Case study of urban dynamics in Sydney

FACTFILE
- 35 53’S 151 10’E
- World city – links national economies into the world system.
- Economic authority – TNCs, TNBs, Specialised Services and Markets. 1.2% growth each year. Although not political centre of Australia.
- 4.2 million current population. Projected 5.5 million by 2031.
- Sydney, although Australia’s economic powerhouse does show signs of slowing down. With growth of 1.2% compared to 2.1% of Victoria.
- High end intellectual jobs - 30% jobs are managerial occupations dominated by the financial sector.
- 64% of TNC HQs of the Asia Pacific region are located in Sydney.
- Since 1998, 13 TNBs have set up their HQs in Sydney to control business in the Asia Pacific Core. → Deutsche Bank chosen Sydney to run its futures and asset management for the Asia Pacific Core and internationally alongside London.

Social structure, spatial patterns of advantage and disadvantage, wealth, poverty and ethnicity.

Social Structure: form or pattern of interrelationships of people in society.
- Distinct social classes are predominant in Sydney dictated education, employment and income. Spatial patterns of advantage and disadvantage have emerged as a result.
- Education
  - Allow to live in attractive high income suburbs to the north which are close in proximity to Sydney’s top universities.
  - Higher percentage of tertiary education usually results in a higher social class.
  - E.g. Shalvey only 4.2% compared with Mosman 43.15%. Mosman more than doubles Shalvey’s median household income at $2000.
- Employment
  - With tertiary occupation → higher percentage of these in managerial style jobs.
  - E.g Shalvey only 11.7% whilst Mosman has 42.37% meaning higher income overall.
- Income
  - Economic wealth derived from income is the most vital factor in determining the social class of an individual.
  - High income earners ($1500 pw 1996) in high level managerial jobs can extend the extent of their personal choice in all aspects of life.
  - Residentially they spatially position themselves around the waterways of the Sydney Foreshore, Northern Suburbs and around the Georges River area whereby access to the city is convenient and there is great access to desired goods and services.
  - Land prices in these areas are usually double or triple the price of land in the outlier suburbs and thus spatially excludes those of lower economic class to reside in wealthy areas.
  - Areas of high income usually also means it is a area of high accumulation of wealth including physical assets, buildings and financial assets.
Lowest recorded income is $300 pw and as such there is unlikely to be anyone living in absolute poverty, but relative poverty to median income.

**Spatial patterns of advantage and disadvantage**
- North West to South West chasm which spatially divides Sydney according to income levels. The channel runs roughly from Pennant Hills and Castle Hill in the north west towards Kogarah. The high income suburbs are virtually all in the north and east of the city. The low income areas are all in the south and the west. Running along the ‘Great Divide’ are a series of middle income suburbs such as Campsie and Homebush.
- Areas of concentrated economic and social disadvantage form ghetto like environments. In areas including Macquarie Fields, there is a disproportionate increase of crime, violence, delinquency and child abuse. Spiral affect leads to intergenerational poverty as education, income and occupation are not improved. Thus spatial disadvantage has an overwhelmingly negative impact towards affected citizens oftentimes exacerbating the poverty cycle.

**Patterns of ethnicity**
- Large cities tend to house large enclaves of migrants.
- Sydney has taken up 43% of migrants entering Australia between 1996 till 2001.
- Long term migration has changed the demographics of Sydney’s population.
  - 40% of population was overseas born.
  - 6% ESL at home
  - 16.5% from Britain and Ireland with 16.5% from European nations.
- Determined by language. Those speaking English tend to assimilate into the community with little evidence of segregation or distinctive enclaves. Non English speaking migrants showed a strong tendency to segregate themselves into cultural enclaves.
- May provide then with security, common customs or assistance in employment.
- **Vietnamese – Cabramatta**. Cheap housing, manufacturing employment. 1996 – 42% of Vietnam born living in Sydney was living within the jurisdiction of the Fairfield council.
- Susceptible to change once assimilation occurs. Marrickville was very Greek 35 years ago and now it has moved to groups like Vietnamese and Pacific Islanders.

*Changing economic character, nature and location of residential land, commercial and industrial development.*

**Economic Character**

Development of a global economy

During the 1980s, there were many developments that encouraged the development of a **global economy**. These include:
- **Major advances in transport**
- The development of **advanced information technology**
- The **deregulation of financial systems** in many countries
- The greater encouragement of **international trade** (globalisation)
Sydney’s changing economic character

17% of employed people in Sydney work in finance and business services; this is comparable with London and New York.

Nature and location of residential land

- **Due to the land rent mechanism – inner city suburbs are expensive/too expensive for commercial/industrial estates.**

The nature and location of residential land in Sydney has been affected by the following factors:

- **Physical geography of the GSMSR;** the position of the harbour has divided the city into 2 broad areas:
  - The hilly area to the north of the Harbour (most attractive for residential development)
  - The area to the south and west of the harbour (less attractive for residential development)
- **Suburbanisation** has resulted in the sprawl of residential areas from the original settlement around the CBD
- **Urban Decay and Renewal** has resulted in the development of new residential areas closer to the CBD and gentrification.
- **Urban consolidation** has meant that the settlement in the inner city area has become higher density. In 2002, 70% of new residences in Sydney were a result of suburbanisation and 30% were a result of urban consolidation
- **Exurbanisation** – only a minor factor

Commercial development

Sydney’s role as a world city has had a number of effects on the nature and location of commercial development. These 3 broad effects are:

- **Location of regional headquarters** – incentives for TNCs to locate their Asia-Pacific regional headquarters in Sydney.
- **Location of advanced producer services** – these are the highly specialised service industries required by TNCs and advanced local organisations.
- **Location of financial services** – located exclusively in the CBD and North Sydney
- Suburbanisation of many commercial and retail activities into the Middle Suburban Zone including Chatswood, North Sydney, Parramatta.
- CBD more related to national and global business, tourism and high quality shopping e.g. Chanel.

Industrial development

In the immediate post-WW2 period, Sydney grew rapidly as an industrial city, protected by high tariffs (high tariffs on imported goods, protecting Australia products).
• From the mid-1970s through to the 1990, Australian manufacturing was exposed to greater global competition as tariffs and other forms of trade restriction were drastically reduced. Sydney lost much of its manufacturing capacity in cars, clothing, textiles and chemicals.
• There is an increasing share of import-export activities in transport, storage and wholesaling that have stimulated air and road transport activity in the inner-city area.

The high-tech industry is also suburbanised. The main high-tech location is in the area from Ryde to North Sydney; known as Sydney’s silicon corridor stretching 10km. In little more than a decade, the area has been transformed into Australia’s high-tech heartland. Gleaming glass and concrete buildings house some of the biggest names in the information-based economy. For example, Microsoft, Toshiba, Sony, Seimans, Fujitsu, Canon, Phillips and 150 smaller technology companies.

In 1999, 15000 new jobs were created in the North Sydney – North Ryde corridor. To help this growth, more than 120,000sq m of commercial office space was developed in the North Ryde area.

Culture of Place

Culture refers to the way of life of a group of people. The culture of place will be expressed in terms of its architecture, streetscape, heritage, noise, colour, street life, energy, vitality and lifestyles. New York, London and Paris have a very distinct sense of place.

Sydney’s CBD and inner metropolitan Sydney:

Architecture
• Well know landmarks including the Opera House and the Harbour Bridge.
• Notable structures including the Centre point Tower and Chiefly Tower.
• Heritage buildings of the colonial past including St James Church, The Queen Victoria Building, Royal Arcade and St Mary’s Cathedral.
• Distinctive new buildings around the Darling Harbour area including exhibition centres and the new developments at Pyrmont.

Streetscape
• Small cove settlement – no plans for wide roads and thoroughfares.
• Sydney was one of narrow streets.
• Some footpaths were widened in 1998 to make pathways friendlier for pedestrians.
• But many inner city suburbs including Redfern still share this problem.
• TNCs and TNBs have constructed large and prestigious buildings signalling a competitive capitalist streetscape of business.
• New streetscapes has emerged in Pitt Street as their malls herald in a new era of retail.
• Distinct streetscapes emerged in inner city suburbs including Newton, Pyrmont and Paddington where there is a strong influence of the cafe culture.

Noise, colour, street life and vitality
• Noisy traffic – King Street, George Street and heavy traffic presence. Ever present braking, honking and acceleration. Quiet buzz around restaurants.
• Colour – great variety of colour showing the contrast of the harbour, parklands, residential and commercial estates. Bluish white concrete and aluminium to sandstone yellow of the past colonial period.
• Street Life – Lively - No distinct streets of New York or Paris. People come to the city for work not to live. Cafes may be alive with people during lunch breaks. Pitt Street mall busy with tourists. Oxford Street immersed in the cafe culture.
• Vitality – brashness and willingness to embrace the new. Sydney Olympics a boom for businesses in the city areas. Good nightlife as council is encouraging the city to be more friendly 24 hours a day. E.g. screenings of the World Cup and Olympic matches at Darling Harbour and Circular Quay.

Growth

• Sydney will be undergoing major growth due to immigration and natural increase.
• 2008 - 4.2 million people currently in Sydney region.
• 2036 – 5.9 million people. (+1.7 million)
• 2031 - Half a million new jobs in particular around suburban centres in the West.

Development

• 2031 - 640,000 new homes.
• Accommodating the growing population: estimated that urban consolidation will cater for more than 30% of the future population. Most of the remainder would be in new suburbs to the north-west and south-west. Areas around the North Shore have already been approved to undergo this process. Killara and Wahroonga planned for high rise.
• Increase housing capacity in existing areas by providing 60-70% of new housing in those areas. (2014-2031)
• Communicate with local governments so to ensure good urban design.
• Improve housing affordability by urban renewal.

Future Trends

Sydney Metropolitan Strategy 2005 – plan of Sydney’s development
1. F – Ensure Fairness
2. E – Encourage Economic Competitiveness
3. E – Protect the Environment
4. L – Improve Governance

TRANSPORT
Dominated by Sydney’s growth and need for development to meet with demand
• As population grows, there will be a greater reliance on safe and efficient public transport systems. Improved roads, rail, transit ways, ferries and bus services
• Improve interactions between Sydney’s centres – extension of networks – NW and SW rail ink.
• Improve existing transport system – reliability, integration and extension.
• Increase freight capacity – from 1.3 million in 2005 to 2.9 million in 2021.
INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY PARKS AND PUBLIC PLACES

Dominated by Sydney’s growth and need for development to meet with demand

- **Provide a regional open space in Western Sydney** so to improve access to parklands for those living in Western Sydney.
- **Plan for regional open space in growth centres** e.g. Penrith.
- **Improve the quality of regional open space** – Plan for a waterfront city park in East Darling Harbour. Continuation of the Greenspace Program.
- **Improve access to waterways, parks and centres** – NSW parks and wildlife w/ Dept of Tourism, sport and recreation to integrate recreational trails for better access.

CENTRES AND CORRIDORS

- Development of urban centres as agglomerations aimed to improve access to goods and services and the liveability of the city.
- Implemented in a way which will fit in with the FEEL G principle.
- Global City (Sydney CBD), Regional Cities (Parramatta), Specialised Centres (Olympic Park) and Major Centres (Hornsby).
- Important source of employment and will lower pressures placed on public transport. Lowering of transport times is also a point of social equality as certain minorities of the population are placed at a disadvantage due to lengthy travel to work.
- 2005 – 80% pop lived within 30 minutes to one or more urban centres by public transport.
- Corridors of economic (Potential Parramatta to Macquarie Park), renewal and enterprise activity located around the orbital motorway network will also be a source of employment. Sydney’s 10km silicon corridor between Ryde to North Sydney. These bands will prove beneficial to new and established industries through the formation of a centre nodal area.

IMPLEMENTATION AND GOVERNANCE – efficiency of development

- Align subregional and local planning with state-wide strategy aims.
- Improve State government involvement in strategic places and projects. E.g. the management of urban renewal projects and Sydney’s growth areas. Aimed to increase efficiency and buck passing.
- Increase transparency and accountability of funding and project delivery.
- Ensure stakeholder involvement (community etc) – subregional planning, development review and regular updates.
Ecological Sustainability

- The environmental footprint of Sydney will increase by 46% to meet the demands of goods and services from the population in 2031.
- **Marine Health** – more efficient catchment of water, promotion of water sensitive urban design, implementation of Metro Water Plan as a long term goal to ensure aquatic health.

  E.g. reusing grey water, reducing sewage discharge and improving the stormwater quality before discharge into SH. Sediment traps and filters have been used to clean water discharge.

- **Biodiversity** – Support councils in the development of a Local Environmental Plan.
- **Air Quality** – Plan for improved air quality consistent with Action for Air program. Improve the emissions of public transport.
- **Heritage Preservation** – Identify areas of cultural significance in the Hawkesbury Nepean catchment area. Involve aborigines in the management of culturally significant areas.
- **Encourage sustainable travel** – walking and cycling