Infill Development

Introduction

Infill development is occurring in most Australian cities and towns. Most of this development is within inner or middle ring suburbs as land and infrastructure for new growth areas becomes more expensive to develop, and residents are looking for greater choices in location, particularly in established areas. Infill development can occur at a range of scales including:

- redevelopment of existing buildings and sites
- development of vacant sites, and
- redevelopment of under-used land and buildings sometimes in large scale urban renewal projects (see examples at end of this fact sheet).

The principles for healthy places should be considered in planning for infill development (as they should for all development).

Infill development in old industrial area, South Sydney
Source: TPG Town Planning and Urban Design

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Spatial Location

Infill development can renew an area by bringing in new residents and businesses, and developing new or upgrading existing infrastructure. For larger scale projects the renewal is generally undertaken in a planned and managed way which assists with co-ordination between private development projects and public infrastructure.

Infill development should consider ways to encourage and increase social interaction within the community, enhance the physical environment, incorporate opportunities for physical activity, improve real and perceived personal safety and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, and promote health and wellbeing[1]. Infill developments should also consider the needs of children and adolescents, such as by providing adequate public play areas that cater for different age groups and by providing apartments suitable for families.

Upgraded or new public places should also be provided with relevant supporting infrastructure that encourages use and social interaction.

Transport Network and Design

Depending on the scale of the infill development, the planning and design phase should consider:

- the surrounding land uses, facilities and destinations that will be important to the new residents and how these can be accessed
- connections and continuation of the surrounding pedestrian and cycling networks, and
- availability and access to public transport.

For larger scale projects, places with suitable supporting infrastructure (parks, play areas and community meeting rooms) should be considered within the redevelopment area to encourage active living for all ages.

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[1] Adapted from Victoria Department of Human Services
http://www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au/hav/articles.nsf/pracpages/Sustainable_Physical_Activity_in_Neighbourhood_Renewal?OpenDocument

HEALTHYSPACES&PLACES

Low Density Residential		Mixed Use		Retail		Office/Community
Medium Density Residential		Industry				

NEW ROAD

PEDESTRIAN LINK

NEW ACCESSIBLE STATION

PLAZA

INFILL

Large disused industrial sites and redundant reserves provide an opportunity to intensify urban areas and assist with improving access to public spaces and local facilities.

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Health and Planning Fact
Research has indicated that neighbourhoods with a high population density, good land use mix, high connectivity and good provision of walking and cycling facilities are more likely to encourage walking and cycling for transportation (Saelens et al., 2003). Infill developments, especially in larger scale urban renewal projects, are able to incorporate many principles that encourage active living.

Other potential health and well being benefits from infill developments can include:
- improvements in parks and reinvigoration of public places
- increased sense of community and decreased isolation
- increased choice of places to live, and
- reduced crime and stress.[2]

PRACTICE ADVICE

Good Practice
Infill development should:
- be well integrated into the surrounding area to enhance active living options with connections to pedestrian, cycling and public transport networks
- where relevant, provide upgraded or improved supporting infrastructure
- depending on the scale of the project, revitalise or create new streets and public areas, and
- provide a range of housing options for all members of the community.

Optimum Practice
- Infill developments or renewal projects should be undertaken in a co-ordinated way to maximise the potential for active transport options.
- Infill developments can be a focus for the local as well as the wider community with active and vital public spaces, art and recreation facilities.

Avoid
- Infill development that does not integrate with the surrounding area, especially with transport and pedestrian networks.
- Infill developments that create unsafe areas or discourage use by particular user groups.
- Infill development without any public open space that caters for the needs of multiple users (children through to older adults).
- Infill development that creates or perpetuate barriers to movement through the urban environment.

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[2] Adapted from Community Guide http://www.thecommunityguide.org/pa/environmental-policy/communitypolicies.html

REFERENCES

Saelens, B, Sallis, J and Frank, L 2003, 'Environmental correlates of walking and cycling: findings from the transportation, urban design and planning literatures'. *Annals of Behavioural Medicine* Vol.25(2), 80-91 as quoted in Gebel K, King L,Bauman A,Vita, P, Gill T, Rigby A and Capon, A. 2005, *Creating healthy environments: A review of the links between the physical environment, physical activity and obesity*. Sydney: NSW Health Department and NSW Centre for Overweight and Obesity.

USA Government *Guide to Community Preventive Services. Environmental and policy approaches to increase physical activity: community-scale urban design land use policies & practices* http://www.thecommunityguide.org/pa/environmental-policy/communitypolicies.html

Victoria Department of Human Services 2008, *Sustainable Physical Activity in Neighbourhood Renewal* http://www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au/hav/articles.nsf/pracpages/Sustainable_Physical_Activity_in_Neighbourhood_Renewal?OpenDocument

Examples of Large Scale Urban Renewal Projects

Docklands, Melbourne Vic
http://www.docklands.com/cs/Satellite?pagename=Docklands

Subiaco, Subiaco Redevelopment Authority, Perth WA
http://www.subicentro.com.au/subicentro

HoneySuckle, Hunter Development Corporation, Newcastle NSW
http://www.honeysuckle.net/pages/

Kelvin Grove Urban Village, Brisbane Qld
http://www.kelvingroveurbanvillage.com.au/

Green Square Urban Renewal Area, Sydney NSW
http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/Development/UrbanRenewalProjects/GreenSquare/Default.asp