

# Services suffering

**MATTHEW WARD**

TRANSPORT and other “hard” infrastructure to meet Camden’s growth is well behind schedule, but social, or “soft”, infrastructure is falling drastically short, commentators say.

Macarthur Diversity Services, which supports the area’s migrant and refugee populations, was recently forced out of its Camden Council-subsidised Narellan library office space.

The organisation still provides services from its Campbelltown office, but the move, forced by a Federal Government funding cut, was an example of the lack of support for social services, executive officer Karin Vasquez said.

The demographics of Camden’s new growth centre will only be mapped in future censuses.

While an influx of residents from different cultures was expected, more immediate challenges existed, Ms Vasquez said.

“There’s a perception that Camden is a lot more affluent than Campbelltown ... however there are a lot of issues (in Camden) like social isolation, single-parent families, and single-income families which got into the market five years ago and are paying very high mortgages with young children,” she said.

South West Community Transport is lobbying the State Govern-



**Karin Vasquez and community facilitator Ann Bianco are concerned about the lack of community infrastructure in the South West Growth Centre.**

Picture: ROBERT POZO

ment on behalf of residents, mostly elderly, who were stranded after bus services in the municipality’s north were scaled back last year.

The group’s executive officer Lyn Bright said finding suitable premises was a big problem faced by many social organisations.

“They’re building mezzanine

office space with no disability access,” she said.

St Vincent de Paul Macarthur centres manager Steve Irwin said high waste disposal costs were forcing some residents to dump rubbish at collection bins.

Opposition planning spokesman Brad Hazzard said the government was failing to deliver.

“It’s a challenge for both sides of

politics to get the balance right between hard and soft infrastructure and to recognise different populations have different needs,” he said.



**DOES CAMDEN HAVE ENOUGH SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE?**

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