining a community organisation, or support staff;

- dedicated community based staff, such as a place manager, to oversee the transitionary period and implement policies to manage withdrawal and handovers;

- establishing successor organisations and community governance arrangements; and

- closure strategies for projects that have fulfilled remits.

The challenge for each regeneration programme is to develop an appropriate exit strategy during the initial stages of the project to maximise the outcomes from the initial injection of resources and enhance sustainability. Evidence strongly suggests that the longer the timescales allowed for the development and embedding of appropriate exit structures and strategies during the lifetime of the renewal project, the greater the likelihood of a successful transition beyond the end of the project.

1 INTRODUCTION

This report constitutes the final output of the research undertaken by the Southern Research Centre to develop appropriate exit strategies for housing regeneration programmes. Previous outputs from the research include: a Positioning Paper, which provided a review of relevant literature and a summary of both Australian and international practices in relation to exit strategies; and a Work in Progress Report – that outlined details of preliminary research findings.

1.1 Terminology and context

It is important to be clear about the meaning of the terms used in this Final Report.

'Regeneration programmes' are programmes funded and facilitated by government for a *discrete period of time* to redress particularly disadvantaged communities or locations, especially those dominated by social housing. 'Regeneration' and 'renewal' are often used interchangeably but it is helpful to note that the term 'regeneration' usually encompasses a wider set of practices than 'renewal' and includes practices such as environmental, social and economic.

'Exit strategies' is used to denote the range of policies that seek to consolidate or build upon the achievements after a housing regeneration funding program has formally expired. For example, components of an exit strategy might include: capacity building and training programmes; future funding arrangements and income generation; cross-sectoral working practices; and handover arrangements at the end of a project.

'Sustainability' in the housing context usually denotes policies that are able to maintain the current level of services into the future without recourse to another large injection of public resources. Table 1 below sets out a typology to illustrate the different components of regeneration policy in Australia, and the objectives and types of exit strategies that might follow from them.

Table 1: Types of Regeneration Strategies Facilitated or funded by Government

Environmental	Social	Economic
- Redesign or refurbishment of housing stock - Place based rejuvenation of local housing estate common access areas with gardens, play areas, community meeting facilities etc	- Programmes to identify and develop local community leadership - Facilitate community building activities, and engagement with local community groups and services. - Address tenure mix to redress extent of disadvantaged (low income)	- Enterprise development initiatives centred on locality - Employment programmes to reduce unemployment - Training opportunities

	households in local area.	
Objectives of Exit strategies		
Future improvements in stock paid for by the local community itself without need for continued government subsidy.	Leadership and community institutions become self-sustaining.	Low unemployment and buoyant local economic activity.
Possible types of exit strategy		
Ensure place based approaches are accompanied by other strategies to increase home ownership, tenure mix or appropriately skilled mutual community institutions to fund and support continued improvements.	Leadership succession plans for community infrastructures to support continuous renewal. Ensure institutions are sustainable by being representative and 'owned' by local community.	Ensure employment or training programmes are based on creation of sustainable employment and not short term subsidised public sector jobs which may disappear as soon as funding withdrawn.

1.2 Regeneration Paradigms

It is widely recognised that State Housing Authorities (SHAs) across Australia have to grapple with a set of complex policy issues all of which are accentuated by structural factors and processes that make successful intervention all the more difficult.

Arguably, the most significant structural factor is the condition of the stock itself. The average age of the public housing stock across Australia is over 20 years and in South Australia over 30 years (Badcock 1995) necessitating SHAs to increase their spending on repair and maintenance significantly (Hall and Berry 2004).

Second, the process known as residualisation has meant that many tenants now housed in public housing have a high level of need. It is estimated, for example, that 90 per cent of the 346,000 households in public housing are dependent on income support and as many as 45 per cent of all new tenants are classified as having special needs (FACS 2003). In practice, this will require housing managers to develop more sensitive welfare orientated housing management practices to cater for the demands associated with this client group. State Housing Authorities also have to operate within tight financial constraints. For example, government assistance for public housing made available as part of the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement has reduced real funding terms by nearly 15 per cent between 1990 and 2000 (Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/ State Service Provision, 2000: 1357). SHAs have sought to make up the deficit in resources by adopting private sector funding models in asset management practices and reorganising their services to secure policy objectives.

The contemporary operating environment has precipitated a number of challenges that each SHA is required to address. For example, how can financial investment in housing stock be best maintained? What are the optimum strategies to ensure high quality services at a time when resources are limited? What is the appropriate social mix on housing estates that are undergoing regeneration? What are the best practices to empower tenants and enhance social capital? These and similar challenges are particularly pertinent at this juncture as many housing regeneration initiatives that commenced in the 1990s are drawing towards their conclusion (Randolph and Judd 2000). SHAs are therefore keen to ensure that the investment that has been spent on regeneration is maximised and that the benefits are maintained.

The challenges are considerable; as hindsight shows, many regeneration initiatives of the 1980s were not necessarily successful in securing long-term sustainable outputs. For example, in spite of considerable expenditure on physical and economic regeneration, housing estates very often remain stigmatised and unpopular localities. It has also proved very difficult to secure economic investment that can lead to sustainable job opportunities for local residents and there is evidence too that many households who are able to secure employment move elsewhere (Whelan 2004).

The difficulty of securing sustainable outcomes for regeneration investment has precipitated a widespread debate within academia and the housing profession internationally about the efficacy of contemporary practices. For example, some academic commentators (Atkinson 1999, Badcock 1995) have argued that short term injection of funds targeted on housing estates for regeneration are likely to have limited effect unless accompanied by wider economic and social reform. In particular, critics have argued that the substantive problems associated with public housing stem from a set of policies that have accentuated residualisation including priority allocation policies that result in the over representation of high need category applicants in public housing. Furthermore, the commitment of governments of all persuasions to reduce overall welfare expenditure very often has significant implications for deprived localities such as public housing estates since it leads to a diminution of funds made available for spending on housing, health and education. For these reasons critics (e.g. Kleinman 1998: Moulaert, Swyngedouw and Rodriguez 2001) argue that at best short term injections of funds can only have a marginal impact in reducing the symptoms associated with neighbourhood decline. There is evidence to support these criticisms. For example, in the European context Andersen (2002) summarised the evidence from recent evaluations of regeneration projects in a number of different countries and concluded that area-based interventions are unlikely to have long-term benefits unless accompanied by intervention particularly in relation to structural long-term employment.

Other academics take a less pessimistic view. For example, Power and Tunstall (1995) and Evans (1998) argue that provided area based regeneration interventions are adequately financed and properly managed, it is possible to make significant long-term improvements. The arguments of Power and Tunstall and others have been especially influential in UK housing professional practice which is usually unsympathetic to academic perspectives that deride area based intervention and hold out for major structural reform. Professionals recognise that policy intervention in areas of welfare are always likely to be subject to considerable constraint and it is incumbent on housing authorities to make the best use of funds.

Other perspectives that have had some influence on regeneration practice include neo-liberal arguments that seek to foster market-type solutions for public housing; for example, breaking up monolithic public housing estates with new properties for purchase. Academics such as Saunders and Tsumori (2002) argue that the market

can be an effective mechanism to facilitate regeneration as first time homebuyers will very often seek out cheaper housing areas. The incoming homebuyers can bring financial resources and social capital to the area (e.g. buying from local shops and sending their children to local schools that benefit by having a greater social mix of pupils). Supporters of neo-liberal policies have also argued that the most appropriate intervention is to encourage unemployed residents to leave deprived neighbourhoods to enhance the chances of securing employment. Some contemporary welfare policies, Saunders and Tsumori (2002) suggest, reinforce a dependency culture within deprived neighbourhoods by not providing sufficient incentives to the long-term unemployed to seek work.

Environmental perspectives (for example Newman 1972 and Coleman 1985) have had considerable influence in regeneration practices, especially the claim that poor design can accentuate problems such as crime and social disorder. Coleman (1985) in particular, has argued that there is a direct link between the incidences of crime and poor design and her arguments were incorporated in many of the regeneration programmes of system built estates throughout the 1980s in the UK. Some of the modifications included reconfiguring public spaces into private gardens, blocking off overhead walkways and converting single level dwellings into two storey maisonettes. It is now acknowledged that bad design is just one factor that can accentuate crime and that other policies also need to be in place (Judd, Samuals and O'Brien 2003).

The most significant influence on contemporary regeneration practice is the social exclusion framework (see Arthurson and Jacobs 2003) the origins of which stem from French social policy in the 1980s and European Community initiatives of the early 1990s. The social exclusion framework in areas of housing regeneration was given a further boost by the decision of the UK Labour government to launch a 'Social Exclusion Unit' to tackle the problems of deprived neighbourhoods. In practice, this entailed linking different policies in areas such as health, housing, education and employment within the rubric of one overall programme. Social exclusion policies have sought to tackle deprivation in a number of key areas; for example, to assist the long term unemployed secure job opportunities in their local neighbourhood; physical renewal of the environment; improved service delivery of welfare provision; and support for disadvantaged communities (such as single parents and refugees).

In Australia, housing regeneration practices have tended to focus on tenant participation and tenure diversification alongside asset management and investment strategies (see Arthurson 2004; Wood et al 2002; Randolph and Judd 2002). The emphasis placed upon tenure diversification is in part a response to priority based allocations policies that have meant that a significant proportion of new entrants to public housing have a high level of need. Table 2 overleaf (reproduced from the Positioning Paper) summarises the key influences on contemporary regeneration practices.

Table 2: Housing and Urban Regeneration Paradigms

Paradigm	Rationale	Prescription	Examples	Comments
Structuralist perspectives	Market based government policies accentuate spatial inequality Global and economic restructuring is a major cause of inequality	More interventionist role for Government More resources for deprived communities Fiscal redistributive policies	No recent examples but actively promotes universal modes of social housing provision rather than selective targeting	Critique highly influential in academic quarters but little practical influence in contemporary policy making
Neo-liberal perspectives	Underclass and cycle of disadvantage theories	Lower tax base to encourage business investment, public housing for only those with acute needs switch of resources to individual subsidies rather than bricks and mortar	Home ownership first time buyers grant Commonwealth rental subsidies in preference to public housing provision Tight controls on government subsidies Encouragement of private finance/control as an alternative investment stream in regeneration	Policies generally supported by Commonwealth Government. In particular, the targeting of resources to those most in housing need Underlying assumption that public housing reinforces social disadvantage Privatisation (i.e. asset disposal) Support for individuals to exit public housing
Environmentalist perspectives	Physical layout of public estates accentuates crime and anti-social behaviour	Focus on design and physical improvement to housing	Modification to ameliorate poor design, e.g. system built housing estates	Influential in the 1980s but now mostly seen as a limited response
Social exclusion/ inclusion perspectives	Problems within public housing localities are multi-faceted and require a range of policy	Area based policies aimed at addressing social exclusion, including urban	New Social inclusion Units SHAs area renewal	Model deployed in the UK and European Community. Now being promoted by

| | interventions that are focussed at the level of neighbourhood

Lack of 'joined up government' thinking and action | renewal projects and mixed development schemes | programmes

Tenant empowerment policies to enhance social capital

Employment and training schemes Community participation. | some Australian SHAs |
|---|---|---|---|---|

There is general agreement that practitioners should seek to adopt a holistic approach incorporating physical renewal, tenant empowerment policies and integrated models of service delivery. Particular attention needs to be paid to maintenance issues in relation to the housing stock and physical environment. However, there are different perspectives both about the appropriate mix of strategies that should be in place and some concern about the long term consequences of tenure diversification policies and the financing of regeneration schemes. For example, Arthurson (1998), and Randolph and Wood (2003) suggest that mixed development, unless matched by an increase in supply of public housing, will result in the loss of the overall public housing stock. As for the financing of regeneration schemes, these very often rely on new financial models such as head-leasing, asset disposal and stock transfers and there are some who question the long impact of adopting these models. For example, it has been argued that at best they provide short term one-off fixes but fail to address the underlying problem faced by SHAs; namely under-investment in the housing stock (see Hall and Berry 2004).

It is apparent from the policy context outlined above, that SHAs will be required to develop tangible policies to ensure that the benefits that can accrue from initial injection of funds can be sustained in the longer term. However, there has to date not been any study that specifically looks at the role of exit or forward strategies to sustain the benefits of housing regeneration or any audit of existing Australian practices although there has been some research in the UK on exit strategies in the context of housing regeneration.

1.3 Aims and Structure of the Report

This research project sought to address these gaps in knowledge by exploring some of the salient issues that practitioners need to address in the development of exit strategies. Specifically, the project has:

- Sought to identify good practice to maximise the potential for housing regeneration investment.

- Highlighted some of the potential barriers that can undermine housing regeneration and what steps can be taken to overcome these.

- Concentrated on the challenges of managing regeneration projects and the difficulties of securing long-term objectives within the context of limited budgets and tight timescales.

The aims of the research project are primarily practice based so that the capacity of exit strategy models in the Australian context can be explored. However, the research also has a heuristic component; to identify the obstacles to successful policy implementation in the context of housing regeneration and consider how these can be best overcome when devising new models. The aims of the project required an appropriate mix of research methods to ensure that gaps in knowledge could be addressed. It was deemed necessary to adopt a threefold strategy:

- An international literature review (set out in the Positioning Paper) which examined the utility of exit strategy models and discussed some of the key debates within the housing profession and academia on the efficacy of regeneration strategies.

- An audit of exiting regeneration practices in Australia (set out in the Positioning Paper) to gauge the extent to which exit strategy models are deployed and recent innovatory developments.

- Five case studies of current housing projects to look in more detail at specific innovations and record the views of key housing regeneration professionals, tenant activists and policy-makers in the areas of housing renewal, community participation and mixed development.

The Final Report builds on the earlier outputs of the research by presenting the findings from the five case study investigations undertaken in New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania. This introductory chapter has set out the policy context, summarised relevant literature on the development of housing regeneration exit strategies and reiterated the aims of the research project. Chapter Two summarises some of the innovations in regeneration practices both in Australia and abroad. Chapter Three explains, in more detail, the data collection strategy that has been deployed to answer the key research questions. Chapters Four through to Six present the findings of the project. These three chapters are organised along thematic lines to answer the research questions posed – to identify the appropriate objectives of exit strategies, how to develop and implement exit strategies, and finally, how they might be evaluated. The concluding chapter summarises the overall findings and sets out the emerging policy issues that arise.

2 REGENERATION PRACTICES AND EMERGING THEMES

This chapter discusses regeneration practices in Australia and abroad to highlight the emerging themes in contemporary practice. As discussed in the introduction to this report, public housing agencies across Australia and abroad share a commitment to maximising the return on investment in the renewal of their housing stock. In practice, this entails seeking ways of developing policies to promote sustainable outcomes beyond the initial period of investment. The survey of Australian States and Territories set out in the Positioning Paper revealed that although all SHAs are actively engaged in developing sustainable policy outcomes, only in Queensland are there specific exit strategies in place.

Australian Capital Territory

In the Australian Capital Territory there are no large-scale social housing estates (Arthurson 2004). However, the ACT housing authority has established a 'Community Linkages Programme' for the period 2002-2005 to link public and community housing tenants to available support services. Examples of activities funded by the programme include the employment of development workers, local based projects to foster tenant involvement in local neighbourhoods and safer living environments.

Northern Territory

In the Northern Territory, the absence of large estates has meant that policies to promote housing sustainability have tended to be small scale. For example, policies are in place as part of the 'Home Territory' campaign to progress a coordinated housing policy up to the year 2010 involving key stakeholders (tenants groups, government representatives and peak bodies).

Tasmania

In Tasmania, there are broad acre estates in the Bridgewater/Gagebrook, Clarendon/Rokeby and Acton/Shorewell neighbourhoods. Whilst there are no specific exit strategies in place, the State Housing Authority have initiated an 'affordable housing strategy' with a commitment to $45 million extra spending over a three year period on increasing the supply of affordable housing for low income households. The affordable housing strategy is intended as a first step to ensuring the long-term viability of the affordable housing sector. On the large broad acre estates, the most substantive activity is taking place on the Bridgewater Estate under the auspices of the Bridgewater Urban Renewal Project (BURP) that encompasses local residents, local government agencies and the State Housing Authority. BURP's activities are discussed in more detail in Chapters Four through to Six.

New South Wales

In New South Wales, there are a considerable number of large public housing estates that have benefited from large injections of investment funds. The New South Wales Department of Housing have put in place two large programmes, the Neighbourhood Improvement Programme (NIP) between 1994 and 1999 and more recently the

Community Renewal Strategy (CRS) that commenced in 2000. The CRS seeks to establish inter agency working practices and a holistic approach to urban regeneration and increase the value of the public housing stock. However, urban renewal programmes involving major physical renewal projects have not been widely pursued since the demise of the NIP. New initiatives include a proposed physical renewal of the Minto estate in south-west Sydney and, more recently, a public private partnership proposal for the renewal of Bonnyrigg estate in western Sydney. The programme of works taking place on the Minto Estate is one of the five case studies selected for this project and is also discussed in subsequent chapters.

Victoria

Victoria's Housing Authority has put in place a 'Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy' (NRS) to enhance community well-being; an important component of the strategy is to invest in some of the most disadvantaged localities. So far, ten renewal projects have commenced and further investment is planned. The Housing Authority has also established Neighbourhood Renewal Plans to coordinate service provision in areas such as housing, education and social services.

Western Australia

Western Australia has established in 1995 a 'New Living Program' with initial activity taking place in the suburbs of Kwinana and Lockridge in Perth. The programme has subsequently been introduced to a wider range of estates. The project's objectives include crime reduction, physical renewal, community well-being and tenure diversification to lower the proportion of rental public housing.

Queensland

Queensland's regeneration policies entail two linked programmes. The 'Urban Renewal Programme' (URP) and the 'Community Renewal Programme' (CRP). The URP focus is on upgrading or replacement of public housing on the larger housing estates to provide more tenure choice and to encourage local communities to take a role in the decision making process and where possible in local employment projects associated with the capital works programme. So far, there have been eleven areas that have benefited from URP. The CRP forms part of the State Government's crime prevention strategy initiated in 1998. Specific objectives of CRP include addressing factors accentuating unemployment such as limited educational and training opportunities and social deprivation, Sustainability outcomes are an important part of both CRP and URP and the most recent innovation is a 'Transition Planning Policy' to assist staff plan for long term and sustainable improvements. In practice, the focus of the Transition Planning Policy is at the level of implementation particularly establishing measures and procedures towards the end of projects.

South Australia

Finally, South Australia has in place an Urban Renewal Programme specifically to regenerate areas with a high concentration of public housing (SA Housing Trust 2003). There are no specific exit strategies in place although there is an implicit recognition that sustainable outcomes require community involvement and support. The Housing Trust have set up a number of mechanisms to encourage involvement for example, the 'Have your Say' database to facilitate feedback; the 'Trust Talk Tenant Link' a housing

newsletter published biannually and regional and community forums to enable residents living within the vicinity of renewal programmes to voice their concerns and make recommendations.

The brief summary of State Housing Authority practices in the area of housing regeneration shows that policies to promote tenant and community involvement are firmly embedded in some states, although the role of such participation is variable and in some cases not well integrated with the renewal process itself. However, it is only in Queensland where specific exit strategies have been devised although these have yet to be implemented. Table 2 overleaf (reproduced from the Positioning Paper) provides a summary of regeneration activities across Australia.

Table 3: State Housing Authority Policies to Maintain Sustainability

State	Estate Regeneration	Exit Strategies	Programmes to achieving sustainability
ACT	Not large scale		Community Linkages Programme
NT	Not large scale		Home Territory Campaign
NSW	√		Community Renewal Programme
TAS	√		Regeneration Programme
VIC	√		Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy
QLD	√	√	Community Renewal Programme and Urban Renewal Programme
WA	√		New Living Project
SA	√		Urban Regeneration Programme

2.1 International good practice

The review of international literature published in the Positioning Paper highlighted the extent to which exit strategies are deployed in the UK, where they are utilised as a vehicle to secure benefits once the initial injection of resources is drawing to a close. A plethora of publications from national government and local government research reports (e.g. Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 1997; London Borough of Hackney 1999) argue structures, resources and support networks must be in place at the end of any project if the regeneration objectives are to be sustained. However, the review of literature indicated that many of the publications on exit strategies were primarily prescriptive, making the case for their deployment, but that there is little published research on the problems or practical difficulties of actually implementing an exit strategy. However, available data primarily from UK and US sources suggest that the success of any exit strategy entails three interrelated tasks (model design;

implementation and coordination; monitoring and evaluation). These are summarised in turn.

2.1.1 Model Design

Fordham (1995) identifies different kinds of models that can be deployed at the inception of an exit strategy. For example, some strategies focus on developing a portfolio of long-term projects to continue at the end of an initial programme, whilst others might entail a single successor body or bodies to take over the running of a project or transfer responsibility to another funding agency. The design of an exit strategy depends on a set of different factors, including funds available, institutional capacity and other agencies' willingness to take over the running of a project.

2.1.2 Implementation and coordination

It was apparent from the research findings and review of exit strategy practices in the UK that inadequate resources remain the biggest obstacle to successful implementation and that the most successful exit strategies are those where funding streams are identified at an early stage. Research by Martin Price Associates (2002) identified the following factors as important in making an exit strategy successful: continuity of staff, more than one funding stream of revenue and an ongoing commitment from funding agencies. Fordham (1995) makes the suggestion that tapered funding streams at the end of a project can offset problems that arise when funding comes to a complete halt.

2.1.3 Monitoring and evaluation

Successful exit strategies should include a mechanism to evaluate the regeneration project. It is generally recognised that evaluation procedures should be in place at the start of the project so that the anticipated outcomes can be measured by what is achieved. The research literature identified specific obstacles to successful evaluation: high staff turnover and bureaucratic reporting procedures that fall short of what is required to monitor progress.

It is apparent from a review of exit strategy literature that a short-term injection of resources is not a sufficient catalyst for sustainable housing regeneration and that purposeful planning is required to spend resources judiciously. However, significant gaps in knowledge remain about the practices of regeneration and exit strategy planning in the Australian context. The next chapter sets out the methods that have been deployed to address these gaps.

3 METHODS AND DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

3.1 Method and case study estates

This chapter outlines the methodology used to investigate the research questions for the project. As set out in the introduction, the aims of the research are to explore the utility of exit strategy models, a vehicle for assisting long-term sustainability, and develop appropriate exit strategy models. The principal methods included:

- **A review of international literature**. The information included in this strand of the research is described in the Positioning Paper and summarised in Chapter One of this report and provides useful data to develop exit strategy regeneration models.

- **An audit of SHA regeneration practices**. Documentation was collated from all SHAs. The data was set out in the Positioning Paper and summarised in the preceding chapter.

- **Five case study investigations** of current housing projects that embrace renewal, community participation and mixed development schemes. These locations were chosen because they contain examples of innovative but distinct regeneration practices. Each case study consisted of 8 to 10 semi-structured interviews with housing and regeneration professionals and one focus group discussion with tenants and community representatives (10 interviewees per discussion). A brief description of each locality is set out below.

Bridgewater a large broad acre estate outside Hobart in Tasmania was selected as one of the case studies because of the Housing Department's tenant led policies and proactive approach to urban regeneration. It has been the location for the Bridgewater Urban Renewal Programme (BURP), a community led project to secure the benefits of regeneration. The funds provided by the Commonwealth Government in 1997/8 as part of the 'Better Cities' Programme amounted to $160k of Government funds plus 'in kind' contributions from Brighton Council and Housing Tasmania to develop community cohesion in the locality.

BURP in Tasmania could be regarded as a 'mature model' of local community renewal that has existed in one form or another for the last decade. This programme is an example of the organic and unstructured nature of the development of community building initiatives. After the original community renewal programme concluded, the community, or more specifically, one member of the community, took responsibility for focusing and coordinating the efforts of BURP. The success of BURP underscores the importance of having a 'driving force' or champion both within the community as well as support in a policy environment. However, the premature death of the coordinator has now left the programme in an uncertain transition phase due to the absence of succession planning.

Bridgewater's population at the time of the last census was 3867 (ABS 2001) and there are 1438 dwellings in the locality of which over 45 per cent were rented from the State Housing Authority. At the time of the census, unemployment amongst the population eligible to work stood at 17.3 per cent.

Salisbury North in South Australia is of special interest as it was selected as the pilot project for a 'whole of government' service delivery approach to estate regeneration, following the restructuring of the South Australian Department of Human Services to incorporate housing, health and welfare in one Department. The regeneration project commenced in mid-1998 and at that stage there were 1,390 public housing dwellings in the area representing 37 per cent of the total housing. One of aims of the project is to reduce the concentration of public housing to around 15 per cent through refurbishment, demolition of obsolete stock and sales for home ownership.

The Parks, also in South Australia, is one of the largest regeneration projects in Australia, at the start consisting of 2,960 public housing units, comprising 60% of the total housing in the area. The project encompasses the five suburbs of Woodville Gardens, Mansfield Park, Ferryden Park, Athol Park, Angle Park and part of Woodville, covering an area of five square kilometres. Regeneration formally commenced in 1999 and involves projects that will last for 10-15 years. The project involves a public-private partnership arrangement where the redevelopment project has been managed by a private developer.

In South Australia, both regeneration projects are at the mid-later stages of programme implementation providing examples of progression beyond the early setting up phases and at a crucial time in relation to embedding exit and transition strategies in the programme development.

Minto is in Campbelltown in the south west of Sydney. The estate was designated for renewal in mid-2003. The programme will take between 10 and 15 years to complete and involve the redevelopment of 398 dwellings, currently a mix of both cottage and attached property (town houses) largely built on 'superlots'. The aim is reduce the proportion of public housing to around 30% scattered across the area, with the rest being redeveled or refurbished for sale. It is proposed that the renewal programme will be undertaken in the form of a public-private partnership arrangement where the redevelopment will be undertaken by a private developer and new homes at higher density will be passed back to the Department of Housing on completion. The process of estate renewal has started with clearance of one of the precincts, but the master plan has yet to be agreed. This case study provides an example of a very early stage in the renewal project development where community structures have to date not been well integrated in the renewal process. There is no exit strategy for this project as yet.

Windale is a suburb in the southern Newcastle area. Consisting predominantly of detached cottages built in the mid-1960s, the estate since 2000 has been the focus of a major 'whole of government' community renewal programme led by the NSW Premier's Department, but with strong Department of Housing involvement. The renewal process here has not involved physical renewal and has instead centred on a range of initiatives to build community cohesion and strength. The project involved the appointment of a Place Manager for three years, after which an exit strategy, in the form of an agreed 'Transition Plan', has been implemented which aims to move the project onto a community controlled basis. As such, it provides a very different example to the other physical redevelopment projects in the study, and has been carried out on a much more limited timescale.

In the analysis presented in Chapters Four to Six, for ease of reference, the case study estates are designated in the text in the following manner:

Tasmania BURP	TAS
NSW Minto	NSW 1
NSW Windale	NSW 2
South Australia Salisbury North	SA 1
South Australia The Parks	SA 2

3.2 Research questions

In each of the case study investigations, interviews were sought with key practitioners with expertise in housing regeneration alongside focus group discussions with community and tenant activists. The set of questions for both the interviews and focus group discussions were framed around the following issues:

- The key factors that should be considered from the outset in relation to a limited- time renewal programme

- The level of understanding of the importance of implementing effective exit strategies

- The extent to which exit strategies or comparable strategies to ensure sustainability of outcomes have been or are being developed

- What stakeholders think is likely to happen after the current programme has come to an end

- The ways to resolve conflicts in the development and implementation of an exit strategy (i.e. conflicts between private sector developers and community interest groups)

- The procedures required to successfully operationalise exit strategies

- The steps that should be taken if exit strategies go wrong

- The factors that determine when exit strategies should begin

- The institutional capacity and resources required to implement exit strategies

- The measures necessary to facilitate residents' involvement in the development of an exit strategy

- The implementation of an evaluation strategy that includes an explicit approach to assessing the immediate outcomes of the programme and future outcomes during the transitionary period.

3.3 Data collection

Data collection has not been uniform in each of the five case studies primarily because each project was at a different stage of development. The South Australian case studies (Parks and Salisbury North) were well-established projects at a pre-exit strategy stage. In NSW, Minto had not completed the initial master planning stage and had no exit strategy in preparation, while in Windale, an exit strategy to move the continuing interventions to a community basis was being rolled out. The Tasmanian case study (Bridgewater) can be viewed as a mature exit strategy. The most informative data is that of the South Australian case studies primarily because interviewees were contacted just at the point when respondents were thinking about the development of exit strategies (i.e. at the mid-later stages of the projects). In the case of the Tasmanian and NSW projects, certain of the questions listed above were deemed not relevant due to the very different stages of development the regeneration projects had reached.

In South Australia, programmme managers are attempting to implement what could now be considered to be best practice in urban regeneration in an established renewal programme. As a result, programme managers in South Australia had better access to more sophisticated information and understandings of 'community building' and sustainability than was the case when the 'exit strategies' were being developed in either Tasmania or Windale in New South Wales. As set out in Chapters Four to Six, the research findings are generally more oriented towards the outcomes of regeneration and sustainability. This is because it was these topics that had most resonance with interviewees and were therefore covered at length and constituted most of the interview and focus group data. To some extent this phenomenon is indicative of the difficulty of all participants had to anticipate in clear terms the long-term outcomes of the programme or intervention.

3.4 Data analysis

The interviews and focus group discussions were tape recorded and transcribed to ensure accurate data. Each of the transcripts provided useful data of current regeneration practices although many of the interviewees and focus group discussants were not familiar with the terminology associated with exit strategies. However, interviewees were able to provide important information on some of the challenges that need to be addressed in successful regeneration project management and long term planning. The focus group discussions with community activists and tenants provided not only divergent views on regeneration strategies, but insights about how best to engender community participation. As stated, since many of the focus group interviewees were not familiar with exit strategy terminology it was incumbent on the focus group convenor to explain carefully the aims of the research and the information that was required. The focus groups consisted of eight to ten participants. While participants were selected on the basis of their expertise, it was also deemed important that the participants were broadly representative of the locality in respect of age and gender. The small number of participants in each focus group makes it inappropriate to make any statistically reliable inferences. Nonetheless, their responses do capture contemporaneous perceptions of the regeneration process in each of the five localities.

The literature review undertaken as part of the research for the Positioning Paper also informed the analysis by establishing the three key thematic areas for categorising the data collected. The three thematic themes are:

1. Policy design i.e. the inception of exit strategies and their objectives

2. The management of exit strategies and the issues that need to be addressed for successful implementation; and

3. Evaluation: identifying how exit strategies can be monitored and evaluated (i.e. identifying programme objectives and discussing how performance indicators might be used to assess whether the objectives have been achieved).

Table 3 overleaf (adapted from the Positioning Paper) sets out the three thematic categories that will be used to analyse the case study transcripts.

Table 4: Data Collection Techniques and Thematic Areas

Case Study Questions	Methods of research	Themes areas		
		Policy design & the inception of exit strategies	*Management of exit strategies*	*Evaluation issues*
Key issues to be considered from the outset	Interviews & focus groups Literature review Review of current practice	√		
The level of understanding of exit strategies	Interviews & focus groups	√	√	
Whether exit strategies have been developed	Interviews & focus groups Review of current practice	√	√	
Expectations of sustainability	Interviews & focus groups		√	
How are conflicts best resolved?	Interviews & focus groups Review of current practice Literature review	√	√	
What steps should be taken if exit strategies go wrong?	Interviews Review of current practices Literature review		√	
When should exit	Interviews &	√		

strategies begin?	focus groups			
Institutional capacity required?	Interviews	18	√	√
How can residents be involved in the development of an exit strategy?	Focus group with tenants Interviews with SHA officers	√	√	
How should exit strategies be evaluated?	Interviews with SHAs Review of existing practices			√
What are the implications of not employing exit strategies?	Interviews Review of current practice Literature review			√

4   EXIT STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES

This chapter, along with chapters five and six, presents the findings from the interviews and focus group discussions. It begins with a discussion of the expectations surrounding regeneration programmes before turning to an analysis of the perceived objectives of exit programmes. This is followed by an examination of the level of understanding of exit strategies.

4.1 Expectations of Regeneration Outcomes

It was apparent that across every case study site, there was an overall belief amongst interviewees and focus group discussants that at the conclusion of the regeneration activity there should be a coherent, recognised local community regardless of whether the focus was on physical or social intervention. There were general expectations that this community would experience a greater level of stability amongst its public housing residents (i.e. reduced turnover), greater social mix, reduced stigmatisation, decreased anti-social behaviour, improved quality of life for residents, increased property values for homeowners, and higher levels of social capital and involvement in community activities as a direct result of urban regeneration.

Similar sentiments about the overarching goals of the programmes were expressed in both South Australia and New South Wales, where regeneration areas:

> Will be a lot more attractive area to live in and I imagine that a lot of the social issues evident over the last decade will be lessened (housing officer, SA1)

> …[will] re-establish community strengths and build social capital through the process (Renewal manager, NSW1).

Other proposed outcomes for the community were perhaps more aspirational than realistic:

> A strong working relationship and strong awareness of how to influence Government at a range of levels (council officer, SA2)

> We want to live in a community that believes in itself (resident, NSW 2).

In Tasmania, interviewees reflected upon the success of BURP and its role of engendering a sense of community well-being. A focus group discussant pointed out that the problems in Bridgewater were considerable before the establishment of BURP so that when policies were put in place for regeneration, the community were generally very positive:

> We've come from a very low base where self-esteem has worn very low, so it really hasn't taken a lot to get people to feel good. In fact, the success of BURP has been because of that low base I think (TAS focus group).

In the NSW scheme which had not involved physical renewal (Windale), but a programme of interrelated community renewal initiatives, the reaction was generally positive:

> The project has allowed the people…. to realize they can work together to improve [the estate] and improve stigma (resident, NSW 2).

And:

> The initiative has given people a platform to build capacity (resident, NSW 2).

However, this optimism was not reflected on the Minto estate in NSW, which entailed wholesale physical renewal, probably because only a few interviewees thought they would be around at the end of the process or that the plans had yet to be finalised:

> I don't know. There's no clear information about that. The master plan is being talked about but it hasn't been released, so who knows (community worker, NSW 1)

And some were very negative about the outcomes of the renewal process and the disruption to their way of life:

> We are losing our families, it is something that can never be replaced….the redevelopment is destroying our lives….we had a special community inside a community (resident, NSW 1).

Residents and local stakeholders here cited the problems caused by lack of communications and a continual changing of plans, allied to a lack of effective consultation or involvement of residents in the process. This had led to mistrust and a breakdown of the relationship between the residents and the housing department.

4.2 Perceived Objectives of Regeneration Initiatives

From the thematic analysis of the data collected in each of the case studies, it was evident that there were five major components linked to the sustainability of positive outcomes. These are: changing the social mix in the regeneration area, building self-sufficient communities, implementing community development strategies, maintaining public spaces and retaining levels of service provision. Each of these aspects is discussed in turn.

4.2.1 Changing Social mix

Sustainability was linked to the objective of progressing specified indicators to ensure that the area under regeneration was closer to the social and economic level of surrounding suburbs. Altering the tenure mix and attracting new, higher income residents and homeowners were regarded as the main strategies for achieving this goal. Particular reference was made to the concept and benefits of increased social mix in New South Wales and South Australia:

There's research that shows that increasing the social mix reduces social problems (community worker, NSW 1)

In South Australia, actions to change the socio-demographic profile of residents were coupled with expectations that this positive outcome would be sustained beyond the formal life of the regeneration project:

One of the major aims is that by then [project endpoint] the community is so significantly changed that it actually becomes a little bit self-sustaining by significantly changing the demographic makeup of those communities, and lessening those levels of public housing concentration, we would believe that those communities should become self-sustaining in the longer term (housing officer SA 1)

An alternative viewpoint that a policy of tenure diversification may not remedy the current and ongoing effects of disadvantage was considered in New South Wales:

I'm not convinced that dispersal will improve the lives of DoH tenants (community leader NSW 1)

Further comments in New South Wales suggested that the change in the community profile, particularly as a result of people from different cultural backgrounds moving into the area, could contribute to additional disharmony. A similar sentiment of caution was offered in South Australia where it was suggested that the Housing Trust has a responsibility to be careful about who is placed in public housing in the regeneration area. Client targeting was regarded as a key factor in the sustainability of a regeneration project:

Incoming tenants have higher expectations. For example, homeowners are less tolerant of crime, disruption and other inappropriate behaviours (housing officer, SA 2).

In Tasmania, focus group discussants and interviews with policy makers, highlighted the positive changes that have taken place since the inception of BURP; for instance how public tenants were keener to live in Bridgewater now that its reputation had improved.

The vacant property indicators are now all very good, we had previously 168 vacant homes, nobody wanted to live there, we now have a 98 per cent occupancy rate (C/E Bridgewater Council, TAS).

The number of fires in the area has dramatically decreased in 2003. For example in 2002 there was some 200 fires in the area, in 2003 they have been just 25 (housing officer, TAS)

The impact of these achievements is evident in the number of properties that have been sold to new and existing tenants in the Bridgewater area. It was pointed out by a housing officer 'that for the year 2003/4 ninety six public houses have been sold, representing 30% of all sales in the State' (housing officer, TAS).

However, a more extreme vision of the social impacts of renewal was aired in NSW, where the outcome of physical renewal was seen as resulting in:

> …a private suburb, probably one of the best served (by local facilities) in the whole area (resident, NSW 1).

Another resident noted a potential loss of community as a result:

> Once its been redeveloped the community will be more closed, not so many people will get involved – it will be less community like…..When we had Carols by Candlelight last year everyone was invited….but no one from the new private homes [adjacent to the estate] came (Resident, NSW 1).

Clearly, the outcomes of social change on current residents are perceived very differently between the estates.

4.2.2   Self-sufficient communities

Another common theme that emerged from the data was an expectation that the community will be self-sufficient at the end of the regeneration project. Self sufficiency was regarded as the extent to which the community was able to build and develop itself.

At Salisbury North initiatives such as the Community Reference Group were undertaken with long term objectives in mind, specifically the establishment of self-sustaining community structures that will take on responsibility for community development programmes once the regeneration project ends. One goal is that community development functions currently carried out by the Neighbourhood Development Officer will gradually be taken over by members of the community:

> We are looking to have a transition process where the community itself and the volunteer workers become I guess the community workers…It's a matter of being aware that you will pull out at some stage, and recognising that all the way through. It's got to be something you start right from the beginning. It is a long process (housing officer, SA 1).

Residents in South Australia were perhaps understandably concerned about the extent to which they would become accountable for sustaining community building and development activities:

> At that point [completion of regeneration] the Council and the Trust are going to say, 'you're on your own, that NDO we've provided isn't going to be there, you're the Progress Association and we don't have any funds for you so … you're independent, off you go (resident SN)

In contrast, New South Wales' residents felt that the outside intervention they had received to support the community had not been useful. Residents were generally sceptical about the whole regeneration process and indicated that, based on previous experiences with regeneration, it was unlikely that they would be allowed to be responsible for community activities. Prior to the current initiative:

> The community was running the community…but then it got to the point where they thought our community was becoming too powerful within itself...they didn't like that so they stopped us with what they could and put us back where they wanted us (resident, NSW 1).

Despite this negative view, there were suggestions in both New South Wales and South Australia that funding should and would be provided to maintain community-building activities after the regeneration projects had been completed. Specifically, in South Australia, residents felt that the Neighbourhood Development Officers (NDOs), who had been instrumental in pulling communities together, should continue.

In New South Wales, there seemed to be an expectation that a government body, such as the Department of Housing, would continue to provide funding for a community development or tenancy advocate position:

> At the end of the project, it will be hard work to make the new community gel and they'll need a community development worker to rebuild the community in the estate areas (Council officer, NSW 1).

The local council in Tasmania funded a Community Development Officer throughout all phases of regeneration and at the conclusion of the interventions however, it was not until someone living in the community was employed to develop the community that significant progress was made. It was also found to be important to ensure that local residents staffed community-building programs and that the money for the development activities stayed in the community.

> ...the money that was paid to staff was kept in the community. So that was one of the key successes I think to work it that way (c/exec Bridgewater, TAS).

The community renewal approach in the second NSW estate had left a more sophisticated framework for self-sufficiency once initial three year project funding from the NSW Premier's Department had finished. This took the form of a high level cross-agency 'Directions Group ' overseeing the community renewal process, an incorporated community body charged with developing strategies for continuing the renewal process, four precinct committees, a formal interagency Alliance of locally based government and non-government agencies, and a community centre based in the local primary school site. In addition, the Department of Housing supported a Neighbourhood Advisory Board of tenants, and other non-government agencies were active in the area. However, tensions were reported between some of these players associated with the transition to a more independent existence and the transfer of responsibilities to the incorporated community group. Duplication in effort was mentioned by some stakeholders, as was a fall off in the number of active members of the incorporated group. The layers of accountability and reporting between community workers and the various bodies involved also led to frustration ad duplicated effort at

times. Moreover, there was a feeling that successful renewal in this case would need local involvement:

If the community can do it from the bottom up, it will be more sustainable (resident, NSW 2).

4.2.3 Community building

In terms of sustainability and positive outcomes, in South Australia it was thought to be vital to consider established community networks, special interest groups, and what happens to these people 'when we actually start to split a community up ' (housing officer SN).

This sentiment was mirrored in New South Wales where comments were made relating to the urgent need to address issues of grief and loss as clients were relocated and communities dispersed during regeneration:

I've stayed here for about eight years and the community are like family…They know each other.

This resident then added that it was:

….really disheartening for people when the community is being pulled apart (resident, NSW 1).

For other respondents sustainability was seen as more achievable through the community development activities conducted with residents as part of the regeneration project. Hence:

…community development needs to rise, not drop off, when the physical 'bricks and mortar' regeneration is complete ' (resident, SA 1).

The need for longer-term involvement in community building was also recognised in the NSW redevelopment estate (Minto):

There needs to be an emphasis on developing a sense of community for people and place and this needs to be sustained all throughout the project starting by nurturing the existing community and integrating the new residents to the area…. There needs to be some investment in community facilities such as parks and playgrounds from the beginning to support a positive view of the transition (Renewal project manager, NSW 1).

But at the same time the disruption caused through demolition and the relocation of residents presented a problem for those whose responsibility it was to develop community building strategies:

[My] position is funded to do community-building projects in the estate, but the community is diminishing before our eyes (community worker, NSW 1).

Other stakeholders noted the negative impact on the local schools, shops and non-government support services as the estate was cleared of tenants and redeveloped.

However, in Windale, community development approaches had been at the centre of the renewal process. Importantly, a locally based Place Manager funded by the Premier's Department had provided a key supporting role in the development of the renewal strategy, mediating between the community and the various services and government agencies. This was seen to be an essential catalyst. This appears to parallel the appointment of Neighbourhood Development Officers in the South Australian cases. In other words, these kinds of renewal programmes need a local 'champion ' to ensure the community building process is kept on track and with sufficient influence to negotiate the buy-in of various parties.

In Bridgewater, Tasmania, community development was prioritised as the most important component of regeneration by the Housing Department and a practical means to alter perceptions of the area as a deprived neighbourhood to one that is vibrant and thriving:

> Providing success stories was important for instance from the School and the Rock Eisteddfod. Those sort of activities helped…it was about how residents in the area perceive their neighbourhood, what has been done over time and what their expectations are (housing officer, TAS).

4.2.4 Improved Public spaces

The need for investment in community facilities and public spaces was recognised by those in the NSW case studies as an important part of sustaining regeneration achievements. Providing parks, playgrounds and ensuring that the school continued to be adequately resourced were mentioned as valuable contributions to achieving positive outcomes. A respondent from the local council emphasised the relationship between physical and social renewal, stating:

> [The estate] lacks a sense of centre so physical planning is really important because of the links between physical planning and social outcomes and the existing problems of the estates (Council representative, NSW 1).

While the South Australian case studies were more advanced in their renewal process, residents also raised the sustainability of physical outcomes as an important concern:

> We're going to have to keep the standard up, that's the big thing (resident, SA 1).

In Tasmania, the improvement of public space had been an important priority for BURP and considerable resources have been spent on cleaning and removing graffiti from walls and landscaping open public spaces. The physical improvements were part of a strategy to address the negative image residents had of their neighbourhood and enable BURP to market success stories. According to one housing officer the investment in public space led to:

A huge reduction in the level of maintenance costs as a result lower vacancy rates and people not leaving the community (housing officer, TAS).

4.2.5 Continued Access to Services

Those who were part of the Minto case study explicitly linked this issue of service provision and its role in securing sustainable outcomes. Minto interviewees were concerned that they would lose a range of welfare services, when the current community was dispersed and the concentration of public housing tenants reduced. Government representatives conceded that the current level of service provision would not be able to be maintained once a large number of people with high and complex needs were no longer co-located.

It is not surprising that this issue is unique to Sydney given the size of the city and the potentially substantial travel times that could be faced by tenants wishing to access services they required. This loss of services also serves as a disincentive for previous residents to return to the community.

4.3 Level of understanding of exit strategies

4.3.1 Awareness of Exit Strategies

A common finding from the interviews with housing authority staff in SA was that there is no well-defined knowledge of exit strategies. Those who had heard the term explained that they did not have practical experience in developing exit strategies for regeneration projects, but claimed to understand what was meant by the term:

> But I certainly know….I mean as a worker when you are doing my sort of role, …, there's a real need to make sure you don't just pull the pin on that and it disappears…How you do that as an organisation is important (housing officer, SA 2)

An alternative viewpoint was that exit strategies are about best practice and reviewing regeneration outcomes rather than planning for what happens at the end of the project:

> The [South Australian Housing Trust] doesn't have a defined exit strategy, or an urban renewal policy as such……They have grappled with the notion for some years of putting best practice information in writing to inform future project managers, and to make information publicly available about successes and failures of particular approaches (housing officer, SA 1).

Yet another perspective was that exiting from a regeneration area refers specifically to the completion of physical asset renewal; as for all other purposes, the South Australian Housing Trust (SAHT):

> don't exit the community, we're still managing that part of the community that is our tenant base … it's a bit black and white to talk about an exit strategy (housing officer, SA 1).

From the private partner's viewpoint an exit strategy was largely perceived as a way of documenting and assessing proposed deliverables of the regeneration project in a commercial sense. That is, answering the question of:

> How do we decommission a project, and move on and ensure we have delivered what we said we would deliver (private sector partner, SA 2).

Residents at Salisbury North who participated in the study were all involved to some degree in the community development aspects of the regeneration project and they demonstrated a very specific understanding of an exit strategy. For them it was seen as a means by which the Salisbury North Community Reference Group (for the regeneration project) would become an independent, self-run Progress Association, and the project withdraw from the hands-on running of the group. On the other hand, residents at The Parks were unfamiliar with the term 'exit strategy'.

In Tasmania, the perspective was quite different given that they were currently engaged in what could be conceived of as an 'active' exit strategy. There was a general understanding that exit strategies involved ensuring that the benefits of regeneration activities were sustained in the longer term. Given this context, it is not surprising that the following view was offered.

> This [BURP] has no exit. It implies that you're going to leave. Isn't that what exit means – leave? So we don't want to leave (BURP staff member, TAS).

In New South Wales, the understanding of exit strategies differed considerably between the two case study estates. In the first case study area, there had been no development of an exit strategy at the stage the renewal process had reached, although there was recognition of the issue. However,

> …there is an expectation that sustainability will be delivered as a result of the process. It's not about exiting, its about achieving a sustainable result (housing manager, NSW 1).

Another stakeholder admitted that no strategy had been devised, as the end of the project was at least 10 years away, although:

> …there's some loosely put together bunch of thoughts (renewal project manager, NSW 1).

In Windale, the first phase of supported community intervention had come to an end and a 'Transition Plan ' had been developed by the incorporated community body in conjunction with the Premier's Department. The belief was that his strategy was to be effectively managed by the local residents and involved the transfer of championing the areas from a State employed Place Manager to the local community. The plan was set up toward the end of the three year project to ensure some continuity of ownership of the renewal programme was maintained and a viable governance structure run by the community would take over from the Premier's 'Place Manager'. The setting up of the community body was itself part of this plan. In Minto, it was thought that some form of paid community worker would be needed to assist in the transition:

There needs to be some [social support] role maintain, dedicated people and resources to help through the transition…. (renewal project manager, NSW 1).

However, this was a long way off.

4.3.2 Exit strategy planning

None of the case study regeneration projects in South Australia or New South Wales have exit strategies in place. The development of what appears to function as an exit strategy for Tasmania occurred largely through good fortune rather than good planning and relied on the motivation of a particular individual who is no longer part of the community.

The common reason cited for not developing exit strategies is the long life of the projects. For instance, The Parks project runs for a total of fifteen years and is currently only into its sixth year of implementation. Hence, the immediate focus to date has been on redevelopment occurring.

Probably because it is still ten years out, I don't think anyone has given much thought to it [exit strategy] (council officer, SA 2).

Another reason concerned the impetus to address crime and other problems that are emerging in the precincts targeted for regeneration in latter stages of the project. The SAHT does not want to commit a lot of funding to maintenance in these specific areas but the older stock continues to deteriorate and will become worse before it is redeveloped. The tenants with the most complex needs accept these houses as they have a shorter waiting time, so:

Developing exit strategies has a lower priority than addressing social issues in later precincts and problems of housing stock (housing manager, SA 2).

A similar focus on the short to medium term was noted in Minto:

The [Department] has anticipated that the process will take 10 years so its hard to think about what will happen and implementation is the main problem for residents (local council manager, NSW 1)

In South Australia another reason cited for why exit strategies have not been developed is that the key agencies will still have a presence in the areas at the end of the projects:

There will always be public housing in Salisbury North, there will always be Council in there doing things…..The project might come to close, in terms of formal agreement between the Housing Trust and the Council, but the sustainability of what we're doing continues … an exit strategy presupposes that you've come in that then you leave, and I would question that from both major project partners' perspectives (council officer, SA 1).

The estate renewal programme in Minto in NSW had no exit strategy at the time of the research – no one had given much thought to this (see above). However, several respondents noted the need to get an exit strategy incorporated from the outset of a renewal programme of this kind or stressed the need for community building and support as a part of the exit strategy throughout the process, as tenants will face the trauma of seeing their community replaced around them.

> Planning for the transition is also required rather than simply removing services as the number of tenants drop (Department of Housing manager, NSW 1)

> Community building is required at the outset. Positive relationships between existing and new residents need to be established and this should start now (community leader, NSW 1).

This should be aided by full-time support workers (a model used in private sector master planned estates), but the problem was that this would cost money:

> There needs to be some….dedicated people and resources to help through the transition and establish a new community….but a full time worker costs $100,000 per year. (Department of Housing project manager, NSW 1)

The Windale project did have an exit strategy in the form of a 'Transition Plan'. The aim of this plan was to move the project from a project essentially coordinated and run as a state Premier's Department place management project to one where the community, in the form of an incorporated community body, is to take over the management of the scheme to coordinate and develop new community development initiatives but primarily with Department of Housing support. At the time of the research, this transition plan was in the early stages of roll out. The community body representatives were proud of the fact that they had conceived of the plan and it was being developed by the community:

> [The plan] is based on the belief that all programmes are managed by the people (community worker, NSW 2).

However, others active in the community felt that the planning for transition had not really involved the community as a whole (and was therefore undemocratic) and had been developed too quickly, due to externally imposed time and funding constraints, emphasising the need for longer term continuity in managing these kinds of projects:

> I was really disappointed that the Premier's didn't have the commitment to the community….. They should have stayed the distance, particularly at this end of it (resident, NSW 2)

4.3.3 Timing of exit strategies

There was little agreement from respondents in South Australia about when exit strategies should commence. Suggestions ranged from putting an exit strategy in place at the start of the project to not worrying about this aspect until the projects were almost completed:

From the beginning of the regeneration project it should be in place so that if we walked away tomorrow, or if suddenly government funding was cut, the whole suburb doesn't collapse (housing officer SA 1).

Year ten - put an exit strategy in.....gives you enough time to work on the exit strategies and put them in place (private partner, SA 2)

It should probably be active and obvious when we are starting to wind up the project, about the thirteen-year point (housing officer, SA 2).

In Bridgewater, the view of the council officers interviewed was that an exit strategy should be in place so that a successful transition can occur. As the remarks below make clear, BURP is seen by the council as the vehicle to sustain the regeneration strategy project and the rationale for their contribution of $25k per annum for BURP activities:

There is base core funding that will keep BURP running and it's a project driven there on. As a council we're constantly engaging BURP to do things 'cause they can do it for us and we get value for money in return' (C/E Bridgewater, TAS).

In New South Wales, the problems associated with the roll out of the Transition Plan in Windale were attributed to the lateness of the planning for this and the frictions caused by a perceived failure for full community buy-in to the process.

4.3.4 Key issues to be considered from the outset

A variety of issues were raised by respondents as needing to be considered from the outset in the development of an exit strategy. A common issue mentioned was the need to build self-help objectives into an exit strategy:

Empowering people to take some ownership in their community. That sort of process can happen during the actual project (housing officer, SA 2).

Bringing in the other service agencies at an early stage was also mentioned:

Agencies like Fire and Police need to be involved at the outset because their work will be directly affected once relocation and demolition occurs (community worker, NSW 1).

Some also considered a strong programme of communication throughout the project as very important:

Good support and communication to the people involved [the residents] throughout is essential and a reasonable thing to expect (community leader, NSW 1).

Communication, communication, communication! The issue for tenants is that they don't know what's going on (community worker, NSW 1)

At the same time, questions were posed by some respondents about the capacity of the community to take on more responsibility:

> Will it ever get to the stage where community can manage it themselves?
> There is little social capital in The Parks (private partner, SA 2).

Several respondents mentioned that initiatives such as employment programs are potentially more difficult to continue after regeneration is completed and more consideration needs to be given to these aspects. Specifically, small business is a key part of an exit strategy that is often ignored and some sort of successor organisation is needed within the community to continue working with business to develop local employment opportunities and initiatives:

> Small business is often overlooked…a buy local campaign would be good…..[you] need a regeneration strategy to think about how you are going to support people who are long term unemployed (private partner, SA 2).

Another suggestion was the need to develop a forward plan that identifies which indicators would signal that the regeneration project is coming to an end. There could be a line drawn for budget expenditure, accompanied by a review process probably involving surveys and workshops. There would also probably be some kind of celebration and a handover of particular responsibilities to different agencies, which would have to be negotiated:

> You would probably, a year out from ending, think about a programme of community involvement and planning, talk about aspects of the project that weren't concluded and who would finish them, and getting agreement about that, whether it would be the human service providers continuing a programme to conclusion, or the council having to undertake works at the end of a project (housing officer SN).

In Tasmania, the impact of staff not developing long-term plans was very apparent to a board member of BURP, particularly in the context of the death of its key activist. As is made clear below, the challenge in the development of an exit strategy is to focus on the long term (i.e. to anticipate challenges, to capture funds and implement policies):

> The whole strategic planning thing has probably been left unattended to. One of the things I have established is there is not any kind of formal forward direction strategy…its quite difficult to actually think too far ahead because there are too many uncertainties (assistant chief executive Bridgewater, TAS).

4.4 Summary

There is only a limited understanding from across the different stakeholders involved in the regeneration projects of what exit strategies entail, when they should commence or agreement about whether they are even necessary. At present, there is no *explicit* 'exit strategy' in place in either Tasmania, the two South Australian case studies or in Minto in New South Wales. However, the Transition Plan in the Windale estate in New South Wales was functioning as an exit strategy and pointed to the value of having this kind

of arrangement in place to carry over the programme of community building beyond the end of a formal period of intervention.

In general, it was clear from the fieldwork that the value of long term strategic planning and the need for some form of defined transition plan after the immediate renewal programme was completed is recognised by renewal professionals and residents alike. Yet, the demands associated with day-to-day management of projects and the long time spans involved make it difficult to devote sufficient time to engage in long term strategic planning or to conceptualise what might be needed in an effective exit strategy in the future.

However, the Windale example where an exit strategy had been developed, albeit rather too quickly for some, at the end of a time–limited renewal programme provides a clear *modus operandi* of the issues surrounding implementation where the aim is to transfer the effective ownership of the renewal process to the community for the long term.

5 DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING AN EXIT STRATEGY

This chapter explores the key issues relating to the development and implementation of an exit strategy. In particular, it looks at the challenges that are encountered in seeking community support and the leadership capacities required to address problems that can occur, including conflict and disputes.

5.1 Involving residents in the development of an exit strategy

In all of the five case studies, there was agreement that ideally local residents and stakeholders should be involved in the planning and management of regeneration. In the development of an exit strategy a range of stakeholders, such as Council and service providers would also participate. In the Windale example, the clear objective was to transfer responsibility for the further development of the renewal strategy to the community.

In the South Australia projects, project staff and local residents felt that some of the existing structures and social and community networks could be utilised to engage residents in the development of an exit strategy, such as the SAHT Regional Advisory Boards and links with local schools. Specifically, at Salisbury North the Community Reference Group for the regeneration project, which comprises twenty-two people representing various age groups and different sectors of the community, was considered pivotal. It is expected that the Community Reference Group will continue as a representative body beyond the term of the regeneration project:

> Our role as government agencies is to make sure that the Group has a defined purpose after the renewal, once we leave. That needs to be worked out in the next five years, and that would come into an exit strategy (housing officer, SA 1):

In Tasmania, there was general agreement that the most effective way to facilitate community involvement was through the existing networks established by BURP. It was made clear in interview just how effective BURP had been in orchestrating community participation. For example, community gardening projects, youth employment schemes (engaged in environmental improvements) and maintenance classes for young people to repair bicycles.

The role and benefits of community participation were recognised in the New South Wales examples, from both sides of the fence:

> We still need to do a lot with the community. Their involvement needs to be maintained and increased in relation to community building….Community participation would be part of the best practice model (housing manager, NSW 1).

> The project has allowed the people…to realise they can work together to improve [the estate] and improve stigma (resident, NSW 2).

Volunteering was previously not common and now has become more so, especially for those who have time after their kids (resident, NSW 2).

Furthermore, one community worker in Windale noted that there should be a range of ways for residents to participate as people had differing motivations and capacities to be involved. In this way, a 'structure of participation' would be developed allowing more people an opportunitiy to contribute in a variety of ways.

Appreciating and dealing with the emotional impacts on residents as their community disappears was a strong theme on the Minto estate. As one stakeholder put it, there was a need for:

…some understanding of the grief and loss experienced by the residents as their friendships and informal supports networks are dismantled (community leader, NSW 1).

Another resident noted:

A bit more understanding of the emotional impact the redevelopment has had on the tenants who have been relocated is needed by the client service officers of tenants in their new locations. We're not asking for special treatment, just a bit more understanding – these people have been forced to leave their homes (resident, NSW 1).

Active involvement by the community in the renewal process was seen as a way of alleviating that sense of loss through having some say in the outcomes.

5.2 Resolving Conflict

In South Australia, housing and council officers identified a number of existing policies and structures that are in place to deal with any conflicts and disputes arising in the regeneration process that could also be utilised in the development of an exit strategy. For instance, the Community Reference Group at Salisbury North have a conflict resolution function built into their purpose. There is membership crossover and direct linkage between Council's elected members, Community Reference Group members, and the project's Steering Committee. This very deliberate structure provides mechanisms for any concerns to be raised by stakeholders and dealt with early on in decision-making processes. There are also mediation groups available, and mechanisms to involve an independent third party. All of these mechanisms could be drawn on, if necessary, in the development of an exit strategy to resolve conflict on any matter. Residents expressed the view that trust and communication with project partners were important to the community, and that these aspects would have to continue over the development of an exit strategy.

However, the generally positive relationships reported in South Australia were not reflected in the New South Wales cases. In Windale, while relationships with the government agencies had been generally good and seen by residents and community workers as a real benefit, relationships between competing groups within the community were much more problematic. There was a feeling among one group of community activists associated with a longer term project on the estate that they had been frozen out of the arrangements and decision making in the period after the end of

the Premier's Department's direct involvement. Both groups were in receipt of funding from various sources but were clearly having difficulties in working together. There were also concerns that the Indigenous community on the estate had not been effectively brought into the process. Community workers here considered that facilitated meetings to work out conflicts between the various elements of the community and support services, together with ongoing leadership skills training and support, should be a component of the ongoing strategy for the project. The problem was, how best to achieve this:

> How do you build trust where people can work out their differences in a *negotiated* manner, not leading to fragment groups?

> And

> You need to get everyone in the one room with a facilitator to work through the issues (community worker, NSW 2).

At the time the research was being conducted, the relationships between these two sides did not appear to be being addressed through any obvious mechanism to bring the various factions together. However, there was a general feeling that this would happen and there was recognition it was essential.

In Minto, relationships between the Housing Department and the residents appeared to have more or less broken down. All sides recognised that the process had been poorly managed at a strategic level, culminating in a Ministerial announcement that the estate would be demolished before the consultation period had started and without prior warning to both sides. The withdrawal of the initial master plan based on a consultative process also added to the breakdown in trust. Meanwhile, decanting and demolitions had started, but with no clear idea as to what would be happening. As a result:

> There was a lot of anger expressed at the lack of consultation and the manner in which people were being relocated (renewal project manager, NSW 1).

The result was that most residents felt a sense of exclusion from the process and were simply waiting for the time they too would be moved out to somewhere else. Few seemed to be keen to return. One resident commented that the only benefit of the whole process was that is had brought the community closer together. However, few thought much would be left of the old community at the end. In this case, there also seemed to be few obvious avenues by which these conflicts could be openly discussed and resolved at the time the fieldwork took place

In Tasmania, BURP address any conflicts that arise at their regular board meetings, planning meetings in which residents are invited to attend. Given the leadership role BURP provide it is inevitable that some criticisms were articulated. In summary, interviewees reported two minor tensions, the first related to acrimony between Bridgewater community activists and those within working from Gagebrook's community house (Jordan Rivers). It was explained that the tensions were a direct result of the wide publicity BURP received in the press and a concern that Gagebrook residents were missing out on the funds being made available. A couple of interviewees reported that the second source of tension related to a small number of activists being unhappy about the leadership style of the former director of BURP, in

particular her charismatic style was perceived by some as being too autocratic. However, it was pointed out that this was a minority perception and that the former director of BURP was held in very high regard within her community and appreciated for her dedication to the neighbourhood.

An interesting way to address conflicts within an exit strategy was provided by a senior officer from Brighton Council and board member of BURP. He described the conflicts in the following way and suggested that they are dealt with formally through the auspices of BURP's management committee.

> Naturally, there are jealousies on both sides. Jealousies in competition, communities are competing for the same dollar, competing for the same love and affection. There's accusations back and forth, pride, egos all that stuff that any little town has also happens here. How do we deal with it? First, by separation of powers, in other words, there are the workers, the manager, and the Board. Any complaints or issues are dealt with at the appropriate level (ACE Brighton Council, TAS).

A similar response was provided by a board member of BURP who argued that the competitive funding mechanisms now in place pitch different communities in competition with each other and that this is the source of many of the tensions:

> You've got a culture where you're in competition with other people seeking the same sources of money and that can generate huge problems (BURP board member, TAS).

The comments from both these Tasmanian interviewees suggest intra-and inter-communal conflicts can become a major challenge for programme managers engaged in a regeneration project.

5.3 Developing Leadership and Capacities

The view of respondents in South Australia was that the same State and Local Government agencies that currently have a presence in the areas, including local councils and the SAHT, will have ongoing roles beyond the formal term of the regeneration projects. However, their level of involvement will change. For instance, the SAHT will have a reduced role in the two communities, as there will be lower concentrations of public housing in the areas:

> It's not all about what role the State housing authority has, it's about what role does the broader community have once that renewal is complete. My view would be that exit strategies shouldn't be confined to the organisation that led the renewal project (housing officer, SA 1).

From this perspective the responsibility of the SAHT is largely confined to physical assets and its role in influencing social and economic outcomes for tenants is limited:

> We manage tenancies and build houses … to ask us then to be responsible for whether children in that household receive proper nutrition and education is a big ask, and not one I think we could make a claim too. The impact of renewal on the community has probably been overstated in the past. If you

can physically change the look of a place people think you're in control of the situation, but we're not (housing officer, SA 1).

In both the South Australian projects, the local government councils are commonly envisaged as the key service provider agencies at the completion of the regeneration projects and into the future:

> The upgrade of housing will change once the project's finished, but it won't come to a complete standstill, the Housing Trust will still have a role to play, Council will have strong investment in the community development … and we are there for the long haul (council officer, SA 1).

Once again, several interviewees identified the Neighbourhood Development Officer (NDO) positions as essential in terms of building community capacity and resources and linked the ongoing funding of these positions to issues of sustainability. For instance, some fears were expressed that at the conclusion of the regeneration project, the community cohesion that has been established in Salisbury North will disintegrate unless the NDO position continues to direct and encourage community participation:

> There seems to be a need to have someone cracking the whip and saying this is what you should be doing, this is community (housing officer, SA 1).

Residents at Salisbury North were somewhat concerned with the issue of where funding for community development would come from after the regeneration project is completed. It was suggested that an important part of an exit strategy and the transition of the Community Reference Group to an independent Progress Association, would be planning for 'who do we approach to get money from, where are we going to get it'. For the Progress Association to be successful, it would have to 'offer the community a successful group, show that we are able to lobby on their behalf, be an advocate for them' (resident, SA 1).

In Bridgewater, two outstanding issues emerged from the interviews. First, there was general anxiety about the long term funding commitment for BURP and attracting revenue was therefore an important priority for the current project director. Currently BURP receives funds from Brighton Council and Housing Tasmania but these funds are set on an annual basis so it was difficult for BURP to engage in long-term strategic planning because of the uncertainty over funding. This said, it was clear from the interviewees response both from Brighton Council and Housing Tasmania that BURP work is highly valued and seen as instrumental in engendering neighbourhood cohesion. There was a general expectation that BURP long-term future was secured although the funding level would not be as high as in previous years. An important priority for the BURP board was to capture different funding steams so that specific projects could start:

> There is core funding that comes from housing and there is some money the council puts in. I think I am comfortable with that but the rest of it is project driven and I guess you are working constantly to try and achieve extra money (BURP Director, TAS).

Second, it was suggested by interviewees that generating positive stories about the locality was essential in ensuring the success of the regeneration. A Housing Tasmania staff member stated that BURP was excellent at self-promotion and

marketing. This in turn encouraged interest from the community and led to large turnouts by local residents to the events and activities organised by BURP including Tidy Garden Days, fetes, music eisteddfods and planning events:

> BURP sought to adopt a marketing profile for the area, they became a 'mouth piece' for the community as a whole in terms of what was happening in the area and how the community was progressing, the projects that were occurring and the ways of looking at how the various projects were going. In my opinion, a large proportion of the community really identified with BURP as the marketeer (housing officer, TAS).

5.4 Planning and Overcoming Problems

Respondents in all the case studies generally had difficulty in commenting on what could happen if exit strategies do not work. This was due partly to their limited understanding of exit strategies and inability to visualise the elements that a specific exit strategy might contain. In the case of Windale, however, the problems in implementing the Transition Plan to community ownership of the renewal process gave some pointers to what can happen.

Overall, respondents thought that if problems arose they would probably relate to the community development aspects rather than physical housing outcomes. It was emphasised that if the effort is put in from the start in terms of working on employment, parenting, education etc, and monitoring outcomes then things should not suddenly go wrong when the project finishes:

> I cannot imagine the last day the last block of land is sold everything falls in. I think we'd be seeing some warning signs (housing officer, SA 2).

> It's necessary to keep the community involved, if we keep things basic and for the people then we will succeed (resident, TAS).

It was suggested that if exit strategies did go wrong then in some instances:

- Additional funding might be necessary in order to go in and prop the community up; or

- Services within the area might need to work together in order to find solutions; or

- A fully costed strategic plan would have to be implemented to address the problems that have arisen.

The Windale example pointed to the inter-community problems that can arise if the exit strategy is not implemented with enough time and resourcing to ensure all community elements are effectively brought into the process. While this is a particular issue in this case, where the pre-existing community was in place at the end of the process, it also points to more general issues with ensuring community buy-in when the original rationale and focus of the programme has moved on. In this case, the Transition Plan

was devised too late on in the three-year programme to be fully embedded in the community, and resourcing was limited:

> They should have been working on this well before (community worker, NSW 1).

Moreover, (though not initially intended) effectively handing the ownership of the process over to one group in the community without bringing onside other groups was also seen as divisive. There was also a need for a skilled person to do this planning and assist the community in implementing the strategy. This could only be achieved by appointing a paid worker. The loss of the place manager at the end of the renewal programme (due to funding withdrawal) was seen to have removed the one person linking all the elements of the community. It appears to have been difficult for a community organisation to effectively fulfil this role, at least in the short term. However, in the case of those estates where physical redevelopment will effectively remove the original community over the ten years or so the process rolls and where little of the old community will be left, transition strategies that integrate the elements of the new community may need very different approaches.

5.5 Summary

In general, stakeholders and residents appear to have similar expectations about who will continue to deliver all the needed services once regeneration projects are formally completed. There is an expectation amongst partners that local councils should be the lead partners responsible for community development activities once the redevelopment process has completed. The one exception was in Windale, where the New South Wales Department of Housing remains the majority owner of the estate and whose role in maintaining a community development strategy remains substantial. Nevertheless, even here, once the Premier's Department's involvement recedes, the local Council will assume a more significant profile, together with other key government and non-government service agencies.

The management of a regeneration project is usually very complex and interviewees had expectations that much of the responsibility for post-regeneration would be devolved to the local level. However, how this might be completed in practice was unclear in most cases. Windale suggests this would need to be carefully thought through and a clear support framework put in place to ensure local community control is properly supported.

One of the biggest obstacles when engaging in forward or strategic planning is uncertainty about budgets coupled with the difficulties of capturing funds (competition with other localities, budget priorities, etc.). In particular, staff working for community development projects highlighted the problems that can arise from inadequate core funding or the removal of funds (and therefore key workers) at the end of the renewal process. Periodic injections of short-term funds make it difficult to plan ahead with any certainty. Indeed, it is unclear what will happen if key positions such as NDOs and community development workers are removed from the communities and whether the changes they have introduced will be sustainable without this input. The case of Windale provides some evidence of the impact of this situation.

Major physical renewal programmes will inevitably result in new residents moving in who are unlikely to share a sense of past achievements or 'community'. This can

engender a source of tension for long standing residents and care is needed at the end of a project to address this factor. As discussed in Chapter Four, the slow dispersal of a community through relocation as the redevelopment proceeds can be very distressing for the original residents, especially if they feel disempowered from the processes happening around them.

Finally, factoring in an exit strategy might prove difficult in complex policy environments and hard to achieve in the context of residualisation processes and limited funds. Coordination across different agencies is the key challenge for effective service delivery once the regeneration programme has ended.

6 EVALUATION ISSUES

6.1 How should exit strategies be evaluated?

Interviewees from most of the case studies proposed broadly similar ways of evaluating an exit strategy, although many of these suggestions seem more related to evaluating the actual outcomes of the regeneration project rather than an exit strategy *per se*. The ideas included:

- Using modelling as a tool to evaluate the project outcomes. That is, showing what the area was like before regeneration, how it changed throughout the process, and what the area might look like in the future through utilising a range of performance indicators, including community involvement, maintenance costs, vandalism, crime, employment, education and school retention rates, vacancy rates, whether sold properties are owner occupied or rented out, how long private tenants/owners stay, and whether there is a high turnover of private properties.

- Evaluating progress on indicators related to the specific project objectives. Indicators range from employment levels (collected from statistical agencies), to community perceptions (gathered with community surveys). Satisfaction amongst the community would also be a key factor, as would the community's continuation of activities initiated by the project.

- A survey at the end of the project or towards the end of it to see if the original objectives of the programme had been achieved in reality.

- In the transition stage, a need to monitor whether positive changes were being sustained and whether the community has taken ownership of the project and kept it going?

- Evaluate immediate and long-term outcomes of the regeneration project with surveys in a variety of areas, such as post-relocation, residents' perceptions, changes in schools, student numbers and student profiles, and property values. The data collection on all these aspects should commence from the beginning of a project.

- Return in twenty years and see what the area is like, what are the school retention rates, how are people looking after properties, what services do the community need and are unemployment levels up or down?

The Windale project was distinguished by having an evaluation strategy built into the original project plan using pre- and post-project measures, including surveys to assess social capital formation and residents attitudes. An initial benchmark survey was repeated two years on towards the end of the renewal project, although limited change was recorded no doubt due to the short timeframe. Further surveys were expected. Representatives of the local community suggested a broader range of measures should be included in any evaluation of the longer term success of the project:

- Improved safety

- Overcoming stigma

- Positive attitudes and behaviours in young people

- Increasing volunteering of young people

- Increased consultation with young people

- Improved self-confidence and self-belief

- Stronger community ties.

However, measurement of these indicators might prove difficult and housing department staff were also concerned about 'harder' measures of performance, including those relating to asset management issues.

6.2 What are the implications of not employing exit strategies?

There were only limited responses to the question of what are the implications of not employing exit strategies. One view put forward by several respondents from South Australia was that the whole notion of an exit strategy is problematic, so they could not see the benefits of developing one. The issue is that an exit strategy implies additional investment post completion of the regeneration project, and the merits of this are considered debatable. As regeneration projects are lengthy (up to 10-15 years), it is deemed more appropriate to focus on closing off stages of the project and celebrating milestones, rather than 'exiting' the project:

> I find it an intriguing discussion because I'm not sure whether a community that's had an enormous investment in the assets requires an ongoing investment in social infrastructure and so on, or shouldn't that be better targeted towards those communities that have higher levels of need and haven't had that strategy applied to them. How much do you have to intervene into a community to make it functional? Or don't communities just establish themselves? (housing officer, SA 1)

The other related issue was that an exit strategy implies that the agencies and partners are leaving the regeneration area when the key players such as the councils and SAHT remain:

> Again, I'm not quite sure, by establishing the concept of an exit from it, it does sound like you're leaving that community to its own devices, no matter what resources you might leave behind, but that's not what happens (council officer, SA 2).

Residents on the other hand stated that without an exit strategy issues remained about financial sustainability of community development activities initiated by the community. Therefore, it was important that before the end of the regeneration project, networks were established with government agencies and funding bodies other than Council and the Trust, and that ensuring this happened could form part of an exit strategy.

In Tasmania, this question was answered along similar lines to those interviewees in the two case studies in South Australia. Although, there was only a limited understanding of the role of exit strategies, the general view was that BURP's activities are inimical to a *de facto* exit strategy established by the local council and the State's housing authority to ensure that the benefits of the redevelopment undertaken in the late 1990s are maintained. The consequence of not maintaining a post regeneration presence in the form of a body such as BURP was viewed as problematic and a factor that would undermine earlier investment in the locality and hinder the scope of community participation.

6.3 Summary

Evaluation is generally seen as necessary, but there is some uncertainty as to how best to evaluate an exit strategy and it is often overlooked at the programme development stage because of other important priorities.

Measuring the success of a regeneration project is seen as particularly challenging. The obvious indices such as property values, crime statistics, neighbourhood satisfaction and housing management indicators were viewed as useful, but it can be difficult to discern whether improvements are a consequence of the project itself or external factors such as growth in the wider economy.

An important problem for any would be evaluation or review is that they are often viewed as an opportunity to flag up examples of policy success. It is hard to acknowledge policy failure when engaging in evaluative work primarily because of concerns that information might be viewed negatively and cited as a justification to reduce funds or close off programmes.

7 CONCLUSIONS

It is clear from the literature review contained within the Positioning Paper and the case studies reviewed in this Final Report that exit strategies are not well developed in most of the renewal programmes included in this study, or indeed, more widely in Australia. Only one, the Windale community renewal programme, had developed an explicit strategy that aimed to transfer the task of sustaining the outcomes of a time-limited community renewal programme to the community. The Parks, Salisbury North and Minto estates had not reached the end of the immediate renewal process and staff had not yet worked out how a transition would need to be managed. BURP (Tasmania) though operating as a post renewal agency, had not put in place any formal procedures normally associated with exit strategies.

The findings suggest that the time limited aspect of regeneration programmes is not well understood or accepted. Moreover, it is evident that none of the five case study estate projects had considered the need for an exit strategy from the outset. It was only when projects were beginning to reach maturity that such strategies came onto the agenda. However, it should be noted that, despite overseas literature stressing the need for such strategies, it is also the case that there are relatively few examples of such strategies being implemented in comparable projects in other jurisdictions. Again, this is also related to the fact that, as in Australia, most estate renewal projects have long time spans and relatively few have reached completion. Several areas emerged for the research from which specific conclusions might be drawn.

7.1 Community capacity building

It was interesting to note that in nearly all the case studies, the expectations of community capacity building are very high and there is an assumption that the active and ongoing engagement of residents can be taken as a 'given'. Yet, the current problems within BURP and the Windale transition plan provide indications of some of the issues that arise when expectations of community capacity to engage in policy development fail to materialise or lead to conflicts. It has yet to be seen whether sufficient numbers of residents have the capacity or the interest in maintaining a direct involvement with the governance of housing once the renewal process has run its course. Only in the presence of some investment in skilling-up residents and establishing strong involvement in and ownership of the renewal process is there likely to be any longer term commitment to engaging with the community after the renewal process has ended. Much depends on the nature of the renewal programme and the profile of the housing locality that is delivered at the end of the process. In many cases, it is likely that communities dominated by home owners are likely to have very different needs and service requirements than the ones they replace. Each renewal programme is likely to have different outcomes in terms of the social profile that is created, and therefore likely to have different support needs. This suggests that exit strategies need to be developed and delivered with specific reference to the local situation. While generic frameworks and guidelines will be useful to assist in strategy development, actual strategies will be highly variable and place specific.

7.2 Funding issues and institutional capacity for implementation

Ideally, local residents, along with a range of relevant stakeholders and government agencies should be involved in the planning and development of an exit strategy, including the local Council, housing authority and other service providers with a presence in the area. The development of an exit strategy seems more likely when there is a skilled person to do the planning and to link all the elements of the community. The other key issues in relation to the institutional capacity to develop exit strategies are to provide enough time and resources to ensure that all the community elements are effectively brought into the process. The findings suggest that the time limited aspect of regeneration programmes is not well understood or accepted. A related theme running through the discussion on exit strategies was need for adequate resources to ensure such strategies are actually implemented. For many of those interviewed, it was assumed some form of intervention would continue to be needed to ensure whatever plan was envisaged for the period beyond the renewal programme itself was carried forward. In terms of the institutional capacity required, this might be in the form of a community led group of some sort, or of a community development worker or 'place manager' who would have responsibility for progressing community development after the renewal programme had ended. The idea that this task might be simply passed to some form of community grouping without sufficient support and resources is likely to prove problematic. One of the criticisms of the Windale transition plan was that the community group charged with implementing the plan did not have the skills or resources to effectively undertake the tasks involved. In Tasmania, the success of the community involvement in the renewal process appeared to rest on one person's efforts, making the process vulnerable and uncertain. It can be discerned from the research findings that successful exit strategies require a commitment from the funding agencies to resource policies that embed institutional capacity. At the very least, the agencies need to ensure that there is a broader cohort of people to carry the process forward, implying the development of an effective community participation process during the renewal period. Whether a place manager is appointed or a community body established to manage the post-renewal process (or both), this implies on-going funding to support the maintenance of broader local governance arrangements. Of course, the issue then arises as to how long such institutional support should go on for, and where long term funding for such a position might be sought. Given the reluctance of government agencies to commit to long term funding of such posts, this remains a problematic issue.

7.3 Conflict resolution

The management and resolution of conflict is clearly a critical aspect of urban renewal programmes. As far as exit strategies are concerned, there was little direct evidence of how conflicts might be managed. In South Australia, the establishment of formal governance arrangements (community reference groups, project steering group) has the potential of providing a vehicle for managing conflicts during the transition phase at the end of the project. In Windale, the exit strategy that was developed (through the transfer of governance of the project to a community group) had led to a degree of conflict between various factions within the community that had yet to be successfully resolved at the time the fieldwork was conducted. In Bridgewater, BURP provided an invaluable forum for community conflicts to be articulated and aired. The evidence suggests that whilst an exit strategy does not exclude the possibility of conflicts arising it can provide a valuable mechanism for identifying, airing and resolving conflicts. There is a need to ensure that the structures set up to facilitate the transition period at

the end of the renewal project include some recognised negotiated mechanism to allow such conflicts to be expressed and managed, possibly through a mediated forum to allow all elements of the community to express their points of view in a non-confrontational manner.

7.4 Evaluation

Relatively few regeneration and renewal programs in Australia have been subjected to either a formative or summative evaluation. While there are some exceptions, and it would be true to say that SHAs are becoming more aware of the need to implement monitoring and evaluation strategies, they are still not well developed. Yet, without some form of ongoing monitoring and evaluation framework in place to feed into the development of exit strategies or transitionary arrangements, it will be more difficult to ensure such arrangements are successfully put in place in good time. The development of any evaluation protocol should not be laborious data collection exercise for regeneration managers (all of whom are likely to be juggling competing work pressures). Ideally, evaluation should be kept as simple as possible with indicators devised to flag up problems that require remedial action (rather than a detailed audit of activity) if it is to prove effective.

7.5 The need for exit strategies?

A final comment concerns the perception of the need for exit strategies. Several respondents, mainly those from the SHAs involved, questioned the need for such a concept. Essentially, they saw themselves as still being involved in the area, albeit on a reduced scale, once the renewal process had ended, so there was no real need for an exit strategy for them as they would still be there. Such a view was most evident in the locations where the majority of new residents were home purchasers, and perceived of being capable of supporting themselves. For these interviewees, the issue of what or who an exit strategy might be for was in doubt. There would be no need for the extensive community supports and services that public housing tenants would both need and expect once the area is dominated by home owners with only passing ties to the old community, and probably much more outwardly mobile than the old community they replaced. It is likely that all that will be needed at the end of most redevelopment programmes is a revised system of tenancy management at a lower density for the remaining public tenants, while the private owners and renters will simply look after themselves. In the context of a completely different community profile, what the function of an exit strategy would be in these cases will need to be carefully defined. Would the strategy be for the remaining tenants only, or for the whole community?

It should be noted that the typical renewal programmr in Australia is quite different from that experienced in the UK where a much higher retention of public or social housing stock is the usual outcome of the renewal process. Even where low-cost home ownership has been included as part of UK renewal schemes, it will be often managed by a registered social landlord. Moreover, rehousing original residents onto the renewed estate is also common and therefore the need to rebuild and maintain community infrastructure for the returning community is a much more prominent task. One of the common renewal models in Australia is one whereby the majority of stock, transfers to the homeownership market and public involvement in the area falls to a minority stake. In such conditions, exit strategies involving intensive community development programmes, social infrastructure provision and community support appear to be much less appropriate.

This is not the case in those projects where there is a strong community development and renewal component. Windale was the obvious example of this. Here, an exit strategy was seen by stakeholders to be critical in order to maintain the long-term benefits of a time-limited intervention. The aim here was to provide a community focus for continuing to attract new funding and resources to support initiatives into the future for an estate where the community was still there and no redevelopment and sales had been planned. For these kinds of renewal programme, exit strategies are therefore essential. However, it is also clear (from the Bridgewater example as well), that these kinds of cases require on-going funding for core positions to ensure momentum is maintained and the community body charged with taking the programme forward has sufficient capacity and skills to do the job.

Finally, as noted above, it seems evident that there is no prototype exit strategy that can be applied to all situations. Each renewal project will have different objectives, different funding arrangements, different time scales and different mixes of physical and community renewal interventions. As such, each project or programme will need to develop its own approach to how the transition into the post-renewal period is managed and the community benefits of the process maintained. Nevertheless, most respondents to the research generally supported that such strategies are required in some form. Crucially, the earlier such strategies are considered then the better the chances that the transition of the estate into a new community will be managed successfully.

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