

## Transcript of Interview #8 (24/03/25)

**Interviewer:** Hi! My name is Jodie, a master's student at the University of Sydney School of Architecture, Design and Planning. I'm the responsible researcher for this study, and we'll be conducting this interview. Thank you for agreeing to participate. Please note that you can withdraw from this interview at any time, even after it's finished, and if you withdraw, your responses will be removed from the research study.

For this interview, I'm going to be asking you some questions about what you think of the boundaries of Western Sydney when shown on a map, and what makes it different from the rest of Sydney. There are no right or wrong answers. Before I ask you the questions, I provided you with a map called Map 1. This map is for you to look at and think about the key question - where is Western Sydney? Please feel free to use this map, to draw lines, arrows, images, comments, or mark anything on this map to show where you think Western Sydney starts and end. You can draw on this map at any time before the end of the interview, and I'll let you know when that's coming to the end. You can make as many changes as you like. So now I'm going to start asking you the interview questions.

In whatever way you like, tell me a little bit about yourself, and where in Sydney you live.

**Interviewee:** Okay, um so I have recently moved to what I would consider Western Sydney. Previously I lived in the North Shore, so I was, oh, I guess, upper North Shore kind of but I guess it's even further than that. So I was living in the Hornsby Shire, close to the Hawkesbury River, and then I've only recently moved to Grantham Farm, which is near Riverstone, Schofields area. So yeah, um yeah, I guess that's kind of an overview of where I live.

**Interviewer:** What are the first four words that come to mind when you hear or read Western Sydney?

**Interviewee:** Okay, that's a good question. I'd say inland. Um, can it be like a term, or does it have to be four?

**Interviewer:** Nope, go for it.

**Interviewee:** Okay, I'd say warmer climate. And I'd say, denser. One more?

**Interviewer:** One more.

**Interviewee:** Okay. And I'd also say, diverse.

**Interviewer:** In what way?

**Interviewee:** Um, just diverse, or all of them?

**Interviewer:** Just diverse

**Interviewee:** Just diverse, I'd say, culturally, more diverse. And I'd say, probably more diverse in terms of um, yeah, I guess the primary one would be culturally, linguistically more diverse. But then also, I think that when you're speaking to people from Western Sydney, they generally come from more diverse backgrounds as well, whether that be educational or occupational, um and I think it's more of like a melting pot versus other parts of Sydney as well.

**Interviewer:** Okay. What do you think makes Western Sydney a distinct part of Sydney?

**Interviewee:** So I'd say, probably just expand on my previous response. I think that Western Sydney's diversity probably sets it apart from other parts of Greater Sydney, um and as a result, you have more I guess, culturally driven events. So, to give you an example, we have like Lakemba Night Markets. We also have the Blacktown Night Markets as well, so I think those are just examples of what can come out of more diverse community. Um, I'd also say what sets it apart, is that, I guess, other parts of Sydney are becoming less accessible to every person.

**Interviewer:** In what way, accessible?

**Interviewee:** Accessible in terms of affordability. I think people, especially younger people, getting locked out of other parts of Greater Sydney, because -

**Interviewer:** And do you mean in housing, specifically?

**Interviewee:** Housing. Yes. Um yeah, I'd say, housing is the primary one. But yeah. And I guess just to try - and I'm sure you've also experienced this, but as a young person, a lot of people that I know, who previously lived in other parts of Sydney, are kind of being pushed north-west just because, yeah, like, I said, they're being locked out of other parts of Greater Sydney.

Um, so I'd say it's probably more cost wise, more accessible than other parts of Sydney and I'd actually say that it's probably better connected than other parts of Sydney - not everywhere, and I'll. Like. add that, but like when you're comparing, let's say Blacktown, to like Northern beaches or I think the, a lot of investments also going towards connecting -

**Interviewer:** Connecting where?

**Interviewee:** Connecting like Point A to Point B, where?

**Interviewer:** Yeah

**Interviewee:** I'd say, like, there's a lot of investment going towards, obviously, and this is your area of expertise, but the Western Sydney Aerotropolis, um and then we're seeing, like the Western Sydney Metro line, the North West Sydney Metro line as well, which was a massive piece of infrastructure which has been really successful, and then also the Metro South West connecting Sydenham to Bankstown. So yeah, I'd say, transport

infrastructure has been concentrated, as well in connectivity towards western, north-west and south-west Sydney.

**Interviewer:** Okay, Did you have any other comments on that question before I move on?

**Interviewee:** No, all good.

**Interviewer:** What are your perceptions or associations of Western Sydney today?

**Interviewer:** Hm, perceptions today. I'd say a lot of perceptions of Western Sydney are being I guess, rethought. I think that Western Sydney was previously thought of - as like if you couldn't live near, Greater Sydney, like near, Sydney CBD, that's where you went. But I think actually a lot of people are now choosing to live in western parts of Sydney, especially as infrastructure is enhanced and um there's a noted shift of the population westward as well -

**Interviewer:** Whereabouts do you think or see?

**Interviewee:** I think we'll see the greatest concentration of population along the Metro lines and especially as connectivity towards the [Western Sydney] Aerotropolis is enhanced. I think you'd see a lot of population also shift more west. There's gonna be a heap of jobs that are now going to be located there. So I think that'll also drive movement. So I'd say, like that perception is shifting and I think the identity of Western Sydney is going to continue to undergo um -

**Interviewer:** What did you think the identity was before?

**Interviewee:** So I'd actually say, and this is just my own personal experience, but when I was living in the North Shore, I probably until I went into uni, didn't go very west. The only time that I think I started to go west was when I had friends who lived like near Blacktown, Seven Hills, and I'd go and visit them before. Before that I was probably very in my little bubble. So I probably didn't have a lot of thoughts about Western Sydney until I got into university, and then, um I guess, my perception was that it, like, if you're talking about so - so I think Western Sydney's identity is quite diverse, because obviously you have places like St Marys and um like Mount Druitt, that have perception that they're a bit less safe, and I, to some extent, think that that's still true. But I think that's also shifting, as people kind of move towards those areas. I think they're going to undergo change as well. So yeah, I guess that's more of a specific example, but I think that my main kind of reflection on that question would be that I think that it's changing. The identity of Western Sydney is changing -

**Interviewer:** To what?

**Interviewee:** To, um to, I don't know. I think that it's becoming a more desirable place to live.

**Interviewer:** And what, in your personal opinion, is desirability? So connectivity, accessibility?

**Interviewee:** So accessibility to me, accessibility. Yeah, definitely, connectivity. I think connectivity is a big one. I think diversity in housing types is a big one, I think access to open space and green space is a big one. Safety also is a massive one. I'd say those are probably the primary considerations.

**Interviewer:** Good. Any other comments before I go to the last of these questions?

**Interviewee:** All good, no.

**Interviewer:** How has your view of Western Sydney changed over time?

**Interviewee:** Um, so I guess I already kind of touched on this question. But I'd say that. Yeah, in the past 6 or 7 years probably had a lot more exposure to it. To Western Sydney -

**Interviewer:** In your personal or professional life?

**Interviewee:** Both. So like, I said before I started, uni probably didn't venture into Western Sydney that much unless it was to - yeah, pretty much I would say. Paramatta is probably the most west that I went regularly.

**Interviewer:** You grew up in the Hornsby area?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, grew up in the Hornsby area. So, um and so, before that probably didn't have a lot of thoughts about it. Only when I started uni I started to have friends who lived out west. I would go and visit them and I thought it was more like, I said, culturally diverse place, and that has, I think, is still sentiment that I feel today, but I'd say that, yeah, my original perceptions of it being on like a more unsafe kind of area or like I think that's definitely changed.

**Interviewer:** I'm going to start asking you to share your map of Map 1 now because we're moving into the mapping questions, before we go there any other comments on any of the previous questions before we go to strictly mapping?

**Interviewee:** No, all good.

**Interviewer:** All good. Yep, I can see your map. So using this map, how would you show where Western Sydney starts and ends today? And talk me through your process.

**Interviewee:** Okay. So I'm not actually sure if I can draw on this, can I?

**Interviewer:** Oh, if you insert, you should be able to just doodle.

**Interviewee:** And so -

**Interviewer:** If you got shapes, you can start drawing lines

**Interviewee:** Oh, cool. I would say that Western Sydney to me now - so when you're, and I suppose this is my question to answer: would you consider Northwest and Western Sydney separate?

**Interviewer:** I will wait for your response, and then I will let you know mine.

**Interviewee:** Okay. Okay. Cause. I probably -

**Interviewer:** Because it's yeah. It's just the broad Western Sydney if I said it to you, no context.

**Interviewee:** How would I define it?

**Interviewer:** How would you define it?

**Interviewee:** Hmm. Probably say. actually, no, I don't agree with that. Um, Blacktown, Seven Hills.

It's actually a really interesting exercise. Um, Bankstown, Hurstville. Okay, jokes. I'm going back here. No, actually, I'm going back here. Ignore this little, this little -

**Interviewer:** This little detour?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I would say that's how I would define it.

**Interviewer:** So everything west of there, are you, including Campbelltown and the little cut offs there?

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Are you including all the communities of the Blue Mountains like in that National Park?

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Okay. What about up north? Where are you up north? Okay, walk me through what metrics or what you've used to come up with that line.

**Interviewee:** So my thinking was - and this is why I asked you that question at the beginning - is that I think there's a distinction now between Western Sydney and North-west Sydney. Um, I think now, if you ask someone what's Western Sydney? They probably wouldn't say like Castle Hill, or like, I think that's now very firmly like North-west Sydney, and I think that probably extends to even, like, Tallawong, I would say, is North-west Sydney, Rouse Hill as well.

**Interviewer:** And what in your mind is that difference?

**Interviewee:** For me. I just well, I think that North-west Sydney has probably become better defined because of the Metro line.

**Interviewer:** Okay, and you are defining it it only pure because of that infrastructure like it's different?

**Interviewee:** Yeah but I also feel like North-west Sydney's also become, like, has its own identity in that it's a bit, bit more affluent of an area now, and I don't know if that's what sets it apart, but I think it has its own identity. Like, if you're comparing, let's just say Castle Hill, which is a big centre in that area, to Blacktown, I'd say they're very different.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Interviewee:** And I think the Blacktown's firmly Western Sydney. I think Parramatta used to be Western Sydney, and -

**Interviewer:** You've oh, you've actually excluded it! It's on the eastern side.

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** And you've also excluded Auburn, that's very interesting.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I don't, because I -

**Interviewer:** Talk me through the eastern frontier, that's very interesting.

**Interviewee:** Yeah. Well, Parramatta, like, I said, I think used to be Western Sydney. Now, I wouldn't say that it's so firmly Western Sydney anymore. I think it's Central Sydney, and then Auburn, because I feel like, because this Burwood, Campsie, all the way to Bankstown is -

**Interviewer:** So is Bankstown in or out?

**Interviewee:** Bankstown's in, in in eastern, sorry.

**Interviewer:** Oh, eastern. Okay. Yep.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, because I think also, you're gonna probably something that's coming through, is that, I probably, the lines that are better connected with the Metro, I think I'm counting them, not in Western Sydney anymore.

**Interviewer:** Oh okay.

**Interviewee:** So in the same way that North-west, it's connected with the Metro lines become North-west Sydney, I think south-west is going to be connected with the Metro line becomes South-west Sydney -

**Interviewer:** Will that change when we have the Airport Metro?

**Interviewee:** No, cause that's the west line. I feel like that'll be firmly western Sydney. But I think that, yeah, North-west Sydney and Western Sydney have - they're distinct - and then South-west Sydney and Western Sydney are distinct again.

**Interviewer:** What makes them distinct besides, from infrastructure like, are you using infrastructure as your defining logic?

**Interviewee:** So, yeah, I think so. And I don't know if that's something that I've analysed before now. But yeah.

**Interviewer:** Do you think there are cultural differences besides, from the northwest portion, cultural differences when you're looking in the eastern frontier. So from Parramatta -

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Have you included Merrylands in that?

**Interviewee:** It's on the boundary, I'd say.

**Interviewer:** Oh, on the boundary. Oh yeah. So, for example, is there a cultural difference between like Auburn and Fairfield? Two different sides of the line.

**Interviewee:** Oh, that's a really good question, probably not. No. I wouldn't actually say - I feel like the line is blurry, I'd say this is indicative. I think that you know it's one person who would classify all. And for me, I wouldn't say that this is also a concrete line. It's more like this is where I see Western Sydney and Eastern Sydney starting to kind of fuse. If that makes sense.

**Interviewer:** That makes sense. So what is? Talk me through your logic of up north? So you've got Box Hill

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** On the east, and Windsor to your right.

**Interviewee:** Yeah. Again.

**Interviewer:** And then -

**Interviewee:** Actually, I'm not, too, I wouldn't say that I'm too married to that. I'm not too familiar with those areas, so I wouldn't not, too like firm on those I'd say Box Hill I put on the east because I think it identifies greater with North-west Sydney, whereas Windsor, I'd say, has, like, Windsor and Richmond, I'd say, are more like the west.

**Interviewer:** Hmm! And do you think that Greater Western Sydney, because you hear that term around, is a different entity than Western Sydney or they are the same entity, just

**Interviewee:** I feel like i've actually never heard of Greater Western Sydney before. Um, maybe Greater Western Sydney encapsulates North-west and South-west. But I'd say, if you're if you're saying Western Sydney, this is probably what that means to me most.

**Interviewer:** And walk me through your inclusion of your more peri-urban kind of communities on the west, so like west of Penrith and south-west of Leppington. Those kind of areas, smaller communities.

**Interviewee:** West of Leppington. I, again probably don't have - as I'm more familiar with North-west than I am South-west, probably don't have too many strong opinions about that, either.

**Interviewer:** No, that's all good. I'm about to send you Map 2 for your consideration. And before we go on to Map 2, was there anything you wanted to comment or mark up?

**Interviewee:** Um not from me. I have some questions I wanna ask you after, but I'll I'll let you go through the formal process of the interview.

**Interviewer:** All good. No worries, and could you indicate on your Map 1 where your kind of boundary is? So you know, you took that little detour from Bankstown.

**Interviewee:** So yeah, wait. Let me let me give you a more. Oh, shit! Let me give you a more...I'll make it a different colour so it's easier for you. So I'm just gonna vaguely follow this line and I'll put this in. Oh, no, that's not what I want to do. I would say that's the line there in orange.

**Interviewer:** Okay, cool. So feel free to flip onto Map 2 once you've received it.

**Interviewee:** Did you send it to my email?

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Interviewee:** Okay, just waiting for it to come through. Can you see my emails?

**Interviewer:** Yes, I can.

**Interviewer:** Oh, oh, no, I can't tell your emails, I just see your Word doc. I can't see any.

**Interviewee:** Okay, give me one second. I haven't got your email yet.

**Interviewer:** Oh, wait, why is it sitting in my draft? Let me just actually send that.

**Interviewee:** I was checking my Wi-fi to make sure. But then I was like, wait, I'm on call with you.

**Interviewer:** All good. Oh, it should have gone through but let me just resend it.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, okay.

**Interviewer:** You've got it?

**Interviewee:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Okay, sweet. So if you could open up Map 2, you will see that this is the exact same as Map 1 but it's just a satellite view of what you've seen of the land and



patterns of urban settlement. After seeing Map 2, does this affect anything about how you've shown Western Sydney in Map 1?

**Interviewee:** I'm just having a look at Map 2 at the moment. No, I don't think so. Wow, Dural looks so interesting and Glenorie, built into the mountains like that. No, I don't think so.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Any other comments to round out this interview before I close it?

**Interviewee:** Nope, all good.

**Interviewer:** All good. Thank you for your time. This is the end of the interview. Thank you for your inputs. Please feel free to contact me at any time you had questions or concerns about the study or your interview response. My contact details are in the information statement I sent you, feel free to shoot me anything.