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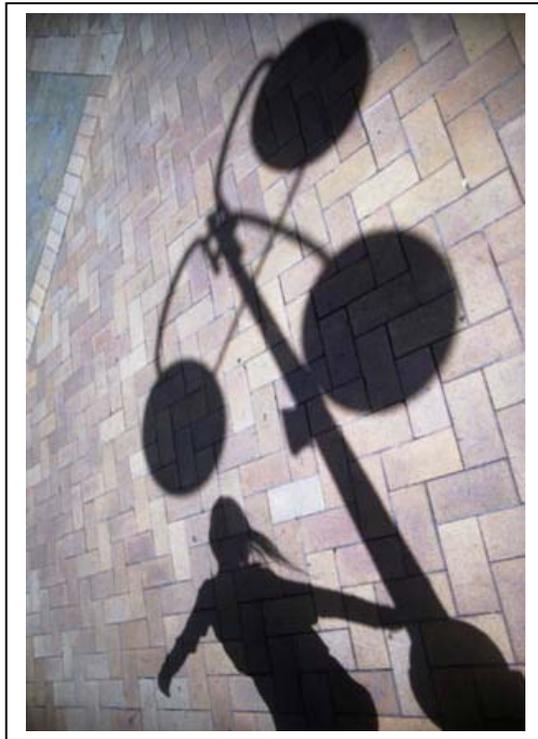


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Children in inner city suburbia

The case of New Farm, Brisbane



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1.0 Introduction

This case study has been undertaken as one of a series to inform the Child Friendly Cities Symposium conducted in Sydney, October 30-31 2006. New Farm, Brisbane was selected for its capacity to throw light on the experience and issues of children in an Australian inner city suburban environment. As with other case study research it does not assume generalisability to other inner city suburban contexts, though it will be suggested there are a range of relevant considerations arising from it.

New Farm presents as having some obviously child friendly features. It is home to one of Brisbane's iconic parks with its' childrens' playground woven into grand trees, is surrounded on three sides by the Brisbane River, and has emerged as a hub for fringe arts and performance. From the early 1990's New Farm and the surrounding area has been the subject of quite intense urban renewal attention. This is not unlike many other inner city suburban areas in Australian cities.

This case study uses various lenses to explore the question of 'how child friendly is New Farm?' and what can be done to enhance it from this perspective. This is both a pragmatic and analytic exercise - pragmatic in that various practical strategies are suggested as arising from the study - analytical in that in order to engage with a child friendly agenda requires critically reviewing the very lenses and assumptions that underpin much current urban development.

1.1 The study area

The case study area is located 3km east of the Brisbane central business district (CBD) on a peninsular formed by the meandering Brisbane River. This area encompasses the suburb of New Farm as well as adjoining suburb of Newstead/ Teneriffe. These fall within what has come to be called the Inner North Eastern Suburbs (INES). Reference is made at times to the INES or to other suburbs in this cluster (such as Fortitude Valley, Bowen Hills). The interface between Newstead and New Farm is important, as these two suburbs constitute a belt of inner city suburbia bounded by the more commercial and industrial suburbs of Fortitude Valley and Bowen Hills. Where important and practical to do so this paper will provide data for both New Farm and Newstead.



1.2 Methods used in the case study

The case study was undertaken over a two month period, and relied on analysis of secondary data sources, site observations, as well as limited direct consultation with residents and agencies. Ethical clearance was gained through QUT's Office of Research to interview relevant agency staff and adult residents, individually and in focus groups. Three focus groups (12 participants) and 7 individual interviews were conducted with residents. One focus group (6 participants) and 12 interviews were conducted with agencies/ businesses¹. There was insufficient time and resources available to interview resident children and young people.

For the purposes of this study children refers to people under 18 years of age. Within this age range this study considered children as comprising three sub-categories:

- Early childhood (below school attending age- approx. 0-4 years)
- Primary school age (approx. 5-12 years inclusive), and
- Young people (approx. 13-17 years inclusive).

1.3 Considering a child friendly urban environment

The use of constructs such as 'child friendly' raises inevitable questions of meaning and utility. The evaluation of an urban area as child friendly or otherwise raises a range of the questions regarding how child friendly is understood and operationalised. Given the applied goals of the Symposium this commenced with a consideration of what suite of indicators for a child friendly urban environment might be supported by previous research.

Urban environments have never been child-friendly for all children. For example, whilst emerging suburban middle class life in post-war Australia often provided a combination of spatial freedom and basic material sufficiency, at the same time Indigenous children often experienced spatial and material oppression, as evidenced through numerous studies and inquiries.

Many indicators of a child-friendly city are also indicators of a 'people-friendly' city, or line up with indicators needed by other social groups, such as parents/ caregivers, or older people. It is important not to overly particularise the well-being of children given the inter-relationship with others in their lives. However social and urban policies and processes have generally been adult-centric, formulated from various adult perspectives and in most cases do not actively seek to appreciate or reflect the various perspectives that children of different social locations have. The development of indicators is inherently reductionist, that is, is selective of what to focus on and they inevitably lose much of the complexity that typifies people's lived experience. That said, they can assist in identifying and suggesting relationships between various phenomena, and in making the complex more discernable.

A typology of features of a child-friendly urban environment was generated from a range of relevant literature (Gleeson, Sipe, & Rolley 2006; Prior 2005a; Prior 2005b; Chawla 2002; Driskell 2003; Frumpkin, Frank, & Jackson 2004; McKiernan, Young, Ambrose & Copeland 2005; Heywood & Crane with Egginton & Gleeson 1998; White 1999). Various indicators of these factors were used to guide the study. Indicators can be at various levels (neighbourhood, group, family, or individual etc). There was not the capacity to generate sufficient data on many of these within the constraints of the case study timeframe and resources. The development of indicators and tools which allow the consideration of child-friendliness to be factored into planning, development and management is an ongoing and important project. Our tentatively identified features are:

- Sufficient material wellbeing (not in poverty, clean water & sanitation, not homeless/ displaced)
- Sustainable socio-economic-cultural context (residential stability, orientation to neighbourhood, employment/ education/ income nexus, socio-cultural networks)
- Sufficiently cohesive community identity
- Positive norms and attitudes about children/childhood and young people/youth

¹ Agencies included various sections of Brisbane City Council, Qld Commission for Children and Young People, Mirvac, New Farm State School, New Farm Library, Urban Renewal, Brisbane Youth Service, Salvation Army, New Farm Community Centre, New Farm Soccer Club, Merthyr Bowls Club.

- Parental comfort with children being in neighbourhood
- Environment promotes physical health
- Environment promotes psychological health
- Accessible services
- Spatial inclusion (versus polarisation)
- Availability of sufficient quantity and quality of public, community accessed and private spaces to play, 'be', and engage with others
- Capacity for multiple (flexible) use of spaces and low contestation between users
- Management approach used in public and community accessed spaces experienced as respectful and inclusive
- Recognition of children and young people's interests in social and urban law/ policy
- Recognition of children in planning in local planning and strategy development
- Meaningful involvement of children as 'authentic' participants in social and urban planning and dialogue

1.4 History

Archaeological evidence suggests at least 6000 years of habitation by the Turrbul people in the area now known as New Farm. Originally called *Binkin-ba* after the *Binkin* turtles hunted in the many lagoons, Aboriginal people practiced fire-stick farming and cultivated *Kambi* (ship worms) along the banks of the river².

With western settlement of Moreton Bay in 1825 came the need for food and the farms initially established at South Brisbane and Kangaroo Point proved inadequate. A *new farm* was established on land cleared and cultivated by convict labour from Merthyr Rd to the river. By the time Moreton Bay ceased to be a penal settlement in 1842 the role as a colony farm had declined.

Since the establishment in 1845-46 of a race club and course (DCP appendices p11) the area has been used as a regional venue for recreation and leisure. The construction of New Farm Park on the race course site began in 1914 (New Farm/Teneriffe Control Plan appendices³ & NF State School history⁴)

Over time the location on the bend of the river and close to the city made the area an excellent site for river industry. New Farm became a medium density suburb with the housing and road grid mostly shaped from the latter half of 1800's. Mixed residential development comprised larger houses on ridges (one was Teneriffe Hill) and lower cost housing in the gullies and on low lying swampland (NT Teneriffe DCP control plan 1995 see appendices). Up until the 1980's it had one of the biggest concentrations of low cost housing in Brisbane and was fringed by substantial industry particularly along the river. Post WWII widows set up the boarding homes and migrants from Europe also settled. The streets of New Farm were sites of community interaction and play for adults and children, made easier by low fences and backyards. Prior to the renovation and apartment boom, the typical New Farm house was wooden on stumps (see DCP appendix p19-21). The timber and tin gave flexibility for the changing needs of families (eg the veranda being built in). This approach to inner city housing has been suggested as reflecting Brisbane's branch office role as an administrative and regional centre.

The development of Brisbane from a 'large country town' into a city proper symbolically occurred in the 1980's with the hosting of the Commonwealth Games (1982) and the World Expo (1988). The re-discovery of the river, the displacement of low income and low cost housing from the inner city, the use of city brown sites to reinvigorate the city were some features of this period. A second phase of inner city transformation then occurred which saw governments formalise urban renewal efforts (Stimson 2000)⁵.

² Source: BCC plaque in New Farm Park

³ Brisbane City Council (1995) New Farm and Teneriffe Hill Development Control Plan: Appendices - New Farm and Teneriffe Hill Heritage and Character Study 1995, Prepared by Elizabeth Musgrave and Kaylee Wilson, Brisbane City Council Heritage Unit, October 1995

Draft New Farm and Teneriffe Hill Development Control Plan: Part B – Planning Study Appendices, Brisbane City Council Urban Renewal Taskforce, November 1995

⁴ New Farm State School Parents and Citizen's Centenary Committee (2001), 1901 -2001 New Farm State School: Centenary Edition, Erinport Pty Ltd 2001

⁵ Stimson, Bob (2000), Brisbane's Inner City Renaissance, Published 9 August 2000, <http://www.uq.edu.au/news/?article=1934>

In 1991-96 Building Better Cities funding from Commonwealth provided a framework and incentive for a range of renewal projects. The Mayor of Brisbane Jim Soorely was a key figure in this. (URTF Sept 1996; Duncan 2004⁶). The Urban Renewal Task Force (URTF) was established to manage the revitalisation of 730 hectares on the CBD fringe, and to increase the population from 12,000 to 30,000 by 2011. The Taskforce, chaired by Trevor Reddacliff, utilised public consultation to provide direct input to various stages of the planning process, and acted as a broker between the community, the private sector and the three levels of government.

Figure 1 (below) depicts the New Farm- Newstead area. A number of the key localities referred to in this paper are identified.

Figure 1: New Farm and Newstead



Source: Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Water: 9543 Tweed Heads-Urangan 2004 Project Aerial Photography 13/6/2004 aspect ratio 1:12000

⁶ Duncan, Tony (2004), Revitalising Brisbane's Newstead – Teneriffe Waterfront, International Cities Town Centres and Communities Society, 2004 Conference Papers, <http://www.ictcsociety.org/conference2004/papers/DUNCAN,%20Tony%205a.pdf>

With the relocation of industry and urban renewal process, housing affordability reduced dramatically between 2000 and 2004. The process of gentrification saw a sharp reduction in boarding houses and other low cost housing. Public housing stock dropped to below the Brisbane average, and any new community housing, such as that developed by the Brisbane Housing Company, tended to be smaller 1-2 bedroom units. New Farm became one venue in a shift in other large Australian cities to 'inner city living'. Obsolete sites were redeveloped and sites with heritage value were renovated. Residential redevelopment saw shifts to higher fences, the 'deck out the back', play areas in backyards as a reaction to traffic increases, the installation of air conditioners thus closing in houses, and increased concern about security.

1.4 New Farm/ Newstead as a series of precincts around 'catalyst' sites

The Urban Renewal process saw various areas within New Farm redeveloped as 'precincts' from the early 1990's. New Farm Park was confirmed as leisure oriented space through the Urban Renewal Open Space and Landscape Strategy of 1992-3, bounded by the culturally oriented Powerhouse Centre for the Live Arts (2001), the Cutters Landing residential redevelopment (2001), and the Riverwalk floating boardwalk (2003). Not far down the road the first Suburban Centre Improvement Program (SCIP) gave Merthyr Village a make-over in 1997.

Back towards Fortitude Valley the James Street precinct characterised by up-market lifestyle retailing and entertainment rose out of an older industrial and residential area (2003) whilst in Newstead the obsolete industrial brown-spaces gave way to the Teneriffe residential precinct (from 1993).

Clearly urban renewal as a strategy was considered a significant mechanism and pre-condition for the ongoing economic development of Brisbane and Queensland. As with many inner city areas in Australia their role is regional and sometimes national as well as local. This backdrop of multiple orientations provides an important context for considering the place of children in the New Farm/ Newstead area.

2.0 Community Profile

The profile below provides a brief snapshot of the social characteristics of New Farm.

2.1 Population size and trends

New Farm has sustained slow population growth over some time and is expected to continue this pattern into the future. The adjoining suburb of Newstead is experiencing far stronger growth as previous industrial land is converted to medium density residential. In the New Farm/Teneriffe Social Planning Study of 1994, which informed the urban renewal process, it was projected that New Farm's population would rise to 13,000 by 2011. In more recent projections this has been downgraded. The following tables detail the actual and projected overall (and by age group) populations for the Inner North East Suburbs (INES).

Table 1: NEIS Population Figures 1981-2001 with projections for 2004-2026

Statistical Local Area (SLA)	Estimated resident population					Projected Population – Trend scenario			
	1981*	1986*	1991**	1996**	2001**	2004(p)^	2011 (p)^	2026 (p)^	Change between 2004-2026
New Farm	9220	8902	9122	9,226	10,124	10,874	10,986	11,087	+213
Newstead			946	1,350	2,878	4,504	6,389	7,299	+2,795
Inner North East Suburbs	12982	12052	12393	12,978	17,008	21,258	23,936	27,462	+6,204

Sources: as above *BCC New Farm/Teneriffe Social Planning Study 1994: Background Paper B – Summary of Existing Demographic Characteristics, Table 1, p.B5, **Australian Bureau of Statistics, Time Series Data 1991-2001, ^ PIFU, Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation, QSAM Output for SLAs – Trend Scenario, June 2005

The tables below show that during the 1990's when much of the Urban Renewal planning was undertaken the population of children was in decline in New Farm, and was rising but from a very low base in Newstead. Since this time there has been an increase in children, with the rises in Newstead being most sustained. Most children located in the INES live in New Farm and Newstead with much smaller numbers residing in Bowen Hills and Fortitude Valley.

Tables 2-4 (below) indicate that the population of the three age cohorts in New Farm has been and is expected to remain relatively level except for the mid 1990's dip. Conversely the population in Newstead has been increasing and will continue to steadily increase for the foreseeable future.

Table 2: Population 0-4 years

Statistical Local Area (SLA)	1981*	1986*	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
New Farm	351	295	329	229	240	349	324	272	233	233	228
Newstead			29	50	113	161	242	259	256	259	266
Inner North East Suburbs											

Source: BCC New Farm/Teneriffe Social Planning Study 1994: Background Paper B – Summary of Existing Demographic Characteristics, Table 2, p.B5, and ABS Time Series Data 1991-2001 for selected suburbs, and PIFU June 2005⁷

Table 3: Population 5-14 years

Statistical Local Area (SLA)	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
New Farm	675	564	471	380	400	487	631	657	567	472	430
Newstead			63	64	124	358	508	473	541	567	560
Inner North East Suburbs			649	538	761	1146	1,480	1499	1479	1383	1337

Source: BCC New Farm/Teneriffe Social Planning Study 1994: Background Paper B – Summary of Existing Demographic Characteristics, Table 2, p.B5, and ABS Time Series Data 1991-2001 for selected suburbs, and PIFU June 2005.

Table 4: Population 15-19 years

Statistical Local Area (SLA)	1981	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
New Farm	606	487	450	315	341	402	430	450	528	457	383
Newstead			63	55	87	155	232	363	297	357	390
Inner North East Suburbs			713	531	735	769	916	1078	1111	1099	1019

Source: BCC New Farm/Teneriffe Social Planning Study 1994: Background Paper B – Summary of Existing Demographic Characteristics, Table 2, p.B5, and ABS Time Series Data 1991-2001 for selected suburbs, and PIFU June 2005

The above projected figures for children should be treated with some caution as they could well be lower than will be realised, in part due to an underestimation of how many people will choose to raise children in inner city suburbs and partly due to recent upward revisions in the Queensland birth rate. Overall it appears there will be more children resident in inner city suburbs than previously predicted. The declining child population in New Farm during the 1990's may be due to a range of factors including school closures, the type of housing stock built (largely unit blocks), gentrification, increasing rental costs, and a changing labour market (between 1990 and 1998 there was a 58% decrease in heavy industry in the urban renewal area)⁸.

⁷ Queensland Government 2005, Brisbane City Council, Trend Scenario Projections 2006-2031, Produced by the Planning Information and Forecasting Unit, Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation, June 2005 (as supplied by Brisbane City Council, Urban Renewal Brisbane, September 2006)

⁸ Brisbane City Council 2006, Urban Renewal Investment Indicator Report: New Farm - Prepared July 2006, p.3

Children and Families

The data in the following two tables indicates that whilst the numbers of families with children in the area declined significantly from 1991 to 1996 this either flattened out (in the case of New Farm) or increased substantially in the case of Newstead between 1996 and 2001. The proportion of single parents with children declined at a faster rate than the proportion of couple families with children. Again this data only tracks till 2001 and other indications are that the numbers and proportions of families with children is now rising.

Table 5: Couple families with children 1991-2001

Statistical Local Area	1991		1996		2001	
	No.	% of total households	no.	% of total households	no.	% of total households
New Farm	1760	24.1%	1422	19.2%	1402	17.3%
Newstead	244	29.9%	236	20.1%	523	20.9%
Total for INES	2353		1970		2341	

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2003) 2001 Census of Population and Housing: Time Series 1991-2001, Table 17 Household type and family type

Table 6: Single parents with children 1991-2001

Statistical Local Area	1991		1996		2001	
	No.	% of total households	no.	% of total households	no.	% of total households
New Farm	603	8.3%	525	7.1%	484	6.0%
Newstead	67	8.2%	87	7.4%	120	4.8%
Total for INES	795		751		769	

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2003) 2001 Census of Population and Housing: Time Series 1991-2001, Table 17 Household type and family type

Somewhat at odds with the 2001 census data and projections from recent years is a range of other data that indicates a 're-childrening' of New Farm. This in part may reflect the utilisation of New Farm amenities by children from adjoining suburbs particularly Newstead. New Farm United Junior Soccer Club supplied information on players registered from 1990 to 2006. This is summarised in the table below:

Table 7: Number of players at New Farm United Junior Soccer Club 1990-2006

Year	1990	1995	1999	2006
Numbers of players	64	59	87	215

Of interest is these data show the same drop in the mid 1990's as the population data. The club Secretary estimated 80% of registered players are resident in the local area. The table below indicates the numbers of players and teams for various age categories. Estimations are that growth in numbers and teams is expected to continue with Under 14 and 15 teams expected to commence in coming years.

Table 8: Number of teams and players for 2006

Team category	Number of teams (N=20)	Number of players (N=215)
Under 6	4	36
Under 7	3	28
Under 8	3	24
Under 9	2	24
Under 10	3	35
Under 11	2	26
Under 12	1	13
Under 13	2 (1 x Girls; 1 x Boys)	29 (15 & 14 respectively)

The soccer club self describes as the only sporting club for children in the New Farm/ Teneriffe/ Newstead area. It has strong links to the State and Catholic primary schools. The role of the club in the local community will be further elaborated later in this paper.

There was also anecdotal evidence supporting the view that the presence of children, particularly young children and primary school age children was growing in New Farm. The New Farm Library report increased numbers attending the Friday Children’s Reading Group. Merthyr Bowling Club report families with children are now regularly attending the Barefoot Bowls sessions held on Sundays. A recent article in *Brisbane News* (24 May 2006)⁹ refers to a couple who moved to Teneriffe eight years ago (1998) and have since then noticed a shift in local demographics.

Back then, there weren’t many people walking around with dogs and children. Now there are so many more people out and about – families, people riding bikes, and lots of small children. We now look at it as the sort place where we could raise a family.

2.3 Employment and income support

Over the next twenty years, there is projected to be below average growth in the workforce based in the INES. By 2026, the total workforce for New Farm and the surrounding area is estimated to be 20,493 people. Fortitude Valley – Inner will attract over 50% of this workforce growth, a projected increase of 183%. New Farm’s workforce will increase by 1286 people, the majority of which will be in professional occupations¹⁰.

In 2001, 8.1% of New Farm’s labour force was unemployed, compared with the Brisbane average of 7.04%. The average age of people not active in the labour force was 32.5 years on par with the Brisbane average of 32.9 years.

Table 9: Labour Force Distribution (2001)

SLA	Labour Force (2001 Census)				Occupation (2001 Census)				
	% labour force employed	% labour force working part time	% labour force unemployed	% population not in labour force	Professionals/Associate Professionals	Managers and Administrators	Tradespersons and related workers	Clerical, sales and service workers	Labourers and related workers
Inner Northern									
Fortitude Valley - Inner	93.6	24	6.4	22	45.9	7.4	6.7	23.4	4
Fortitude Valley - Remainder	88.5	23.7	11.5	32.4	42.3	11.2	7.8	18.8	5.6
New Farm	91.9	27.7	8.1	32.5	46.3	9.6	6.7	17.3	4.1
Newstead	95.2	21.8	4.8	16.3	52	13.6	3.9	14	2.2
Bowen Hills	90	28.9	10	26.1	36.7	13.5	7.3	18.5	9
Brisbane City	93	29.8	7	32.9	36.9	7.9	9.5	18.2	6.4

Source: Brisbane City Council (2006) Brisbane Inner City Advisory Committee: Social, Demographic and Housing Profile (based on Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001 Census of Population and Housing, Population Information and Forecasting Unit (PIFU) 2005.

⁹ Margie Fraser 2006, *Castles in the Air*, Brisbane News 24 May 2006, News Ltd.

¹⁰ NIEIR Economic Forecasting: Employment Growth by Occupation Sector by Place of Work (Trend scenario) 2006-2026

Table 10: Employment Growth by Occupation Sector by Place of Work (Trend) 2006-2026

SLA	High Skilled						Moderate Skilled					
	Professionals		Associate Professionals		Managers & Administrators		Tradespersons		Advanced Clerical/Service		Intermediate Clerical/Service	
	Absolute Growth 2006-2026	% Growth 2006-2026	Absolute Growth 2006-2026	% Growth 2006-2026								
New Farm	335	38.2	164	26.9	97	38.6	111	19.5	-8	-9.3	350	38.7
Newstead	260	43.0	148	24.1	133	25.2	253	27.1	-8	-6.8	276	28.2
Brisbane LGA	60828	45.6	25613	33.5	22369	47.0	23930	32.5	1236	6.1	45030	38.5

Source: NIEIR 2005, as cited in Hunter Birskeys and Wyeth Planning Services 2006, p56

Table 11: Employment Growth by Occupation Sector by Place of Work (Trend) 2006-2026 (cont.)

SLA	Low Skilled						TOTAL	
	Intermediate Production/ Transport		Elementary Clerical/Sales		Labourers/ Related		Absolute Growth 2006-2026	% Growth 2006-2026
	Absolute Growth 2006-2026	% Growth 2006-2026	Absolute Growth 2006-2026	% Growth 2006-2026	Absolute Growth 2006-2026	% Growth 2006-2026		
Fortitude Valley - Inner	855	512.0	1396	200.6	518	227.2	11041	183.6
Fortitude Valley - Remainder	192	40.0	313	40.0	17	3.4	3001	31.0
New Farm	79	31.0	148	35.7	10	3.0	1286	29.9
Newstead	126	27.0	168	84.4	-2	-0.6	1354	28.5
Brisbane LGA	22284	44.1	24988	42.7	4316	10.5	230594	37.3

Source: Source: NIEIR 2005, as cited in Hunter Birskeys and Wyeth Planning Services 2006, p57

Notes: Employment by Occupation was analysed at the 1-digit ASCO (Australian Standard Classification of Occupations) level. The nine levels can be grouped into 3 levels - high skilled, moderately skilled and low skilled. The employment forecasts provided by NIEIR shows employment growth by location of work (rather than by residence)

Income Support: Families

The number of families requiring income support in the area has remained small in absolute terms though there is projected to be growth in income support recipients in Newstead and a relatively static situation in New Farm over the next ten years (see table 13 in particular).

Table 12: Social security dependant family with some employment

SLA	2001	2004	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
New Farm	23	27	30	36	37	38	36	30
Newstead	9	12	16	21	22	22	20	17
INES	43	56	63	75	77	78	71	59

Source: National Institute of Economics and Industry Research (NIEIR) 2005, Brisbane Infrastructure Forecasting Project 2001-2031, Trend: Household types, workforce status, education status, car ownership and part time work share, Table 1: Social security dependant family with some employment, August 2005 (as supplied by Brisbane City Council, Urban Renewal Brisbane, September 2006)

Table 13: Social security dependant family without employment

SLA	2001	2004	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
New Farm	150	196	198	175	174	155	120	117
Newstead	53	130	185	295	279	249	232	215
INES	272	491	568	702	693	687	620	585

Source: National Institute of Economics and Industry Research (NIEIR) 2005, Brisbane Infrastructure Forecasting Project 2001-2031, Trend: Household types, workforce status, education status, car ownership and part time work share, Table 2: Social security dependant family without employment, August 2005 (as supplied by Brisbane City Council, Urban Renewal Brisbane, September 2006)

2.4 Housing

Affordable housing has been decreasing for some time in New Farm and surrounding suburbs. In New Farm, by 2001, separate houses comprised 20.1% of housing types, about one third of the Brisbane average. Flats/units comprised 74.3% of housing types, nearly five times the Brisbane average. Between 1996-2001, separate houses as a proportion of New Farm's dwelling stock decreased from 23.3% to 20.1%. During the same period the proportion of attached dwellings/townhouses decreased from 6.34% to 4.3%. The proportion of flats/units increased by 6.7%, to 74.3% of housing stock. Between 1996 and 2001, the number of low cost rental units in New Farm decreased substantially (see table 14 below).
Housing Affordability

Up until the mid-1980's the Inner North Eastern suburbs of Brisbane were acknowledged as a significant provider of affordable housing for the city. The area's proximity to derelict wharfs and industrial precincts allowed housing to remain cheap for people on low incomes such as the unemployed, students and migrant communities. This changed in the 1990's with the establishment of Brisbane's focus on 'urban renewal' projects to capitalise on the area's proximity to the CBD.

Table 14: Supply of Low Cost Rental Housing, New Farm, 1996-2001

No of low cost rental units (1 bedroom)			No of low cost rental units (2 bedroom)		
1996	2001	Change (+/-)	1996	2001	Change (+/-)
427 (1)	247 (1)	-180	165 (6)	98 (12)	-67

Source: *The Policy Practice (2005), Affordable Housing – Brisbane's Story: A report on housing affordability indicators in Brisbane for the Brisbane City Council, Prepared by The Policy Practice, October 2005 (working data)* Note: This data excludes public housing.

New Farm is a reasonably affluent community, and one in which the processes of inner city gentrification have increased the visibility of wealth, particularly over the past decade. This can be seen in the rapid rise in property values as compared to other areas of urban renewal (see Table 15 below).

Table 15: Median sale prices for residential dwelling units

Year	New Farm	Remainder of Urban Renewal area
1995	\$180,000	\$167,000
1996	215,000	184,000
1997	232,000	190,500
1998	237,000	181,000
1999	262,000	195,000
2000	211,000	223,000
2001	275,000	262,000
2002	320,000	270,000
2003	470,000	363,000
2004	557,000	360,000
2005	555,000	369,000

Source: PRD nationwide research as cited in Brisbane City Council (2006), Investment Indicator Report: New Farm, July 2006, Prepared by Urban Renewal Task Force, p.8

This rapid rate of change in terms of property value was paralleled in terms of new residential construction.. Between 1991 and 2006, 2623 residential dwelling units were approved in New Farm, with 8057 residential unit approvals in the remainder of the Urban Renewal Area¹¹. Detailed data for the period 1991-2002 is shown below in table 16. Thus the socioeconomic mix within the community changed rapidly over a relatively short period of time.

Table 16: Number of residential dwelling units constructed

Year	New Farm	Remainder of Urban Renewal area
1992	30	12
1993	55	17
1994	81	27
1995	132	578
1996	123	186
1997	1126	486
1998	131	566
1999	242	842
2000	483	826
2001	101	540
2002	111	846
Total	1615	4926

Source: Brisbane City Council (2006), Investment Indicator Report: New Farm, July 2006, Prepared by Urban Renewal Task Force, p.8.

2.5 Conclusion

New Farm and Newstead have seen substantial shifts in demography over the past twenty years. The changing socio-economic profile is reflected in rapidly increasing house prices and a shift to professional and managerial residents. Of particular importance to this study is the way in which assumptions regarding population and demography inform urban planning. The over-riding theme of population projections used in social planning for New Farm has been an estimation of numbers of children as either static or declining. The Urban Renewal process was most active during a temporary 'dip' in childhood

¹¹ Brisbane City Council (2006), Investment Indicator Report: New Farm, July 2006, Prepared by Urban Renewal Task Force, p.1

population assessments. Anecdotal evidence from New Farm suggests that some of the planning assumptions made may turn out to be erroneous. Whilst the investment in high density apartments continues to be predominantly marketed toward childless households, there seems to be an increasing preparedness to raise children in inner city environments, including apartments rather than the traditional house and garden arrangement. Moreover young adults moving into apartments in the area without children may decide to 'stay on' despite moving into a 'parent phase' of their life. The effect of an aging population and rising birth rates in Queensland may also have the effect of enhancing intergenerational use of space. We need to factor children of various ages into not out of our cities.

3 A Day in the Life of a Child On James Street, New Farm

The following narrative draws on the field interviews and observations undertaken. The material selected highlights themes from the lived experience as told to us. A fine grained approach to appreciating the social dimensions of people's lives is critical to city and suburban planning.

The day starts early for some children.

Secure in their strollers their dads or mums push them as they walk the suburb's bikeways in the early morning sun.

I've made some good friends pushing Isaac on those early morning runs. There are now 4 dads who run (with their kids) every Friday morning.

I really enjoy our early morning walks. As a dad I find it's a time to connect with the kids in a low-key chatty way. Often it is the only time I get to spend with them because by the time I get home from work they are often in bed. We go to the bakery and newsagent then back home via the park. Mum gets to sleep in. The walk seems to calm everyone down before the crazy work/childcare exodus commences.

The energy of the suburb builds as the residents exit the suburb to attend school/work/childcare. As traffic builds along James Street, delays and frustrations result.

Ah you don't even go on those major roads out of the peninsular between 7.30 and 9am – the traffic is a nightmare and it all happens again between 2- 7pm.

I take the ferry to work – takes longer and I have to walk but I get there on time and its so pleasant. My wife drives Nattie to childcare in Spring Hill. She just hates the congestion- I bet that child hears some juicy swear words during that drive.

High school and tertiary students wait for buses and ferries to take them to school.

If you want to see young people go to the Merthyr Rd bus stop between 7-8am and you'll see hundreds of them their way to the different high schools.

The catchment high school is Kelvin Grove but there isn't a direct bus to the school from New Farm so students have to change buses in the City.

Jon (yr 8 Kelvin Grove College) normally walks 10 minutes to catch the bus from Merthyr Rd into the City where he changes buses for Kelvin Grove. The journey takes him about 50minutes. If he misses the connection bus (because of traffic or he's off day dreaming) then he has to wait ages or walk to a different bus stop to catch a bus that will get him to school. Big responsibility for a 12 year old. I don't understand why there isn't a direct bus – at least past the hospital.

April is sitting for the entry exam for State High. Its not our catchment school but there is a direct bus from New Farm to State High.

I work at the hospital and study part time at Kelvin Grove. Lilly my 2 year old attends day care in Herston. We have to catch buses and walk - it's an epic and time consuming. I can't understand why there isn't a direct bus to the hospital and Uni.

As the exodus of high school students happens primary aged children begin negotiating the streets of New Farm en route to the local primary schools. Some children walk to school.



My children walk to and from school. In the early years I walked with them but now they go off themselves. School friends along the way join them. The kids have a tradition when they come to the New Farm sign on James Street – they go around it on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and on Tuesday and Thursday they go under the sign.

Ellie the Lollipop Lady, knows every kid by name who crosses the road with her – if a child does not turn up she will always enquire as to their whereabouts. I find it comforting that someone is looking out for my child.



The walking bus program is a great initiative but this week only my child and the coordinator's child participated.

More and more children are driven to school.

My oldest child walked to primary school but not the 2 younger ones. When we first started at the school, traffic was not an issue along James Street. Now traffic is so fast and unpredictable that I don't feel it safe for the children to walk.

I remember growing up in New Farm and the older Italians papas used to sit out in the sun and say hello to the kids as they walked by. As the old Italians die or sell their house new owners renovate and put the deck area facing the back and not the street – gone is the informal surveillance. So for peace of mind I drive my two to school and home again.

I feel guilty that we only live down the road but I drive my child to school. With both of us (parents) working it's just not practical for them to walk. It is easier and more efficient for me to drop James off on route to work. He goes to after school care and its 6pm before I pick him up so walking home is not an option.

It's a catch 22. People drive their kids to school because they feel it is too unsafe for them to walk or may be the parents are too rushed. But the more parents drive children to school the greater the traffic around the school making it more dangerous for children and frustrating for parents.

Some primary school children don't go to school in New Farm and some with particular needs can't go to school in New Farm.

Ryan is 12 years old and has developmental delays. In the past he would have gone to school at New Farm Special School. Now a taxi picks him up each day and he goes to Red Hill Special School.

Some children come from outside the area to go to New Farm.

My husband and I split up and neither of us could afford to stay in New Farm. We kept Mathew at New Farm School because it is such a great school. I drop them off on my way to work.

Mid morning what are the babies and Toddlers doing?

Rebecca (2) starts her day with a drive to Lady Gowrie Child Care Centres at Spring Hill. Hazel, her mum knows that the Centre is in the opposite direction to her work and by having to negotiate peak hour traffic she will add 50 minutes to her trip but all her friends send their children there so it must be the best.

Nola has just dropped off Hamish (6years) at school and now she is meeting up with a couple of her friends for a Coffee at Harvey's Café on James Street.

I wouldn't say the place is child friendly by design (they don't even have a highchair). But the café opens up onto a grass little courtyard with a (now empty) fountain so it is a Godsend to us mums. We can sit have our coffee and the toddlers can play happily on the fountain and rumble on the grass - relax.

Mary was meeting Nola and the others at Harveys but after 20 minutes of driving around looking for a car park she gives in and goes home.



Joanne pushes her little one on the swings while the other climbs on the equipment at New Farm Park.

I feel lucky that I can come to New Farm Park. I was a victim of domestic violence and New Farm Neighbourhood Centre and Brisbane Youth Service were a great support. They found the twins and I emergency accommodation in a unit in the once dodgy (now trendy) end of James Street. I left with nothing but someone gave me an old stroller which I used to walk Brandon and Gabby up to the park every day and we would just spend hours running around, going to the Library, talking to a counsellor at the Neighbourhood Centre. Now I have resettled in Mitchelton but every week I make the trip into New Farm and go to play group and give the kids a play in the park.

Sally gets a quick "gallery" buzz from popping into a local art gallery

There are so many galleries in New Farm. Most are kid friendly.



Mary, Rachael, Eleesa (and their combined 5 toddlers) are meeting at New Farm Park for the mums to have chat and the kids to play.

We are all new to Brisbane. I (Eleesa) meet Rachael at the library's Friday children's reading group. We so realised that we were in a similar situation – transferred from Sydney, new babies, no family, living in an apartment. So we just decided that once a week we would meet up and have our own mini play group. Gradually we've extended with more parents coming –we've become really good friends. I know these friendships have made me happier about being in a new place /away from family and so that rubs off on the kids.

Jean is a Nanny caring for Francis and Noah while their mum runs her business from the home office. On Wednesday and Fridays their cousins join the children while their mum works in the City. Today Jean and the children are walking down to the James Street Market. They will stop off for a milkshake and then buy some bread and salad for mum's lunch. Jean checks the notices at the cinema – if there was good children's movie on she might take the kids for a treat.

More and more of my friends are employing Nannies . Having in home care allows parents like me the opportunity to keep working and know that my children are not missing out on the simple things that a home and community environment provides – they go to the park, hang out washing, have an ice cream at the shops. The kids are happy at home, they know their neighbourhood and I'm there if needed.

Nannies are great until they get sick then trying to organise a back up plan is a nightmare. Try balancing work and caring for the kids – who, because they have a nanny, are used to one-on-one attention – in that situation work just goes out the window.

George (1) is enjoying his walk with Grandad. George's mum and dad work in the City and three times a week he stays at his grandparents Cutters Landing unit. There isn't much room to play in the unit and grandma is always worried George will fall off the balcony so Grandad and George spend a lot of time playing in the park and walking along the river and catching the city cat into the City.

When we moved in here we thought we were over our child rearing days but it just makes sense that we have George. Having a child in toe is a great way to strike up a conversation with people in a place where people pretty much are suspicious of each other. Only the other day my wife ventured into the children's reading group at the Library and struck up a conversation with another woman who cares for her grandson twice a week. Happens she is one of our neighbours so we are going to get the kids together and maybe go to the park for a play – give George a friend to play with and its one way for us to get to know our neighbours.

Lunch bell rings at the primary school and the children come out to play.

The increase number of students and the shirking grounds (due to building works) means that the play areas are congested. To counter this the play areas are rotated throughout the day so that all the children can have a turn running on the oval.

The sad reality is that many of our children are raised in houses with little or no green play areas. For many the school oval and a game of soccer on the weekend are the only opportunities they will have to run around on grass.

After lunch the school choir practices the Chinese language song they will perform at the Chinese community centre.

This school is part of the New Farm community – our children are part of the community. Over 100 years the students of this school have never shyed from making a contribution from planting trees, to building murals on Library walls; to singing to the oldies. The challenges to the school have been many but the strength of this community has kept the doors open and the tolerance flowing. The message we are giving our children is that they are part of the New Farm community; that they are important, and their efforts make New Farm a great place to live.

Maria, has just finished shopping and is standing outside the Newsagent in the Merthyr Road shops . Both she and granddaughter (Hannah 3 yrs) are tired. She wants to sit for a while and get their energy back before they walk back up James Street to home. The only public seating is inside Coles. Maria looks in but the seats are full. She can take a seat if she buys a drink or food but Maria is on a very tight budget and cannot afford to do so. So she picks up the shopping and begins the walk home – resting will have to wait.

Jane takes the opportunity, now her baby and toddler have woken from their nap to pop down to Merthya Rd shops and collect medication from the Chemist, pay bills and grab some food for dinner.

I love the Merthyr Rd shops because every time I come here I meet someone I know. Even if you don't know anyone some crazy fruit cake will strike up a conversation.

In terms of "child friendly" it is not! The car park is full of hidden dangers for children – my biggest fear is the little one running out into the car park. Then there is the courtyard full of coffee shop tables, which are great if you are going to have coffee with a friend but a nightmare with a 3 year old determined to pull everything over. There's nowhere just to sit unless you are buying something and no where for the kids to be kids so you have to watch them like hawks.

Margaret and Josh (12 months) are waiting for the City Cat Ferry to take them to the City where they will do their shopping.

If I need Department store things I go to the City. I drive to Carindale or Indooroopilly if I need to get bigger items. Mind you a Target in Newstead would be great for convenience.

I am a single mum. I don't have a car. I don't have cash to spare. I can't afford to buy clothes or presents and sometimes food in New Farm anymore. When I need to do that I walk to the valley get on a train to Toombul and go shopping. You should try combining public transport, a child, stroller, and shopping – its not fun for any of us. Still it's cheaper.

The final school bell rings and school finishes for the day.

You have to get to the school about 20 minutes before school's out if you want a park. It's hectic in the afternoon but I think the morning is worse.

Ellie the lollipop lady guides the children across the James Street Crossing and as she does she asks how their day has been and tells them she looks forward to seeing them tomorrow.

I drive the children to school but they walk home. On hot days the kids detour past Mrs Remo's place because they know she will be out watering her garden and she will spray them with the hose as they go past. One day last summer the kids found Mrs Remo collapsed on her driveway and they were able to raise the alarm. My kids are experiencing community.

Frankie (8) joins his friends at after school care. His mum will pick him up after work about 5.30pm.

One night I got caught in traffic and I thought I wouldn't be able to get back by the 6pm after school care closing time. I was frantic. I had a really bad day and was tired and uptight – being late was not only embarrassing but frustrating. I was so cranky that poor Frankie only had to look sideways and I'd yell at him. I was letting my frustration out on the poor kid.

I worked it out one day – I think Joey spends more time at before and after school care than with me. There is no option – I have to work so we can afford to live in New Farm.

Peter (15) and sister Catherine(16) meet their dad for coffee at James Street before heading off home.

Since their mother and I spilt up its become a tradition that and the kids and I meet twice a week at the James Street Market for/milkshake and touch base. I come from work and they come from school. At first it was a novelty but now the kids would not have it any other way.

Children are involved in many “out of school” structured activities located in and out of New Farm.

Laura (8) discovered circus skills at the powerhouse last school holidays now we've booked her in once a week for a term of coaching.

Toby's (8) weekly play. Monday – After school care followed by a normally frantic drive to Hamilton for piano lessons at 5pm. Tuesday - After school care and then soccer practice. Wednesday - After school and swimming classes at school. Thursdays – maths tutoring. Friday - karate at PCYC. Saturday – soccer. Sunday is a rest day. We tend to sleep in – walk down to the Merthyr Rd shops and have brunch. While we read the papers, Toby plays his Gameboy. He doesn't have many friends in New Farm so I guess he spends most of this time with us or amusing himself.

Claire (12) goes to Gymnastics at Girls Grammar this afternoon. I pick Mathew up from school at Terrace take him to Karate at PCYC, Valley for 5pm. Go back pick up Claire at 6.30 and then Mathew 7pm. Home for dinner, homework and bed.

This afternoon I'll drive Mia (5) to dance lessons in Kenmore. It's the best dance studio in Brisbane so I don't mind the commute.

Hamilton (6) has a private computer tutor who comes to our house for 2 hours each week.

Jon is lonely at home in the afternoon. All his friends are off doing swimming, or karate or piano or in after school and we just can't afford to do that so he's got no one to play with.

Not all activities cost lots of money or involve travel.

After school we walk down to the park for a play. It's a nice way for them to let off steam and for me to meet up with other parents.

Often times we'll just go to the Powerhouse and the kids play on the 'Flood' sign and George and I have coffee.

The other day the ring road around New Farm Park was closed to cars. After the workman left the place was taken over by kids on bikes. It was amazing and so much fun.

With the increase in traffic on the roads; the need for cars to park on bike ways and the increasing competition for space on the bikeways by the walkers and commuter bikers – it's hard for little kids to get a clear and safe run on their bikes.



The best place for kids is the Dog Off Leash Area. We don't have room for a pet but Hamish just loves dogs.

So the off leash area is great. He can run around and entertain the dogs and I talk to people.

Many of the older residents describe a “carefree New Farm” when their children were young and are sad that the suburb and the “world” has changed so much that their grandchildren can not experience the same.

Some children have such structured lives I wonder when they find time to stop and I wonder how the parents pay for it all.

I remember my kids leading a “huckleberry fin” existence – on their bikes racing down the hill and jumping into the river; roaming the industry sites and finding hidden treasures (always bringing home some junk or stray animal); getting into mischief with no eyes prying to condemn them. Now there is nowhere to hide.

Last month my boys went down to Teneriffe Park for an “explore” well next thing we know we had people ringing up asking if we knew the boys were not supervised. Great there is community surveillance but how do the boys learn independence? How are my boys to experience safe risk taking?

Dinner time in New Farm. What are people doing?

Tonight Christopher’s family is going out to dinner at the local Thai Restaurant. Zac’s family is going over to their friend’s house for dinner. Renee’s family is having take away sushi. Stevie’s dad dishes up sausage and mash potatoes.

We go out as a family once a week – there are some cheap and different restaurants around and most welcome children.

The cost is too much for my family so we tend not to go out for dinner – maybe an ice-cream as a treat.

We don’t need McDonalds here because we have so many quick and good alternatives – my kids love sushi.



If we go to friends for dinner the children know I expect “restaurant behaviour” people are amazing about how well they behaviour.

For the children of New Farm slumber awaits. The curtain is falling on Play at the Powerhouse; The lights of the soccer club in New Farm Park are out and the homeless are congregating in the shadows. A childless crowd have taken over Harvey’s giving the fountain outside a rest from climbing children. Slumber (hopefully) against the hum of the city until the early morning when walkers and the strollers reclaim the bikeways and kick start another day in James Street.

4. A Child Friendly Community?

This section outlines various physical and social dimensions of the case study environment and the extent to which these are meeting these needs of children. The conclusion drawn is that New Farm is child-

friendly in a range of respects though planning and development has tended to assume existing resources are adequate and therefore has not added any new amenities. Rather New Farm is largely trading off child friendly and community identity features developed prior to the urban renewal process. A theme of amenity largely mediated through parent and adult consumption appears to underpin more recent developments. The adjoining Newstead area will be the site of substantial population growth in coming years. The lack of pre-existing infrastructure for meeting the needs of children and community necessitates explicit consideration. The capacity of adjoining New Farm to provide the additional educational and social infrastructure likely to flow from the population increase in Newstead does not exist.

There has been a long standing tension in the theorization of urban space concerning the conceptualization of 'neighbourhood'. In this case study of New Farm, we acknowledge then that in describing the particularities of this space, that neither the problems we identify nor the potential solutions to a more child friendly New Farm are all located within local community characteristics. However many issues are about place, and the extent to which place strongly resonated with the people we spoke to suggests that place does matter. We also acknowledge Ziller's (2004) critique of urban planning's frequent assumption that community and place are the same thing, lending unwarranted credibility to romanticized notions of 'traditional friendly neighbourhoods'. However it is important not to let the complexities of competing communities of interest spread far and wide geographically, dissolve interest in localised planning and engagement. This is particularly true for children and young people. The analysis of New Farm in terms of child friendliness follows under the headings of:

- Institutional and governance arrangements
- Social infrastructure and services
- Physical infrastructure and layout, and
- Social and economic structure.

4.1 Institutional and Governance Arrangements

A complex of institutional and governance arrangements influence the lived experience of children. These may range from ones which institutionally are relatively distant to them but are none-the-less powerful, such as national economic and social policies in areas such as child-care and federal education funding. Conversely some arrangements are highly localised, may apply to children in particular cohorts, and have varying levels of influence of child friendliness.

In this case study the major analysis effort was locally oriented- that is at how planning, development and management of the New Farm area has conditioned what has happened and to some extent what will happen. It will be suggested that there is a legitimate role for participation of a suite of agencies in the development of governance arrangements that better serve the interests of children.

At the Queensland State Government level, various institutions and policies have particular relevance. These include the role of the Department of Communities (Stronger Communities program, Queensland Youth Charter), the role of the Commission for Children and Young People, the legislation that conditions how planning and development occurs in the state (Integrated Planning Act), SE Qld Regional Plan 2026, and policies related to the policing of public spaces.

Brisbane City Council is currently leading a comprehensive Neighbourhood Planning Program¹² which is responding to the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2026 and the Brisbane 2010-2026 refresh of the strategic vision of the city.

The SE Qld Regional Plan 2026 outlines a number of strategic policy issues aimed at achieving sustainable development and a compact urban form. The plan establishes a set of clear dwelling targets for all local government areas in the region. In 2005, Council commenced investigating a 'preferred CityShape' to set the future urban form of the city. By July 2007, each local government authority is required to have developed a Local Growth Management Strategy, which demonstrates how these dwelling targets and policy directions can be achieved and/or exceeded.

¹² Brisbane City Council (2006), What is Neighbourhood Planning?
http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/BCC:BASE::pc=PC_1935

Council's Brisbane City Plan 2000 continues to guide and regulate development on a day-to-day basis, and may need to be reviewed to meet the outcomes of the Local Growth Management Strategy and the individual Neighbourhood Plans. Council's vision for the future of the city is outlined in the Living and Brisbane 2010 policy documents. This vision provides Council's strategic focus as well as setting parameters for its day-to-day operations. The vision consists of a number of themes, one of which focuses upon supporting and developing 'strong communities'. That is, the notion of community which are supported by concepts of social capital, social cohesion and inclusion, social sustainability, community and individual well being.

Council also has a number of city-wide policies and strategies which have implications for children and young people including the Youth Strategy, the Indigenous Strategy and various sport and recreation strategies. Council has been active in the area of public space management through various public space initiatives such as partnering in the Young people and Major Centres program, the 'Out and About' and Myer Centre Youth Protocol projects, the development of Public Space Liaison Officers, and more recently the development of Public Space Guidelines as part of the CBD Master Plan.

Council is currently considering its role in contributing to 'stronger communities' in accordance with four key themes/goals¹³:

1. Creating of a safe, welcoming and healthy environment
2. Providing and promoting opportunities to share spaces and activities
3. Facilitating the creation and enhancement of pathways to goods, services and networks
4. Supporting opportunities for community engagement and building resilience

These Council processes have provided some opportunities for children and young people to be involved in visioning and planning, examples being students from some Brisbane schools contributing to the CityShape and Neighbourhood Planning processes¹⁴ and the presentation by a group of young people of their vision for the city to the Lord Mayor and Councillors in City Hall in September 2006¹⁵

Urban Renewal Shapes New Farm and the INES

A vital context for children living in or visiting the New Farm area is the wave of urban renewal that has driven planning and development since the early 1990's. From 1991-1996 as part of the Building Better Cities Program there were some 200 developments (residential, commercial and mixed-use developments) valued at \$600M with ongoing projected investment potential of \$4Bill over 15 years. The objectives of the Building Better Cities Program centered around economic growth and micro-economic reform, improving social justice, institutional reform, ecologically sustainable development, improved urban environments and more liveable cities. Specifically the program sought to revitalise the inner north eastern suburbs as a pilot for revitalising other inner city areas of Brisbane through encouraging population and employment growth in the inner city as an alternative to urban sprawl (achieve 30,000 pop over by 2011), improving employment opportunities, access to services and facilities and housing choice in the area, and improving coordination between three level of government and the private sector so as to increase the private sector's participation in development. The outcomes sought were increased housing and population densities through new development, mixed use development, the conversion of industrial land, and the redevelopment of derelict sites, increased employment, enhanced public transport (Hail and Ride to New Farm and Teneriffe 1995, ferry service to universities, bikeways, and disability access strategy), as well as the maintenance of a level of affordable housing (Urban Renewal Housing Strategy, BCC and the Affordable Housing Strategy for the INES, Queensland Government, boarding house retention through the Boarding House program) (URTF Sept 1996, p.38-41).

Brisbane's urban renewal program has demonstrated the benefits of urban consolidation and will be a blueprint for revitalising other areas of the inner city in the future (URTF Sept 1996, p.3).

¹³ Brisbane City Council (2006) Strong Communities - developing a strategic policy framework: A discussion paper for Divisional Management Team, City Life Program, May 2006 (internal working document)

¹⁴ Brisbane City Council (2006) Neighbourhood Planning – kid's area
http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/BCC:BASE:695013005:pc=PC_2165

¹⁵ Brisbane City Council (2006) Visible Ink – 2026 Reports (date last retrieved 29 September 2006 from <http://www.visible-ink.org/default.aspx?TabID=190>)

This case study has drawn on several documents to try to understand how the changes that occurred during the past 15 years have considered and impacted on children. In some ways this allows for assessment of where children were located in renewal thinking and how well the needs of children may have been addressed during this period. When analysed in conjunction with our own investigations this gives us the capacity to draw at least some tentative conclusions.

A review of the Urban Renewal Community Participation Program (Urban Renewal Community Participation Team 1992, p.9) found entrenched barriers to the involvement of some players. The Team identified that the New Farm community was very diverse and that there were some individuals, communities and other stakeholders who weren't involved in the urban renewal process. School children (preschool, primary and high school), scouts, parents with young children, Brisbane Youth Service, young unemployed, and, singles with kids were all identified as 'missing'¹⁶.

Various small scale projects were undertaken in an effort to involve children and young people. With the Holy Spirit School Project students visited the Urban Renewal Shopfront in Brunswick St weekly.

They developed posters and models exploring re-uses of the New Farm Powerhouse. ... The students also made postcards of their ideas about the creation of an urban village (Engwicht et al 1992 p.20).

Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) undertook a photographic project to allow young homeless people to take photos and slides to record places of importance to them (ibid p.20). BYS also mounted a mural for 2 months on a Brunswick St corner illustrating the theme of home (Telling Tales, 1992). There was however no proactive involvement of children in social mapping undertaken as part of the urban renewal process.

The New Farm and Teneriffe Hill Social Plan of 1994 stated its purposes as to provide social planning input into the planning process for the areas of New Farm and Teneriffe Hill, to provide information on social needs and priorities in the local community, and to co-ordinate the delivery of community facilities and services in the area. It had a steering group of 43 local residents as well as the URTF, relevant Commonwealth, Queensland and Brisbane City Council Departments, as well as New Farm Neighbourhood Centre and Caxton Legal Centre Inc. Valued features of New Farm identified included good walkability, good quality physical environment and good quality social environment (seeing others when you were out, seeing different people on the street, 'village atmosphere', local news gleaned at corner shops, affordable and rental accommodation and its contribution to social diversity (BCC 1994, p.7). New Farm was generally considered a small, well provided for area compared with the wider metropolitan area, with some spare capacity in facilities and services due to the then decline in the inner city population. The steady projected growth of New Farm was seen to be manageable for service provision. The Plan was seen by community and human service stakeholders as addressing social justice, disadvantage and social issues and was intended to be used along side of 'statutory planning' documents and affordable housing strategy. Whilst it contained an extensive action plan it did not include agreements related to funding.

The 1994 Social Plan identified young people as a population group that needed to be planned for in terms of institutions and services. In the period since it would appear these identified needs have not been responded to. For example the 1994 Plan identified the need for direct public transport to the catchment area high school at Kelvin Grove (ref Planning Workshop 1994- URTF Social Planning background paper p.F6). In some instances key resources identified in the Plan have been lost.

In 2000, Brisbane City Council, the Commonwealth and State Governments embarked on a place management initiative¹⁷ to address a range of social and economic issues related to the city's rapid population growth, reports of an increasing gap between rich and poor, and entrenched disadvantage within population groups and local communities. In October 2000, Council established its first project in the inner city (including the suburbs of Fortitude Valley, New Farm, Teneriffe, Newstead, Bowen Hills, Spring Hill, the Central Business District and South Brisbane). The focus was to improve responses to

¹⁶ Brisbane City Council 1992?, Telling Tales: Community Responses to Change, Brisbane's Urban Renewal Project, Inner North Eastern Suburbs

¹⁷ Brisbane City Council (2002), Place Management Framework: City of Inclusive Communities – Initiatives in High Need Communities, Prepared by Social Policy Branch, May 2002

homelessness, safety and drug use through service coordination, strengthening networks and encouraging partnerships between the community, business and government sectors¹⁸. Children and young people were not included in the engagement structures developed.

The Brisbane Urban Futures was established in 2006, to provide strategic advice to BCC on planning and development. This initiative will coordinate delivery of identified projects, which focus on areas of strategic significance for the City's continued development, including urban renewal projects and the Brisbane City Centre Master Plan, the Local Growth Management Strategy, and policy for the development of multi-purpose centres and transit-oriented developments. Membership includes state government and industry representatives as well as the chairs of key bodies such as Urban Renewal Brisbane, the City Centre Task Force and the Brisbane Inner City Advisory Committee (BICAC)¹⁹.

Overall the limited recognition of children and young people during the urban renewal period has had certain characteristics:

- Involvement if it occurs tends to be in relation to a specific site (not in the development of broad planning documents) and usually after the design and establishment phase for a project or space. In other words children and young people are seen as having some limited implementation value rather than being informants to the strategy development.
- This tends to only occur in relation to child specific matters or spaces eg The Walking Bus Project.
- The focus of substantial intervention is usually when young people are seen as being, or having, a 'problem' that needs to be addressed.

There appears to be an assumption underpinning the urban renewal and associated processes that the numbers of children and young people are not large enough to warrant a response, or that a mainstream response (oriented to broader community) is sufficient. For example the 1994 plan identified youth spaces as a priority but saw Fortitude Valley as the obvious place for these to be located (now the location of a Police Citizens Youth Club and BCC's Visible Ink Space). The result is that the New Farm area now has limited amenity for, and orientation to, young people. Whilst the level of orientation to younger children is arguably higher the needs of children appear not to have been an active component of urban renewal thinking sufficient to manifest at the local level.

Currently, development in the suburbs of New Farm and Newstead is regulated and guided by the Brisbane City Plan 2000 (in accordance with the Qld Integrated Planning Act), particularly by the specific development principles and precinct intents set out in the relevant local plans, the New Farm and Teneriffe Hill Local Plan²⁰ and the Newstead and Teneriffe Waterfront Local Plan²¹. These local plans were originally adopted as 'development control plans' and gazetted in 1996 as part of the Urban Renewal initiative. They were subsequently reviewed and updated when included in the Brisbane City Plan 2000.

The **New Farm and Teneriffe Hill Local Plan**, within its limitations as a statutory planning document, has attempted to integrate and retain the 'social' objectives and values identified in the extensive social planning process undertaken in the mid-1990s. A good example of this is the inclusion of development and social planning principles for disability access and universal design, community engagement in development process, and provisions to encourage the inclusion of affordable housing.

This level of commitment to social objectives is generally not present in other local plans in the Brisbane City Plan 2000 (communication from Council officers). It is seen to 'push the boundaries' of planning practice, particularly in relation to the development assessment process.

¹⁸ Brisbane City Council (2005), Brisbane Place-based Projects: A community partnership approach to building strong communities (Progress Report) – unpublished, Prepared for Brisbane City Council, June 2005, p.15

¹⁹ Brisbane City Council (2006, Brisbane City Council Budget 2006-2007, Program 6 – Future Brisbane (Date last retrieved 29 September 2006 from http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/BCCWR/LIB179/BUDGET0607_FUTURE_BRISBANE.PDF?xml=/BCC:PDFHITXML:1035511201:svDocNum=2)

²⁰ Brisbane City Council (2000), Brisbane City Plan - New Farm and Teneriffe Hill Local Plan, Volume 1, Chapter 4: Local Plans, p.109-130 (parts as amended 1 January 2006)

²¹ Brisbane City Council (2000), Brisbane City Plan - Newstead and Teneriffe Waterfront Local Plan, Volume 1, Chapter 4: Local Plans, p.131-150

There is little explicit reference in the Plan to children, young people and families. It does however indicate that public spaces within the local area should be safe and secure, be of a high quality and serve a variety of community needs²². There are some minimum requirements for private on-site open space within all living precincts, and the Plan does highlight the potential for childrens' play areas to be considered when designing communal open space in medium density developments.

However in terms of its contribution to child friendliness it does not sufficiently recognise the emergence of New Farm's 'regional' role as place of cultural and recreation importance, and does not appreciate the role James Street has come to play as a major linking road, with the implications this has for children and safety. There is a general requirement for mixed use precincts to consider "pedestrian comfort and protection" such as awnings but little by way of other social provisions. Observations indicate that the central shopping area at Merthyr Village had little public seating.

The **Newstead and Teneriffe Waterfront Local Plan** is quite different in tone. Unlike New Farm there was no history of 'social planning process' to inform development of the area, and the perceived absence of established 'residential community'.

Specifically there is a lack of planning for children and young people's infrastructure within the Newstead Riverpark Master Plan which relies on families accessing services in New Farm (nearest and most convenient in terms of pedestrian, cycle and vehicle access) – and this was not envisaged in the New Farm and Teneriffe Hill Local Plan.

The Newstead and Teneriffe Waterfront Plan contains several statements intended to support the development of high amenity, high density residential developments where issues such as privacy take precedence over issues such as overlooking to support children's safety (Note that the ability to overlook play area's is built into Vancouver City's guidelines for family housing in high density developments since 1992). Another example, are the provisions which state that outdoor recreation areas must not create nuisance or intrude on privacy of residential neighbours (through screening etc) – again, limiting child-friendliness of these residential development.

The Newstead/ Teneriffe plan takes a precinct approach and suggests different development parameters in respect of these. Two are worthy of particular mention. The Newstead precinct has the character of an inner-city version of a master planned community or 'urban village', oriented to residential, local shopping, business and employment and act as a gateway into Fortitude Valley and parkland, waterfront tourism and recreational opportunities. The Major Parks precinct is to provide "important public open space facilities that fulfil a local, district and Citywide function. Any future development would need to demonstrate that its services a primarily public function and is compatible with existing open space and recreational uses and heritage values." (p.134)

The development codes (which guide the specifics for development proposals) support the development of child friendly uses to some degree in some of these precincts. For example the Woolstores are badged as appropriate venues for child care, club, community facilities, education purposes, indoor sport and recreation, and youth club. If included within an established building, different public notification requirements apply and the development is generally considered to be appropriate.

The local plan also tries to balance the difficulty of retaining a sufficient amount of industrial land to meet the plan's local economic and employment objectives, by limiting the range of activities able to be undertaken in these precincts. For example, indoor sport and recreation (as activities identified as a community priority in various studies) has been identified as 'generally inappropriate' in the plan's industrial areas. These areas often contain the larger land parcels and buildings suitable for use/re-development for indoor sports.

In the Lamington Precinct (the location of the high quality Cutter's Landing residential development, uses such as community facilities, medical centres, education purposes, youth club are deterred by requiring impact assessment – a higher level of assessment and public notification.

²² Brisbane City Council (2000), Brisbane City Plan - New Farm and Teneriffe Hill Local Plan, Volume 1, Chapter 4: Local Plans, p.111

Overall the plans tend to implicitly rely on children and young people's needs being met within existing residential dwellings (indoors and backyards), within individual parks and facilities (which fall under Council's management regimes rather than planning provisions), and through existing institutions and services eg schools. In hindsight opportunities have been lost through the lack of integration between the two local plans, leading to a lack of recognition of the inter-relationship between these two areas. Specific areas which our investigations suggest have unrecognised interdependencies include traffic impacts, different expectations of open space access, differing levels of access to community services and facilities, differing access to retail and recreational facilities, and a limited understanding of how families and children may increasingly be present as the housing market matures.

Implications

Currently children and young people are not sufficiently recognised in local area planning- this could be said in respect of social planning generally which receives little attention unless there is a strong history of community identity and organising. There is a need to recognise greater interaction between local areas of the inner city so as to better address facility stress and cross area use of facilities. Children and young people have at various times been involved in the visioning aspects of planning but rarely in the problem solving of how to make such visions translate to the local level. There has also been some sporadic involvement at a specific and pre-conceived project level. The missing level of involvement is that of being considered a part of a local community in the development of local directions and strategies.

At a state and federal level there is a need for agencies which deal with the social dynamics and issues to play a more active role in considering what child friendly urban environments might look like in terms of their mandate. Better understanding of the interface between childrens lives and urban city life are required together with mechanisms that allow for a more holistic strategic approach to local planning and development. The challenges this poses in the current environment are both inviting and considerable.

4.3 Social Infrastructure and Services

Child care and play groups

Child care is provided by both private and not-for-profit providers. There is one child care centre in New Farm (64 places Source: Child Care Consulting (2006), Review of Inner CBD Child Care Services April 2006, Private correspondence with Kerry Simko, Child Care Consulting) and none in Newstead.

Kindergarten programs are provided by child care centres. Whilst there is a privately operated child care centre in New Farm, Lady Gowrie at Spring Hill was indicated as the kindergarten of choice according to local residents interviewed. The need expressed by parents in this study was for a local community based kindergarten catering for 3-4 year olds, within walking distance of New Farm homes, as the next stage on from playgroup.

Family day care is provided through one inner northern suburb oriented service based in New Farm. In 1994 it had 6 local carers providing care for up to 24 children in New Farm. By 2006 this service was unable to recruit any local carers, the closest now located at Albion. This reflects a trend identified as occurring in other communities where women in more affluent suburbs are not able to be recruited as family day care carers²³.

In-home care by 'nannies' has emerged as another option of child care being taken up by local families. Nannies provide a flexible care for children, ferrying to activities, school pick-ups, homework supervision, and family representation at school events. Nannies were reported as making community interaction possible for some children on a day-to-day basis eg reading at the Library, play at the playground, going to the local shops. Nannies are an expensive option, and it was evident that some families 'share' nannies to manage costs.

Informal care is increasingly being provided by grandparents in the local area as evidenced by their regular participation in the New Farm library-reading program, and presence together at local shops.

²³ Child Care Consulting (2006), Review of Inner CBD Child Care Services April 2006, Private correspondence with Kerry Simko, Child Care Consulting

Playgroups are the 'first point of call' for new parents (both mothers and fathers) and for newly arrived families to New Farm. Playgroups provide a safe place for children to mix with each other and for parents to network and share child rearing issues. Play group patronage in New Farm has changed over the last 10 years, with increasing affluence in the community. Evidence was found of groups of parents coming together via invitation only 'a couple of us get together' informal playgroups. The New Farm Playgroup, which operates from New Farm Neighbourhood Centre, has groups catering for 0-2 years (Monday) and 0-4 years (Wednesday). The nearest Indigenous play group is located in Highgate Hill (south of the Brisbane River)

Brisbane Youth Service provides a **young parent's playgroup** based out of New Farm Neighbourhood Centre which is a region wide service for young parents.

Implications

Child care and playgroups are seen as important basic services for parents and children, and act as conduits to community connection particularly those who are newly arrived to the community. There appears to be fewer local services than needed. In a community with a high proportion of working women and two income families opportunities to make local connections and friendships tend to be augmented through these networks. The expected growth in numbers of resident children and working populations of parents in Newstead will need some consideration in terms of future early childhood services.

Education

New Farm has two primary schools (one State and one Catholic) whilst Newstead has none. There is no secondary school in the area. The following tables indicate numbers of resident age groups of children attending school. These figures reflect the same mid 1990's dip in numbers of children evident in population statistics cited earlier.

Table 17: Summary of Educational Attendance 1991 – 2001

Statistical Local Area (SLA)	1991			1996			2001		
	<i>preschool</i>	<i>primary</i>	<i>secondary</i>	<i>preschool</i>	<i>primary</i>	<i>secondary</i>	<i>preschool</i>	<i>primary</i>	<i>secondary</i>
New Farm	47	264	201	27	227	162	39	219	155
Newstead	3	38	24	14	35	35	18	66	41
Inner North East Suburbs	59	354	309	49	301	276	76	363	343

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2003) 2001 Census of Population and Housing: Time Series 1991-2001, Table 10 Type of educational institution attending (full-time/part-time) by sex

Table 18: Past and Projected Participation Pre-school 2001-2031

SLA	2001	2004	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
New Farm	39	48	54	58	55	50	42	36
Newstead	18	23	27	38	42	41	44	44
Inner North East Suburbs	76	97	116	135	136	133	126	119

Source: National Institute of Economics and Industry Research (NIEIR) 2005, Brisbane Infrastructure Forecasting Project 2001-2031, Trend: Household types, workforce status, education status, car ownership and part time work share, Table 18: Participation pre-school, August 2005 (as supplied by Brisbane City Council, Urban Renewal Brisbane, September 2006)

Table 19: Past and Projected Participation Primary School

SLA	2001	2004	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
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New Farm	219	247	267	299	298	288	252	226
Newstead	66	141	234	315	324	298	298	283
Inner North East Suburbs	363	490	625	760	772	746	708	662

Source: National Institute of Economics and Industry Research (NIEIR) 2005, Brisbane Infrastructure Forecasting Project 2001-2031, Trend: Household types, workforce status, education status, car ownership and part time work share, Table 19: Participation primary school, August 2005 (as supplied by Brisbane City Council, Urban Renewal Brisbane, September 2006)

Table 20: Past and Projected Participation Secondary School

SLA	2001	2004	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
New Farm	155	169	178	205	209	205	184	168
Newstead	41	64	82	128	151	159	180	192
Inner North East Suburbs	343	418	474	606	637	668	657	632

Source: National Institute of Economics and Industry Research (NIEIR) 2005, Brisbane Infrastructure Forecasting Project 2001-2031, Trend: Household types, workforce status, education status, car ownership and part time work share, Table 20: Participation secondary school, August 2005 (as supplied by Brisbane City Council, Urban Renewal Brisbane, September 2006)

The above tables indicate continued growth in secondary school age participation with growth in Newstead expected to continue for the long term. Existing longer term projections are likely to need revision upwards.

The 1994 New Farm/Teneriffe Hill Social Plan reported that the two primary schools, New Farm State School and Holy Spirit Catholic Primary, were in decline and on the verge of closure. In 2006 both are 'capped', have strong local reputations as small, intimate schools and have waiting lists. The primary schools are seen by parents as safe, important and welcoming.

I didn't feel like I belonged in New Farm until my kids started school. This is where the normal people hang-out (local parent, New Farm).

Latest enrolment figures for the two primary schools are:

- 311 for New Farm State School grades 0-7²⁴ which includes 40 pre-school students (as at February 2006)
- 190 for Holy Spirit Primary School grades 0-7²⁵ (as at July 2005).

Operating at capacity has also led to changes in school operations. Indicators of facility stress emerging include rotating play areas throughout the day, and the accommodation of new facilities for the introduction of the new prep year resulting in less open play space for children.

Three quarters of children going to New Farm State School come from the area with the remainder from other suburbs (unpublished data provided by the School). Anecdotal evidence suggests that many families who move out of the area, due to family breakdown or moving house choose to keep their children at New Farm schools where possible.

Both Primary schools provide outside school hours care service. Jabriu After School Service (operated at the New Farm State School) has seen numbers rise from 26 in October 2001 to 45 in 2006. The holiday program Jabiru runs has in this same period risen from an average of 15 children attending per day in 2001 to 40 per day in 2006. Jabiru indicated that less than half of the families who use of the service receive a subsidy compared to 80-90% in other Jabriu sites, reflecting the relatively higher income of families in the area.

²⁴ Education Queensland 2006, New Farm Enrolment Data (unpublished), Enrolment data by school catchment as at August 2006 (excel format:book4.xls)

²⁵ Education Queensland 2006, Schools directory search, (Date last retrieved 28 September 2006, <http://education.qld.gov.au/wcis/Centre/ViewPrintSchoolDetails.aspx?searchID=992634&searchType=SS>)

The 1994 Social Plan indicates there were 2 local special schools in the area (at New Farm and Newstead), and 1 special education support unit, together providing care for up to 150 children. Both have since closed. The policy position is that disability and other special learning environment provisions have been mainstreamed with specialist teaching and support services accessed through local primary schools. The New Farm State School has a current refurbishment to allow for wheelchair access and facilities. The nearest special school facilities are located at Red Hill and the Royal Brisbane Hospital.

Implications

Given the primary schools are already at capacity (capped) and the physical site of the state school constrains further expansion it is not obvious how expected additional demand over coming years can be met. Given the population increase projected for Newstead, this is the obvious location for a new primary school. The question that needs to be asked is will it be planned for and where would it be located?

There are no state or private secondary schools located in the New Farm/ Newstead area. In coming years the numbers of secondary students is expected to increase across the INES. The largest increase is projected for Newstead which has already seen a doubling of resident secondary students between 2001 and 2006. New Farm continues to be in the catchment for Kelvin Grove State College and the lack of direct public transport service between New Farm and Kelvin Grove was identified in the 1994 Social Plan as a priority need (p.32). Twelve years on this situation is unchanged and requires consideration (see Public Transport section below).

Public Transport

New Farm is serviced by BCC bus routes and the CityCat ferry service. The Brisbane suburban rail network has stations at Fortitude Valley and Bowen Hills.

The orientation of public transport in the New Farm area is to commuter services rather than to local use. This also provides ready access to Fortitude Valley and the Brisbane CBD for entertainment, shopping and transfer to other services. As part of the Urban Renewal process a 'Hail and Ride' bus was introduced in 1995. This no longer operates. Work place health and safety changes mean bus drivers have more limited interaction with passengers which in turn is likely to lead to less available incidental support for passengers including children.

Discussions of public transport and car usage are entwined. New Farm residents have become more car dependent over the years. In 1981, 43.3% of households in New Farm did not have a car (compared with 17.2% of Brisbane). By 1991, this had declined to 38.4% for New Farm, compared with 15.2% for Brisbane)²⁶. Between 1991-2001, the number of people travelling to work by car doubled in the Urban Renewal area. The number of people walking and/or cycling to work also increased by 100%.

Table 21: Methods of travel to work, Urban Renewal area, 1991-2001

Mode of Transport	1991		1996		2001	
	Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%
Car	1,994	52.6	2,833	58.1	4244*	57.3
Bus	726	19.1	775	15.9	1006	13.6
Walk	581	15.3	729	15.0	1218	16.4

²⁶ Brisbane City Council 1994, New Farm and Teneriffe Social Planning Study – Supporting Information (Background Papers), Prepared by Planning Workshop in association with BBC Consulting Planners, Prepared for Urban Renewal Task Force, July 1994, Background Paper B: Summary of existing demographic characteristics, Table 14: Trends in Vehicle Ownership 1981-1991 (% of households), page B12

Train	182	4.8	161	3.3	228	3.1
Taxi	88	2.3	106	2.2	115	1.5
Ferry	-	-	-	-	244	3.3
Bicycle	97	2.6	99	2.0	205	2.8
Other	125	3.3	173	3.5	148**	2.0
TOTAL	3,793	100.0	4,876	100.0	7408	100.0

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing (1991 and 1996) as cited in Brisbane City Council (nd) Urban Renewal Key Performance Indicators 1991-1999

*Of these 13.5% were passengers in a car.

** Includes Truck, Motorbike/Scooter and Other

Between 1991-2002, Brisbane City Council spent over \$2,036,679 in local area traffic management improvements in the Urban Renewal area, with over 61 traffic management works installed. A significant proportion of these works related to James Street and New Farm State School precincts.

Implications

Overall the notion that inner city living means decreased private vehicle use was not supported by residents reports during this study of increased traffic, Council's investment in traffic management and rising car ownership rates. As mentioned previously there is no public bus service from New Farm to the catchments' secondary school (Kelvin Grove State College). Given the clustering of the nearest public hospital (Royal Brisbane Hospital), a major university campus (QUT Kelvin Grove) and the Kelvin Grove Urban Village (education and arts precinct) there appears to be a good case for a direct bus service.

Health and Community Services

Simple statistical indices showing services per head of population are unlikely to reflect the lived experience of community and health services in New Farm. A recent review of community facilities (Hunter Birkys, 2006) found that the area's central location and historical development has led to a concentration of metropolitan and regional level facilities and services within the area. Many of the community facilities within the New Farm area service a wider area. For example, Community Options provides some services for clients as far north as Pine Rivers, while the Merthyr Family Centre is the base for a family day care service that extends across the north of Brisbane. Meeting rooms and venues in the area are used by agencies and groups from the CBD, Valley and other areas, and many are at or beyond capacity. Most cultural facilities within the area offer activities at a cost, and most have a city-wide catchment.

The area is well served for paths and walkways such as Riverwalk. Again, parks such as New Farm Park and Newstead Park draw users from a wide catchment rather than just the local area. There are few low-cost indoor recreation options. Sports options in the area cover a range of sports and many are relatively affordable for people on limited incomes. The area also houses a number of hostels and refuges for homeless people, people with mental health or substance abuse issues, people escaping domestic violence and frail aged people. Other data from the Hunter Birkys (2006) study include:

- Reduced number of local GPs available to service local families.
- Existing drug, alcohol and mental health services are relocating from New Farm and the Fortitude Valley due to increasing rents.
- New Farm Neighbourhood Centre has developed into a key regional resource centre, advocating for marginalised people and communities. The centre is juggling the need to re-position itself to meet the needs of the 'new' community demographics and its social justice mandate. The centre's central location and identity as a safe and inclusive space means it continues to draw from a city-wide catchment. Although, original planning foresaw the neighbourhood centre as a 'local service'.

Our study was told that:

- Parents were resigned to the fact they had to travel to access basic services. Those with limited incomes, time-poor or had limited transport options found it difficult to access services.
- Family doctors were difficult to find locally. They were often expensive (\$70 consultation), out of hours consultations (\$100+) and provided limited outside hours services – which impacts on families with young children.
- Parent's knowledge of key community facilities ie. New Farm Neighbourhood Centre, New Farm Library, is limited by the poor provision of information and their ability to navigate Brisbane suburbs.

It is really hard to get information on local services. We had to go outside New Farm for the basics – the Child Health Clinic was next to next to methadone and needle exchange (in Spring Hill) – we felt uneasy about going there (local parent, New Farm, September 2006).

Implications

The above data suggests an ongoing tension between the local and regional roles that New Farm has played for many years as well as the tension between orientation to service provision for people who are marginalised and the increasing proportion of residents and precincts that are affluent. There is clearly a gap in respect of services and spaces for local young people, and particularly young people who do not identify with the specific cultural orientation of the Powerhouse centre. No specific epidemiological portraits of mortality or morbidity were available for this report. Given the general level of affluence of New Farm, it would be surprising to find any substantial disadvantage in health status among either adults or children in the area. Nevertheless as shown above this does not mean that there are not specific areas of concern related to health (particularly appropriate, locally oriented health care) and other services such as child care and youth support.

4.4 Physical Infrastructure and Layout

Inner city areas such as this are heavily conditioned by what has occurred over many years. Street sizes and grids are inherited. There is often little available space for large new initiatives other than that which becomes available through the redevelopment of obsolete industrial or commercial areas, some of which may have aspects of heritage value. Some of the key challenges regarding physical infrastructure relate to the provision of public open space and how this relates to new developments, and the interface between residential traffic and walkability.

New Farm is home to one of Brisbane's iconic parks, on land originally used as a racecourse. It's adjacency to the Citycat ferry terminal and the Powerhouse precinct, and availability of a significant level of parking means this is a well used city resource²⁷. At weekends it can be so crowded as to dissuade people from visiting. A range of other parks and open spaces exist in the area (Wilson's Outlook, Merthyr Park, Powerhouse Dog Park) though the loss of access to open space within New Farm has been canvassed as an issue since the early 1990's.

In March 1994, a review of public open space in New Farm²⁸ found an undersupply of public open space when compared to the standard outlined in the 1978 Brisbane City Town Plan (19.2ha for 9,122 people representing a provision rate of 2.1ha/1000 people, compared with the city standard of 3.45ha/1000 people). Even when Teneriffe Park (3.04ha) was included – total provision for the urban renewal area only increased to 22.3ha (representing a rate of provision of 2.23ha/1000 people – still well below the city standard. In order to meet the standard of 3.45ha/1000 people an additional 12.2ha of public open space would be required in New Farm/Teneriffe area.

²⁷ The original racetrack now constitutes an internal circular road within the park. Our investigations revealed that the parks child friendliness would be enhanced by encouraging cycling and walking rather than internal car use.

²⁸ Brisbane City Council 1994, New Farm and Teneriffe Social Planning Study – Supporting Information (Background Papers), Prepared by Planning Workshop in association with BBC Consulting Planners, Prepared for Urban Renewal Task Force, July 1994, Background Paper H: Culture and Recreation, pages. H3-H5

Issues identified as why additional open space was not required/realistic included the proximity to regional parks in the City such as the Botanical Gardens and South Bank, the lower proportions of children requiring active open space, the opening of riverfront bikeways providing additional passive recreation opportunities, and high land values making the purchase of additional open space prohibitive.

A particular deficiency identified was the absence of local level parks in the central residential precinct of New Farm which were seen as having particular importance for older people and the very young (0-4 years). Since this time there has been an upgrading of existing parks and the Powerhouse redevelopment. The riverside has been opened up to pedestrian and cycling use with walkways gradually linking along the river. From 1994 to 1997 the city's largest ever street tree planting program saw 2000 trees planted in New Farm and Teneriffe.²⁹ An extension of New Farm Park into vacant land between Sydney and Dixon Street did not occur and is now high value residential housing (Cutters Landing).

In Newstead the largest open space is that of Teneriffe Hill. Additional open space is planned to be provided in Newstead River Park with 5ha of parkland green space including areas for active recreation (kick and play / playground equipment) and passive areas (river walk links). The heritage-listed gasometer is to include a 600m² to 1000m² community facility (expected to include internal and external spaces for day and night time use).

In 2006, issues remain the same – the area is still under provided with open space when compared to Council's revised and updated standards (4ha/1000people). In addition, the pressure on the existing spaces have increased as New Farm Park and the Brisbane River walk have established as places of 'regional' or 'metropolitan' significance as urban parkland. Very limited open space opportunities are provided within or adjacent to the schools grounds of Holy Spirit Primary and New Farm State School. Whilst young children are catered for to some extent by existing open spaces (eg the fig tree children's playground in New Farm Park and New Farm Soccer Club are superb resources) there is little active leisure provision for young people. There is a need for additional innovative responses to enhance the supply of and access to open space for passive and active recreation. This will inevitably bring with it different preferences within the residential and business communities. For example New Farm Soccer Club emerged from the study as an extremely important point of community convergence, particularly for children under 14 and their parents. The space available within New Farm Park for training and matches is limited and extension to the hours used may be necessary in time. The interface between community use of open public spaces and residents/ business could have points of tension over time and require both facilitation and leadership from local and state governments.

A 2005 report undertaken as part of the Brisbane City Centre Master Plan³⁰, canvassed a number of issues and strategies which have applicability in the New Farm area:

- development of Urban Commons to provide intensive community use and informal recreation in areas of medium to high residential development
- impact of the needs of an area's working population (especially during lunch hours, before and after work)
- provision of open space for sporting activities (not just passive activities)
- 'private' open space provision ie. Where open space is held within private ownership, should not be included in calculations of public open space (as there are often constraints on 'public access')
- Maintain the existing rate of provision, through creative strategies including road closures, use of spaces in and between buildings

The report also suggests a number of 'qualitative standards' to support the provision of urban commons and other urban open spaces:

- development of guidelines to support the management of open spaces and urban commons i.e. maintain access, diversity of use, safety, etc

²⁹ Brisbane City Council (2006), Brisbane Urban Renewal, Investment Indicator Report: New Farm, Prepared July 2006

³⁰ SGS Economics and Planning (2005), City Centre Open Space and Community Needs Assessment: Final Report, Prepared for Brisbane City Council, Prepared by SGS Economics and Planning, and Andrea Young Planning Services, December 2005, p.68-70

- each local area (SLA) to have a local park within 500m of residences, as well as children's playground, two youth spaces, a dog off-leash area, and 250m of an urban common space
- linking spaces

Implications

Maintaining good quality physical environment for children is reliant on maintaining a balanced relationship between the quality of children's individual residential 'living' environment and the shared community spaces within the neighbourhood. This relationship is based on adequate access to open space for passive and active recreation. It was apparent that new residential developments are orienting the existing open spaces and reducing the amount of internal open space they would otherwise provide. Whilst understandable in some respects the combination of higher density living and continued development of the area as one of regional significance is placing strain on some areas. Greater consideration of designing families and children into higher density inner city living is warranted.

New Farm represents a particular form of inner city gentrification based on an assumption that rising socio-economic status coupled with the rapid development of high density apartments would relieve the need to think about the needs of children in the area. Qualitative data suggest that a number of issues impact on the quality of life of children in the area. These include a lack of recreational space in the area, contests over public space in the area (eg perceived concerns about child safety given proximity to inner city public space issues such as sex workers, homeless people, drug and alcohol use) as well as cultural/commercial shifts in the shopping precincts of New Farm clearly oriented toward adults. New Farm has also taken on a regional focus, with developments oriented toward 'visitors' rather than locals. Hence whilst the iconic New Farm Park is well known across Brisbane as a child friendly destination for families, a number of local families report they frequently take their children away from New Farm on the weekend to engage in outdoor activities since the local environment becomes congested. Simple childhood activities such as riding a bicycle are seen as problematic in the local environment due to safety concerns. In this study this was particularly true of James Street.

These concerns about safety impact on the freedom of movement of children. Hence whilst the high density, small area of New Farm on the surface provides an environment conducive to children walking to school, a recent study of modes of school transport in Brisbane showed that still 50 per cent of children in New Farm were driven to school even though almost 80% live less than 1 km from the local school (Ridgewell et al, 2005:16-16). Thus the potential spatial advantages of high density living for encouraging walking, and reduce traffic can be substantially reduced due to social issues of safety.

4.5 Social and Economic Structure

Various aspects of social and economic structure have been canvassed in the Community profile section of this report.

An assessment of social exclusion in respect of children is available through NATSEM³¹ data. New Farm is ranked in Decile 9 and Newstead in Decile 10 of the child weighted social exclusion index, which indicates that over a range of social exclusion variables, residents are among the most advantaged of the Australian population. Without denying this affluence, it is important to acknowledge that such data, by definition provides a generalised portrait of a community and more finely grained observation can reveal more of the socioeconomic diversity of the community.

In many ways New Farm can be seen as a privileged urban space in which social problems are at a minimum and households generally have sufficient resources to be able to cope with any shortfalls in local services. It might therefore have been assumed that affluence over-rides other possible variables of concern related to childhood. Yet there are at least five problems with such a rapid assessment. Firstly, there is an assumption of socio-economic homogeneity in which the affluence of a community is assumed to be consistently distributed across the urban landscape. Secondly, by privileging material wellbeing, the capacity to acknowledge other aspects of wellbeing is diminished. Thirdly, the social and economic

³¹ NATSEM (2006), Poverty and disadvantage among Australian children: a spatial perspective: A paper for presentation at 29th General Conference of the International Association for Research in Income and Wealth, Joensuu, Finland, 20-26 August 2006, Ann Harding, Justine McNamara, Robert Tanton, Anne Daly and Mandy Yap, National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling

characteristics of urban space are dynamic, hence any characterizations situated in fixed points of time can become tenuous over time as social characteristics change. Fourthly, estimations of socio-economic status tend to privilege adult centred measurements and do not necessarily capture a child perspective. Finally, there is the possibility of over-emphasizing an 'island' view of parts of the city landscape, drawing on an assumption that specificity of place captures all aspects of (dis)advantage.

New Farm represents a relatively small geographical area yet a highly diverse built environment. The area has transformed from a fairly traditional dichotomy of suburban housing and light industry, to an increasing provision of high density residences often based on the refurbishment or replacement of industrial sites. Levels of population density vary considerably from street to street, and along with that the social characteristics of 'new' New Farm from 'old' New Farm. Significant pockets of working class housing whilst certainly diminishing in significance should not be assumed to have disappeared in the process of gentrification.

There can be no denying that New Farm represents an area of relatively high material well-being. However, this does not represent the entire story of the area. Social and Health Impact Assessments typically acknowledge a wider spectrum of wellbeing determinants such as lifestyle, behaviour, availability of services, community beliefs and values, aspects of the natural and built environment (Young et al, 2005:6). Moreover increasing evidence from social capital research indicates that community cohesion, sense of belonging, levels of trust and feelings of safety are very important aspects of community wellbeing and whilst these may overlap with material conditions, they can be important independent variables (Young et al, 2005:12).

Conclusion

Overall the New Farm area contains many child friendly features and is experienced as such by most who this study engaged with. There are however significant limitations to this in a number of respects and which have been cited in the above accounts. There is insufficient space here to revisit each of the factors identified earlier as characterising a child friendly urban environment other than to say that whilst broad socio-economic indicators rate highly in New Farm on a raft of more localised indicators, there is variability. Without active consideration and response it is reasonable to conclude that the child friendliness of the area will decline over time.

5 Priorities for Change

Suggestions for how to make the case study area more child friendly were canvassed in interviews and conversations with stakeholders throughout the fieldwork. Towards the end of the study a Stakeholders Workshop was held at New Farm Library. Attendees were briefed on what the study had identified and asked to develop draft strategies. These were then compared to those developed by the case study team. There was a high degree of coherence between the two sets of suggestions and a combination of these forms the greater part of what is detailed below. In the writing of this case study report further consideration has been given to possible pilots and specific initiatives that might progress a child friendly city agenda.

5.1 Legitimising and operationalising a child friendly cities agenda

Priority: Specification and endorsement of a child friendly cities agenda by governments and key stakeholders, whilst being mindful of the need for inner city areas to be friendly to people of all ages and backgrounds.

Possible project: Partnership between parties such as State Governments, Universities/ ARACY, the planning and development industry and Australian Local Government Association to develop child friendly city indicators and incorporate these into tools which assist various levels of planning and decision-making.

Priority: The surveying of the way children of various ages experience their physical and social urban environments should be incorporated into mainstream education at both primary and secondary levels.

Possible project: The Commissions for Children and Young People in NSW and Queensland may be appropriate lead agencies for the piloting of this in their respective states. Information gained could be articulated to local planning and service review and strategic development.

Priority: Establishment of an inner city network in Brisbane for the exchange of ideas about key issues in children's experience of the inner city, and how the inner city can improve it's child friendliness.

5.2 Responding to the re-childrening of New Farm and Newstead

Priority: Responding to specific identified pressures in New Farm and Newstead.

Possible project: Developing a plan for responding to the local and regional 'rechildrening' pressures on New Farm and Newstead. This should explicitly take into account the social dimensions of children's lives, the need to encourage a mix of housing types and arrangements to support increased levels of residency by families with children in the inner-city, and the interface between pedestrians, cyclists and traffic, particularly in and around James St. Brisbane City Council could be lead agency for this.

Possible project: Brisbane City Council and The Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian to host a design process for key stakeholders in respect of the Newstead River Park site. The task would be the development of an age friendly area, with specific regard given for children of various ages (including young people) and older people. The process could involve investigations, concept development, market testing (perhaps through developer focus groups), economic and social assessments.

Other complementary research could include a review and adaption of the Vancouver Guidelines for application in Australian inner cities.

5.3 Build on the community orientation available in New farm rather than have it be reduced to a diminishing asset

Community identity and spirit cannot be assumed or simply regarded as self-sustaining asset. There appears to be substantial support within New Farm to engage in community building and improvement strategies which utilise local skills.

Priority: Engaging children and young people in improving the amenity of specific spaces/ areas in the local area. New Farm local primary schools could be involved in one relevant local investigation per year in collaboration with Brisbane City Council. The local BCC library is clearly a well regarded local resource and could play an important role in displaying projects undertaken.

5.4 Incorporation of children's perspectives and children's involvement into local planning and strategy development

Priority: To create the situation where children and young people's perspectives are considered in local planning and development

Possible projects:

- Establishment of a networking group of interested agencies and residents for New Farm which could meet at the library
- Partnership between the library and a tertiary institution
- Development of a local grandparents and kids group
- Invite Murri grandmothers to use NF library
- Develop options for disabled young people
- Build on New Farm website
- Stages and soap boxes near Powerhouse

- Enhance interface of the library to park- locate lockers at the library with recreation equipment and open up use of veranda
- Link library to other spaces on peninsular by bikeway
- Develop a children's garden in the park

It was emphasised that it is important to engage with children and young people early in any process, that a dual acknowledgement of children and aged friendly is useful, and that there is an important role for legislative and guidelines support in order for processes undertaken to have some chance of influencing practice.

5.5 Additional active and passive leisure options

Priorities: Creating additional options for local children to engage in active and sub-group relevant activity within the New Farm/ Newstead area.

Possible project: Development of a local cultural and recreational strategy for children and young people. Partners could include BCC Parks, developers, shopping precinct businesses, local schools, parents and grandparents, various groups of children and young people.

Other strategies to consider are:

- re-orientation of outdoor space in and around the Powerhouse building to facilitate flexible passive ('hang out') and self-directed active leisure.
- continuation of the adventure sports theme along the river with consideration of bouldering/ rock climbing, skate/bmx facility and small craft activities eg canoeing, tinnies. Such options should be considered for the reach from New Farm to Newstead.
- additional interpretive play areas for younger children similar in sensory and environmental engagement to the New Farm Park playground
- increased availability of local options which have appeal to a diversity of children and young people (perhaps through links to Visible Ink and the New Farm Library).

5.6 Improving local services

Priority: To develop direct bus service from New Farm to the Kelvin Grove State College/ QUT Kelvin Grove campus via the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

Priority: To improve access to information regarding services relevant to children of various ages

Possible project: It was suggested that a Queensland government website should have an on-line search facility for local services and facilities for local catchments [search by suburb name].

Priority: Improve services for local young people from New Farm and Newstead.

Possible project: A partnership project to develop a range of strategies oriented to young people including consideration of:

- a youth space
- wireless connectivity at the New Farm library
- the co-location of some services so as to make service pathways more legible. New Farm library may have a role as a family friendly point of information on services in partnership with local services
- consideration of access to local bulk billing health services.

5.7 Endorsed and utilized public space guidelines

Priority: There is a lack of clear guidelines or standards for public space provisions and amenities, such as public access to toilets/water/seating at shopping centres and in mixed use developments.

Possible project: BCC to negotiate with relevant property owners to re-instate access to basic amenities within the centres/mixed use areas.

Possible project: Suburban guidelines for public space be developed by Brisbane City Council. These could be informed by the BCC draft Public Space Guidelines currently being developed in respect of the Brisbane CBD Master Plan. Development of both these guidelines should explicitly consider the needs of children of various ages.

6. Conclusion

This case study has highlighted that even in localities of relative advantage children's needs are insufficiently regarded. The pace and nature of inner city urban development requires attention to be given to the social sustainability of these areas and in particular to how these can be positive environments for children of various ages. The inner city is not simply the province of 'empty-nesters'. In a variety of ways children of various ages, their parents and caregivers are utilising inner city areas as either residences or as venues of regional significance. Whilst this case relates to one particular inner city area we trust that it provides a useful point of reflection for others interested in the development of child friendly cities.

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