

Transcript of Interviewee #5 (17/03/25)

Interviewer: Hi my name is Jodie. Master student at the University of Sydney's School of Architecture, Design and Planning. I'm the responsible researcher for the study and will be conducting this interview. Thank you for agreeing to participate.

Please note you can withdraw at any time, even after it's finished. If you withdraw, your responses will be removed from the study. For this interview, I'm gonna be asking you some questions about what you think of the boundaries of Western Sydney when drawn 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 out through this whole interview and think about the key question - where is Western Sydney? Feel free to draw lines, arrows, doodles, comments, anything, mark up on your map to work to show where you think Western Sydney starts and ends. Draw on this map at any time before the end of the interview, which I'll let you know about. You can make as many changes as you like. Okay. I'll start asking you the interview questions now.

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

Interviewee: Okay. Um well, I live in Glenwood, which is in the northwest of Sydney, the north-west region west.

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

Interviewee: Diversity, uh, multicultural, uh, large area and economic powerhouse.

Interviewer: When you say diversity in what way do you mean?

Interviewee: Uh, a diverse mix of people, cultures, um, skill sets.

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

Interviewee: Um. I think the distance from what would be traditionally seen as the central business model, which what is seen as the central business district of Sydney. Um and the traditional view, or the historical view of where Sydney was being around the harbour, um with Western Sydney being so far west of the east coast, um yeah, it's a sort of a distinct uh environment and distinct uh geographical centre.

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

Interviewee: Uh, perceptions uh it's probably uh disadvantaged, um both geographically, socioeconomically, and in service provision from government. What was the other part of the questions?

Interviewer: Uh, perceptions and associations.

Interviewee: Oh, you um, and yeah, the associations are the yeah, they' sort of uh, probably more of a manufacturing distribution, warehousing part of Sydney rather than the actual commercial or economic hub.

Interviewer: Where did you get your associations from?

Interviewee: Uh, probably from mostly from the media.

Interviewer: Are you from Sydney?

Interviewee: Uh, traditionally, I'm originally not from Sydney, but, um, yeah, have lived here for a period of time.

Interviewer: How has your view of Western Sydney changed over time? Particularly if you're not from New South Wales.

Interviewee: Um over time, it's uh the view that the Western Sydney, the western part of Sydney was uh socio economically disadvantaged um and was where - in inverted commas, the poor people live, um has changed when you sort of look at house prices or you try and live out there with the growth, and the um with the price, of the population growth, and diversity that has come into the area with more perceived to be a lot more professionals moving out there as house prices, you know, what is what I can see the Western part of Sydney, escalating. Um and it's not really there are as live everywhere, areas of social disadvantage, but it's not the predominant feature of the area.

Interviewer: So how has specifically your perceptions change from when you lived in Melbourne to where you live now in Sydney?

Interviewee: When I lived in Melbourne and would read about Sydney, or you hear about Sydney in the media, um the references to Western Sydney were usually in relation to negative stories. Um now that I'm here and living in Sydney, living in Western Sydney, you hear a lot more about the um positive and the um yeah, the growth and the benefits in Western Sydney.

Interviewer: So you say that you live in Western Sydney. What does it mean for you? Do you feel like there is an identity attached or you merely live geographically in Western Sydney?

Interviewee: I'd say from my point of point of view, um, it's a geographic tool. Um, descriptor is the way I use it myself.

Interviewer: Do you believe the region has an identity?

Interviewee: Probably not. I don't but I don't also say don't think regions generally within Sydney or within anywhere have a specific or a homogeneous identity. Um so,

yeah, there's elements of all different cultures in Western Sydney, but that's the same in other parts of Sydney or other parts of Melbourne.

Interviewer: We are reaching the end of the interview, so how would you show where Western Sydney starts and ends today on Map 1? And then walk me through your process?

Interviewee: I would suggest that um the edge of Western Sydney is um sort of in the space in the area between Sydney Olympic Park and Parramatta.

Uh, for example, in the centre, so down Silverwater Road and then continuing sort of down, whatever. Uh, so it starting in Silverwater Road um and sort of heading. extending that line northward, um, I've gotta draw that line?

Interviewer: Yes, please.

Interviewee: Hopefully that's Silverwater Road and I'm pointing out, um, seems to be. So it's that way and further down, yeah.

Interviewer: So what are you using when you draw these lines? What are you referring to?

Interviewee: Um, I was sort of uh might that uh, yes, or geographical sort of central sort of point, Silverwater Road, in my mind. East of that line, um you look to well well, see, you look more towards Sydney for the bulk of your services or like locations in the western parts – oh sorry, the eastern part of Sydney. Whereas when you crossed over that, you're sort of more into the Parramatta, Merrylands, Liverpool area that you'd be sort of drawn to the Parramatta, Liverpool, Penrith locations.

Interviewer: So why have you chosen Silverwater Road specifically?

Interviewee: It's a landmark I'm familiar with, and um it seems to be like that's a, you know, it's a sort of a major north-south connecting road, uh that's sort of, yeah, provide a break between the two.

Interviewer: To what extent - so you've gone pretty - it's just a line north-south. When does west stop being west and something else?

Interviewee: Oh, I'd see, the, uh, the base of the Blue Mountains?

Interviewer: Ok, why the base of the Blue Mountains?

Interviewee: Um, because once you sort of go up into the mountains, so like after you got past Emu Plains, um in the Penrith area, um, you sort of then become into a different community. That's sort of the Blue Mountains.

Interviewer: What type of community is that?

Interviewee: More of a rural-ish lifestyle community rather than an urban or peri-urban area, um that is, yeah, like a metropolitan area becomes more of a outskirts area, I see.

Interviewer: Did you see the same for the northern sections and southern sections?

Interviewee: Um no, the southern sections, I think, so down around Camden, Leppington area, I see those more as urban areas that are sort of on the edge that haven't filled out yet.

Interviewer: So would consider Camden, Leppington, to be Western Sydney or something else?

Interviewee: Uh, yeah, I'd consider them to be part of Western Sydney.

Interviewer: Oh, could you draw that on the map? How far north is Western Sydney to you?

Interviewee: Do you want me to draw?

Interviewer: Yes, please.

Interviewee: Um, how are far north? Probably see the floodplain of the Hawkesbury River which is the sort of northern boundary of Sydney. Ah, it's the northern boundary.

Interviewer: So you use that natural boundary as a boundary?

Interviewee: Yup

Interviewer: Ok. Do you consider that there, is just one Western Sydney? Because you hear a lot about Greater Western Sydney, are they the same -

Interviewee: Sorry?

Interviewer: Ah, sorry, is there one Western Sydney or a Greater Western Sydney? Because you hear both of these terms used. Do you think they are one term, or they're actually a different terms? I mean, different things?

Interviewee: I think there're really one term. Um like Western Sydney would be the area I drew on the map.

Interviewer: Yup

Interviewee: Within that there's several regions which have separate identities and so for um, components-

Interviewer: What identities do you think exist in Western Sydney if before you said all the Western Sydney itself doesn't have a regional identity?

Interviewee: Oh, sorry, locations or um yeah, centres of Western Sydney, so like around the Parramatta catchment, or around Campbelltown, Campbelltown, Liverpool,

Penrith, sort of areas would be sort of hubs of western Sydney, but I'd see the sort of all a region.

Interviewer: Yup. So now turn your page over and this is Map 2. Map 2 is the same. It's just the satellite view showing geography and patterns of urban settlement. Does this - looking at this map, does this change any way of having drawn your map on Map 1?

Interviewee: No, I don't think so because what I drawn was sort of the natural sort of boundaries of Sydney, the growth of Sydney metropolitan area. Um and um yeah, the geography or topography doesn't really change it.

Interviewer: Yup. Uh, we're reaching the end of the interview. Did you have any other comments before we close up?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: This is the end of the interview. Thank you for participating and for your inputs. You can contact me at any time, if you have any questions or concerns. Uh, my contact details are in the statement which you've read.