

Transcript of Interviewee #7 (18/03/25)

Interviewer: Hi, my name is Jodie, a master student at the University of Sydney 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 in this interview. Please note you can withdraw at any time, even after we're done. And if you withdraw, we'll take your responses out of the study.

For this interview, I'm gonna be asking you some of 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 and before I ask you for questions, um, you'll see Map 1 in front of you. This map is for you to look at and think about the key question, where is Western Sydney? Feel free to draw lines arrows, images, comments, or whatever you need on this map to show where you think where Western Sydney starts and ends. Uh, please draw on this map at any time before the interview and I'll let you know when that's coming to an end. Make as many changes as you want.

So I'm now gonna start the interview questions.

Interviewee: Ok.

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

Interviewee: Okay, uh, I live at the base of the Blue Mountains. Um, I have lived elsewhere in Sydney but at the moment it's the base of the Blue Mountains on the other side of the Nepean River. Um what do I do? I work as a development manager in Western Sydney.

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

Interviewee: First four? It's somewhere between the mountains and Parramatta? Um, extending north and south to somewhere, uh so it's not north Sydney, it's not northwest Sydney, it's not southwest Sydney, but it's western Sydney.

Interviewer: And in the first four words, like immediate association?

Interviewee: Uh, west, green. River, um before the mountains.

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

Interviewee: It's not east Sydney.

Interviewer: In what way, in what way?

Interviewee: Um, east Sydney is where uh the power and money lies. Western Sydney is where the rest of Sydney is, people in the east don't like going to the west. People in the north don't go to the west, and people in the south they just stay where they are.

Interviewer: Do you think there are any particular characteristics or traits about Western Sydney, which makes it different?

Interviewee: It is very multicultural, highly integrated with cultures, unlike the east. It is diverse, um and people who live in the west identify with the west because they've either grown up here or they've been living here because it's not other Sydney.

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

Interviewee: I grew up in Strathfield, many years ago.

Interviewer: Do you consider that Western Sydney now?

Interviewee: At that point that was Western Sydney.

Interviewer: So it's changed?

Interviewee: So it's changed because that's no longer.

Interviewer: What made it stop being Western Sydney?

Interviewee: Gradual change because the population of outer Western Sydney has increased dramatically over the last 20 or 30 years to force a balance further west.

Interviewer: Where is outer Western Sydney?

Interviewee: From Penrith out. So when I grew up Parramatta was west. Um, and the centre of Sydney was probably getting close to Rookwood Cemetery? But it's moved dramatically more west since then, it's probably now Parramatta.

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

Interviewee: Unique culture? Um, divide between the haves and the have nots but being very quickly taken over by people who are more educated and more um middle class than it was. I would call Western Sydney 50 years ago, lower but now it's definitely middle class.

Interviewer: Would you say that's applicable towards, you know, the whole region that you would classify Western Sydney?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: So generally across the region, you think it's changing?

Interviewee: Yup

Interviewer: And do you...where do you get your associations of Western Sydney from? Like how would they...how did you come to these thoughts?

Interviewee: By growing up here for the last 50 years. So, when I was growing up, you'd only come, be in Western Sydney if you couldn't afford elsewhere. And I think now if you can't afford anywhere, you're not living in Sydney, you're living outside of Sydney because it's –

Interviewer: And you mean outside of metro Sydney

Interviewee: Yeah, which includes Western Sydney.

Interviewer: Uh, did you have any other comments or inputs before we move onto the mapping questions?

Interviewee: Oh, I just think this is a very interesting and critical piece of piece of research.

Interviewer: Thank you. So now we will look at Map 1, how would you show where Western Sydney starts and ends on this map? Please talk me through your process as you draw.

Interviewee: I can draw?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewee: So the western boundary would be the river.

Interviewer: Which river?

Interviewee: The Nepean River. That's the boundary, so it wouldn't extend any further than Windsor, and I wouldn't extend any further than the other side of Penrith.

Going south, um that's it would then, I don't know how you then come from there back down, but to me, Western Sydney doesn't extend down past Campbelltown so maybe it goes like that and it wouldn't extend further north on Windsor. Um, it doesn't go into the Hills district, so it would come down through there -

Interviewer: So you're following, what motorway is that? The A2?

Interviewee: The A2, yeah. Going back up through here. Doesn't go down in the there anywhere, so would come up through here somewhere.

Interviewer: So you're going around Ingleburn and then –

Interviewee: Ad then some way here, it's gonna come around and do that.

Interviewer: So, excluding the Shire and then you've got Bankstown. So where is your most eastern forefront?

Interviewee: Probably that.

Interviewer: So around Auburn, Bankstown, ok.

Interviewee: Down that road.

Interviewer: And then you've got there, where would you put Rouse Hill on that border within Western Sydney or outside?

Interviewee: Outside.

Interviewer: Outside, ok. So, talk me through this particular area with, like, what logic have you used to create this shape?

Interviewee: I think boundaries to the east to the south, and north, or north and south is the city, to the north up here is that's uh -

Interviewer: So that's north of Richmond?

Interviewee: Richmond and Windsor. I think the other side of the river there, is, has always been rural or outside the city. Then the Blue Mountains is always been the Blue Mountains and it's never been a part of the city. And south, um Camden and around there, um as always been rural and outside of Western Sydney. Campbelltown has always been some really southern area of what define and south, southwestern Sydney.

Interviewer: I mean, a lot of those areas down the south, like Cobbitty and Camden are like real growth centres for housing, so would you consider those to be soon to be Western Sydney or they would never be Western Sydney?

Interviewee: Probably never Western Sydney.

Interviewer: Ok, so even if there may be like urban development –

Interviewee: Yup, because there's urban development is now going all the way down through here, but is that now, you know?

Interviewer: And where is here?

Interviewee: Douglas Park.

Interviewer: Ah yeah

Interviewee: You know along that that freeway and they're just putting houses and estates all the other side of it. But that to me, it's not. To me, when you enter Sydney from the south, it's Campbelltown, not before.

Interviewer: Ok.

Interviewee: And similarly, when you enter it from west, it's once you come across the river to the north.

Interviewer: So, when what divides basically eastern Sydney to the most eastern frontier of Western Sydney, according to you.

Interviewee: Ah, that's a good question. I don't know. Is the answer?

Interviewer: No, there's no right or wrong answer. I mean, when does the Inner West become west?

Interviewee: Well, the Inner west. So there was no Inner West when I was growing up, it was just Western Sydney, which was west of the Harbour Bridge and then about the 90s or so, it became an inner west. Um but then there was a divide between probably Strathfield as the border of the Inner West and then out, but then it keeps sort of moving out.

Interviewer: Ok, what do, why do you think that border between Inner West and west keeps moving out?

Interviewee: Because the Inner West has been gentrified and attracted the people who want to be the power and the money but can't afford to be east so they're in the Inner West. Um, then the people who can't afford to be in the Inner West then go all the way up. So the divide is like, it used to be the yuppies, but there's no such thing as yuppies anymore, but it's the people who want to be close to the city that can't afford to be in the city for the amenity that the city provides. So it's mainly, new, you know, young people either married or newly married but not necessarily with kids.

Interviewer: And do you think there are cultural differences between where you have indicated Western Sydney is and all other areas that are not or is it a geographic thing? And we're um environmental and looks like road infrastructure is what you use to-

Interviewee: Yeah, I think it's more infrastructure.

Interviewer: Ok. Do you believe that there is a regional identity in Western Sydney?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: What is that?

Interviewee: It's um the batters.

Interviewer: The battlers, what are the those? Who are these people?

Interviewee: People who don't have enormous money or power or influence.

Interviewer: Power and influence in what way?

Interviewee: So they don't necessarily have the executive, executive jobs so they don't have the power and that level. And no longer, it's not blue collar, but the white collar, but they're not CEOs or executive levels.

Interviewer: Any other comments or marks on your map before we move on to the second question? Feel free to look underneath Map 1. That is Map 2 and as you can see, it's exactly the same, but it's just a satellite view showing obviously the terrain and the patterns of urban settlements. After seeing this Map 2, do you feel anything different about how you've shown Western Sydney in Map 1?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewee: Walk me through it.

Interviewee: Um, well again, the settlement patterns sort of stop there and back -

Interviewer: So towards the mountains where you gonna see when it becomes when come down to Campbelltown.

Interviewee: And then they come down to Campbelltown and through there. That's not settlements, that's all um market gardens and other stuff. It comes up through here we've got national parks, so that's the border. Um up here, um settlement comes through there, so except for the Hills district, um, and then it some of it has that divide through there.

Interviewer: Yep. Now, this is the end of the interview. if you had any other inputs or comments, please, free or questions. Uh otherwise, thanks for participating.

Interviewee: Thank you.

Interviewer: You can contact me at any time, if you have any questions or concerns about the study or your interview response. My contact details are in that participant information statement that I've given you and thank you for your time.