

Cities within a City: Planning Policies and Intra-Urban
Inequalities in Greater Sydney

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis in memory to my parents and their dream for my Doctoral degree.

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Statement of Authentication

I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in full or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution. This research study is evaluated and approved by the Western Sydney University Human Research Ethics Committee; the approval number is H13384 (Appendix 1).



.....
Khandakar Al Farid Uddin

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The author declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning this thesis's research, authorship and/or publication.

COVID-19 impact statement

The research faced significant challenges due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021. The COVID-19 lockdowns paused field study, created challenging working conditions, and minimised access to internal and external resources. The author's health and wellbeing were also adversely affected by the difficulties of managing work and family life during the pandemic and working from home.

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List of acronyms

ABC- Australian Broadcasting Corporation

ABS- Australian Bureau of Statistics

AHURI- Australian Housing and Urban Research

CBD- Central business district

DCP- Development Control Plan

DoPE- Department of Planning and Environment

DoPIE- Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

EP&A- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act

EPI- Environmental Planning Instrument

FFTF- Fit for the Future

GCC- Growth Centres Commission

GSC- Greater Sydney Commission

IEO- Index of Education and Occupation

IPC- Independent Planning Commission

IRSAD- Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage

LEP- Local Environmental Plan

LGAs- Local Government Areas

LPPs- Local Planning Panels

NIMBY- Not in My Backyard

NHMRC- National Health and Medical Research Council

NSW- New South Wales

PAC- Planning Assessment Commission

ROCs- Regional Organisations of Councils

SA2- Statistical Area Level 2

SEIFA- Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas

SEPP- State Environmental Planning Policy

WSU- Western Sydney University

List of publications

Category	Publication details
Peer-reviewed articles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Farid Uddin, K, Piracha, A & Phibbs, P. (2022). A tale of two cities: contemporary urban planning policy and practice in Greater Sydney, NSW, Australia. <i>CITIES</i>, 123, 103583, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2022.103583 2. Farid Uddin, K & Piracha, A. (2022). Socio-economic divide and COVID-19 disproportionate impacts in Sydney: Rethinking post-pandemic urban living, <i>International Journal of Innovation and Sustainable Development</i>, Inderscience Publishers (In process). 3. Farid Uddin, K & Piracha, A. (2021). A tale of two cities: Housing deprivation in Sydney, <i>Regions e-Zine</i>, Jan 2021, Issue 8, https://doi.org/10.1080/13673882.2021.00001084 4. Farid Uddin, K & Piracha, A. (2020). Differential application of planning policy deepening the intracity divide: the case of Greater Sydney, NSW, Australia. <i>Spatium</i>, No 44, Dec 2020, Institute of Architecture and Urban & Spatial Planning of Serbia (IAUS). https://doi.org/10.2298/SPAT2044001U
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Media	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Farid Uddin, K & Piracha, A. (10 Aug 2021). Sustainability and resilience in times of crisis: Understanding Western Sydney’s disadvantage, Open Forum, Sydney, https://www.openforum.com.au/sustainability-and-resilience-in-times-of-crisis-understanding-western-sydneys-disadvantage/ 2. Farid Uddin, K & Piracha, A. (12 Jan 2021). Housing locational disadvantages in Sydney, Open Forum, Sydney, https://www.openforum.com.au/tackling-housing-problems-in-western-sydney/ 3. Farid Uddin, K & Piracha, A. (14 May 2020). A tale of two cities, Open Forum, Sydney. https://www.openforum.com.au/a-tale-of-two-cities/

Abstract

Numerous research papers and reports have acknowledged Sydney's inequalities in terms of place-based difficulties, governance, migrant settlement, displacement, gentrification, housing development, and affordability. However, that research is not specific to the urban inequalities related to urban policy applications. Considering the gap, this research investigates the urban planning practices, their impacts and outcomes in Sydney in light of case studies, secondary evidence, empirical data and critical urban philosophies.

The key questions in this research are: how is Sydney transforming into an increasingly unequal city? how do influential socio-economic actors contribute to urban inequalities? what is the situation of the rights to the city in the disadvantaged geographies of Sydney? And how are the life and livelihoods of Sydney's underprivileged residents disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic? COVID-19 was not thought of at the beginning of the research, but it appeared as an excellent opportunity to examine the cumulative effects of COVID-19 on disadvantaged areas in Sydney. Interviews for this research were conducted in the COVID times. The interviewees talked about COVID and the Greater Sydney divide at length without any prompt from the interviewer.

The case studies of this thesis analyse the techno-managerial process of community input into planning issues and communities' ability to participate in planning matters in different parts of Greater Sydney. For example, the Parramatta Road Urban Transformation Strategy case outlines how difficult the complexity of planning engagement is for lower socio-economic communities. In addition, the council amalgamation and Low-Rise Medium Density Housing Code cases outline how communities ability and local politics played a critical role in urban planning.

The content analysis and empirical data show that the state advances the market's interests by accommodating Sydney's extended population and dwellings in Western Sydney. The affluent groups have social and political control over planning policies; consequently, they are privileged in Sydney's urban planning system, practice and outcomes. On the other hand, certain groups are effectively left out from the urban opportunities due to lack of ability to engage with the policy matter and for organised obstacles or by the maneuvers of the powerful socio-economic groups.

This research employs critical theory as a crucial lens to analyse the socio-economic disparities in urban spaces. The critical analysis outlines that the NSW urban planning system, practices and outcomes influence the cities within a city divide in Sydney, supporting secondary content and empirical data. The affluent areas are prioritised in neoliberal urban growth with less housing and population targets and expanded opportunities. In contrast, the disadvantaged regions have extreme urbanisation instead of much needed urban opportunities and infrastructure support.

The NSW urban planning practices are strongly influenced by socio-economic power; consequently, high socio-economics northern and eastern areas of Sydney influence the urban growth and development. They are able to prevent densification in their areas. On the other hand, the less affluent residents of low socio-economic Western Sydney areas lack the power to resist large volumes of additional dwellings leading to fast densification. The critical analysis of this research outlines Sydney's urban policy practices, planning powers, and urban rights divide as an 'east-west divide'.

The urban planning system, policy practice, and outcomes deepen the intra-urban divide in Sydney. Uniform policies do not have uniform effects because of unequal policy implementation and differing engagement abilities of the communities. The government needs to be proactive in supporting disadvantaged communities to avoid increasing disparity arising

from situations such as COVID-19. There are widely accepted philosophies available that can ensure urban justice in the city planning and urban policy domain. For instance, the ‘Just City theory’, an urban philosophical and practical concept, argues that ensuring equity, diversity, and democracy is the crucial means for a just city. There are good international examples of how urban planning system and policy reform efforts are being made to generate robust community engagement in urban planning, primarily to engage disadvantaged communities that could be adapted for Western Sydney.

This research points out that empowered local politics, expanded communication, enhanced consultation, and improved community engagement mechanisms are needed to effectively engage Western Sydney residents in the planning process. This research develops the ‘Equal, Resilient and Sustainable Western Sydney Model’ to address the existing urban divide and build equal, sustainable and resilient cities and communities. This thesis also proposes numerous strategies to ensure Western Sydney residents’ active and robust community engagement. In addition, better and accessible education, improved human resources, innovation, technological transformation, and efficient infrastructure are vital to enhancing socio-economic development in disadvantaged Western Sydney.

The COVID-19 pandemic affected people’s lives and livelihood, especially in disadvantaged residents. A study illustrated by a varied overview of community actions in the UK and The Netherlands extracted six structures of community actions. It shows instances of what has been occurring in the UK and The Netherlands and how the public swiftly erected on prevailing community effort and prepared new plans to combat the pandemic. The disproportionate COVID-19 impacts in Western Sydney emphasise the need to develop community capacities in the post-pandemic Western Sydney that has equitable access for its residents to resources and amenities.

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Sydney, the capital of New South Wales (NSW) state, is one of Australia's largest and most dense cities. It is also Australia's only global city. Sydney Metropolitan total site area is 12,368 square kilometres (sq km)¹. Geographically, Sydney is bordered by the Blue Mountains towards the west, the Hawkesbury River towards the north, the Woronora Plateau in the south, and the Tasman Sea to the east. By considering its more extensive area, Sydney Metropolitan is also known as Greater Sydney or Sydney and Sydney central business district (CBD) is known as Sydney CBD or Sydney City. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) definition of the Greater Capital City Statistical Area (Figure 1.1), Greater Sydney ranges from Wyong and Gosford in the north to the Royal National Park in the south and is bounded by the coastline to the east and the Blue Mountains, Wollondilly, and Hawkesbury in the west.

¹ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/learn/research-and-statistics/the-city-at-a-glance/greater-sydney>

Figure 1.1: Sydney's Greater Capital City Statistical Area



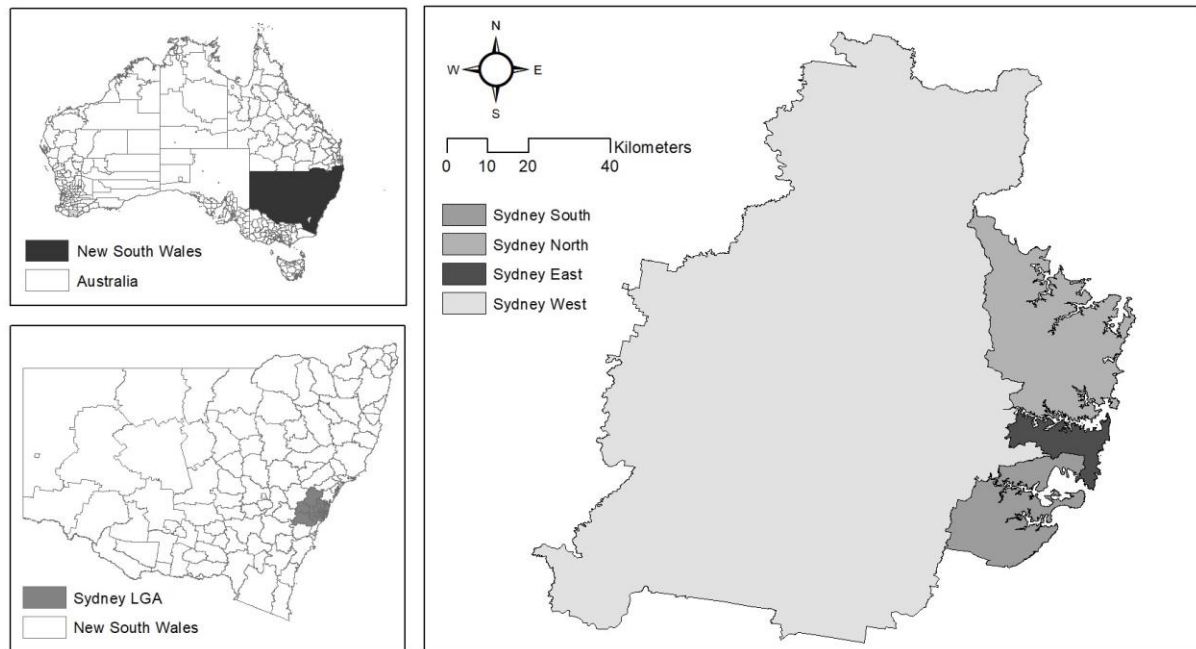
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2019 (accessed from [https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/factsheetsgeography/\\$file/Greater%20Capital%20City%20Statistical%20Area%20-%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf](https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/factsheetsgeography/$file/Greater%20Capital%20City%20Statistical%20Area%20-%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf))

In 2019 the estimated resident population for Greater Sydney was 5,312,163², which comprises almost 65% of the state's entire population. Greater Sydney comprises 33 local government

² <https://profile.id.com.au/australia/about?WebID=250>

areas (LGAs) and has more than 900 state suburbs. Conventionally, Greater Sydney is divided into four geographical subregions: east, west, north and south (Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2: Four subregions in Greater Sydney



Source: Author.

Though Sydney is the most developed and modern city in Australia, Sydney residents experience place-based disadvantages based on socio-economic advantage and urban amenities. In Sydney, the more affluent communities are centred in the north and east, and the more underprivileged are focused in the regions of Sydney's West (Roggema, 2019; Scheurer et al., 2017). This research explores Sydney's socio-economic divide from an urban planning perspective. This chapter introduces the research context, reviews the existing literature to identify the research gap, demonstrates the research hypothesis, questions and objectives, and highlights the rationale and significance of the research project. Finally, this chapter summarises the chapter contents of the thesis.

1.2 Research context

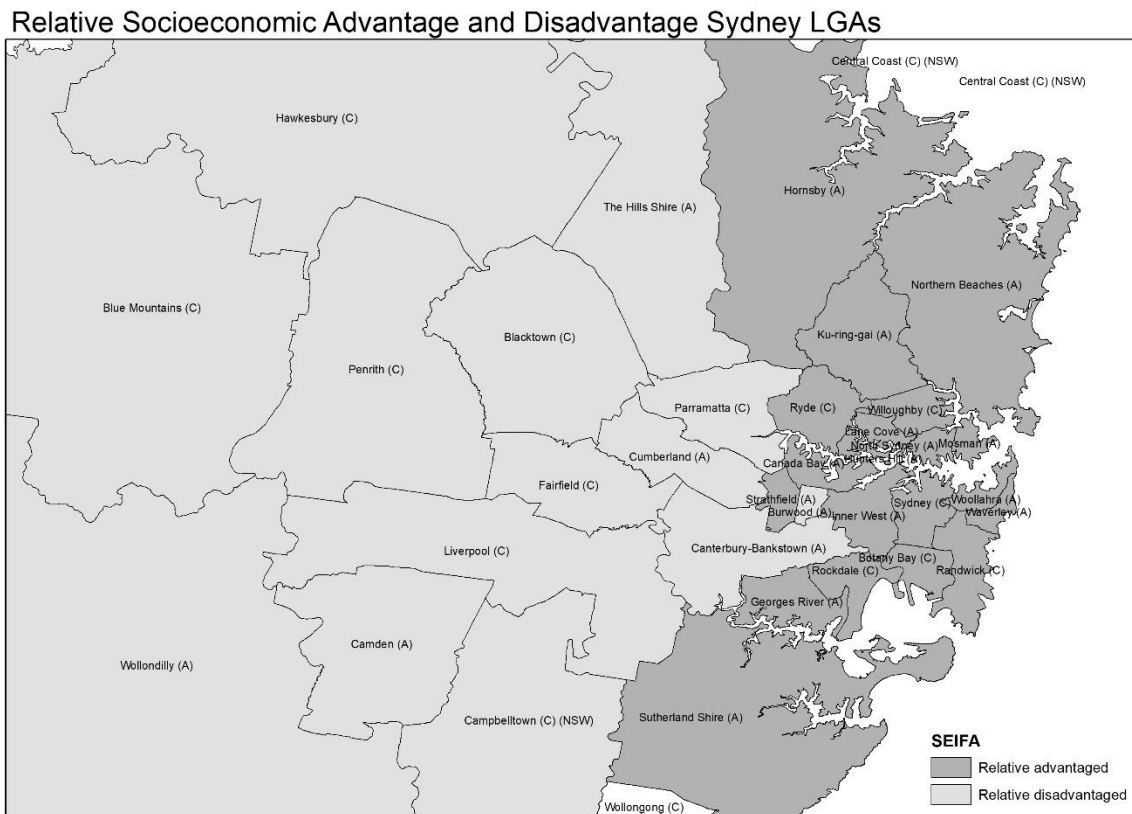
Sydney has been experiencing socio-economic and demographic changes since 1788 due to rapid urbanisation (Stilwell & Hardwick, 1973). In Sydney, colonial urban growth and development started over 200 years ago when it was formed as a British penal colony in 1788. Since then, urban planning in Sydney has transformed through the influences of planning practices from Britain, the United States of America and Western Europe. After the British settlement in the nineteenth century, successive governors began constructing infrastructure that supported intense urban growth in Sydney. The British funded high growth rates and invested capital into public utilities and urban residential development during the 1880s. Consequently, by the time of Australia's Federation in 1901, Sydney had become a city of world importance with over half a million inhabitants (Forster, 1999).

Urbanisation brings opportunities as well as a particular set of socio-economic and environmental problems (Davidson & Arman, 2014). Since the nineteenth century, Australian urban geographers have noted distinctive urban social inequalities (Randolph & Tice, 2014). During the nineteenth century, the manufacturing industry had become a dominant economic force and employed a large proportion of the labour force in Sydney. Massive urban expansion of that century had added a new dimension to the within-city patterns of residential exclusion (Forster, 1999). Cannon (1975) also noted the segregation of suburbs that were developed in Australian cities in the nineteenth century and argued that working-class housing was developed in the industrial areas or unappealing land while affluent parts of the town were urbanised with public transport routes and more attractive surroundings free from industrial pollution. Forster (1999) argued that in the late nineteenth century, Australian cities were public transport reliant and only the upper class and well-paid people lived in the areas with better public transport facilities. The urban inequality and socio-economic divide in urban amenities still exist in Sydney (Gladstone, 2021; Taylor, 2021).

The urbanisation process plays a vital role in urban transformation. Sutton and Kemp (2011, p. 23) argue that the extensive economic growth and development had widened the gap between the 'haves and have-nots', and the less advantaged communities face various urban challenges. Australian cities are divided into two types of residential urban environments: higher income and more educated residents tend to live in the inner and middle-ring suburbs with higher house prices and proximity to jobs and urban amenities, while lower-income and less educated residents tend to live in the outer suburbs (Buxton et al., 2012).

Greater Sydney is also a divided city. Due to rapid economic and population growth, Greater Sydney has been expanding, and its demographics are transforming. Affluent residents are highly concentrated in Sydney's advantaged areas with a modern lifestyle and closeness to jobs, a good transport network and urban amenities. On the other hand, low and medium-income residents live in disadvantaged regions. Figure 1.3 shows the spatial divide of Greater Sydney along socio-economic lines. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS., 2018) defined socio-economic advantage and disadvantage as 'people's access to material and social resources, and their ability to participate in society'. The most socio-economically disadvantaged lower-income groups are geographically concentrated in Greater Sydney's western and southwestern suburbs; conversely, socio-economically advantaged affluent areas are located in the north and the east.

Figure 1.3: Areas of socio-economic advantage and disadvantage in Sydney



Source: Drawn by the author using Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA³ – 2016, The Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD) at Statistical Area Level 2. Local government boundaries are superimposed.

Western Sydney is the biggest metropolitan region of Sydney (Figure 1.2) and generally embraces the north-west, south-west, central-west and far western subregions within Sydney.⁴ Considering its larger size Western Sydney is also called Greater Western Sydney. Greater Western Sydney incorporates 13 local government areas: Blacktown City, Blue Mountains City, Camden Council, Campbelltown City, the City of Canterbury-Bankstown, Cumberland Council, Fairfield City, Hawkesbury City, Liverpool City, the City of Parramatta, Penrith City,

³ Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) is an Australian Bureau of Statistics product that ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. The indexes are based on information from the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing (<https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/2033.0.55.001>).

⁴ Western Sydney University, About Greater Western Sydney, https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/rcegws/rcegws/About/about_greater_western_sydney, accessed on 26 August 2020.

The Hills Shire and Wollondilly Shire.⁵ The Greater Western Sydney region extends from Windsor in the north to Campbelltown in the south, to Lidcombe and Roselands in the east, with the A3 (a major metropolitan connecting road in Sydney) producing the boundary between the greater west and inner west, to Penrith and the lower parts of the Blue Mountains in the west.⁶

Greater Western Sydney is the third-largest economy in Australia, behind Sydney CBD and Melbourne CBD, with a population of 2,553,255 over almost 9,000 square kilometres.⁷ Greater Western Sydney contains about 9% of Australia's population and 44% of Sydney's population. The residents of Sydney's west are mainly of a working-class background, with significant employment in the heavy industries and vocational trade.⁸ Over a third (35%) of the Greater Western Sydney population were born overseas, and it attracts around 60% of the immigrants to Australia. Greater Western Sydney is culturally diverse, with residents from more than 170 countries.⁹ The population is expected to reach 3 million by 2036, making the region one of Australia's fastest-growing urban populations, and it will accommodate over two-thirds of the population growth of Sydney.¹⁰

The affluent areas of Sydney are attracting high-tech investment and skilled employment and have become the global economic corridor (Acuto, 2012; Vogel et al., 2020). On the contrary, the disadvantaged areas are falling behind (Kenna et al., 2017) and have become a concentration of poverty and the underprivileged without sufficient urban facilities, housing, climate, and cultural and environmental amenities (Wiesel et al., 2018). With more people in

⁵ Greater Western Sydney Region, <https://profile.id.com.au/cws/about>

⁶ Western Sydney University, About Greater Western Sydney, https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/rcegws/rcegws/About/about_greater_western_sydney, accessed on 26 August 2020.

⁷ Greater Western Sydney Region, <https://profile.id.com.au/cws/about>

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greater_Western_Sydney#cite_note-WesternSydney-1

⁹ Western Sydney University, About Greater Western Sydney, https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/rcegws/rcegws/About/about_greater_western_sydney, accessed on 26 August 2020.

¹⁰ Ibid

the outer disadvantaged suburbs, many residents are travelling longer to get to work for the lack of good jobs. For example, in Western Sydney, 200,000 people leave the region every day for work, and it is projected to increase to 340,000 by 2041 (Australian Government, 2016). The wealthier people live in the job growth areas yet have shorter travel times. Conversely, due to higher rent, and overpriced housing, the less affluent people cannot live in the attractive areas near Sydney's urban amenities.

An inequality map in Sydney shows that the advantaged areas in Sydney have greater access to urban facilities, jobs and educational prospects than the most disadvantaged regions (Gladstone, 2021). Sydney social researcher claimed in Gellie (2019) that the residents of Sydney's west are busy living and paying off their mortgages and are less politically involved than the connected, well-informed parts of eastern Sydney that are able to lobby for policies that suit them. It is difficult for less affluent residents to understand and manage time to participate in the planning process within complicated and challenging urban planning arrangements.

The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 and 2021 has tested the capacity of cities around the world. The restrictions put in place to stop the spread of the coronavirus have had a severe adverse impact on economies. Disadvantaged communities experience higher vulnerability to risks in emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in even more disadvantaged conditions. Sustainable and resilient communities are vital to improve individuals' or communities' ability to adapt and overcome any crisis and transform their collective ability to face challenges (Teriman et al., 2011). Following the existing urban disparities in Sydney, in the COVID-19 pandemic, the impacts are also different in Sydney, varying by socio-economic status and urban location.

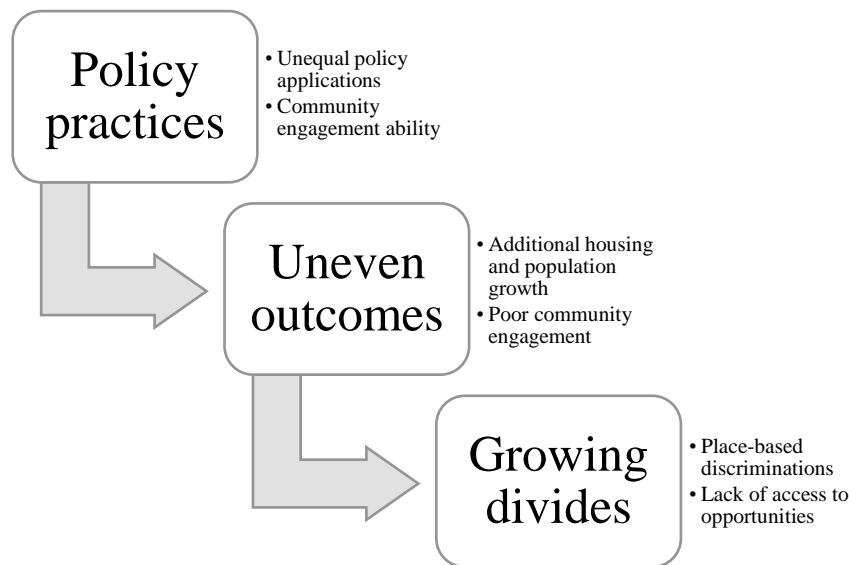
The deep-rooted urban inequality in Sydney has been longstanding and has created a visible divide and place-based disparities. The causes, patterns and effects of urban inequality are

different in Sydney from other cities. For example, Sydney's most geographically privileged areas have four times higher job access, nearly eight times advanced social support, and ten times greater education prospects than disadvantaged areas (Gladstone, 2021). However, the NSW Department of Planning has been putting a massive amount of newly built houses and added population in the disadvantaged part of Sydney (Taylor & Gladstone, 2018). It appears the NSW urban planning is persuading the place-based difficulties in Sydney. The existing unequal urban settings signify a strong relationship between urban growth and urban inequality in Sydney. The contexts of Sydney's urban growth and unequal demographic conditions provide a broader opportunity to explore Sydney's planning policies and intra-urban inequalities from the urban planning and urban geographic perspectives.

1.3 Research hypothesis

This research assumes that the planning settings, urban policy application, outcomes and community engagement in planning practice in Greater Sydney can also be geographically separated based on socio-economic conditions. This research hypothesises that in Greater Sydney, the planning applications and outcomes reinforce the city division by exempting some areas from planning reforms that are mostly related to accommodating additional dwellings or population growth. In addition, any urban policies (theoretically) may have different and adverse outcomes in some areas, even when applied uniformly across the city. Figure 1.4 presents the research hypothesis.

Figure 1.4: Research hypothesis



Source: Author.

The unequal urban growth, urban policy applications and outcomes may generate a significant socio-economic split in Sydney. Consequently, parts of Sydney face place-based inequalities in urban amenities, jobs, transport and housing. This research assumes that the unequal and selective application of urban policies can lead to a more divided city, and the prevailing unequal urban policy practice is accelerating the existing divides. This research also debates that the community's ability to consider resilience and sustainability also varies, and the coronavirus pandemic's socio-economic effects may also be spatially differentiated in Sydney.

1.4 Research gap

Urban policy discrimination and urban divide dynamics deserve intense research. Urban scholars need to analyse the planning policies that lead to city division. Although urban planning policy applications and their outcomes have been identified as an essential issue of research in Australian urban scholarship, there is a shortage of contemporary research on critical urban inequality from an urban planning standpoint. Academic literature has theorised the urban planning policy standpoints in NSW through various lenses, including neoliberalism, managerialism, post-political theory, rational technical planning, agonism, communicative

rationality and community resistance (Baker & Ruming, 2015; Brunner & Glasson, 2015; Bunker, Crommelin, et al., 2017; Bunker & Searle, 2009; Buxton et al., 2012; Gleeson, 2001, 2017; Gleeson & Low, 2000; Goodman et al., 2016; Goodman & Douglas, 2017; Gurran & Bramley, 2017; Gurran & Phibbs, 2013, 2014; Gurran & Ruming, 2016; Houston et al., 2017; MacDonald, 2015; Piracha, 2010; Ruming & Gurran, 2014; Ruming et al., 2014; Ruming et al., 2012; Ryan & Woods, 2015; Schatz & Rogers, 2016; Troy, 2018).

Some authors have acknowledged the disparities of Sydney in terms of planning governance, migrant settlement, displacement, gentrification, housing development and affordability (Atkinson et al., 2011; Brunner & Glasson, 2015; Buxton et al., 2012; Dodson, 2012; Forster, 1999; Gleeson & Low, 2000; Gleeson & Randolph, 2002; Healy & Birrell, 2003; Holloway, 2002, 2005; McLoughlin, 1992; Petrova, 2016; Randolph & Tice, 2014, 2017) but their research is not specific to the urban inequalities related to urban policy applications. By and large, existing research in Australia has not recognised that planning policy reform and selective application of the same reform can create cities within a city.

Although NSW's urban planning policy has been acknowledged as an essential topic for research, there is a shortage of contemporary studies on its selective application and consequences. Therefore, significant gaps remain. Analysis of urban inequality, unequal policy application and impacts is absent. Thus, there is a shortage of research that identifies or acknowledges that urban planning policy application and reform generates intra-urban inequalities in Greater Sydney. Scholarship needs critical knowledge and evidence about Sydney's urban inequality. This research argues that the dearth of study in this area is a setback in understanding urban divides under the same urban policy settings. The existing literature does not seem to fully concede that the community's ability to engage actively with urban planning policy practice can lead to urban divides and inequalities. Exploring the role of the community's ability and community engagement processes in influencing urban policies is

essential in understanding planning dynamics. Thus, planning policy applications, practices and outcomes divergence need serious analysis.

1.5 Research objectives

The main focus of this research is to explore the divide in Greater Sydney in terms of urban planning policy disparities, urban inequalities, place-based discrepancies, and the community's ability, resilience and sustainability in Greater Sydney. In doing so, this research aims to analyse various urban policy cases of spatially differentiated practices, reforms and community engagement in the planning process through critical perspectives. This study also examines state urban planning objectives, influential actors and power dynamics in the policy process concerning the cities within a city divide in Greater Sydney.

When this research was initially framed, the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic were not part of the project's objectives as the disaster had not yet emerged. However, interviews for this research were conducted during COVID times. The interviewees brought COVID-19 into their responses. This created the opportunity for this research to include COVID-19 in the research discussions. Thus, this research has taken the opportunity to investigate the unequal impacts of COVID-19 on Sydney's disadvantaged to highlight their ongoing disadvantage. This research attempts to exemplify Sydney's unequal COVID-19 urban geographies. The research also aims to examine how the life and livelihoods of Sydney's underprivileged residents are further disadvantaged by the outbreak, considering the existing community abilities, deficiencies and challenges of resilience and sustainability. The research hopes to produce critical urban discourses and generates significant evidence and suggestions for policymakers and practitioners to resolve the urban divide in Sydney.

1.6 Research questions

The research is guided by three questions and some secondary questions to study the issues in-depth (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Research questions

Primary questions	Secondary questions
What are Greater Sydney's residents' unequal urban settings, and how are the residents being forced into disadvantaged situations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What are the existing intra-urban inequalities in Greater Sydney? b. What role are contemporary urban planning policy practices playing in producing place-based discrimination?
How are urban planning policies practised in Greater Sydney, and what outcomes does it lead to for various parts of Sydney?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. How is urban planning policy reform and application exercised in various parts of Sydney? b. Why is the techno-managerial process of community participation successful in certain areas and not in other areas? c. What are the consequences of unequal urban planning policy application and intra-urban inequalities in Greater Sydney?
How are the life and livelihoods of Sydney's underprivileged residents disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What is Sydney's community capacity position in a time of crisis, considering sustainability and resilience? d. How does the pandemic outbreak exaggerate Sydney's disadvantaged regions?
What urban planning policy and other measures can be taken to reduce the inequalities in Greater Sydney and enhance community engagement in Western Sydney?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What measures can minimise/end intra-urban inequalities in Greater Sydney and develop Western Sydney's community capacity? b. What wide-ranging actions can improve community engagement in Western Sydney? c. How should Western Sydney change in the post-pandemic urban restructurings?

1.7 Rationale and significance

Urban planning is the exercise associated with the organisation and the making of cities. Urban planning typically involves broader activities relating to the policy, process and context achieving planning objectives. Urban planning and policy is subjective by the extensive arrangement of planning theories on social, economic and political issues and their

interrelations and is shaped by diverse and theoretically differing thoughts of justification, power and understanding (Dikeç & Swyngedouw, 2017). While planning is manifest as ensuring citizens' interest, planning also creates inequalities in cities (Hyötyläinen, 2019). The study's key objectives to explore Sydney's urban planning policy applications and intra-urban inequality are significant, considering its academic and practical contributions.

All Australian cities have physical inequality, communal divisions, uneven financial development and community amenities (Dodson, 2012). Buxton et al. (2012) have described the typical two parts of Australian cities: higher income, educated, professionally employed residents live in affluent areas of inner and middle-ring suburbs, and the lower-income and less-educated residents live in the outer suburbs. Thus, the isolated neighbourhoods of Australian cities experience a high level of place-based disadvantages (Gilmour & Milligan, 2012). The Australian urban planning system has also been shifting over the years in response to economic growth, urban development and suburban expansion (Searle & Bunker, 2010). Urban authority in Australia is different from many other countries as the state governments, not the national government, are responsible for urban planning, major infrastructure and service delivery (Davidson & Gleeson, 2018).

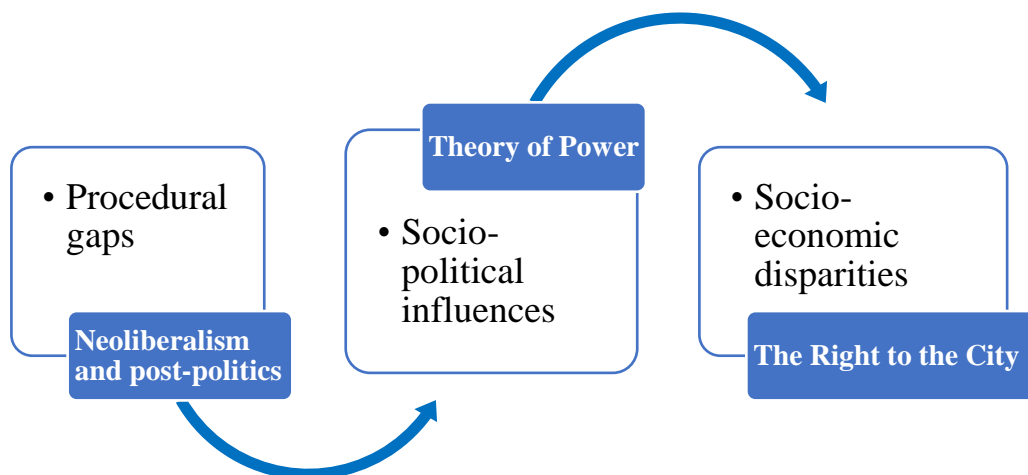
Consequently, the social order has become more complicated regarding population growth pressures and increasing community responsiveness (McFarland, 2011). Exclusion, residential differentiation and access to urban opportunities have transformed into a complex system and have certainly deteriorated regardless of economic growth and social polarisation levels (Forster, 2006). As a result, the social order of Australia is leading to increased socio-economic inequality (Berry, 2014; Pusey & Wilson, 2003). Thus the research on urban divides and place-based inequalities in Sydney and their relationship with planning policy is an earnest attempt considering its theoretical and practical importance.

Research on urban inequalities enormously enriches the existing urban scholarship due to the shortage of contemporary studies on urban inequalities from urban planning perspectives. This research reveals urban planning policy disparities, intra-urban inequalities and planning policies role in enhancing urban divides. In addition, if we want scholarship to contribute to the city's governance, democratisation and equality, we must critically identify and catalogue the city's inequality, right and power dynamics. We must also analytically absorb various critical philosophies and help to foster the possibilities and practice of democratic and fair urban policy-making to establish sustainable and just cities. Critically theorising the social, economic and cultural disparities in the same planning arrangement and geography is essential to outline the existing inequities and generate a consensus to reduce exclusion. Developing a combined critical approach and its related analysis is a significant contribution to urban studies knowledge. The empirical data and analysis are also substantial resources for urban academics, researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and urban managers. Research on urban inequality highlights the need to transform the existing planning principles and practices. It outlines that the socially just city should be designed in a way so that all groups of society are included in the mainstream of urban development opportunities (Schmitt & Hartmann, 2016). Neighbourhoods and cities with a mix of affluent and poor people can support better social amenities (Young, 2002). Thus, research on urban planning policy disparities and intra-urban inequalities is essential to establishing a just, resilient and sustainable Sydney city. The evidence and analysis will contribute to changing the existing process of policy initiation, formulation and implementation relating to urban growth and development. Finally, the findings of this research have been published or are in the publication process on various platforms to disseminate the urban inequalities dynamics to broader audiences.

1.8 Theoretical approach summary

Theory plays an essential role by providing an academic context for empirical studies (Kitchin & Tate, 2000). Contemporary social, political and economic restructuring has led to massive modifications in urban organisations, bringing critical consequences to urban citizens (Purcell, 2002). ‘Critical’, ‘urban’, ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ have become crucial expressions and ideas to illustrate urban effects (Marcuse, 2009). Brenner (2009) has identified numerous vital functions of the critical approach that discovers the power arrangements, exclusion, inequality and discrimination and intends to express the ongoing and emergent socio-political strains of the urban condition. Critical discourses are vital analytical tools to illuminate and inform the urban theory and practice that perhaps forges urban disparities (Brenner, 2009; Marcuse, 2009). Numerous critical theoretical and conceptual ideas are associated with planning policy discrepancy and intra-urban inequality. This research chooses a combination of critical urban theories and develops critical discourses to analyse and frame the urban inequalities in Sydney (Figure 1.5).

Figure 1.5: Theoretical framework



Source: Author.

1.8.1 Neoliberalism and post-politics

Planning is often treated as an upholder of public interest (Fox-Rogers & Murphy, 2016; Howe, 1992). However, according to the Critical and Marxist perspective, planning represents the interest of capitalism (Allmendinger, 2009). Neoliberal urbanism is a process that relies on a simplification of planning and has been given priority, which reduces opportunities for public political action and community engagement opportunities (Wehrhahn, 2015), thus leading to approaches of post-politics (Bond et al., 2015). Due to the increased neoliberal delivery mechanism of state planning policy processes, Greater Sydney has entered into a new post-political phase that minimises community engagement through a techno-managerial process (Greiss & Piracha, 2021). The government's various managerial practices in urban planning policy limit community engagement and secure stakeholders' interest (MacDonald, 2018; Piracha, 2010). Thus, this research analyses urban planning arrangements in the framework of neoliberalism and post-politics.

1.8.2 Theory of power

There is a significant presence of a broader notion of power and domination in society. The shaping of any policy depends on the varied underlying forces of power (Richardson, 1996). Consequently, power is used to serve the interests of the vested group and enables inequalities. Yiftachel (1998) argued that urban policies had been used to control, contain and deprive the poor and shift material and political resources to the affluent. The ability to contain the power of the modern nation-states advances the interests and aspirations of the socio-economic and political elites (Richardson, 1996). In this process, certain groups can effectively be excluded from the policy process and can therefore be excluded from urban opportunities (Yiftachel, 1998). French philosopher Michel Foucault's theory of power is associated eminently with the first view of exploring power in society (Friedmann, 1998). Accordingly, this research applies

Foucault's theory of power to conceptualise various socio-economic and political influential power in Sydney's urban planning arrangements.

1.8.3 The right to the city

The urban transformation and speedy growth-producing opportunities for some residents and some areas are accelerating underprivileged conditions for some other residents and some other areas. The 'right to the city' theory of Henri Lefebvre is prominent in framing urban inequalities (Camargo, 2016; Purcell, 2002; Unger, 2009). Less affluent communities lack the necessary socio-economic, natural, and cultural amenities due to their disadvantaged location and lack of interest and knowledge about the policy process. The poorer communities cannot move to affluent areas because of a lack of affordability and shortages of housing. The right to the city outlines the urban rights of residents of unjust cities. This research also relates the theory of the right to the city to analyse Sydney's urban inequality as it advocates the rights of disadvantaged urban residents.

1.9 Methodological approach summary

This research applies the qualitative approach to explore the research questions. Qualitative research allows thoughtful analysis of concerns (Babbie, 2013). Qualitative research is concerned with elucidating human experiences within various conceptual frameworks (Winchester & Rofe, 2010). The qualitative research approach is explained in Figure 1.6.

Figure 1.6: Qualitative research approach



Source: Generated by the author following Berg (2009).

A detailed research context, complete analytical structures, and comprehensive theoretical frameworks significantly supported the analysis of this thesis's relevant literature, secondary

sources of contextual documents, and empirical data. In addition, comprehensive research and data collection methods help the research grasp its required evidence and examples. This research has used qualitative methods of case studies, content analysis and interviews to reach its objectives and test the hypothesis. Finally, the research unpacked its analysis in the framework of combined critical philosophies and unveiled its findings supporting evidence from qualitative data.

1.10 Structure of the thesis

The thesis has eight chapters, outlined in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Summary of the chapter contents

Chapter	Title	Objective	Contents
One	Introduction	The purpose of the chapter is to introduce the research.	This chapter presents the overall synopsis of the research and outline of the thesis. This chapter introduces the research and describes the research context, hypothesis, summary of existing research, gaps, objectives, research questions, rationale and significance. This chapter also outlines the summary of the theoretical and methodological approach applied in this research. Finally, it outlines the structure of the thesis.
Two	Background: Urban transformation and inequalities in Sydney and the underprivileged Western Sydney	The focus of the chapter is to outline the research background.	This chapter provides background information on Sydney and its urban growth, including Sydney's geographical settings, urban growth and development. It presents the institutional arrangements and statutory planning instruments for metropolitan strategic planning policies and evaluates the planning reforms and practices in NSW. Finally, the chapter introduces the Greater

			Sydney divide and presents Western Sydney's demographics, growth from the 18th to 20th centuries, and current urban development plans.
Three	Theoretical contexts: Urban inequality, neoliberalism, post-politics, power, and right to the city	This chapter reviews the relevant literature from various theories in demand to create a suitable analytical setting for the research.	This chapter describes the theoretical contexts of this thesis and clarifies the thoughts adopted to conceptualise this research. The chapter explains urban inequality thoughts, discusses various critical theories on urban inequalities, and introduces new critical discourses. Finally, this chapter generates the theoretical base and analytical framework for this research.
Four	Research methodology and methods	This chapter focuses on the research methodology adopted by this study to explore inequalities in Sydney.	This research has followed a suitable method to achieve the research aims and objectives. This chapter presents the methodological subjects of this research, such as research design, approach, methods, rationality, data sources and data collection technique, and analysis for the validation of this research.
Five	Case studies. A tale of two cities: contemporary urban planning policy and practice in Greater Sydney	This chapter points to identifying why the techno-managerial process causes suppression of community input into planning matters only in socio-economically disadvantaged areas and how the formal planning process could be contributing to gaps between different parts of Greater Sydney.	This chapter analyses three cases of spatially differentiated community participation and urban policy practice in the planning process in NSW through the theoretical prism of post-politics. It presents empirical studies on the contemporary policy practices and community engagement characteristics in NSW planning.
Six	Empirical insights: Cities within a city in Sydney	This chapter analyses Sydney's	This chapter demonstrates the urban planning practices, their

		urban disparities and investigates how the disadvantaged residents face inequities in the same planning arrangement and geography.	impacts and outcomes in Greater Sydney in the aspects of evolving critical urban thoughts of neoliberalism, post-politics, the theory of power, and theory of right to the city to conceptualise the urban inequality in Sydney in support of the empirical findings from the study.
Seven	Analysing urban inequality and disproportionate COVID-19 impacts in Western Sydney	This chapter explores the community's capacity to understand their sustainability and resilience aptitude and COVID-19 diverse impacts in Sydney.	This chapter evaluates the capacities theorised to produce community resilience and sustainability. It also investigates how the life and livelihoods of Sydney's underprivileged residents are disproportionately affected by the outbreak.
Eight	Conclusion	This chapter summarises the study's findings, key arguments and presents recommendations.	This chapter briefly outlines the thesis findings and arguments. It also provides detailed propositions to improve the disadvantaged conditions of Western Sydney.

1.11 Conclusion

Exploring the interconnection between planning policy application, practices, outcomes, and place-based disadvantage in Greater Sydney is substantially crucial as there has not been much research on the selective application of planning policy and uneven outcomes. From this research point of view, the relationships between urban planning and urban inequalities are dominant to understand urban concerns; if their association is not explored, there will not be the potential to realise the underpinnings of growing urban inequalities in Sydney. The following chapters present this research background, outline urbanisation trends, urban planning arrangements and urban growth in Sydney and Western Sydney, and develop the methodological, theoretical and analytical background to further critically analyse the urban divide in Sydney in support of case studies and empirical insights.

Chapter Two: Background: Urban transformation and inequalities in Sydney and the underprivileged Western Sydney

2.1 Introduction

Australia is one of the most urbanised countries, with three-quarters of the total population living in metropolises (Davidson & Arman, 2014; Ruming, 2014). Consequently, urban planning policy applications and their reforms are an essential aspect of the Australian socio-economic and political context (CIE, 2013; Tomlinson, 2012). Although urban planning is well established in Australia, the planning process is constantly shifting to respond to urban challenges (Brunner & Glasson, 2015; Piracha, 2010). High levels of urban growth, socio-demographic evolution and geographic restructurings have complex effects on neighbourhoods in metropolitan areas (Foote & Walter, 2017), establishing new citizens, new economic opportunities, new forms of power and new prospects (Grant, 2010). Brown and Kristiansen (2008) argue that cities are bases for renewed opportunity, advancement and modernisation for many people and offer the most significant promise of avoiding hardship. However, exclusion and marginalisation appear to be a significant consequence of the urbanisation process (Horsell, 2006). Urban growth and development in Australian cities also offer enormous advantages and are often responsible for growing urban inequalities.

Australia has a three-tiered arrangement of government: Federal/Commonwealth, State, and Local. The Australian Constitution outlines the federal and state governments' functions; however, the constitution does not acknowledge local governments. Federal government responsibilities include foreign relations, business, defence and immigration, while the state and territory governments are legally in charge for all matters not allocated to the

Commonwealth. State governments are the authority to plan and develop significant infrastructure and services for residents. Thus, states are recognised as critical urban administrators (Sansom, 2009). The state governments are the custodian of urban planning and development actions on residents' economic, social and environmental matters, health, education, wellbeing, security, entertainment, ecological care and improvement. Notably, state governments are also responsible for legislating urban planning policy reforms and have the authority to implement these reforms. In this urban growth and development process, the local government serves as a subordinate or assisting organisation. Searle and Bunker (2010) argue that the state's local government is a junior participant in this process. Because of this constitutional and administrative background, the NSW state government has developed widespread urban planning policies and reforms to support the functions and growth of urban areas. Urban administration in NSW has promoted various policy reforms in planning matters to implement urban policy objectives. The urban policy application trends, existing planning policy instruments, urban planning outcomes and their impacts on urban spaces is a significant topic of interest.

In exploring and analysing the critical urbanisation process, planning policies and intra-urban inequalities in Sydney, it is essential to review Sydney's historical evolution and development trends. This chapter describes the historical background and critical foundations of the urban growth in NSW and Greater Sydney. This chapter provides some basic information on Sydney and its urban growth to present Sydney's geographical settings, urban growth and development. It also presents the institutional arrangements and statutory planning instruments for metropolitan strategic planning policies and evaluates the planning reforms and practices in NSW. Finally, the chapter introduces the Greater Sydney divide and presents Western Sydney's demographics, growth from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries, and contemporary urban development plans.

2.2 Historical overview of NSW and Greater Sydney's urban growth

Sydney, Australia's economic heart and NSW state's growth centre, has evolved its current form over time. Sydney has been inhabited for thousands of years, and it has taken hundreds of years to transform Sydney from a British colony to a modern city. Australian Aboriginal people first lived in the areas around 40,000 to 60,000 years ago, and their descendants spread across Australia. NSW was inhabited for thousands of years before the appearance of the British First Fleet in 1770. In January 1788, Arthur Phillip arrived at the present Botany Bay in Sydney with over a thousand settlers to start a colony. Since the British colonial period began in 1788, urban planning in Australia has been transformed by the impact of new planning changes (Freestone, 2007).

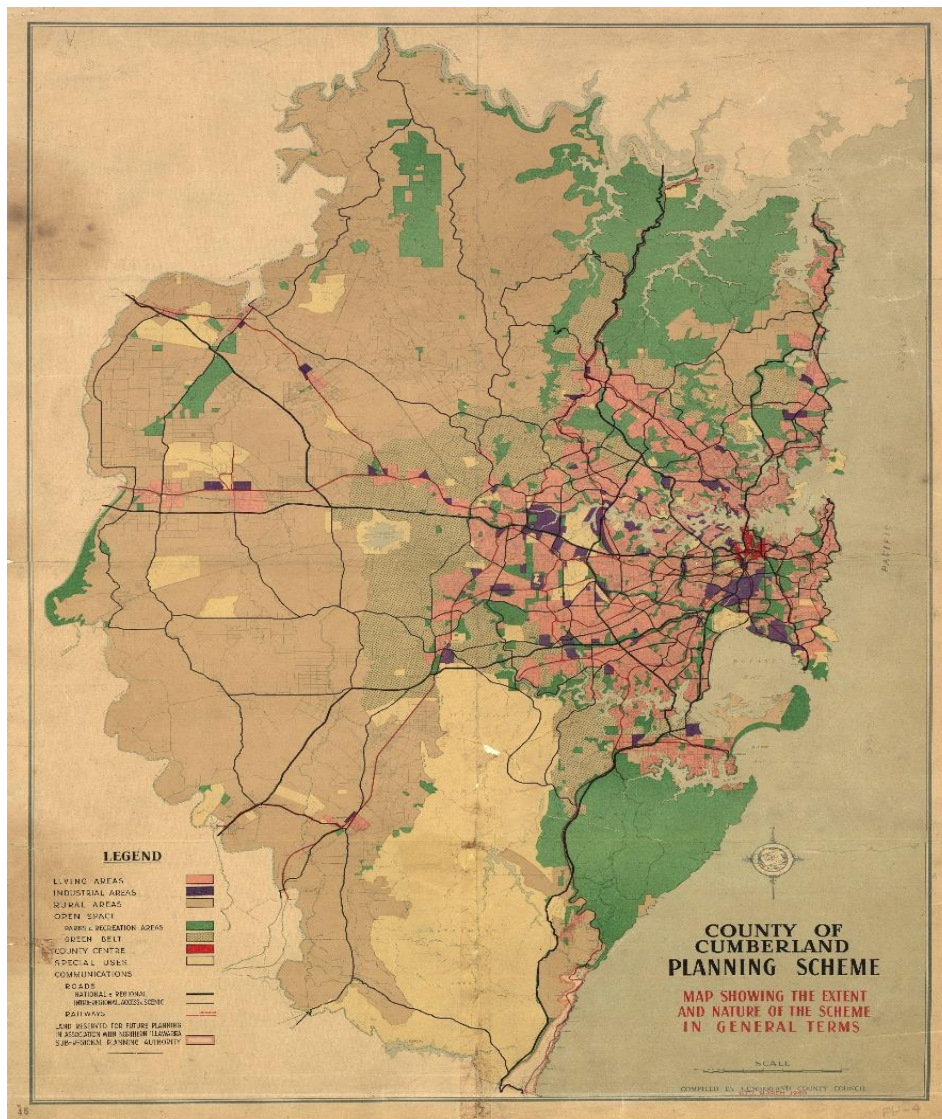
After NSW was founded as a British penal colony in 1788, subsequent governors initiated Sydney's roads, public buildings, and urban amenities in the nineteenth century. The nineteenth century's rapid colonial development and economic growth triggered extreme urbanisation in Sydney. Consequently, the government had to enforce regulatory controls on urban development; thus, some structural control measures were introduced by the *Police Act 1833*, *Streets Alignment Act 1834* and the *Building Act 1837* (Ashton & Freestone, 2008). The *Sydney City Incorporation Act 1842* gave Sydney the city's status, and Sydney City Council was introduced. However, a robust legislative framework was desired due to the nineteenth century's compound economic growth, faster urbanisation and increasing social problems (Ashton & Freestone, 2008). The Commonwealth of Australia was established in 1901 by uniting the six separate British self-governing colonies.

However, despite significant urban growth in the colonial period, the urban developments were criticised for their adverse consequences. Ashton (1993) characterised Sydney as an accidental city due to the colonial form of urban planning and unorganised growth. After the federation, to reshape Sydney's development and produce the maximum residents' wellbeing, a *Royal*

Commission for the Improvement of the City of Sydney and its Suburbs was established between June 1908 and May 1909 (Freestone, 2006). In 1918, a Town Planning Advisory Board was appointed to sketch the urban growth. *The Local Government Act* was reviewed in 1919 to encompass councils' authorities in subdivision and development matters (Ashton & Freestone, 2008). Due to the lack of appropriate facilities, the Greater Sydney Movement (SMH, 1900) demanded legislative changes to resolve the metropolitan planning and administration shortcomings. However, the Sydney movement was entirely unsuccessful (Minnery, 2014) and attained a mere achievement to establish a Town Planning Commission in Sydney in 1922.

After World War II (1939–1945), the world's countries entered a new era of economic growth, which stimulated the rapid expansion of Australian cities. The first metropolitan plan for Sydney, *the Cumberland County Council Planning Scheme* (Figure 2.1), was formed in 1948 under the Local Government's provisions (Town and Country Planning) Amendment Act 1945, which initiated various urban planning initiatives for the urban growth in Sydney.

Figure 2.1: Cumberland County Council Planning Scheme Map



Source: City of Sydney Archives: <https://archives.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/nodes/view/524474>

From 1964 until 1974, the NSW State Planning Authority had extensive obligations for urban planning issues, and direct ministerial control was introduced in the planning system (Spearritt & DeMarco, 1988). In an ongoing process, the State Planning Authority branded various urban planning control opportunities in the subsequent metropolitan strategic plan, the Sydney Region Outline Plan, in 1968 (Ashton & Freestone, 2008). From the early 1970s, the federal government became more engaged with state urban development and established a federal Department of Urban and Regional Development (Freestone, 2007). From 1974 to 1980, there was a revolution in the NSW planning system. As a result, the Planning and Environment

Commission was announced, the *New South Wales Heritage Act (1977)*, the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act (1979)* was introduced, and the Land and Environment Court (1979) was established.

Metropolitan Sydney in the 1980s had a growing demand for housing and land and insufficient services and infrastructure, which pressed the state government to improve its mechanisms for enhancing housing growth (Ashton & Freestone, 2008). In 1980, the Department of Environment and Planning was established. The Department of Planning introduced a new regional strategic plan, *Sydney into its Third Century: Metropolitan Strategy for the Sydney Region*, in 1988 to promote urban growth in Sydney. Consequently, in the 1990s, NSW was very dynamic in urban growth promotion and practised a neoliberal political consensus toward privatisation and deregulation of the planning system (Ashton & Freestone, 2008). The NSW state government introduced several strategies as part of the increasing contribution to urban management. The strategies *Cities for the 21st Century in 1995* and *Shaping Our Cities in 1998*, alongside a new integrated transport strategy in 1995, were initiated to progress urban growth and development in Sydney.

In the first two decades since 2000, the state government began developing new metropolitan strategies following a hybrid governance method to foster urban development and promote Sydney's attractiveness and sustainability (McGuirk, 2005). These strategies included *City of Cities: A Plan for Sydney's Future in 2005*, *Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036 in 2010*, *A Plan for Growing Sydney in 2014*, *Towards our Greater Sydney 2056 in 2016*, and *A Metropolis of Three Cities – The Greater Sydney Region Plan in 2018*. The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act 1979)* has also been amended several times from 2000 to 2020 to centralise the decision-making power and support urban development. The NSW urban planning system and various planning reforms have made many changes and initiated numerous strategies to ensure more efficient urban planning and development. The state has

promoted numerous strategic approaches in managing rapid urban growth. The urban planning directions have always been centred on ensuring urban growth.

The above historical evolution of urban growth and development shows that metropolitan planning in Sydney had been inclined to urban growth and development from the colonial period to the current time. The historical progression provides a broader idea about sequential urban growth; however, Sydney's planning approaches have undergone various changes in characteristics. It is essential to analyse the planning issues' critical features to understand the planning progression. The following section focuses on the key features of urban planning and development in NSW and Sydney.

2.3 Urban planning arrangements in Sydney, NSW

The Australian urban characteristic is “multiscalar and institutionally complex” (Dowling et al., 2019, p. 3). Before moving to the analysis and investigation of the research queries, it is essential to understand Sydney's urban planning and development procedures. Understanding Sydney's urban planning elements will help comprehend Sydney's dynamic forces of urban planning policy initiation and application aspects. In the Australian three-tiered government structure, NSW is one of the states. The authority and responsibilities of the federal and the NSW state governments are stated in the constitution. Metropolitan planning in Australia is entirely the responsibility of state governments (Searle & Bunker, 2010; Stilwell & Troy, 2000). The federal government has minimal involvement in urban planning policies and plans unless any larger metropolitan plan requires financial assistance (Searle & Bunker, 2010). The third level of government, local governments, is not recognised in the constitution, and the state government guides its functions. State planning plans and policies legitimately determine the local government's role in urban planning (Searle & Bunker, 2010).

In Sydney's metropolitan planning, the state government involvement originated from a post-war political and philosophical context (McGuirk, 2005). Searle and Bunker (2010, p. 165) report the state government authorities in metropolitan planning as "a legacy of the 19th-century Australian colonial governments". By citing Butlin et al. (1982), Searle and Bunker (2010) also define the system as a 'colonial socialism' system. Thus, the state government has the sovereign authority to initiate and implement reforms in state and local government functionalities. Therefore, the state governments produce metropolitan plans with the minor consideration of local government desires (Searle & Bunker, 2010). Considering these institutional settings, NSW state governments have been introducing a wide variety of urban planning policies and plans for the growth and development of Greater Sydney.

Sydney's metropolitan strategies are characterised by "a high degree of blueprint-style" of planning to develop urban areas (Searle & Bunker, 2010, p. 167). In the nineteenth century, the town and country planning model was established in response to the industrial city's urban crisis (Gleeson et al., 2004). Sydney's metropolitan planning has experienced the strategic change from the comprehensive spatial blueprint planning tactic of the Cumberland Planning Scheme implemented in 1951 to the contemporary metropolitan strategies (McGuirk, 2005). The "market driven development directed the strategies", and the key objective was the "timely and orderly development" of urban areas (Gleeson et al., 2004, p. 351). In the 1960s, a "rational technocratic" phase was established, and policy and the state planning departments' regulatory systems were adjusted to cope with the shifting socio-economic conditions (Gleeson et al., 2004, p. 351).

In the twentieth century, Sydney's metropolitan planning was directed by environmental protest and lobbying on particular local issues (Kübler, 2007). By citing Beck (1997), Gleeson et al. (2004, p. 352) claim that during the 1970s, town and country planning had been critiqued by the community and professionals for applying "excessively rational institutional goals and

techniques". Consequently, participatory environmental planning laws, environmental effect evaluation, and environmental safeguard actions were instituted in the 1970s (Gleeson et al., 2004). At the end of the 1970s, planning was squeezed amid socio-political and economic criticisms, and the economic issues were triggered as a central challenge to urban and environmental planning and the state governments often recast planning as a financial enablement device throughout the 1980s and early 1990s (Gleeson et al., 2004).

Metropolitan governance and planning in the late 1980s and 1990s were developed as the entrepreneurial city practice, which substituted the government's regulatory styles with facilitative styles to implement strategic planning and bring private investment into line (McGuirk, 2005). Thus, in the 1990s, the NSW state practised a neoliberal political consensus of public-private partnerships to fund planned new infrastructure (Ashton & Freestone, 2008). However, the 1990s started with the deregulation of development control arrangements to shape financial growth (Gleeson et al., 2004). In the early 1990s, the federal government was remarkably interested in metropolitan policy through urban renewal programs (McGuirk, 2005). On the other hand, the 1997 'More Time for Business' policy of the federal government institutionalised the development industry's pressure for deregulated urban planning systems (Gleeson et al., 2004).

Metropolitan planning for the entrepreneurial city swayed Sydney's economic and population expansion (McGuirk, 2005). However, growing rational planning techniques were developed with the substantial investment in new transport structures constructed with public grants to private businesses (Gleeson et al., 2004). Federal government involvement in urban strategies and major infrastructure ambitions changed Australia's metropolitan governance (Searle & Bunker, 2010). Therefore, neoliberal economic advantages became the underpinnings in initiating and reforming urban planning and development (Gleeson & Low, 2000). Consequently, Australian cities, particularly Sydney, received numerous metropolitan planning

strategies and policies to accelerate their urban growth. However, these strategies and policies were criticised for applying political vision and limited democratic practice of community participation (Gurran, 2007; McGuirk, 2005). Urban growth and development strategy implementation often generated community concern and caused community antagonism and resistance (Searle, 2007).

The structure of the Australian government shows that metropolitan planning lies exclusively with the state governments; however, the state and federal governments work together to boost economic and infrastructure development due to political and economic accord. More extensive metropolitan plans and infrastructure projects need financial support from the federal government. The state government has the ultimate authority in metropolitan planning as the successor of the colonial legacy. Consequently, the state government has the autonomous power to initiate and implement urban planning and development policies and their reforms. On the other hand, local governments, the essential partners of governments in implementing government policies at the grassroots level, have been losing their strengths as the state government determines its functions and operations. The state planning tools also regulate the local government role in urban planning. Therefore, the state government is producing urban policies and metropolitan strategies and consequently, NSW state government planning settings have been leading extensive urban growth and development of Greater Sydney. The below sections explain urban planning policy tools and various reforms in Greater Sydney.

2.4 NSW's urban planning settings and policy reforms

In Australia, the primary practice in urban planning has been rational planning with an ever-intensifying and robust response to economic growth (Piracha, 2010). In the last couple of decades, NSW embraced numerous urban planning policy reforms and strategies in shaping cities. The attempts were instigated to create a metropolitan scaled comprehensive development and implement urban policies to fortify desired economic outcomes. Thus, the

substantial political and economic reform inclination is narrowing Australia's planning practices and outcomes (Gleeson & Low, 2000; Piracha, 2010).

However, the community engagement with the planning activity has changed a lot, and lip service has been paid to communicative or collaborative planning (Piracha, Williamson, et al., 2011). In some spaces in Australia, such as Western Australia, communicative planning was given serious attention to ensure community involvement (Hopkins, 2010). In NSW, however, the amendment in planning communication has been altered several times and has only functioned as an excuse for fast-tracking planning (Piracha, Dunn, et al., 2011). In the past decades, repeated attempts were made to increase State power and encourage development in NSW. Consequently, the planning restructurings in NSW have gathered speed and are becoming more persistent and more intense (Piracha, 2010). Several new reforms have continuously been introduced to ensure urban growth throughout the years (MacDonald, 2015).

Urban planning in NSW rests with the state government authority, the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DoPIE). Since the establishment of the department of planning, it has been altered many times. In April 2019, the latest planning department was declared after the 2019 state election by combining the Department of Planning and Environment and the Department of Industry.

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) is the key land use planning law in NSW, demonstrating the regulations for urban planning procedures. It gives directions on planning management, tools, development assessments, building endorsement, and enforcement of related planning issues. The EP&A Act 1979 was introduced, and a special appeal court, *the Land and Environment Court*, was created in 1979 to control land development. The EP&A Act 1979 presented new land-use planning methods, which focused on environment protection, division of authority between state agencies, state and local

governments, and ensured community involvement. However, the Act was a progressive initiative, and it has been amended many times.

The first set of amendments to the EP&A Act 1979 was announced among the various reforms in the Environmental Planning and Assessment (Amendment) Act. New arrangements provided the Minister with authority to control development applications and limit local planning entities' authority to evaluate the state agency's infrastructure development initiatives. In 1993, amendments to the Act heightened the planning minister's authorisation powers in planning and excluded local councils from decision-making in certain instances (Park, 2010). In 1997, crucial changes were first introduced, including the concept of State significant development. The Minister approved developments stated to be "State significant" in an Environmental Planning Instrument (EPI). The ideas of "exempt" and "complying" development were introduced in the same reform's initiative. Small developments approvals were exempted from seeking permission, and slightly more significant complying developments faced more straightforward approval processes (Park, 2010). McGuirk (2005, p. 63) claims that the central planning applications of the 1990s were "neither metropolitan-focused nor policy-oriented". McGuirk (2005) also argues that the reforms focused on streamlining development approval arrangements' planning processes.

The NSW state government established the Growth Centres Commission (GCC) in 2005 to streamline planning, enable land supply, and coordinate new planning with services and infrastructure delivery. The GCC divided growth centres into north-west and south-west Sydney precincts and released structure plans for development over the next 25 to 30 years. The state government abolished the Growth Centres Commission in 2009 due to criticisms. Piracha (2010) evaluated 2004–05 and 2007–08 planning changes and argued that the planning transformations in NSW have gathered speed and are more persistent and more intense. Since then, several new reforms have been introduced. The reform efforts from 2005 to 2011

concentrated on centralising powers and took away argumentative development decisions from local councils, and gave them to expert panels (MacDonald, 2018).

The 2008 amendment to the EP&A Act 1979 brought substantial modification to the legal basis of the land use arrangement, which includes the uniformity of the local planning process through the initiation of the Standard Instrument, the formation of the opportunity to avoid local planning controls through Part 3A of EP&A Act 1979 and the introduction of the Gateway Process to alter local planning procedures. However, Kiely (2009) argues that the amendment centralised the power of the state government regarding development approvals. The community participation opportunities turned out to be a technocratic managerial process on the decision of the Minister for Planning (Lipman & Stokes, 2008). After 2011, the new Liberal-National state government made many changes to the State planning system. In April 2013, the government released a White Paper titled A New Planning System for NSW and related discussion papers.

In addition to the planning department, the state government established the Greater Sydney Commission (GSC) in 2016 as an agency under the Department of Premier and Cabinet by a Parliamentary Act with definite urban planning roles for Greater Sydney. The GSC's key role is to direct urban development in Sydney and be responsible for allocating additional dwellings and populations to different parts of Sydney. Since its establishment, GSC has introduced a metropolitan strategy and regional plans to ensure desired housing and population growth in Greater Sydney.

The NSW state government has continuously revised its planning arrangements to update and modernise its planning system, ensuring simpler and faster decisions and planning outcomes. The various NSW planning statutory mechanisms for urban planning and land use are illustrated below:

Ministerial Directions: Under Section 9.1 of the EP&A Act, the Minister can direct an environmental planning instrument, a public authority, a council, or a person to exercise those directions in any planning decisions to implement certain principles, plans, objectives, or rules.

Independent Planning Commission: The Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) is known as the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) since 2018 to recognise its independence and decision-making role. This independent statutory body was introduced in 2008 to play a significant role to confirm community confidence in urban planning and development decision-making processes.

Local Planning Panels (LPPs): In 2017, the government announced changes in the EP&A Act 1979 to create local planning panels (LPPs), formally known as independent hearing and assessment panels. LPPs are mandatory for all LGAs in Greater Sydney. The LPPs ensured enhanced integrity and transparency in the planning system and confirmed improved urban planning outcomes.

Local Strategic Planning Statement: Amendments to the EP&A Act 1979 in March 2018 introduced the requirements for councils in NSW to prepare Local Strategic Planning Statements (LSPS) to set out the 20-year plan for land use in local precincts. Sydney metropolitan councils have prepared a LSPS during the years 2019-2020. The statements are aligned with the Greater Sydney Commission's Sydney metropolitan regional and sub-regional plans. The statement ensures that the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) development controls are consistent with the LEP as the primary and key instrument to provide council and community direction to local planning development.

Development controls and approvals: A Development Control Plan (DCP) delivers comprehensive planning and design strategies in the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) established by a council. Development controls in a council's LEP and DCP need to be up-to-

date and simple so that residents can understand the local development provisions. Councils must evaluate their LEP every five years to appraise its effectiveness on population, infrastructure, strategic plans and other vital points.

Complying development: Complying development is a joint and fast-track planning and construction approval that a council or a qualified certifier can finalise. This provision was introduced in 2018 as a faster planning approval system to save applicants time and expenses for low impact developments.

The Low-Rise Medium Density Housing Code: The new Low Rise Medium Density Housing Code was introduced in 2018 to increase the supply of housing and affordability, which permits one and two-storey dual residences, manor houses, and terraces to be approved under a fast-track conforming development process.

State Significant Development (SSD) and ending Part 3A: By reforming the EP&A Act in 2011, Part 3A was repealed, and future modifications will be assessed through the State Significant Development and State Significant Infrastructure pathways.

Community Participation Plans: The state government introduced Community Participation Plans (CPPs) in 2018 to ensure the community knew how to participate in planning decisions.

State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP): State environmental planning policy (SEPP) declares that development consent is required before the development can occur.

Local Environmental Plans (LEPs): LEPs provide guidelines for the planning choices of local councils. The LEP is the central planning instrument to shape communities' future and confirm local urban improvement is appropriately made.

Development Control Plan (DCPs): A Development Control Plan delivers comprehensive planning and design rules to back the planning controls in the LEP.

Urban Planning and Development Community Panels: Every council in the Sydney Metropolitan area has a local planning panel to determine contentious, complicated, and sensitive local development applications. The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment appoints suitably qualified independent experts, and councils select community members to the Planning Panels to decide significant planning applications in the area. Five planning panels across metropolitan Sydney evaluate significant development proposals. The Sydney Planning Panels are:

- Sydney Central Planning Panel
- Sydney Eastern City Planning Panel
- Sydney Western City Planning Panel
- Sydney South Planning Panel
- Sydney North Planning Panel

The five independent Sydney Planning Panels adopt development plans in their region. The panels also perform as a planning authority in some outcomes when assigned by the Minister for Planning or the Greater Sydney Commission, carry out rezoning evaluations, and deliver guidance on planning and development substances.

Regional and subregional plans: Greater Sydney Commission divided Sydney Metropolitan into three regions in the latest metropolitan strategy *A Metropolis of Three Cities – The Greater Sydney Region Plan of 2018*. Regional plans are being developed in the strategy to plan for Sydney’s future population’s demands for housing, employment, infrastructure and a healthy environment. Along with the regional plans, in 2018 Greater Sydney Commission also introduced subregional plans by dividing Sydney Metropolitan into five districts. These District Plans are the relevant subregional strategy for the districts. The Greater Sydney Commission formulated the strategy. In Greater Sydney, all planning proposals need to reflect the Region Plan and District Plans.

Due to the expansion of housing, business and migrants across the past 50 years, Sydney and specifically Western Sydney have faced unprecedented urban moves to adapt to growing business and population (Maheshwari et al., 2020). Urban planning policies tend to deepen the area-based discrimination in the Australian city (Yiftachel, 1998). The deep-rooted urban inequality has in Sydney has enormous adverse impacts on disadvantaged residents. The following section introduces urban inequalities in Sydney.

2.5 Urban inequalities in Sydney

Sydney is often ranked in the top ten of the most liveable cities globally in various rankings. It is a modern and vibrant city with a substantial global business and economy concentration and is a popular tourist destination. Sydney is Australia's economic and financial heart, and its continuous growth is essential to support the NSW and national markets, ensure a better life for residents and create even better opportunities for its residents.

Even though continuing urban growth and development are occurring in Greater Sydney, some regions in the city lag in providing their residents with the necessary opportunities of improved jobs, amenities, transport and education, consequently generating urban divides. Wiesel (2018, p. 4) defines the advantaged members of the society as 'elites', 'ruling class', 'upper class', 'super-rich', 'ultra-high net worth individuals' or 'high socio-economic status individuals'. The opposite is lower socio-economic status individuals or working-class people in non-managerial or non-professional jobs. Greater Sydney has a socio-economic spatial divide. Two patterns characterise the spatial divide: the most socio-economic and infrastructure disadvantaged lower-income groups are primarily geographically concentrated in Greater Sydney's western and south-western suburbs; conversely, socio-economically advantaged affluent areas are almost exclusively located in the north and east (Burke & Hulse, 2015; Roggema, 2019; Scheurer et al., 2017; Wiesel et al., 2018). However, increasingly more new housing is being

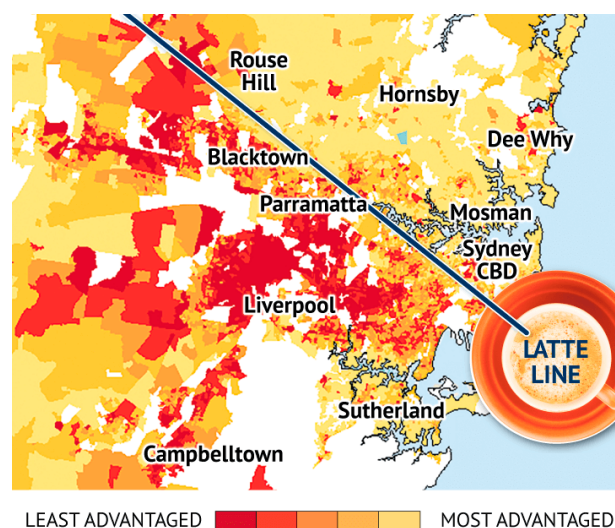
placed in disadvantaged Western Sydney, increasing the urban and residential densities without the provision of sufficient amenities and facilities.

The following subsections describe some key features of the Greater Sydney divide and present socio-economic underprivileged conditions statistics by four subregions (following the subregion, figure 1.2 in chapter one):

2.5.1 Sydney's divide line

Various expressions have characterised the socio-economic divide in Sydney. For instance, journalist Saulwick (2016) termed it the “Latte line” (Figure 2.2) or the “Goat Cheese line”. Chrysanthos and Ding (2017) labelled it the “Red Rooster line”, and Piracha (2016) characterised this as the NIMBY (not in my backyard)-Land and Bogan-Land divide. The ‘haves’ are north of that line, and to the south of that line are mostly ‘have-nots’ (Chrysanthos & Ding, 2017). The socio-economic advantage of the ‘haves’ can be defined as access to material and social resources and the ability to play a part in the community; conversely, the ‘have-nots’ are the underprivileged condition (Gladstone, 2018). Figure 2.2 shows one popular conception of Sydney’s divide as the ‘Latte line’ based on the preference for cafés and coffee.

Figure 2.2: Sydney ‘Latte line’



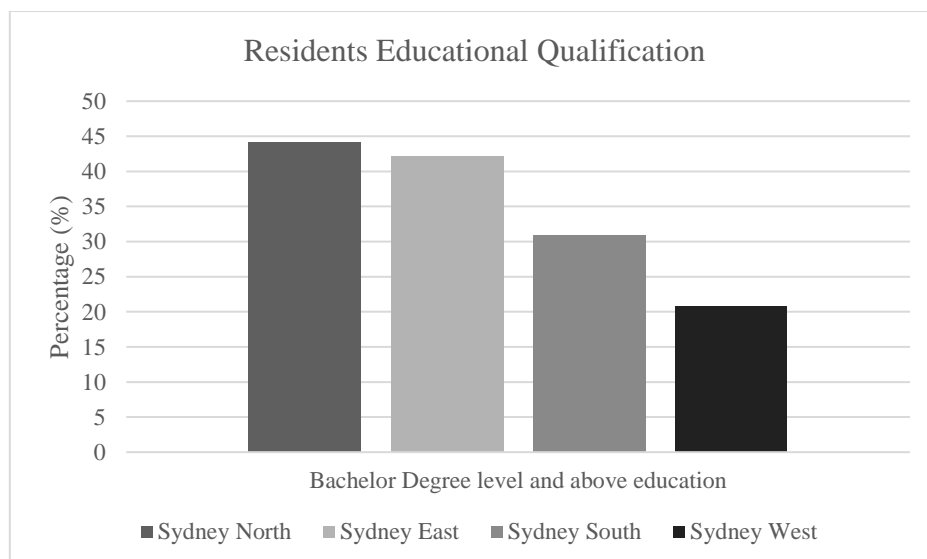
Source: Accessed from <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/sydney-s-latte-line-exposes-a-city-divided-20180327-p4z6et.html>

Also, various socio-economic indicators show that Greater Sydney is divided into privileged and underprivileged areas (Figure 1.3 in Chapter one), and a significant spatial division is existent (Gladstone, 2021; Taylor, 2021). Figure 1.3 in the previous chapter shows that Sydney’s spatial divide ranges from the north-west to the south-east that generally covers the north-west, south-west, central-west and far western suburbs.

2.5.2 Educational disparities

In Sydney, where an individual lives and attends school, whether in the eastern, North Shore, Inner West or the western suburbs, has been an issue for many decades (Campbell, 2003). The level of education qualification varies following their socio-economic and cultural position. The percentage of adults with a bachelor’s degree level and above education qualification is much lower in Western Sydney compared to other parts of Sydney. Figure 2.3 shows that the percentage of bachelor’s degree and above education qualification is significantly lower in Western Sydney than in Sydney’s other areas.

Figure 2.3: Bachelor’s degree level and above qualification by subregion, 2016

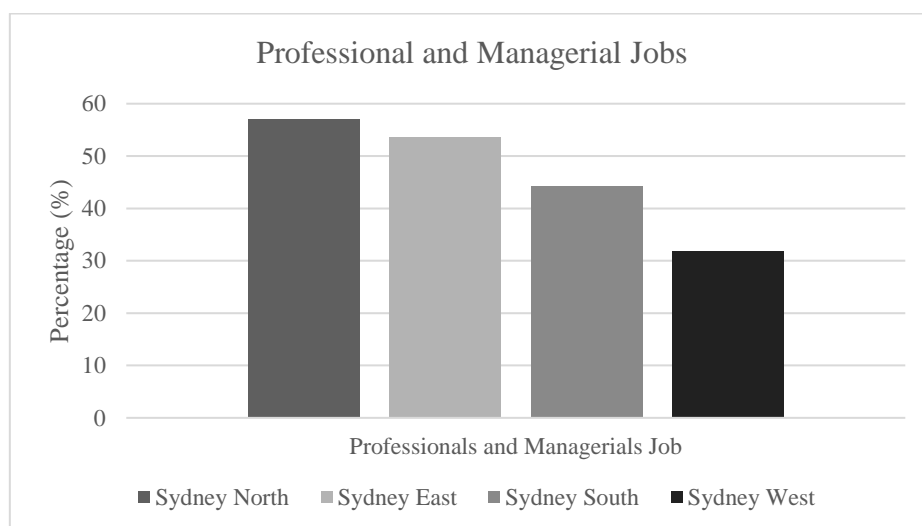


Source: Generated by the author using ABS 2016 Census data.

2.5.3. *Employment divide*

White-collar jobs are located in the north and east of the city (above the dividing line), and blue-collar jobs are found in the south and west (below the dividing line) (Lee et al., 2018). Western Sydney is highly dependent on manufacturing, construction and transport sector jobs and has long-standing job deficiency (Fagan & Dowling, 2005; Forster, 2006). Figure 2.4 shows that the western suburbs of Sydney have a higher proportion of residents in non-professional and non-managerial jobs. The percentage of professional and managerial jobs residents is around 31% in Western Sydney compared to nearly 57% in Sydney North, over 53% in Sydney East, and over 44% in Sydney South.

Figure 2.4: Residents in professional and managerial jobs by subregion, 2016



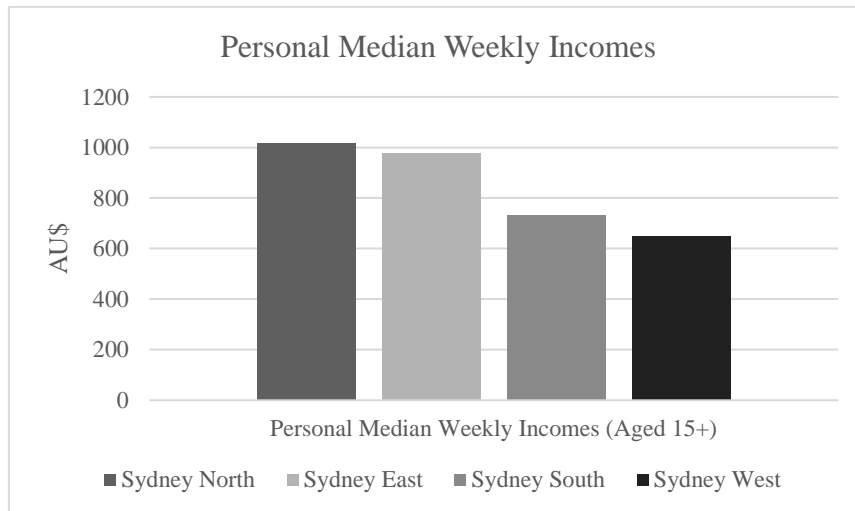
Source: Generated by the author using ABS 2016 Census data.

2.5.4 *Income gap*

Income differences are closely associated with social stratification and hierarchy (Wilkinson, 1997). A study of tax data of 229 Sydney postcodes revealed that Western Sydney fell behind in income growth in the ten years from 2003 to 2013, and jobs had moved east back to the city (Irvine, 2015). The former inner-city low-income areas have been transformed into exclusive enclaves of wealth and opportunity. Western Sydney residents have higher proportions of non-

professional and non-managerial jobs, so the personal median weekly income of people aged 15+ years of AU\$600 for Western Sydney is nearly half the personal median weekly income of around AU\$1000 for Sydney’s northern and eastern suburbs residents (Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5: Median personal weekly incomes in Greater Sydney by subregion, 2016



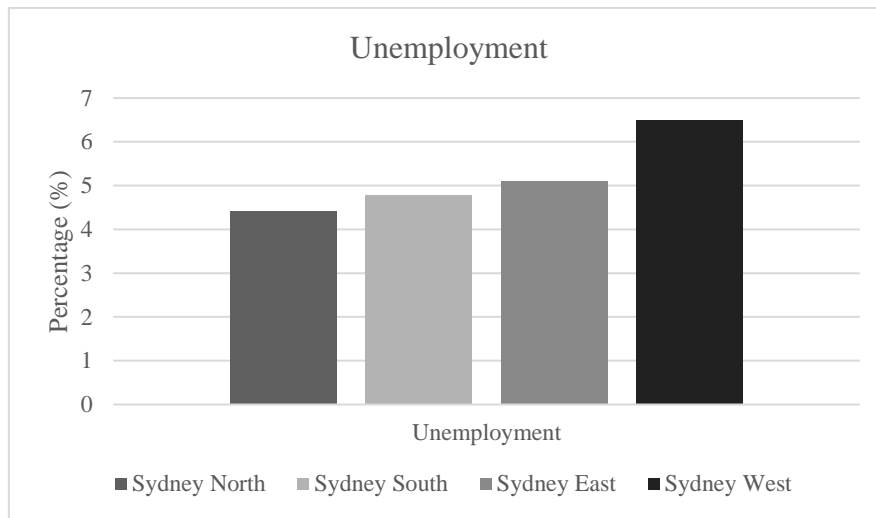
Source: Generated by the author using ABS 2016 Census data.

In addition, Sarkar et al. (2018) allege that the earnings growth rate in the lower socio-economic classes is lower than the higher socio-economic groups level. Thus, the growing inequalities often supplement economic growth in the city and deepen disparities within regions in the same city (Castells-Quintana & Royuela, 2015).

2.5.5 Unemployment

Western Sydney residents face a growing jobs deficit, as the unemployment is much higher than in other parts of Sydney. Figure 2.6 shows that the average unemployment rate in Western Sydney LGAs is higher than in the other regions. Residents also need to travel far to the east or north of Sydney to access higher-quality jobs.

Figure 2.6: Unemployment percentage in Greater Sydney by subregion, 2016



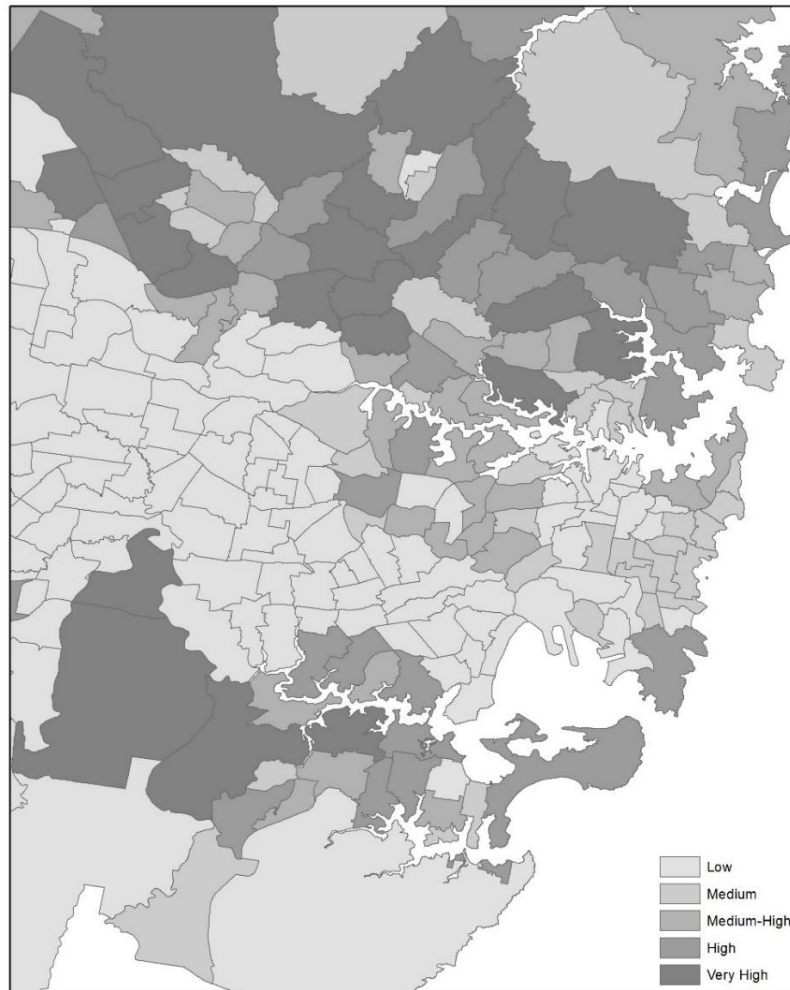
Source: Generated by the author using ABS 2016 Census data.

Even though Western Sydney's population is growing fast, its economy, which relies on industrial employment, is in relative decline; on the other hand, knowledge-based work is increasing in the east in areas surrounding Sydney CBD (Scheurer et al., 2017).

2.5.6 Housing prices divide

The advantaged areas are closer to jobs and good schools and have good access to urban facilities. The advantaged areas are costly and unaffordable for people in disadvantaged areas. The study by Koziol (2018) has pointed to Sydney as the most unaffordable city in Australia. Property prices in advantaged areas are growing faster than in the disadvantaged areas of Greater Sydney because the supply of new dwellings is deficient in affluent areas and the amenities and job opportunities are very high (GSC, 2018a). The housing prices are remarkably higher in advantaged areas; consequently, most Sydney residents cannot afford to buy a property there. Figure 2.7 divides Census 2016 housing data into five categories and confirms that property prices are significantly higher in advantaged areas; consequently, most Sydney residents cannot buy a property closer to jobs, good schools and urban facilities. Property prices in advantaged areas are growing faster because the demand for housing is higher, and the supply is lower.

Figure 2.7: Housing prices by area, 2016



Source: Drawn by the author with ABS Census 2016 data at SA2 (Statistical Area 2) level.

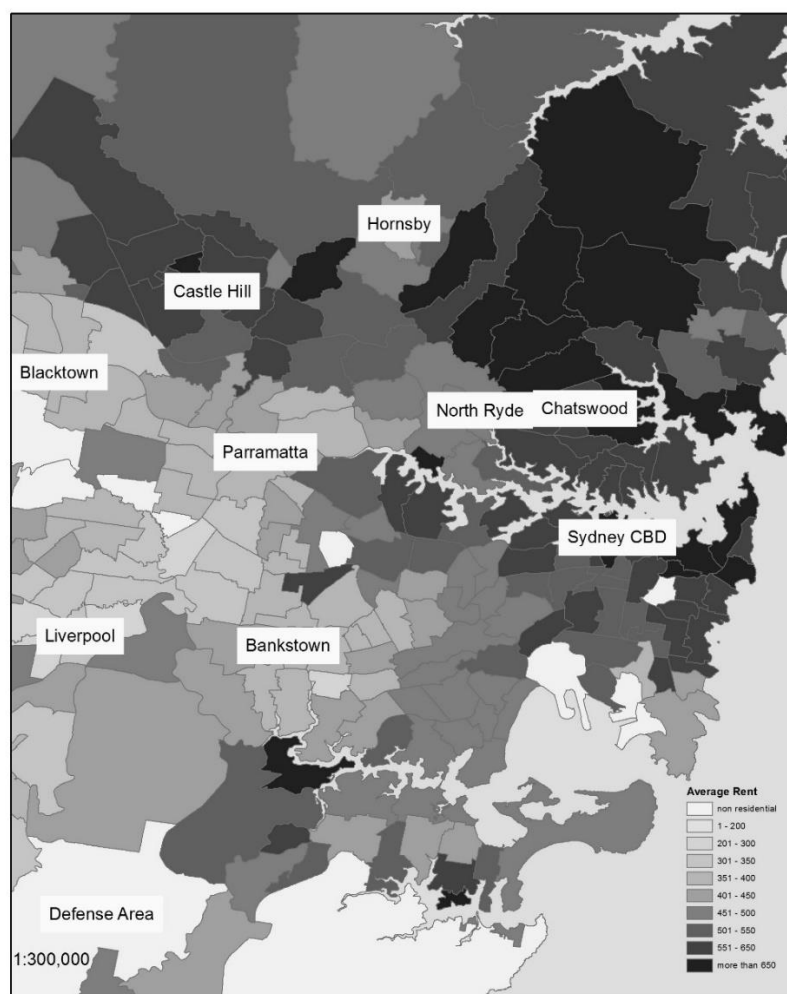
Consequently, due to higher prices, the residents of lower-income areas are increasingly shut out from areas with good access to jobs, transport and services (Troy et al., 2017), and the western part of Sydney is distant from good quality natural and cultural amenities, such as favourable climate, topography, ocean water area, beaches, museums, theatres, galleries and zoos.

2.5.7 Average rent divide

Properties with water (harbour) views and closer to the city are beyond affordability for most Sydney residents. Urban inequality represents an unequal urban setting where impoverished communities are compelled to live on the urban periphery because housing in the city centre is

too expensive (Hyötyläinen, 2019). In Sydney, many underprivileged people are being relocated from Sydney's eastern and northern parts to the western Sydney regions due to affordability and housing choices (Troy et al., 2017). A four-bedroom house in the west is lower in price than a studio flat in the east of Sydney (Taylor & Gladstone, 2018), and the average rent is also significantly higher in the north and east of Sydney (Lee et al., 2018). Figure 2.8 shows that housing rents are significantly higher in privileged areas.

Figure 2.8: Average housing rent by LGA in Greater Sydney, 2016



Source: Drawn by the author with ABS Census 2016 data at SA2 (Statistical Area 2) level.

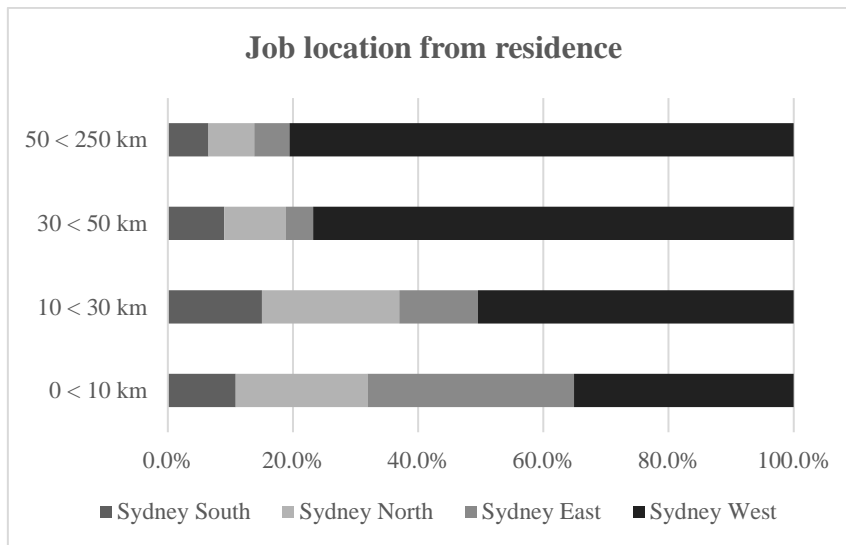
In recent years the property price gap has markedly increased between the eastern and western parts of the city. Less affluent residents cannot obtain property in advantaged areas. As a result, many lower-income families are concentrated in Western Sydney (Lee et al., 2018; Roggema,

2019). They cannot move closer to the city centre because the average rent is not affordable on their income. In addition, Hill et al. (2009) claimed that the prices of lower quality houses are growing faster than higher-quality houses. This indicates that the housing prices in the west have a high chance of increasing and are also becoming unaffordable. Within the housing market competition, the housing market in the west is at greater risk as the prices increase faster during a housing price boom, and in the course of a bust, the prices fell faster in Western Sydney, compared to the more affluent parts of Greater Sydney (Hill et al., 2009).

2.5.8 Long commutes

Western Sydney residents have long commutes for work as the jobs are concentrated in the east or north. State and Commonwealth governments shared priority areas, and public transport, particularly rail, serves central city-focused white-collar (professional) employment. At the same time, roads are congested with lower-income workers making daily trans-suburban commutes (McGuirk & O'Neill, 2002). Hurni (2005) analysed the transport-related social exclusion across Sydney and found that the disadvantaged groups living in areas with limited transport services are excessively represented in Western Sydney. Lee et al. (2018) argued that living in the west is associated with longer commute times. Gleeson and Randolph (2002) termed this 'transport poverty, a widespread problem in western Sydney. Figure 2.9 shows that Western Sydney residents have to travel long distances for jobs, while the residents of eastern Sydney are located significantly closer to the jobs.

Figure 2.9: Distance of job location from the residence by subregion, 2016

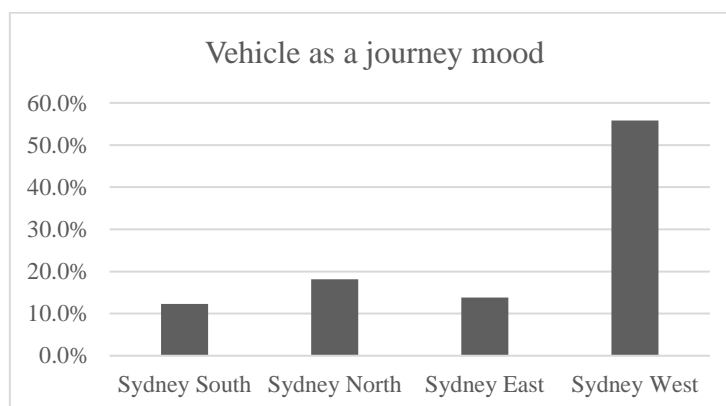


Source: Generated by the author using ABS 2016 Census data.

2.5.9 High dependence on the car

Most workers who reside in suburban areas have jobs in the broader city surroundings, and most commute from one local government area to another generally by car. Western residents are highly dependent on the car as a mode of transport to work, which is reflected in the high levels of traffic congestion, longer travel time, and higher rates of road accidents. Figure 2.10 shows that more than half of the western Sydney workers used a private vehicle as a driver or passenger to work, compared to only 12% of residents in southern Sydney, 13% in eastern Sydney and 18% in northern Sydney.

Figure 2.10: Vehicle as the method of the journey to work by subregion, 2016



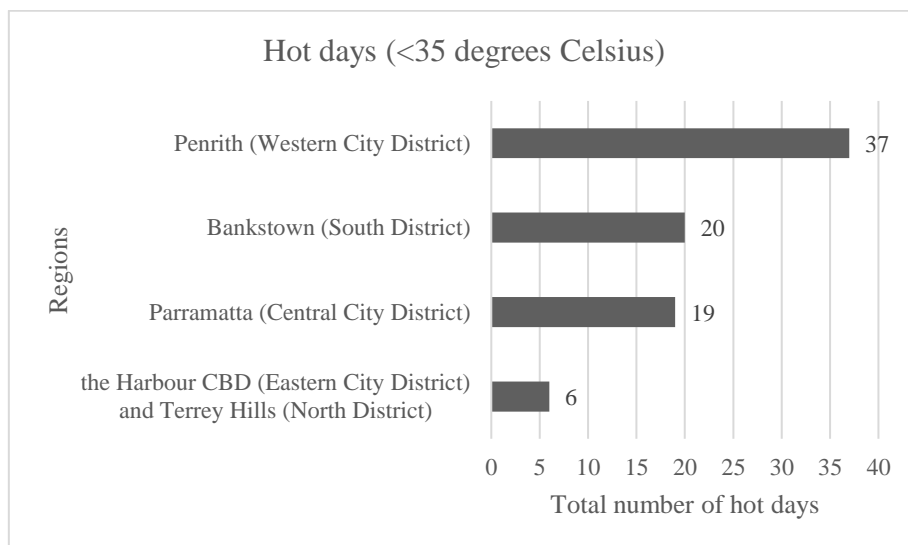
Source: Generated by the author using ABS 2016 Census data.

As car use is high in Western Sydney, people spend less time in green spaces, adversely affecting their health (Roggema, 2019). The use of active transport for the journey to work, meaning trips completed by walking or cycling, is significantly lower in Western Sydney at only 19% compared to 51% in Sydney east (ABS, 2016).

2.5.10 Natural and environmental divide

There are natural and environmental variations across the Sydney basin, and urban heat is a common problem for Western Sydney (Pfautsch et al., 2020). Western Sydney is often 5–10 degrees warmer than the east in summer and has half the yearly rainfall of eastern Sydney (Allchin, 2019). Figure 2.11 shows that during the summer of 2018–19, the total number of hot days over 35 degrees Celsius) was substantially higher in Western Sydney and lowered in the other parts of Sydney (GSC, 2019).

Figure 2.11: Average hot days by selected areas 2018–2019



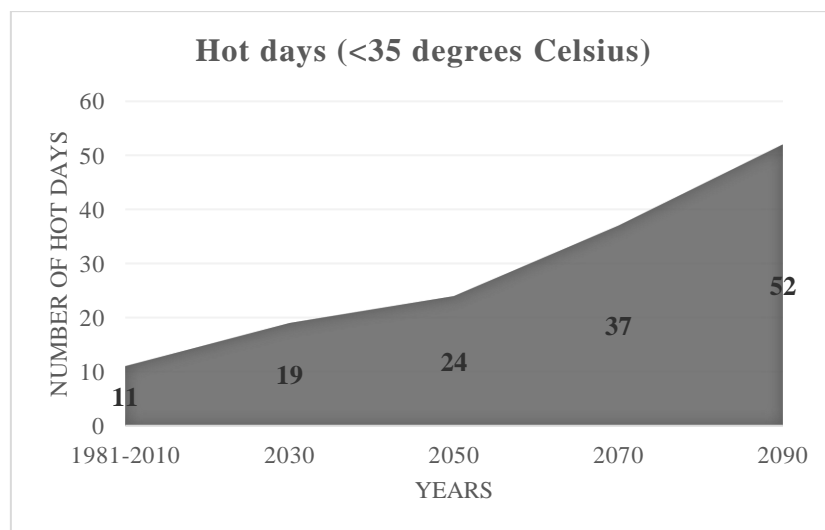
Source: Generated by the author using statistics from GSC (2019).

In addition, tree canopy cover and annual rainfall are also significantly lower in the western regions. GSC (2018a) data shows that the average annual rainfall in Western Sydney is significantly lower than in other areas. In the Western Parkland City areas, the average annual rainfall is 683 mm, compared to 1215 mm in Eastern Harbour City. The existing urban tree

canopy cover is 16% in the Western Parkland City and 17% in the Central River City areas, whereas tree canopy cover in the Eastern Harbour City is approximately double.

The overall effect of climate change on the Sydney metropolitan area significantly shifted during recent decades due to urbanisation (Maheshwari et al., 2020). Climate change effects are not equal in every place, and Western Sydney has more hot days than other areas, and the growing excessive urban heat will have overwhelming effects on Western Sydney’s residents, businesses and environments (Ogge et al., 2018). Figure 2.12 shows that some areas of Western Sydney will face even more severe heat days, and without necessary strategies, the regular number of days over 35 degrees Celsius could rise by up to five times from a historical average of 11 days up to 52 days in 2090.

Figure 2.12: Average hot days 1981–2010 and forecast to 2090 in Western Sydney



Source: Generated by the author using information from Ogge et al. (2018).

The above figures confirm that Western Sydney is underprivileged on various socio-economic dimensions. Western Sydney residents are mainly of a working-class background with significant employment in heavy industries and vocational trade, low annual income, a growing jobs deficit, long travel distances to the east or north of Sydney to access higher-quality jobs, and growing climatic disadvantages. The affluent northern and eastern regions of Greater

Sydney have managerial and professional class jobs, higher income growth, low unemployment and a better quality ecosystem.

Due to the population pressure, subsequent governments have initiated various strategies to expand Sydney. Due to the coastline and topography, the city has expanded to the west and the western suburbs now accommodate millions of people. The thesis predominantly concentrates on Western Sydney's socio-economic adversity regarding Sydney's intra-urban inequalities and urban development consequences. A brief outline of Western Sydney's urban growth and disadvantage is provided to understand the background of the research. The below sections present urban extension and recent urban development initiatives in Western Sydney to help understand the changing urban aspects of Western Sydney and outline how the years of planning expanded the city of Sydney westwards to Western Sydney.

2.6 Western Sydney's growth from the 18th to 20th Century

2.6.1 Eighteenth-century: Western Sydney has become the site of Sydney's urban growth. The research focuses on Sydney's urban inequalities concentrating on Western Sydney's underprivileged condition. Thus, it is essential to understand Western Sydney's urban growth-related basic information, including its general and settlement history, to establish a clear concept of its urban development.

Western Sydney has a long history of urbanisation and has gradually become the largest metropolitan area of Sydney. In 1788, the County of Cumberland was established, covering the Greater Sydney metropolitan areas. From the colony's early days in 1788, the availability of land that could be cultivated for food production attracted inhabitants to move from the initial settlement at Sydney Cove to areas further west, which led to new settlements in the County of Cumberland.

Parramatta (Rose Hill), established in 1788, is the oldest urban centre of the Greater Western Sydney region and the second oldest city in Australia. In 1788, Governor Arthur Phillip preferred Parramatta as the most suitable place for extensive farming as the Sydney Cove region was unsuitable for agriculture (Heaton, 1879). Auburn, Baulkham Hills, Greystanes, Nepean River, Penrith, Prospect and West Pennant Hills sites were established before 1800 (Heaton, 1879; Stacker, 2014). In 1799 Governor John Hunter built Old Government House at Parramatta to initiate the commercial development of the Parramatta district.¹¹

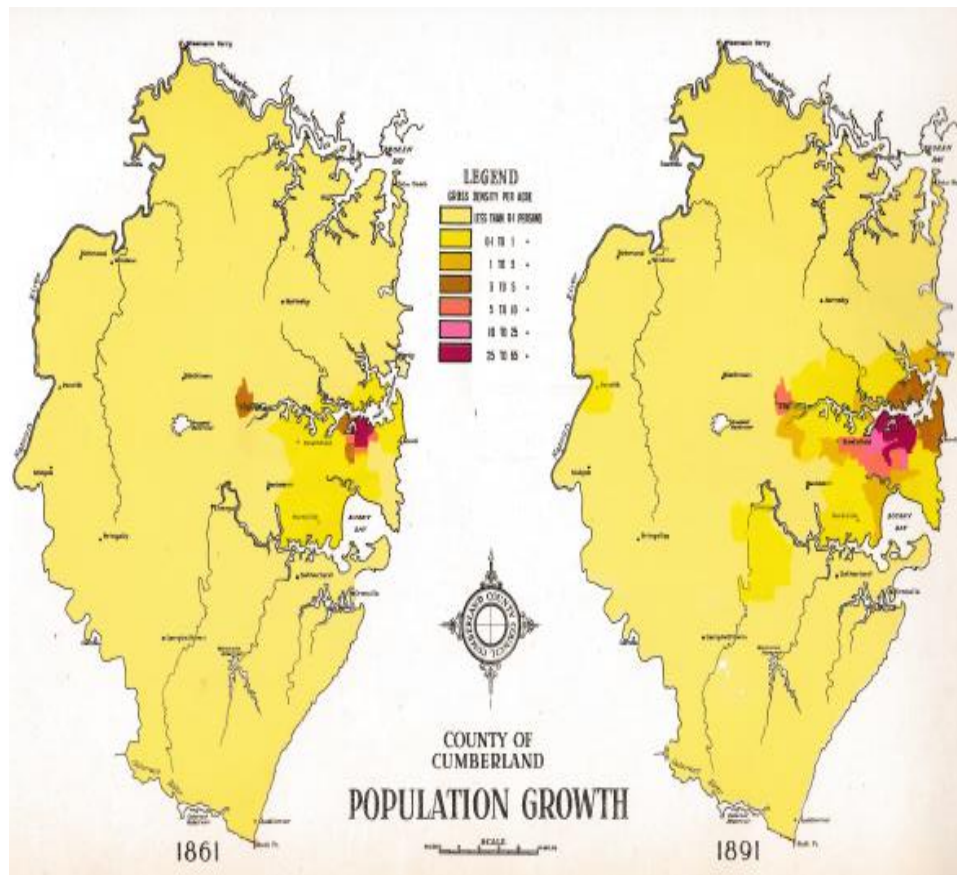
2.6.2 Nineteenth-century: In 1803, a government stock farm was formed in Riverstone, Marsden Park and Smithfield areas due to favourable soil and reliable water source. Windsor was the fourth British settlement zone in Australia, and the government started to allow settlers to live in the area in 1804 (Stacker, 2014).

Parramatta Road (A44), initiated in 1811, likely based on Indigenous tracks, is the main connecting road to the heart of Greater Western Sydney (Broomham, 2001). It is also the major connecting road between Sydney CBD and the western regions. Because of commercial movement, transport connection and availability of land, western Sydney areas started to grow fast.

Due to a high rate of immigration, the population of NSW reached 154,000 by 1846. Between 1851 and 1860, 123,000 people migrated to NSW and suburban development increased from the middle of the century (Cumberland County Council, 1948). Migration increased, and between 1871 and 1890, 274,000 new residents were added to the total population. Figure 2.13 shows the widespread population growth in Cumberland County during 1861 and 1891.

¹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greater_Western_Sydney

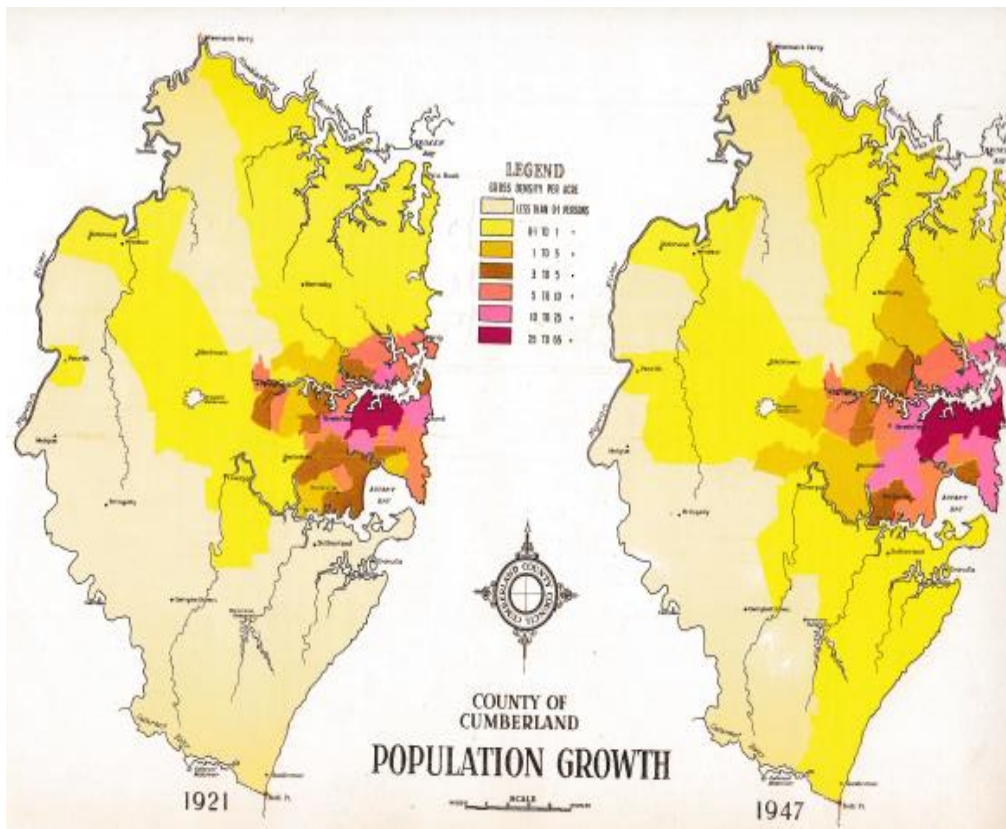
Figure 2.13: Population growth in County of Cumberland in 1861 and 1891



Source: County of Cumberland Planning Scheme 1948.

2.6.3 Twentieth century: The post-World War I economic growth and flow of immigration in the first twenty years of the twentieth century further dispersed the Sydney population to the western suburbs. The upgraded transport system in 1926 increased the population in the Canterbury and Bankstown areas of the Greater Western Sydney suburbs. Subsequently, over the seven years to 1933, there was a tremendous population increase on the Sydney fringes of Bankstown, Sutherland, Fairfield and Holroyd due to urban growth. Figure 2.14 shows that the total NSW population increased by 60% from 1,061,000 in 1921 to 1,702,000 in 1947; however, there were a definite reduction of population in the inner suburbs and a growth of population in other areas, especially in the western suburbs (Cumberland County Council, 1948).

Figure 2.14: Population growth in County of Cumberland during 1921 to 1947



Source: County of Cumberland Planning Scheme 1948.

After World War II, the Greater Western Sydney region became one of the most populated and urbanised areas in the country (Australian Heritage Commission, 1981). Western Sydney suburbs mainly started to grow when post-war migration plans fulfilled the requirement for industrial labour, and the demand for housing surpassed housing supply after World War II (Gwyther, 2008). There was extensive suburban development in the 1950s and 1960s due to industrial growth. Blacktown, Campbelltown and Liverpool areas were settled as satellite cities with a robust presence of working-class and industrial services (Pollon, 1988). In the two decades following World War II, around 2.5 million migrants settled in Australia, mainly from the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Malta, Italy, Greece and the former Yugoslavia (O'Farrell, 1992).

The low-priced rent, the presence of established ethnic communities and the declining inner suburbs aided Western Sydney as a first-stage settlement area for post-war immigrants, predominantly from southern Europe (Tamis, 1997). Slum clearance from the inner suburbs and gentrification from the 1960s forced lower-skilled immigrants to move to low-priced public and private housing in the new suburbs of Sydney's west (Gwyther, 2008). The influx of immigrants in the 1960s and 1970s populated the western suburbs, and migrants mainly from south-east Asia and the Middle East settled in Bankstown, Cabramatta, Lidcombe and the surrounding suburbs (Beech, 2015; Kass, 2008).

Although significant urban growth and development occurred in western Sydney, the region was behind in providing residents' facilities. For instance, there was no teaching hospital until Westmead Hospital was founded in 1978, and there was no tertiary studies opportunity until Western Sydney University was established in 1989 (Gwyther, 2008). Since then, no full university has been established; however, there are some campuses of other universities.

Due to the mounting pressure of high density in existing areas, almost all the metropolitan strategies had additional housing and density targets for Western Sydney.

2.7 Contemporary (21st Century) urban development in Western Sydney

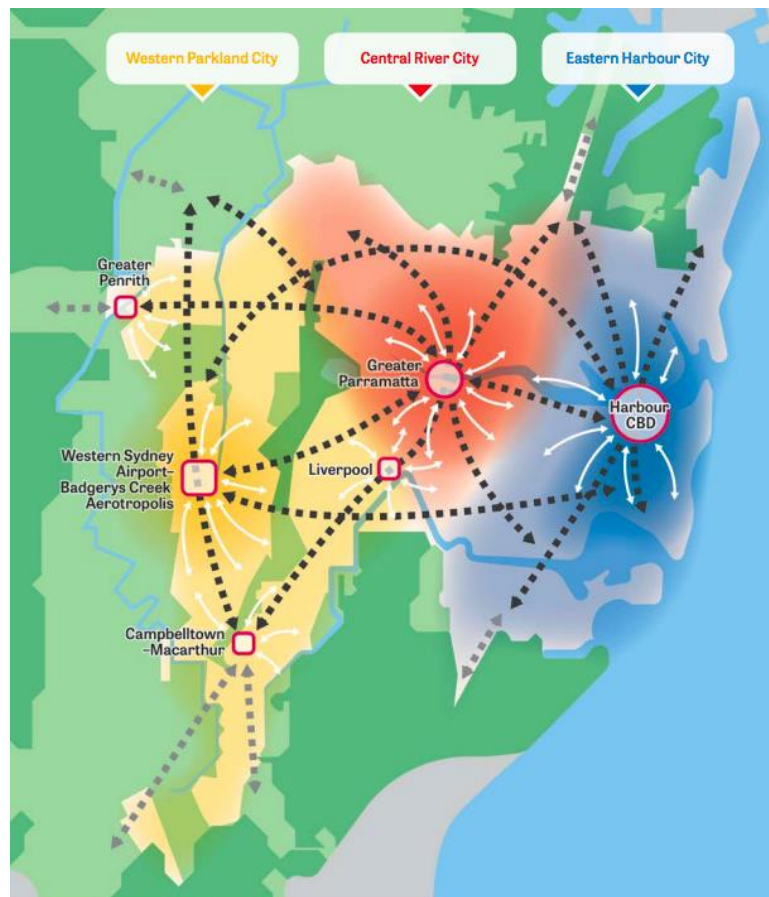
The City of Cities strategy of 2005 aimed to make Sydney a city with strong regional five urban cities or centres, including Parramatta, with the required socio-economic and urban amenities for their local populations. Later in 2018, the *Greater Sydney Region Plan, A Metropolis of Three Cities*, identified the objective of three cities or regions in Greater Sydney to ensure urban facilities in the subregions. The below sections describe the recent planning initiatives for western Sydney.

A Metropolis of Three Cities, 2018: The NSW state government's latest metropolitan strategic plan, the *Greater Sydney Region Plan, A Metropolis of Three Cities*, aims to create

three cities: the Western Parkland City (based on the planned Western Sydney Airport), the Central River City (based on Parramatta) and the Eastern Harbour City (based on Sydney CBD) (Figure 2.15). It is envisioned that most residents would live within 30 minutes of work, education, health and urban facilities. The Western Parkland City and the Central River City are mainly within the Greater Western Sydney region.

The Metropolis of Three Cities strategy aims to develop the Central River City with widespread infrastructure and facilities. The enhanced facilities and the emerging Western Parkland City aim to form an emerging new city (GSC, 2018a).

Figure 2.15: The Metropolis of Three Cities, 2018



Source: GSC (2018a), p. 7.

The Central River City: The Central River City, which includes the Greater Parramatta and Olympic Peninsula Economic Corridor, is positioned as a centre of excellent health,

education and research institutes. It is intended to increase Central River City's economy significantly due to its adjacent geographic location to the Sydney CBD and connection to the Greater Sydney areas. The population of Central River City is estimated to grow from 1.3 million people to 1.7 million people over the next 20 years (GSC, 2018a). The Central River City is anticipated to be supported by the Parramatta Light Rail, the Sydney Metro West rail link and the Sydney Metro Northwest rail link.

The Western Parkland Sydney: The Western Parkland City includes Liverpool, Greater Penrith and Campbelltown–Macarthur areas of the Greater Western Sydney region. The city is expected to be constructed on the new international Western Sydney Airport and Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis. It is intended to be a polycentric city and anticipated that the Western Economic Corridor would attract substantial defence and aerospace activities and add to business and employment (GSC, 2018a). The city will contain additional population and housing around centres. The population is expected to increase from 740,000 in 2016 to 1.1 million by 2036 and around 1.5 million by 2056 (GSC, 2018a).

Western Sydney District Plan: Greater Sydney Commission has introduced the sub-regional metropolitan plan in Sydney that spread across five districts: Western City District, Central City District, Eastern City District, North District and South District.

The Western City District covers the Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Liverpool, Penrith and Wollondilly local government areas (Figure 2.16). The 40-year vision Western City District Plan is framed in 2018 with the Metropolis of Three Cities Western Parkland City. It is a 20-year district-level plan for western Sydney to achieve economic, social and environmental growth and a guide for executing the *Greater Sydney Region Plan, A Metropolis of Three Cities* (GSC, 2018b).

Figure 2.16: The Western City District areas



Source: GSC (2018b).

Western Sydney City Deal: The Australian federal government initiated the Smart Cities Plan in 2016 to improve the economy of Australian cities in the twenty-first century. The Australian Government (2016, p. 4) Plan identified a vision for the cities and set a plan for broadening cities' potential by commissioning three pillars: Smart Investment, Smart Policy and Smart Technology. The Plan introduces City Deals to use the full potential of cities by bringing together federal, state and local governments, the public and the private business industries.

The Western Sydney City Deal is a 20-year agreement between the Australian government, NSW state government, and local governments signed in March 2018 to implement the vision of the Western Parkland City (Western Sydney City Deal, 2018). The Deal intends to change the Western Sydney region through investment and planning reform, safeguarding better access

to job, housing, health, education and other urban amenities. The Deal includes Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Liverpool, Penrith and Wollondilly councils. The Western Sydney City Deal contains 38 commitments with the core goals of creating the 30-minute city, producing 200,000 jobs, skilling residents in the region, and synchronising and modernising urban growth through partnership (Australian Government, 2018).

Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis: Greater Sydney's second airport, Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport, began construction in September 2018 and aims to commence operation in 2026. The Australian government is capitalising up to \$5.3 billion on the airport project, and the airport is positioned as a transformational infrastructure project that will produce economic growth, deliver jobs, and create opportunities for Western Sydney region residents, and finally will meet Sydney's increasing aviation demands (Australian Government, 2020).

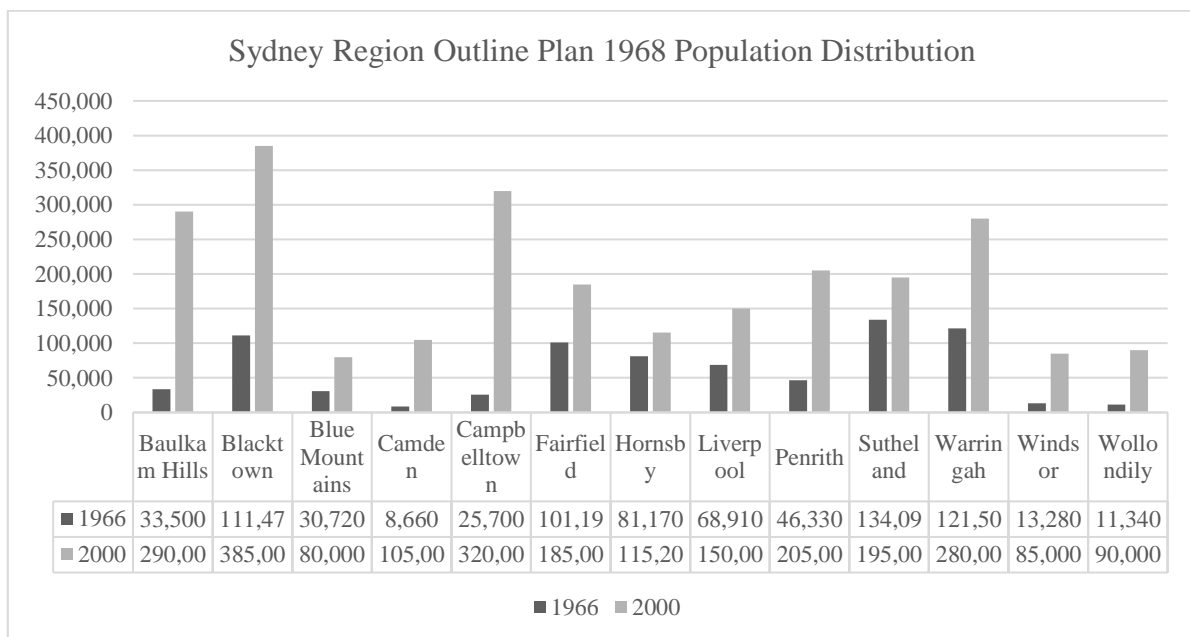
The NSW state government initiated the 11,200-hectare Western Sydney Aerotropolis, Greater Sydney's latest economic hub at Western Parkland City. An aerotropolis is an airport-centred economy and a city region with infrastructure which contains aviation-orientated business and residential development (NSW Government, 2018). Western Parkland City will have 1.1 million people by 2036, and the Aerotropolis will be 'a game-changer' for Western Sydney (NSW Government Planning Portal, 2020). It will link to Greater Parramatta and the Harbour CBD to realise the metropolis of three cities vision for Greater Sydney and generate openings in advanced manufacturing, agribusiness, aerospace, defence, freight, tourism and more areas.

Brand new Bradfield City: A new Sydney city centre and 'hi-tech' city named Bradfield will be built adjacent to Sydney's second airport at Western Sydney's Bringelly area in Sydney's south-west. It will be the third city, alongside the other city centres of Sydney and Parramatta.

2.8 NSW metropolitan strategies and Western Sydney, a destination of density

In Sydney, mass urban growth started with the 1948 County of Cumberland Plan, which relocated residents from inner-city slums to the west (GSC, 2018a). The plan established the initial housing lands in the green belt. The 1968 Sydney Region Outline Plan, which replaced the Cumberland Plan, acknowledged the higher number of jobs and other commercial activities concentrated in the inner areas and aimed to solve the distance to work problem by balancing the distribution of jobs. However, it placed high population and housing in Sydney’s south-west, west and north-west instead of generating more employment. It directed the west as an extended urban area to provide accommodation for the additional population of Sydney. Figure 2.17 shows the population growth (1966–2000) anticipated to be housed in Sydney was primarily in the west areas (State Planning Authority of NSW, 1968).

Figure 2.17: Population growth 1966–2000

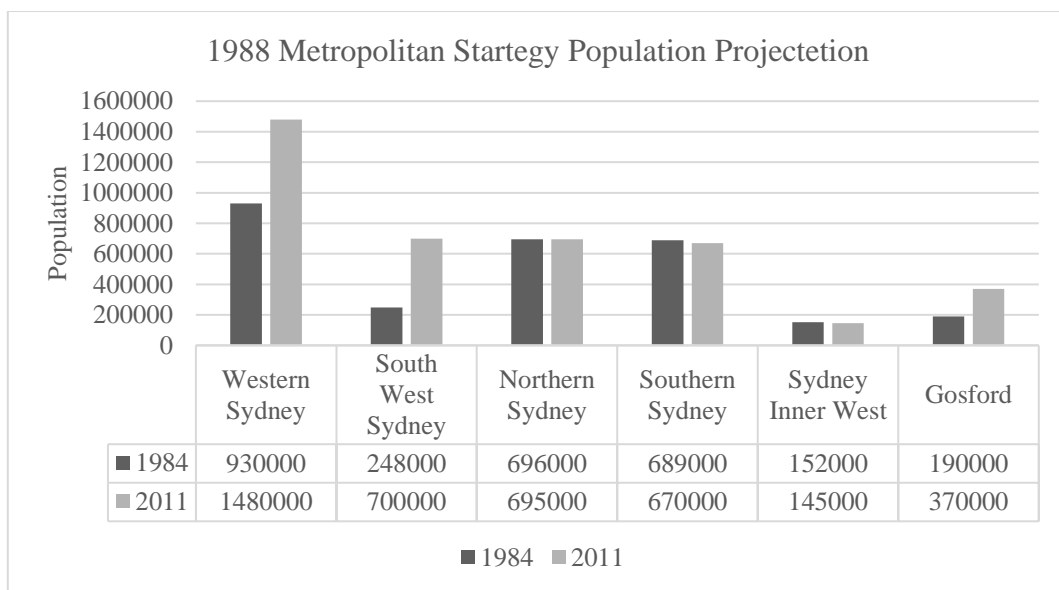


Source: Generated by the author using statistics from the Sydney Region Outline Plan (State Planning Authority of NSW, 1968).

Following the previous approaches, the subsequent strategies, including the 1988 plan ‘*Sydney into its Third Century*’ and the 1995 strategy ‘*Cities for the Twenty-First Century*’, also

identified wide-ranging growth for new Western Sydney zones in the north-west, west, and south-west (Figure 2.18). The strategic aim for extensive growth adopted a compressed urban extension with renewed population and housing targets. The Sydney region was targeted to have a population of 4.5 million by 2011, and more than 588,000 new dwellings were needed (DoP&E, 1988).

Figure 2.18: Sydney into its Third Century 1988 population target



Source: Generated by the author using statistics from the Sydney into Its Third Century: Metropolitan Strategy for the Sydney Region of 1988

In the 2005 metropolitan strategy ‘City of Cities – A Plan for Sydney’s Future’, the government planned for almost 400,000 new dwellings and over 200,000 new jobs in Western Sydney by 2031 (DoP&E, 2005). However, the proportion of new dwellings in the western Sydney regions was higher than the target for the percentage of new jobs. The dwellings target was much higher in line with Western Sydney’s job targets than other parts of Sydney (Table 2.1). The plan branded a corridor from Macquarie Park through the CBD to Sydney Airport as the ‘Strong Global Economic Corridor’ of intense jobs and movement centres while Western Sydney was stressed as a place for business and manufacturing warehousing and transport activities (DoP&E, 2005, p. 8).

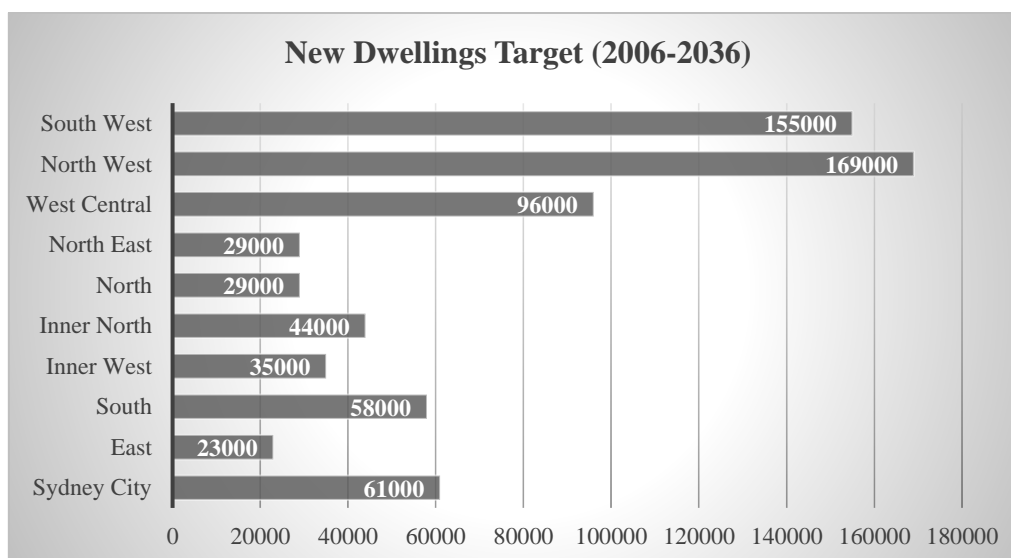
Table 2.1: New dwellings and jobs target in 2005 Metropolitan Strategy

Subregion	New Dwellings Target	New Jobs Target	New Jobs target as a percentage of new Dwellings
East	20,000	17,500	87.5 %
South	35,000	21,000	60 %
Inner North	30,000	54,000	180 %
North East	17,300	16,000	92.49 %
West Central	95,500	35,000	36.65 %
North West	140,000	99,000	70.71 %
South West	155,000	80,000	51.61 %

Source: Generated by the author using statistics from the Metropolitan Strategy ‘City of Cities – A Plan for Sydney’s Future’ 2005, p. 64.

The subsequent strategy, ‘Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036’ in 2010 that targeted 770,000 new dwellings in NSW (DoP&E, 2010), also positioned most new dwellings in Sydney’s south-west, north-west and west-central (Figure 2.19).

Figure 2.19: 2010’s ‘Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036’ dwellings target



Source: Generated by the author using statistics from the Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036 (2010), p. 115.

The state government introduced another metropolitan strategy, ‘A Plan for Growing Sydney’ 2014, which highlighted Western Sydney as a place of Sydney’s most incredible opportunities

as well as many challenges (DoP&E, 2014). Also, the plan recognised that Western Sydney had a shortage of well-paid knowledge-based jobs, the workforce had to travel to other parts of the city for work, and high-value jobs were located in other parts of Sydney, and poor transport network was a barrier (DoP&E, 2014). Over the next 20 years, the number of people in Western Sydney will grow more quickly than in other parts of Sydney, and greenfield housing expansion will mainly be concentrated in the North West Growth Centre and South West Growth Centre of Western Sydney. However, the plan failed to provide any local based strategic plan to resolve the earlier mentioned problems of Western Sydney. Although Western Sydney was cited as a disadvantaged place, more people and higher density are projected for the Western Sydney growth centre.

Greater Sydney Commission introduced the first regional plan, '*A Metropolis of Three Cities*', in 2018, presenting a vision and pioneering activities for managing Greater Sydney's urban growth. The Commission has lodged Western Sydney City Deal in partnerships with the Australian Commonwealth and the NSW state and local governments to create the third city in Western Sydney around the Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis (GSC, 2018a). The latest metropolitan strategy and the District Plans have set a target of 725,000 dwellings for the next 20 years. Central River City and Western Parkland City together form Greater Western Sydney that received the most density of the urban growth and development strategy.

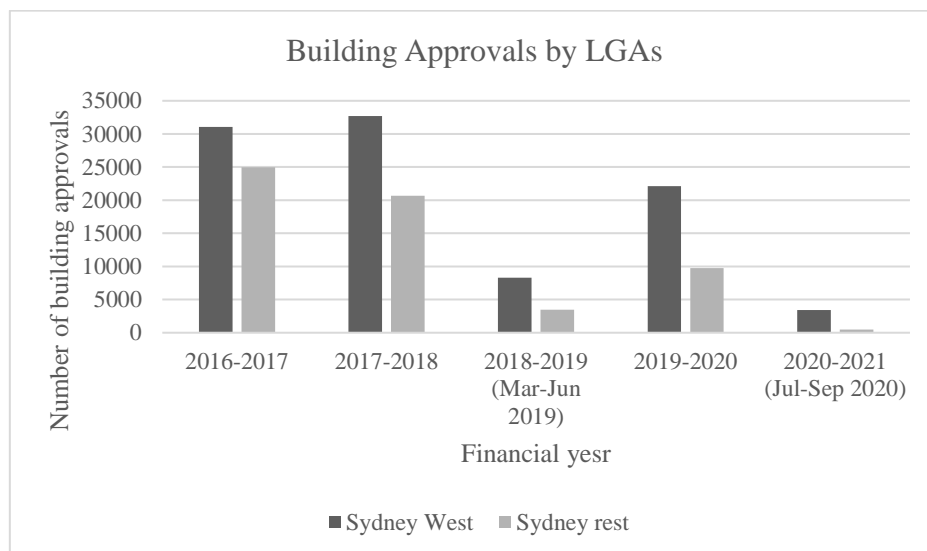
Metropolitan strategic policy for Sydney has always aimed to stimulate urban development. The purpose of the state metropolitan strategies has been to increase density and improve related infrastructure. The NSW metropolitan strategies were successful at accommodating the growing population and housing in Western Sydney. By following the urban expansion, the western suburbs of Sydney have come to contain large areas of disadvantaged areas and low-income residents. Thus, Sydney has become an increasingly unequal urban setting where most metropolitan populations face place-based disparities.

2.9 Uneven housing geography and locational disadvantage in Western Sydney

Greater Sydney's place-based opportunities are also differentially divided with the existing urban divide, causing added adverse effects for Western Sydney neighbourhoods. Lower-income residents are being excluded from the advantaged east and north of Sydney due to higher rent. Consequently, the lower-income residents are increasingly moving out from the areas with good access to jobs, transport and services. Most of the new dwellings and population are located in Western Sydney, away from natural and cultural amenities.

ABS data on building approvals in Greater Sydney for the latest five financial years shows that Western Sydney has been receiving most new housing. In the financial year 2016–17, of the total 55,995 buildings approval in Greater Sydney, 55.44% of the approvals were in the Western Sydney region (Figure 2.20). The proportion of approvals which were in Western Sydney was also higher in the subsequent years: 61.30% in 2017–18, above 70% in 2018–19, nearly 70% in 2019–20 and around 88% in July to September 2020 in the current 2020–21 financial year.

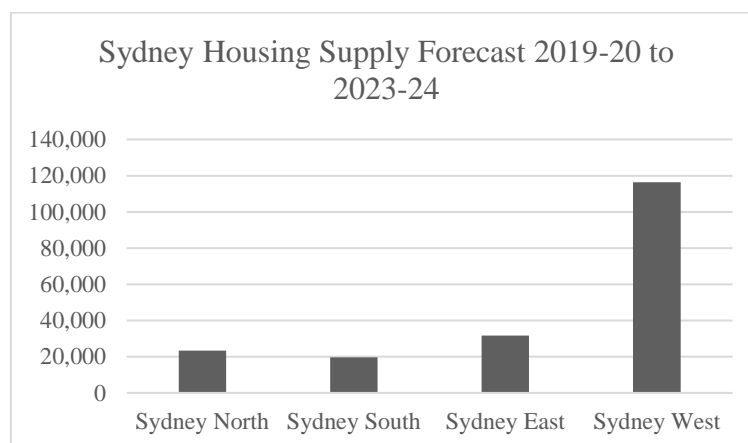
Figure 2.20: Building approvals in Greater Sydney LGAs, 2016-2021



Source: Generated by the author by using Australian Bureau of Statistics data (http://stat.data.abs.gov.au/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=ABS_BLDG_APPROVALS_LGA201)

The population of Greater Sydney is anticipated to grow by 1.7 million by 2036. The NSW government has estimated that 725,000 additional homes would be needed to accommodate the additional population (GSC, 2018a). Also, the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DoPI&E) placed bigger targets for housing growth (DoPI&E, 2021b). However, both the GSC and DoPI&E target Western Sydney for most new housing. DoPI&E data clearly shows that more and more housing is being placed in the western regions compared to other parts (Figure 2.21). The Greater Sydney Housing Supply Forecast 2019–20 to 2023–24 by LGAs demonstrates that 61% of new housing will occur in Western Sydney LGAs compared to 17% in Sydney east, 12% in Sydney north and 10% in Sydney south.

Figure 2.21: Greater Sydney housing supply forecast 2019–20 to 2023–24 by subregion



Source: Generated by using DoPI&E data (<https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/>).

The above data shows that more and more dwellings are being built in disadvantaged Western Sydney. Overall, 61% of the new dwellings are being targeted to be built in Sydney’s west. Thus, it can be argued that due to shortages of housing in other parts of Sydney, people are forced to live in the western region, thus creating locational deprivation.

Deprivation is the condition of a disadvantaged situation in a community. Residents are considered deprived if they lack the required facilities and opportunities to maintain their livelihoods. Housing location is an essential factor and an issue that affects day to day life. Housing location disassociated from facilities and opportunities may lead to deprivation.

Housing location has complex effects on the western Sydney areas residents. Evidence also confirms that residents living in Western Sydney face locational disadvantages regarding job location as they travel further for employment. People have been pushed to shift to the Western Sydney suburbs, and they have been positioned as socially deprived and disadvantaged as they are increasingly distanced from opportunities.

2.10 Discussion and analysis

Due to rapid urban development, Greater Sydney has been experiencing a great deal of change in its urban settings and housing location. The continuing urban growth in Sydney has produced both enormous benefits and growing urban inequality. Different regions in the city are divided by the convenience of socio-economic opportunities, and western parts of Sydney are identified as separate from the eastern and northern parts of Sydney. Urban strategic development has identified Sydney's eastern and northern areas as Sydney's Global Economic and Freight Corridor and home of the majority of knowledge-intensive jobs that have the offices of global businesses, numerous professional service industries, Sydney's four major universities and research organisations, key hospital precincts, engineering consultancies, information technology houses and many other innovative enterprises (Vogel et al., 2020). The uneven distribution of jobs, infrastructure and services across urban areas inevitably results in inequalities in access to resources such as high-quality internet, education facilities, health services and public transport (Baum et al., 2004; Lee et al., 2018; Smith et al., 2019; Wiesel et al., 2018).

In addition, the housing prices and rents are much higher in the economic, business and education hubs of Sydney (Taylor & Gladstone, 2018), and the lower-income residents are being driven further from areas with access to good quality jobs, convenient transport network, and plenty of local services (Troy et al., 2017). Moreover, the housing supply is low, and the housing price and rent are higher in the non-western parts of Greater Sydney. The residents of

Sydney are pushed to buy or rent a dwelling in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods concentrated in Western Sydney. Whether in rent or mortgage payment, housing cost is a crucial element of household expenditure. Many highly disadvantaged Western Sydney residents remain living in poor quality environments, with less secure and high-priced rents (Gleeson & Randolph, 2002). Most of the residents in Sydney are unable to rent or buy a house in the advantaged areas. Similarly, most Western Sydney residents cannot secure a property in the advantaged areas due to higher prices and rent.

There has been widespread concern about inequality that has substantial adverse socio-economic impacts on cities and their inhabitants, and many of the undesirable features of the effects of inequality may indicate further fundamental societal problems (Whiteford, 2015). Inequality has significant psychosocial and behavioural special effects on communities, and many social problems are acute in the uneven peoples (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2010; Wilkinson, 2004). People who live in more impoverished socio-economic situations tend to face worse consequences (Whiteford, 2015). The below-average advantage areas in the Greater Western Sydney areas face various difficulties, and the above-average advantage areas in eastern and northern Sydney are places of wealth and opportunities.

The higher-income areas are attracting advanced venture and skilful work and have become Sydney's modern commercial passageway (Acuto, 2012; Vogel et al., 2020). Conversely, investment in western suburbs is concentrated repeatedly in new housing and population development (Wiesel et al., 2018). The affluent are prioritised in infrastructure support, whereas the infrastructure is much needed in the disadvantaged areas. The distant locations, lower housing quality and environmental harshness have placed Western Sydney residents in hazardous conditions (Roggema, 2019; Scheurer et al., 2017). Consequently, the deprivation levels are significant in western Sydney residents. The distant location from jobs, fewer employment opportunities, poor socio-economic conditions, and harsh urban development

have placed Western Sydney residents in an unfavourable and imbalanced situation. Consequently, instead of minimising urban inequality, the situation deteriorates progressively (Vogel et al., 2020).

2.11 Conclusion

Urban forces contribute to place-based urban segregation as the underprivileged Western Sydney people cannot afford well-off areas, and the south-western and western parts of Sydney transform their areas into lower socio-economic suburbs. State planning policy aims to increase the supply and diversity of affordable and rental housing in Greater Sydney; however, affordable housing has practically disappeared from inner suburbs (Bunker, Crommelin, et al., 2017). On the contrary, Sydney's western suburbs have fallen behind (Kenna et al., 2017), and urban development has positioned the area to concentrate poverty and the underprivileged (Wiesel et al., 2018). Thus, isolated Western Sydney neighbourhoods are experiencing a high level of place-based burdens.

This chapter provides background information on planning and growth in NSW and Sydney. By following urban expansion throughout the decades, the western suburbs of Sydney now have large populations and housing. In recent years, there have been significant infrastructure projects focused on Western Sydney that are projected to increase transport, employment, educational, health, and cultural facilities in Sydney's west. Chapters five and six critically illustrate Sydney's urban inequality from the urban planning perspective. It presents cases and empirical insights on the unequal application and uneven outcomes of the urban policy planning system and practices that concentrate on urban inequality and disadvantaged Western Sydney. Likewise, chapter seven analyses the COVID-19 disproportionate impacts in Sydney to highlight the urban inequalities and underprivileged conditions in Western Sydney.

Chapter Three: Theoretical contexts: Urban inequality, neoliberalism, post-politics, power and right to the city

3.1 Introduction

Theory plays an essential role by providing an academic context for empirical studies (Kitchin & Tate, 2000). An explicit theoretical background helps to make the research successful. Generally, theory can be specified as broad proclamations or propositions that define diverse characteristics of any fact. Berg (2009) classifies theory to understand the interrelation of a concept in various patterns, notions, processes, relationships or events. McFarland (2011) argues theories as a resource for expounding our surroundings, delivering practical and thoughtful exploration. Urban planning policy is the specific exercises associated with the government, governance and city making (Yiftachel & Huxley, 2000). Fainstein (2005) argues that urban planning and development typically involve various courses, such as the process of planning (planning theory and methods), the context of planning (history and organisation of cities) and the object of planning (various policy). The planning theory significantly links the planning process with the subsequent planning action. Theories are essential to understand what is happening around urban settings (Huxley & Yiftachel, 2000).

However, there are debates around ‘theory in planning’ and ‘theory of planning’, which is crucial in understanding planning practices. Dikeç and Swyngedouw (2017) argue that philosophers conventionally maintain a difference between the theory of planning and the theory in planning. As outlined by Faludi (1973), theory in planning focuses on the extent of planning, whereas theory of planning covers the form, styles or planning approaches. On the other hand, planning theories are often criticised for not adapting planning practices as theories

are influenced by social and political practices (Moghadam & Rafieian, 2019). Theories transform perspectives to adjust to new views and considerations with time changes (McFarland, 2011). However, planning theory ought to contemplate the planning procedures and outcomes to produce a better city for all citizens (Fainstein, 2005).

This thesis explores intra-urban inequalities, socio-economic powers and residents' rights in Greater Sydney's urban planning policy practices. Different schools of critical thought and philosophers have delivered numerous theories of planning concerning urban procedures. Critical theory has a 'narrow and broad' intellect; however, in both perspectives, that delivers the expressive and normative notions aimed at reducing dominance and increasing equality in society (Bohman, 2005). However, critical theories have been criticised for being immobile in developing and articulating new societal reforms (Kellner, 1990). Conversely, it is also true that critical theory repeatedly has the wrong impression about urban movement (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2011). The crisis and critique pressures for a comprehensive revision of critical concepts (Zambrana, 2013); consequently, this research has framed new critical discourses with the blend of different major critical theories taking the best approaches to explore the current critical urban concerns. Thus, within the above discussions and considering the Dikeç and Swyngedouw (2017) interpretation of the 'theory of planning' and 'theory in planning', this research considers various 'theories of planning' that outline the urban area practices to understand Sydney's contemporary urban planning approaches.

This chapter defines the theoretical contexts of this thesis and clarifies the thoughts adopted to conceptualise this research. The chapter explains urban inequality thoughts, discusses various critical theories concerning urban inequalities, and introduces the developed new critical discourses. Finally, this chapter generates the theoretical base and analytical framework for this research.

3.2 Urban inequality

Urban inequality represents the undesirable geographical discrepancy among people in a city (Hyötyläinen, 2019). As concentrations of people, cities have long been the centre for entrepreneurialism and concentrated urbanisation that generates inequalities for the urban residents (Miraftab et al., 2015). Consequently, cities are separated into the rich and the poor (Marcuse, 1989). Sutton and Kemp (2011), referring to America, contend that cities' inequality has become so highly rooted that their circumstances and opportunities determine where individuals reside. Urban inequality is the state stigmatisation and realistic disparity from the rest of the city grounded on a traditional mindset of ignoring local needs and favouring state needs in particular areas and neighbourhoods (Hyötyläinen, 2019).

The founding philosophy of urban planning practice was to make the city an equitable place for everyone (Yiftachel & Hedgcock, 1993). However, Schmitt and Hartmann (2016), by citing Needham (2006), argue that planning “makes people poorer or richer”, and the policy choices strongly influence place-making and shaping existing urban settings. The growing inequality has become a significant concern in cities (Davidson & Arman, 2014). Hyötyläinen (2019) argues that cities do not create this disparity; however, they deliver circumstances that facilitate social and economic differences that produce urban inequalities by spatial concentrations of wealth and poverty to a particular place or people. Marcuse (1989) claims that the guiding principle of the city reinforces the geographical concentration of underprivileged conditions. The city's need and development strategies also promote fundamental reasons in generating unequal consequences (Fainstein, 2005). However, Healey (2003) argues that urban policy often proceeds with little attention to minimising inequalities; however, it typically places maximum effort on growth.

Urban inequality has maximum effects on individual improvement and generates place-based disparities in local neighbourhood settings (White, 2003). Wilkinson and Pickett (2014) argue

that the critical effects of growing inequality between rich and poor exaggerate the substances of “dominance and subordination, and feelings of superiority and inferiority”.

Individual capacity and social and economic opportunities play a substantial role in changing a city (Marcuse, 1989). Evidence illustrates that many difficulties related to socio-economic deficiency are more dominant in unequal states or cities (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2007). White (2003) argues that social difficulties, such as unemployment, poverty and declining opportunities, directly affect individuals’ physical and psychological prosperity. Therefore, there is a growing trend in social segregation where people are entirely or somewhat left out from the formal participation process, thus facilitating social exclusion (Horsell, 2006). Urban inequalities and social exclusion have adverse effects on society that generates inability and failure to participate efficiently in economic, social, political and cultural actions (Horsell, 2006).

3.3 Community resilience and sustainability

The concept of community is very challenging to define. However, in general, a community is a cluster of the public in a comparatively small confined area that can take collective action (Akamani, 2012). A community is a cluster in a specific geographical precinct and has common natural, social, economic backgrounds and targets (Norris et al., 2008). Over time, the term community stability was shaped in Germany in the eighteenth century to improve segregated communities; however, some problems were exposed with the approaches over the eighteenth century. Consequently, finally, in the 1990s, the criticisms led to the new paradigms of community resilience and community capacity (Akamani, 2012). The term resilience can also be defined in various ways. Norris et al. (2008) define resilience as the ability to recover from stress, the improvement of resources, and the capacity to apply the approach in challenging situations. Scherzer et al. (2019) explicate community resilience as the constructive ability to increase the community’s potential to overcome any crisis. Community capacity is also the

public's shared capability to generate and use opportunities, cope with anxieties, and fulfil residents' fundamental necessities (Akamani, 2012). Thus, community resilience and community capacity are strongly connected to understanding its residents' abilities.

The community's essential features and access to capital and organised systems are acute in swaying communities' skills to react to various challenges and to accomplish practical results (Akamani, 2012). Community resilience signifies a community's aptitude and is necessary to reinstall its situation after a short-term adverse disruption, such as a disaster or crisis (Houston, 2015, 2018). Community resilience supports the community in getting ready and planning to face ups and downs more strongly and adapting to the actual or potential adverse actions suitably and competently (Scherzer et al., 2019).

The notion of 'sustainable development' was first widely promoted in the 1987 Brundtland Report of World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) from the United Nations, which defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987). Johnston et al. (2007) argue that sustainability is an assumed action or accomplishment adept at being persistent and unlocks opportunities that allow individuals to enjoy a healthy and secure life by fulfilling their needs without destroying the future welfare of people and the planet. A community that is building capability is one that has strategies for positive advancement (Zautra et al., 2008), and a sustainable community is about continuing and increasing the superiority of a community's life, welfares, desires and ethos by resolving the economic, environmental and social health concerns (Teriman et al., 2011).

People cannot foretell where or when or how a disaster will occur. Also, individuals are not aware of some novel crises until they occur. However, a sustainable and resilient community would face any challenges and pull through from any uncertain situation. The ability to adjust to individuals', communities' and cities' changing settings is considered resilience (Norris et

al., 2008). A sustainable and resilient community depends on its socio-economic structures and character. However, it is undeniable that the ability of communities in a city differs significantly considering their capacity, skills, distribution of opportunities and inadequate prospects (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2015).

3.4 Evolution of planning theories and practice

Urban planning is a blended academic field consisting of economics, political science and public policy, which has encountered and developed numerous philosophies and parallel streams of theoretical debates (Dikeç & Swyngedouw, 2017). There has also been a significant increase in research on metropolises and renewed arguments about the content and theories of urban issues (Storper & Scott, 2016). Thus, considering multidisciplinary approaches and various urban theories and contents, the research likewise incorporates several thoughts. In addressing Sydney's urban planning policy and development, this research considers urban equities and policy application challenges. Numerous intertwined dimensions are connected with this research, such as urban growth, urban policy and urban inequality. Urban planning and policy is subjective by the extensive arrangement of planning theories on social, economic and political issues and their interrelations and is shaped by diverse and theoretically differing thoughts of justification, power and understanding (Dikeç & Swyngedouw, 2017). This research explores the planning policy applications and intra-urban inequalities that consider urban planning and development, disproportional amenities and opportunities, uneven policy applications and outcomes and socio-economic conditions to form its theoretical and analytical outline.

Theory systematically generates numerous rational propositions that describe the relationships among concepts and phenomena (Berg, 2009). Planning theories concentrate on the root of planning decisions and their impacts (McFarland, 2011). The basis for modern spatial planning theories evolved in the late 1800s and throughout much of the next century in response to the

effects of capitalism and industrialism (Fainstein, 2017). The dominant form of capitalism progressively functionalised the market and its vigorous communal matters (Bohman, 2005).

Thus, various theories aimed to produce a city based on rational planning approaches that would create equities and allow efficient services to residents (Fainstein, 2017). On the other hand, planning practitioners often object that planning theory is a critical explanation that contests some usual endeavours (Yiftachel & Huxley, 2000). However, instead of arguments, it is undeniable that urban theory facilitates a relationship between the fundamental urban issues innately linked with numerous philosophical thoughts (Scott & Storper, 2015). The critical urban theory was based on more egalitarian, socially impartial and viable urban development arrangements and involved the criticism of numerous thoughts, such as power, inequality, unfairness and manipulation within or among cities (Brenner, 2009).

3.4.1 Critical thoughts

Marxists began to reconsider Marxism when it became visible from Soviet-style communism that socialism did not foster liberty and equality; consequently, a new understanding of political-economy was compulsory and critical theory was introduced by the Frankfurt school of thought (Allmendinger, 2009). Brenner (2009) argues that prominent urban scholars' influence usually originates critical urban theory to the post-1968 era, namely, David Harvey, Henri Lefebvre, Peter Marcuse, Manuel Castells, and many others. Critical theory can be a crucial lens to analyse the socio, economic and cultural disparities in urban spaces. The critical urban theory was dissimilar from the conventional urban theory and rejected innate market-driven and market-oriented disciplinary perception (Brenner, 2009). Allmendinger (2009) argues that the principle of critical theory is to transform society instead of realising and analysing it. Critical theorists do not want to demoralise Marxism but endeavour to recover it to consider totalitarianism, oppression and power.

Marx advanced the theory of false consciousness, where the working class knows that they are doing the work. Even though significant human development occurred in society, capitalists are still exploiting and making a profit; however, people do not understand the poor condition due to the existing state framework. The critical works of Marx and the Frankfurt school of capitalist development advanced the concept of the criticisms of the growth of the political economy, consequently presumed new importance in Marx's thought (Postone, 1993). Allmendinger (2009), citing the critical theorist Herbert Marcuse's work, argues that capitalism avoided unrest and revolution by creating cultural solidarity similar to another critical theorist Antonio Gramsci's hegemony. The Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci formed the notion of cultural hegemony in his Prison Notebooks where Gramsci (1971) theorised that dominant classes exercise power and apply their philosophy.

However, the brief Marxist predominance in planning theory was developed from the growing difficulties of large urban-industrialisation of the urban areas and planners' incapacity to respond to urban complications (Hall, 1983). However, there was no space for community contribution in Marxist studies of planning, and no suggestions were presented for dealing with the hegemony of the 'haves' rather than the 'have nots' in planning outcomes in cities (Lane, 2005). The role of community participation remained inadequate until the late 1960s and early 1970s. The supremacy of the planner and the unitary public interest model remained the norm (Hall, 1983). However, within the limitations, the 1960s was also seen as the growing involvement of residents in planning decisions contained by the context of participatory democratic politics (Dear, 1986).

3.4.2 Rationality

Since its beginning in the twentieth century, contemporary planning has been rooted in modernism or scientific or instrumental moderation. Several researchers have explored the temporal progression and advantages of numerous planning philosophies since the 1970s

including Faludi (1973), Healey (1992), Yiftachel (1998), Yiftachel and Huxley (2000) and Allmendinger (2009). Mäntysalo (2005) argues that Auguste Comte outlined the expansion of rational-comprehensive planning theory from 1798 to 1857; however, the rational comprehensive planning theory was expanded in the 1950s and 1960s by some key ideas which introduced Comte philosophies, which remains in central thought in urban planning theory. Healey (1992) has outlined the origins of the rational comprehensive process idea of planning in the Mannheimian notion of planning as the ‘rational mastery of the irrational’ and its conversion by the Chicago school into this vastly effective planning exercise. Healey (1992) argues that “Mannheim’s advocacy of a form of planning which harnessed systematised social scientific understanding and methods to the managing of collective affairs in a democratic society proved inspirational for the influential Chicago School of rational decision making”. Views of Karl Mannheim, Plato, Friedman and the Chicago school work as the logical foundation of rational planning (Green, 2009; Healey, 1992).

Yiftachel and Huxley (2000) argue that the shadows of 1970s planning theory discourses transformed the planning philosophy into various features. A particular approach constituted the central paradigm, as Faludi (1973) and like-minded theoreticians who appealed rational decision-making as the only planning theory in the early 1970s should cover all other planning theories. Yiftachel and Huxley (2000) also contend that the early 1970s’ inclination was to take a broad view about planning as a practical arena, in some way impassive from the confusing administrative and monetary dashes of realism of urban progress and there is a sense of searching for the right choice, situated as rational-comprehensive or rational-communicative planning. Rational planning is embedded in scientific equality and has strong neoliberal economic dominance. Since the 1970s, there has been a growing apprehension about rational planning due to ignoring individual groups, different interests and cultural situations. The

apprehensions of rational planning were headed to two diverse views: communicative rationality and postmodern thought (Healey, 1992).

3.4.3 Communicative rationality

The first view is to increase the dominion of rationality beyond scientific reality to comprise various groups of people's views. Jürgen Habermas suggests communicative rationality as a resolution (Bernstein, 1985). This concept of Habermas assists as a base of deliberative democracy and communicative planning. Devising the announcement "Planning through Debate", Healey (1992) contends favouring this planning concept. An accord is pursued in this planning over an extended opinion of rationality. Habermas inspires not to give up on purpose and would like the social order to move from an individualised to insightful communication (Healey, 1992). Habermas' communicative rationality parallels everyday perception, which consists of understanding and knowing things (Allmendinger, 2009). Yiftachel and Huxley (2000) claim Habermas' work recognises and combines operative praxis of ideal and up-to-date critical, analytic and normative theorising.

Habermas' concept of communicative rationality has been criticised by those who consider that class, race, gender, and culture have such deep divisions in society that they cannot be decided by communicative rationality. Yiftachel and Huxley (2000) argue that communicative planning theories mainly focus on inward inquiry planning practice. Taylor (1998, p. 122) argues that a smaller amount of attention was given to communication as an interactive activity concerning "dialogue, debate and negotiation". They instead require a power struggle (Healey, 1992). Communicative action is seen as fostering community empowerment and acknowledging dissimilarity, multiplicity and shortcoming that has consequences for the growth of discursive local democracy (Huxley & Yiftachel, 2000).

3.4.4 Postmodern thought

Postmodern thought or relativism is another concern of rational planning based on Gramsci's and Foucault's philosophies. Postmodernism discards rationality and claims that community accord works only for the benefits of the dominant (Allmendinger, 2009). Mouffe (2000) advocated the aspect of postmodern thought by agonism. According to Mouffe (2000), agonistic pluralism contradicts rationality by negotiation or communication. Mouffe (2000) delivered a ground to challenge differences in opinion of postmodern thought by agonism. Postmodern deliberative policy-making approaches advanced community engagement techniques and have been advocated by both practitioners and theorists to persist in democratising public policy (Hopkins, 2010). However, Purcell (2009) argues that communicative planning is merely a decision-making exercise embedded in the communicative process rather than postmodernism or agonism.

Huxley and Yiftachel (2000) recognise planning as an effort to stimulate and control spatial procedures. Yiftachel (1998), drawing on the knowledge and approaches of Foucault (1980), Yiftachel (1998), Mitchell (1991), Taylor (1994) and Anderson (2006), argues that the current state ensures the welfares of social elites and dominant groups, at the costs of weaker groups. Consequently, planning thoughts and practices create inequalities in cities, as Yiftachel and Huxley (2000, p. 910) argue that planning enables rational advancement and suppresses and regulates minor groups, thus establishing rapport planning in place of a "double-edged sword". The underlying reason behind the discrepancies is that numerous players and powers are involved in developing urban planning decision-making, and it is challenging to comprehend the real inspiration of planning theory applied (March, 2010).

3.4.5 Communicative planning

Residents' involvement in communicative planning is essentially required to be conscious of more than discussion and implicates mediation, negotiating and argument; according to communicative perspectives, planning cannot progress without the engagement of concerned actors (Lane, 2005). The communicative perception is typically constructed on combining diverse thoughts and the concept of communication (Habermas, 1987). The essential feature of recent planning thought in community engagement is that all current tactics emphasise planning and political superiority (Lane, 2005). Legacy et al. (2019, p. 276) argue that the new community engagement techniques are based on a 'consensus-model of decision-making' and do not necessarily allow for precarious engagement and inhibit residents from enquiring and stimulating the leading planning orthodoxy.

The above discussions show there are significant disagreements and misunderstandings in the planning theories concerning the planning system. Planning is also positioned as an approach to dominate urban geographies. There is a significant presence of inequality in urban planning practices and urban settings. Consequently, a different insight into the social and urban system was introduced as a critical concept that fundamentally highlights the unequal geographies and circumstances. The below section outlines the insights and appropriateness of critical theory.

3.5 Critical theory

Critical theory is the scholastic reflections and practical assumptions of social facts, which delivers fundamental critical concepts and improves socio-political discrepancy by eliminating inequality and motivating social transformation (Horkheimer, 1972). Critical urban studies are prevalent in urban perspectives (Marcuse et al., 2014). As applied in this research, the term 'critical' derives from the thought of critical theory. The term 'critical theory' was first established in 1937 by the Frankfurt School, an idea which denotes the work of the Institute

for Social Research (Institut für Sozialforschung) in Germany (Kellner, 1990). After the first World War, Germany and Central Europe faced financial difficulties and chaos that instigated the urgent need to reinterpret social order. In the initial stages, Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno and Herbert Marcuse prompted a discussion with the German practice of theoretical and societal philosophy, especially that of Marx, Kant, Hegel and Weber and confronted Marxist belief while extending their thinking that inequality and suppression outline the society (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2011). Consequently, their beliefs were influenced by the overwhelming conditions of social battles that augmented the critical thoughts in philosophy.

Critical theory has its foundations in the thoughts and writings of the numerous Frankfurt School theorists, for example, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Max Horkheimer, Marcuse and Weber. Habermas argues that the translation from traditional to modern capitalist societies described by Weber's concept of rationalisation is marked by a shift in the basis for social legitimation (Denhardt, 1981). In the twentieth century, critical theory was strongly reflected by the Frankfurt school's scholars Max Horkheimer, Erich Fromm, Walter Benjamin, Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, Leo Lowenthal and, lately, Jürgen Habermas and Axel Honneth (Devetak, 2005).

Critical theory is critical to the extent that it makes every effort for human freedom, empowerment and influence and acts to generate a social domain that fulfils human beings' desires (Bohman, 2005). Russell et al. (2011, p. 577) argue that critical theory is to interpret and criticise social settings and "promote change and help organise". Kellner (1990) argues that critical theory commonly outlines the connections among thoughts, theoretical standpoint, and collective situation, thus efforts to contextualise thinking regarding their backgrounds surrounded by societal practices. Similarly, Bohman (2005) argues that critical theory has developed in association with numerous social actions and diverse dominance in modern societies.

Critical theory exposes and criticises the urban settings to foster urban shift; however, numerous philosophers critiqued critical theories for their incompetence concerning its theoretical and practical applications (Bohman, 2005; Kellner, 1990). Nonetheless, the urban space is developing further unequal and confronting various challenges. The sections below discuss critical theory's critics and highlight the need to create a combined theoretical approach.

3.6 Critical theory as a critique of urban planning

Cities have improved residents' life more than ever before where even the urban underprivileged are in a better situation than the rural underprivileged; however, cities have also augmented the shadow of gentrification, intense poverty, homelessness, social isolation, violence, crime, affordability, ecological challenges, unequal access to opportunities and many other difficulties (Storper & Scott, 2016). The devastating impact of cities on their residents is not new. Harvey (2007) argues,

“There is a very old saying from the medieval periods; it says the ‘city air makes one free,’ and it is here that the idea of the freedom of the city starts to be important historically. A question I want to reflect upon today is, ‘what kind of freedom do we have in the city?’ Right now, if we say ‘city air makes us free’ what kind of freedom is being constituted by the urban processes that are going on around us?”.

The shifting geographies of urbanisation and urban growth have changed urban theory, practice and strategy (Ruddick et al., 2018). Planning theory and practices highly concentrate on the broader goals of economic efficiency, modern commodities and liveability; however, they merely emphasise oppression, domination, inequality and marginalisation (Yiftachel, 1998).

Critical theory appeared as the theoretical and practical criticisms which examine socio-political life and attempts to reduce social, cultural, political and economic difficulties

(Devetak, 2005). Bohman (2005) claims that critical theory is a dynamic philosophical institution that objects to illuminating and changing human beings' disadvantaged and deprived situations. Critical perspective investigates the beneficiaries of planning practices and advances the thoughts and debates on urban inequality and poor conditions (Fainstein, 2000). Despite various theoretical and practical improvements of critical urban concepts, urban policy and development are in severe difficulty with many critical ecological, social, economic, cultural and political problems (Swyngedouw, 2015).

However, there are numerous critics of critical theories. For example, Kellner (1990) argues that critical theories have been ineffective in developing and articulating changes, and postmodern and post-industrial theories have been deficient in continuous social research. The urban space has become the centre of increasing inequality, and twenty-first century metropolises face various environmental and social issues (Ruddick et al., 2018). In addition, critical theory is insufficient in analytically and precisely exploring its theories, methods and norms; also, theorists failed to provide a unique narrative formula and a particular approach that provides the necessary and sufficient solutions to such limitations (Bohman, 2005). However, there is optimism, as Kincheloe and McLaren (2011) claim that critical theory as a philosophy is often induced and misconstrued.

If we want the scholarship to contribute to the democratisation and equivalence of cities, we must critically identify and catalogue the inequality, right and power dynamics in cities. We must also analytically absorb various critical philosophies and help to foster the possibilities and practice of democratic and fair urban policy-making. A long time since the emergence of critical theory in Frankfurt, Germany, it still retains the capacity to edge and encounter imbalanced social order (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2011). Thus, given the new state of inequality, a new critical theory may now return and act as possibilities for enlightening equality and increasing public deliberation's scope and effectiveness (Bohman, 2005). The crisis of critique

demands a thorough modification of criticism in practice and concept (Zambrana, 2013). Thus, a suitable critical analysis can better understand unfairness and the current unequal social order. Its critical philosophy can be the autonomous influence in modern social practices and can initiate arguments based on equality and right.

3.7 Critical theories that explore urban inequalities

Various critical urban theories realise the transformative concept of the wide-ranging social, political, economic and environmental philosophies from the planning standpoints (Huxley & Yiftachel, 2000). In addition to a single theory, multiple theories can be framed together to explore urban planning issues (McFarland, 2011). Various research has explored urban inequalities through different philosophical contexts. For example, Iveson (2013) analysis on urban practices relied on the 'right to the city' theory. Marcuse (2009) applied the right to the city theory in critical urban theory and practice, and Harvey (2003) analysed capital and the conception of public rights based on the city concept's right.

Richardson (1996) analyses the policy process and planning theory based on power. Herbert-Cheshire (2003) also analyses government policy and program procedures by relating the theory of power, and Bachrach and Baratz (1962) analyse various attitudes of society grounded on the concept of power. On social inequality research, Mitchell (1991) applied social control and power theory to explore the nation-state's nature, and Yiftachel (1998) applied Michel Foucault's concepts, regimes theory and nation-states to establish a conceptual framework exploring social control and oppression as urban and regional planning tools. Obeng-Odoom (2015) framed African urban inequality with the theory of Jacobsianism (Jane Jacob), Georgeism (Henry George) and neoliberalism. Randolph and Tice (2014) researched Australian cities' disadvantage concerns and applied neoliberalism as a theoretical lens.

Yiftachel and Huxley (2000) argue that most advanced planning theories literature has been normative and narrow, covers an incomplete conceptual framework, and focuses on the process instead of explaining the resolution. It is inadequate to analyse multifaceted urban inequalities and policy issues in a single theoretical framework of the complex urbanised world. Dikeç and Swyngedouw (2017) argue that critical urban theory illustrates and promotes the emancipation of urban politics from weakness or dominance. Within the extensive scholarly literature, a critique of urban planning as discriminatory or unjust is vastly embedded in critical theories (Fainstein, 2017). In addition, the spatial factors of urban divides and disadvantages, power influences and the role of policies have recently appeared as promising in various fields, including human geography, sociology, politics, architecture and law, and the critical efforts to understanding and theorising planning, cities and urbanisation issues in the framework of critical thoughts have gained prominence (Yiftachel & Huxley, 2000). The critical theories analyse the transforming characteristics of domination associated with urban change (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2011). One of the crucial tasks of critical urban geography has been the investigation of urban policies and procedures (Davidson & Iveson, 2015). Thus, this study selects various theories to explore the urban planning policy application and related impacts (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Critical theories in exploring urban inequalities

Theoretical framework	Various research	This research
Neoliberalism	Randolph and Tice (2017)	Neoliberalism and post-politics Theory of Power The Right to the City
Neoliberalism	Randolph and Tice (2014)	
Neoliberalism	Obeng-Odoom (2015)	
Post-politics	Swyngedouw (2007)	
Post-politics	Allmendinger and Haughton (2012)	
Post-politics	Legacy et al. (2018) and (2019)	
Theory of Power	Richardson (1996)	

Theory of Power	Bachrach and Baratz (1962)	
Theory of Power	Herbert-Cheshire (2003)	
Nation-state power	Taylor (1994)	
Social control and power	Mitchell (1991)	
The Right to the City	Harvey (2003)	
The Right to the City	Marcuse (2009)	
The Right to the City	Iveson (2013)	
The Right to the City	Obeng-Odoom (2015)	

Source: Generated by author.

This research aims to apply the combined theoretical approach of neoliberalism and post-politics, the theory of power (Foucault), and the right to the city (Henri Lefebvre) to illustrate and analyse the academic context of the issues associated with intra-urban inequalities and residents' rights in urban amenities.

3.7.1 Neoliberal and post-political practices

Healey (2003) contends that urban political economy is highly significant in underlining the dynamic organisational forces influencing urban movements. The political-economic power product appeared as neoliberalism, which seems to be in all spaces (Peck & Tickell, 2002). Harvey (2008) argues that neoliberalism has produced new arrangements of power that integrate “state and corporate interests”. Since the 1980s, neoliberalism has started to sway urban planning and its associated reforms in urbanised countries, such as Australia (Beeson & Firth, 1998). Therefore, neoliberalism has become a suitable research framework for studying urban planning policy reform progression (Shin, 2016).

The terms neoliberal, neoliberalism and neoliberalisation are commonly used in public, political and academic discourse (Rattu & Véron, 2016). Neoliberal planning emerged during the late 1970s and early 1980s (Fainstein, 2017). However, it received extensive consideration

later in the 1990s post-globalisation period (Peck et al., 2010). The definition of neoliberalism is unclear (Rattu & Véron, 2016). Larner (2006) defines neoliberalism as a new political-economic ascendancy method to extend the existing market; and its relationships with the state (Fainstein, 2017). However, different scholars define neoliberalism differently, such as “a model of economic growth” (Gleeson & Low, 2000) or “a growth-oriented concept of urban development” (Wehrhahn, 2015). Peck and Tickell (2002) claim that neoliberalism is a functioning structure for reforming various state agendas in national and local settings.

The most remarkable features of neoliberalism are the influence to transform the course of urban action (Peck & Tickell, 2002), and neoliberalism is a policy to assist the supremacy of capital by terminating the obstacles (Purcell, 2008). The continuing relationship surrounded by “planning, the state, and the market” accumulated the political neoliberalism planning practices (MacCallum & Hopkins, 2011, p. 495), which spreads markets and modernises wellbeing by dynamically promoting innovative entrepreneurial consistencies (Davies, 2014). Purcell (2009, p. 142) argues that “neoliberalism has subsequently been extended and deepened, and has come more and more to occupy a hegemonic position in urban policy”.

Swyngedouw (2005) classifies neoliberal urbanism as rationality in applying new philosophies and policy strategies that produce states’ control. Neoliberalists argue that the simplification planning process is for the extended access of facilities; however, the overabundance of neoliberal planning regimes has generated a less participatory and more centrally directed system with limited planning control (McFarland, 2011).

Fainstein (2017, p. 111) argues that “the political and economic elites will do everything that they can to maintain neoliberalism”. A neoliberal arrangement can be categorised as a set of conducts that make evident a move to accommodate private sector power in decision-making, a lesser concentration on public choices, and prefers constructing acceptability through public consultation rather than involvement (Coleman, 2004). Neoliberalism changes the arrangement

and validity of public policy hegemony (Olsen, 2006) and stimulates the market economy's role (Jessop, 2002; Lerner, 2006). The neoliberal framework familiarises the new systems of authority by augmenting government interference (Jessop, 2002). Consequently, urban policy reform and urban development have appeared in place of different practices of corporatist associations (Barlow, 1995), and this relationship is the outcome of the neoliberal framework of policy progression. Thus, urban planning policy and its reforms have been shifted to restructure urban planning and urban development (Ruming & Gurran, 2014).

Active community engagement is necessary for participatory political dominions (Crick, 2004). However, post-politics limits community engagement. Zizek (2008) defines post-political politics as politics in which conceptual variances are substituted by techno-managerial planning management. Bond et al. (2015, p. 1162) argue that "politics have been closed down in a variety of ways and the notion of power to the people has become the power to a mantra of economic growth, this closure is often termed a post-political". It is argued that post-politics has substituted resentment and agonism through the arrangement of numerous tactics such as deliberative democracy (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2012, 2014). In this new context, urban post-political works parallel the neoliberal market force and systematically eliminate any form of disagreement with the process of governance machinery that generates formal consensus (Swyngedouw, 2009). However, the socio-economic and political situation determines the societal position, and the prevailing social, political and economic arrangements define public engagement (Allmendinger, 2009), and the narrow form of engagement is interpreted as community resistance (Devine-Wright, 2014).

The community opposition to planning and development has typically been referred to as a process of NIMBYism. NIMBY is defined as anti-development community opposition to introducing public facilities in an urban area (Barlow, 1995). Dear (1992) outlined NIMBY advocates as high salaried, educated, skilled and homeowners. Petrova (2016) labelled NIMBY

resistance as egoism, ignorance and craziness of some residents interested in defending their greensward and placing private benefits at the forefront instead of public benefits.

3.7.2 Theory of power

Power is an ancient term in the academic world and ordinary dialogue and argument (Dean, 2013). The theory of power is as ancient as the history of philosophy, and the space of the theory of power leads from Plato and Aristotle, thus carried to the modern era over Machiavelli's theory of power politics (Moghadam & Rafieian, 2019). The power relation and inequality in the social order continuously encompass dire consequences among advantaged and less advantaged groups (Innes & Booher, 2015). Dean (2013, p. 4) argues that,

“Power is quite self-evidently the preserve of the powerful, is exercised over those with less power or the powerless, and ensures that those who hold it get their way in most situations and typically gain substantial material or other rewards”.

Generally, power is the capacity of strength to accomplish any work (Dean, 2013). It is an approach demonstrated through various customs, methods and forces (Herbert-Cheshire, 2003). The power is itself mighty, is applied over powerless or disadvantaged people to gain benefits (Dean, 2013). Power is essential as well as a complicated multifactorial idea (Bathelt & Taylor, 2002). Bathelt and Taylor (2002, p. 95) define “power as an agency” that socio-economic capacity and authority possessed by social relationships depend on a place at a time and position. Theorists, such as John Locke, also argue power as right or legitimate power; however, power as right or legitimate authority features in a lesser amount in the broader sense, which may or may not be inherent in the rapport of publics to their regime (Dean, 2013). According to Dean (2013, p. 2), the notion of power exists in various arenas and bunches, such as “authority, domination, legitimacy, jurisdiction, violence, government, coercion, control, capability, capacity, ability, force and so on”.

French philosopher Michel Foucault's name is closely allied with the initial observation of power (Friedmann, 1998). It is significant to classify the features of urban planning and development from the standpoint of power, and the essence of power from Foucault's opinion is substantial to discover planning and its application aspects (Moghadam & Rafieian, 2019). Horsell (2006) argues that Foucault's perception of power reframes the urban transformation of public space, parklands and the street. Michel Foucault's theory of power embodies the crucial instant in the contemporary thought of the concept of power.

Foucault provides us with the critique of the conventional views on power (Clegg, 1989). Horsell (2006, p. 222) contends that Foucault's theory of power is "critical to understand how power can be used to structure the fields of possibility in policy development and service delivery". Nicholls and Uitermark (2017) contend that instead of providing an insufficient definition of power, Foucault recognises the underlying forces and extensive thought of power.

Foucault was extremely alarmed around the concerns of unwarranted control and power, sovereignty, disciplinarity and biopolitics (Stein & Harper, 2003). Foucault's thoughts on exercising power appeared from a lecture series at the College de France in the 1970s (McKee, 2009; Šupa, 2015). Foucault's point of view revealed contemporary constructions and practice power within social, political and economic organisations (Stein & Harper, 2003). Richardson (1996) argues that Foucault outlined power to create a distinction between Foucault and other philosophers. By citing Foucault's works, Herbert-Cheshire (2003) argues that power is in common intended to outline any rapport in which one individual guides another's behaviour and a set of movements upon other's activities. Moghadam and Rafieian (2019, p. 2) argue that according to Foucault's views, power is "a sort of software; whereas, in the past, power was assumed to be a hardware or an object belonging to a specific class of society".

Foucault (1982, p. 793) argues that "power relations are rooted in social networks' system". Power is continuously being created and renovated through social connections, and the actors

accomplish power inside an internal setup as they are capable of influencing others about their campaigns and applying the resources to realise their objectives (Bathelt & Taylor, 2002). Rosol (2015), citing various works of Foucault's, categorised power into three practices; first, it can be perceived as the exercise of political authority over other people exercised through regulations; second, supposed by controlling people; and third, power also proceeds through dominant individuals.

Power represents a mechanism to oppress, dominate and exclude (Albrechts, 2003). Power is the debate of 'power over' or 'power to', and thus power is not unassumingly the power of an individual capacity above others; however, it is essentially the ability to accomplish preferred outcomes (Dean, 2013, p. 5). Bathelt and Taylor (2002, p. 94) argue that the practices of power can be very diverse, for instance, "dominance and subordination, control, coercion and discipline" and "can be exercised or unexercised, benign or pernicious, intentional or unintentional, tolerated or resisted" depending on the situation. Power works as an influential talent and empowers individuals to utilise their interests (Bathelt & Taylor, 2002). Power is progressively more demanding the right to use resources and advantages (Fotel, 2006). Dean (2013, p. 6) also argues another paradox that moves the debate of "power over" or "power to" toward "power as capacity" and "power as right" or "legitimate power". Dean (2013), as per Lukes (1974), also claims it as the "third dimension of power". The third aspect of power reflects power as a right that shapes the people's realisation (Dean, 2013). Thus, it is necessary to understand the power relationships among actors and consider the concerns which include or exclude individuals from participation in defining planning actions (Albrechts, 2003).

3.7.3 The theory of right to the city

The right to the city calls for a new policy-making model that discourages inequality and develops the ability to influence transformation (Duke, 2009). The city's right is a dynamic theoretical framework and practical slogan and a right to access urban amenities for

underprivileged groups (Friendly, 2013; Marcuse, 2009; Qian & He, 2012). The right to a city confirms its residents' needs that support a dignified and evocative daily life (Friendly, 2013). It also examines and contests the numerous aspects of produced discrimination in the social order (Qian & He, 2012).

The French political philosopher Henry Lefebvre initially established the 'right to the city' concept in 1968, which pointed to the disregarded groups within the dominant social structure (Marcuse, 2009). Since then, the concept has inspired a powerful global social movement and myriad of local struggles in various countries (Brown, 2013). Iveson (2013) argues that Lefebvre's thought on the right to the city is predominantly promising for liberal urban policy and validates the city's critical study. Lefebvre's right to the city theory is the primary theoretical argument and spreads intellectual inspiration for most contemporary right to the city explorations and the right to the city movement (Friendly, 2013). American-Canadian journalist, author, theorist and activist Jane Jacobs influenced urban studies, sociology and economics through her thoughts on city rights. Her masterwork "Death and Life" offered extensive critical insights in the context of the dominant philosophy of urban growth in the 1960s.

Marcuse (2009) argues that right is not a legitimate action; instead, it is a compound aspect that incorporates the broader rights as required to ensure sustenance. Qian and He (2012, p. 158), by citing Lefebvre (1996), argue that,

“the right to the city is like a cry and a demand ... It can only be formulated as a transformed and renewed right to urban life ... as long as the 'urban', place of encounter, priority of use value, inscription in space of a time promoted to the rank of a supreme resource among all resources, finds its morphological base and its practico-material realisation... it gathers the interests (overcoming the immediate and the superficial) of the whole society and first of all those who inhabit”.

The right to the city is a combined right rather than specific rights (Marcuse, 2009) and a collective influence to restructure the urban system (Harvey, 2008). The right signifies the feature of communal connection instead of inherent personal effects (Qian & He, 2012). The city's right is a right to access existing amenities and a right to change social settings as per citizens' needs (Harvey, 2003). The right to the city promotes the right to the arrangement, impact and execution of rights for its residents (Friendly, 2013). This notion of the right to the city can combine the communal fights into the typical arrangement (Mitchell & Heynen, 2009). On the other hand, Harvey (2008) argues that the city's right is the communal transformation of the urban opportunities instead of the individual right to consumption. Therefore, the city's right is considered a socio-economic right to services within the existing organisation arrangement.

The city's right also denotes the right to participate significantly in the urban decision-making process, especially the participation of disadvantaged people (Duke, 2009). The participation right entails citizens' central role in the decisions that form urban settings and urban dwellers' ability to practise a more inclusive urban making (Friendly, 2013). Duke (2009) also contends that the right to live in a diverse community is the city's right. The right to the city ought to modify, confirm and create the rights more substantive to its residents (Friendly, 2013). First and foremost, the right to the city stimulates the same right of entry to socio-economic amenities for all of its residents (Qian & He, 2012).

The growing neoliberalisation and policy changes involved in urban renovation and growth have shifted the fundamentals of urban life by pushing the disadvantaged groups behind (Bengtsson, 2016). Harvey (2008) also argues that the right to the city is more and more plummeting into the higher concentration of economic intentions. In the hegemonic neoliberal world order, the capacity to participate, contest and modify the prevailing social order, the authority of commercialisation and profit-boosting undermines the notions of rights (Brenner

et al., 2012). The city's right is continually narrowed down by the confined and controlled by the powerful political and economic elites who prioritise their interests rather than collective interest in modelling cities (Harvey, 2008). The unequal urban settings generate, uphold and imitate uneven power, thus impacting social orders and structures (Qian & He, 2012).

Marcuse et al. (2014) argue that broadly demonstrative and varied characteristics and distinctiveness of the urban issues have been acknowledged by some of the most progressive and expressive critical urban theory and critical urban research. Residents' rights and urban inequality have received the utmost academic thoughtfulness (Domaradzka, 2018). Critical urban studies (Harvey, 1973; Marcuse, 2009; Mayer, 2009) have played a unique role in understanding urban growth and development from critical points of view. The above discussed critical theories can be a suitable approach to explore Sydney's urban inequality. Based on the above philosophical contexts, various elements of the discussed theories are identified to assist in outlining the theoretical basis of this research. The elements in Table 3.2 are the essential ideas of the discussed theories to discern a philosophical background, ignore irrelevant material, and combine the key ideas in a meaningful way.

Table 3.2: Elements of outlined critical theories

Theorist	Elements
Neoliberalism and post-politics	
Harvey (2008)	New control to ensure state and business interests
Larner (2006)	Political-economic control to prolong the current market
Wehrhahn (2015)	Urban growth and development model
Purcell (2008)	A policy to assist the power of capital by dismissing the hurdles
Zizek (2008)	Techno-managerial planning procedures replace conceptual discrepancies
Bond et al. (2015)	The notion of economic power narrows political opinions
Allmendinger and Haughton (2012)	Numerous tactics suppress debates and disagreements in planning
Theory of Power	
Dean (2013)	Power is the capacity of strength to accomplish any work, power is itself mighty, is applied over powerless or disadvantaged people to gain benefits
Bathelt and Taylor (2002)	Socio-economic capacity and authority possessed by social relationships depend on a place at a time and position Power works as an influential talent and empowers individuals to use their interests
Rosol (2015)	Exercise of political authority over other people applied through regulations; controlling people, dominant individuals
The Right to the City	
Marcuse (2009)	Right to public amenities and collective rights rather than individual rights
Qian and He (2012)	Socio-economic right and communal connection
Harvey (2003)	Change social settings as per citizens' needs
Harvey (2008)	Communal transformation of the urban opportunities instead of the individual right to consumption

Source: Generated by the author.

3.8 Neocritical discourse

The process of urbanisation has numerous impacts on urban management, governance and its residents. Urban growth and development and the associated policy reform and practices have significant effects on residents. Urban practices have made certain places and residents

privileged and others as underprivileged. Thus, the urban space has become the centre-ground of capitalistic growth. As a result, the city has appeared as a landscape and a ground for passing inequality, forcing bias and revelatory challenges. Urban planning theory and practices should explore the unequal state of affairs from renewed critical discourses and consider under what circumstances or urban settings the planning practices can produce a better and just city or urban spaces for all residents. This research endeavours to establish a neocritical discourse to critically analyse urban inequality, place-based disparities, unequal policy application and uneven urban outcomes.

Swyngedouw (2011) argues that urbanisation practice over the preceding years has been associated with the exercise of de-politicisation and post-democratisation (or post-politicisation). The de-politicisation and post-democratisation (or post-politicisation) have significantly altered the desired urban outcomes. The adverse consequences of urban growth and development necessitate the shift of theory of planning and theory in planning. Increasing disappointment with the leading theories encouraged a quest for substitute theoretical concepts (Kellner, 1990). This research study considers that critical urban studies have much to advantage the thoughtful understanding of urban inequality. Kellner (1990) argues that the poststructuralist and postmodern theory has further confronted usual theory in recent times, and these new critical discourses have opened a new avenue for new critical paradigms. The critical approach significantly reveals inequality, power, rights and injustice in society that fortify social advancements (Brenner, 2009). Thus, the theoretical background of the research attempts to develop an alternative critical approach.

Critical thoughts should consciously consider the broader issue. Zambrana (2013) emphasises concern about the economic and participatory norm that produces the uniform application of the philosophy. In addition, Healey (2003) regarded urban political economy as highly substantial in featuring the organisational powers influencing urban changes. The political-

economic power has established the concept of neoliberalism (Peck & Tickell, 2002). Neoliberalism and political economy thoughts are essential in revealing governmental policy practices. The neoliberal philosophy converting the idea to the economic innovativeness or enterprise that intervenes and endorses social difference and struggle is helpful to understand the realm of the shared interest (Lazzarato, 2009). Neoliberalism has formed new provisions of power that strongly integrate “state and corporate interests” (Harvey, 2008, p. 24). Since neoliberalism has started, it has been influencing urban planning and its associated reforms in urbanised countries (Beeson & Firth, 1998). Therefore, neoliberalism has become an essential theoretical context to explore urban actions (Shin, 2016).

The concept of power has an extensive past in social analysis, ever since Marx and Engels theorised the root and consequence of power in social affairs (Thye, 2000). Foucault’s concepts of power and struggle have been established as a rich conception that generates influential critical thought for the contemporary inequalities in socio-economic and political dominance (Cronin, 1996; Heller, 1996). In addition, none of the socio-economic transformations in societies can be realised without taking the perception of power, which influences changes seriously (Heller, 1996). Indeed, it is vital to realise the power base as government decisions are consequential and executed by vast setups of power associations (Gallagher, 2008). The thought of power as an essential perception motivated theoretical improvement and opened the possibility to various new concepts (Thye, 2000).

The right to the city concept has developed as an influential claim for public accomplishment and struggle with urban inequality (Brown, 2013). The French political philosopher Henry Lefebvre and American-Canadian journalist, theorist and activist Jane Jacobs’ ‘the right to the city’ conception influenced urban studies to understand the current social composition (Marcuse, 2009). The right to the city thought predominantly encourages the city’s critical exploration (Iveson, 2013). The right to the city theory is the crucial theoretic stand and extends

scholarly creativity to examine residents' rights (Friendly, 2013). The contemporary critical theory contends that the democratic social order is not as democratic as commonly assumed, and citizens are controlled by power inspirations (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010).

Theories are essentially crucial in exploring various challenges as they lend the philosophical context of various circumstances. Critical theories are unavoidable in discovering any discrepancy and inequality. Zambrana (2013) argues that the theory is typically critical, and the critical theory sheds light on the existing critical aspects and pulls to bits the organised practices of dominance. However, existing critical thoughts are criticised by thinkers. For instance, Domaradzka (2018) argues that the critical philosophies are commonly endorsed as a socio-economically and politically advantaged cluster, signified by the elites. Russell et al. (2011, p. 578) argue that philosophical ideas, knowledge and hypotheses are not ever unbiased, even the notion of 'neutrality' itself fits into a liberal arrangement of influence and concept. However, numerous theoretical and philosophical fundamentals of critical thought have been tested, re-tested, reformed and repeatedly transformed (Swyngedouw, 2015). Within these crucial debates about critical theories and testimony of theoretical transformation, this research feels the need for a new critical approach in exploring Sydney's urban inequality and place-based urban policy differences. Consequently, a different critical philosophy, neocritical discourses, is developed with the collective thoughts of discussed critical theories of neoliberalism, power and the right to the city. Table 3.3 explicitly outlines the critical focus of the applied critical theories to demonstrate their appropriateness in key focus in analysing urban inequality in Greater Sydney.

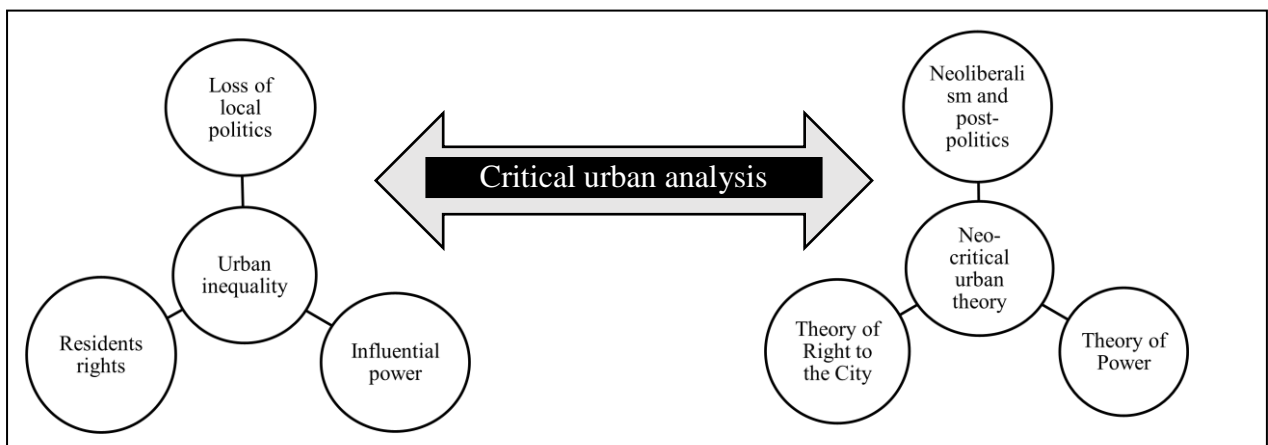
Table 3.3: Key focus and indicators of neocritical discourses

Neocritical discourses	
<i>Critical approaches</i>	<i>Key focus</i>
Neoliberalism	Growth-oriented urban planning system, policy practice, public political action, and community engagement opportunities.
Post-politics	Techno-managerial planning organisations and structured planning context to minimise engagement.
Influential power	Socio-economical positions possessed by advantaged neighbourhoods and their influential talent to ensure their interests.
Citizen/Resident rights	Collective rights to existing urban opportunities rather than individual rights and change of urban settings as per citizens' needs.

Source: Generated by author by analysing various literature.

This research argues that comparing and contrasting the implication of unequal cities allows for a critical reflection of the changes of urban restructuring in the city. Drawing on the existing critical urban literature, this research presents diverse views of activism, engagement and inequality in urban settings. A combined and comparative theoretical approach helps shed light on the changing role of urban theory and practice in these transformational worlds. In this process, critical urbanism has transformed in response to unequal urban processes, particularly unequal access to opportunities, the right to change, and the influential dominant actors (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1: Neocritical model to explore urban inequality



Source: Generated by the author.

Cities and urban areas persist as binding sites where essential urban inconsistencies can be resolved (Attoh, 2011). While citizens' issues have progressively become one of the critical aspects of justifiable and sustainable metropolitan development, it remains indefinite which urban theory should be considered to confront broader urban issues, and urban development is conflicting goals. The theoretical model helps explain urban inequality, residents' right to the city, and a foremost neoliberal drive concept. The research settles with arguments of the urban planning framework and unequal geographies of inequality. Therefore, this research claims it is essential to attempt the perfect philosophical stand to highlight and explore the urban policy and practices that increasingly influence exclusion and inequalities. Thus, this research combines a critical concept that is useful in reframing inequalities concerning urban policy practices. Thus, this research has purposefully chosen the theory of right to the city, theory of power and neoliberalism to conceptualise the intra-urban inequality. The conception of the new critical theory in a combination of emerging critical urban thoughts which marks the city as a departure from more critical studies of urban life and approaches. The combined framework of critical thoughts expects to open a new urban theory and practice perspective, an extensive and operative construction of active critical thought and practice. The research proposes or advocates for a broad sense of existing urban discrepancies through a combined framework of critical thoughts.

3.9 Analytical framework

During the last century, urban inequality and associated movements have developed as a prevailing impression in the call for social action and initiative counter to the exclusionary and discriminatory urbanisation processes (Mayer et al., 2016). Critical urban analysis has a persuasive approach in investigating urban growth and development from critical perspectives (Harvey, 1973; Marcuse, 2009; Mayer, 2009). Critical philosophy exposes and criticises the current urban struggles and stimulates transformation (Russell et al., 2011). An emerging body

of thought has analysed various inequality, discrimination and socio-economic stratification in society. The critical concepts of the right to the city and the notion of power have developed as an influential plea for understanding urban inequality dictated by political-economic neoliberal policy practices, and various power influences are crucial to realise the transformations in societies (Brown, 2013; Heller, 1996; Lazzarato, 2009).

Urban policy analysis and related issues have become prevalent in numerous disciplines (Richardson, 1996). Various scholars have explored urban inequalities or disparities through various analytical lenses. For example, Yiftachel (1995), in his study on rationality and power, identifies three dimensions of planning policy: territorial (spatial content), procedural (power relations and decision-making process) and socio-economic (long-term consequences). Yiftachel (1998) uses four dimensions of planning policy to analyse inequality: territorial (affecting containment, surveillance and segregation), procedural (exclusion and marginalisation), socio-economic (deprivation and dependence) and cultural (homogenisation, alienation and de-legitimation). The various aspects of planning policy and societal aspects in Yiftachel (1995) and Yiftachel (1998) competently analyse various facets of urban disparities. This research has chosen procedural and socio-economic dimensions from Yiftachel (1995) and Yiftachel (1998). This research has not chosen territorial and cultural dimensions as they are not appropriate considering Sydney’s perspectives. However, this research has added a new dimension, ‘socio-political’, considering Sydney’s perspectives. Thus, this research has chosen three scopes to analyse urban policy and intra-urban inequalities (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4: Analytical themes

Research problems	Investigating issues	Theory
Procedural gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selective policy application • Uneven policy outcome • Community opposition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory of power • Neoliberalism and post-politics
Socio-political influences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State power • Planning objectives • Local politics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory of power • Neoliberalism and post-politics

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community's ability 	
Socio-economic disparities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban amenities • Economic opportunities • Place-based inequalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right to the city

Source: Generated by the author.

As outlined, this research applies a neocritical model to analyse urban policy procedural gaps in selective policy application, uneven policy outcome, community opposition stances and socio-political weaknesses. The critical basis of the analysis is state power, planning politics, community's ability and socio-economic snags in the context of social amenities, economic opportunities, urban rights and place-based inequalities.

3.10 Conclusion

Urban trends have continually been shifting. The urban expansion effort continually generates urban inequality; consequently, the underprivileged population becomes more prone to adverse conditions of oppression, deprivation and marginalisation. The widespread socio-economic difficulties of urban settings create uncertainty amongst the poor and increasingly with the working class and middle-class socio-economic groups. Various theoretical perspectives have analysed numerous urban discrepancies; however, there is not any commonly established theory to generate a context to understand urban citizens' unequal or deprived conditions. Within the concern of growing urban inequality generated by planning theories and practices, the discussed theoretical approach of this research is a suitable way for an in-depth understanding of urban inequality and an essential method to analyse planning policy applications and outcomes critically. The constructed neocritical theoretical approach or discourses applied in this research is distinctive in examining how Sydney has urbanised into an unequal city; how the connection between the economic, social and political system of power relations shapes policy applications and outcomes; and what role urban policy is playing in producing urban inequality.

Chapter Four: Research methodology and methods

4.1 Introduction

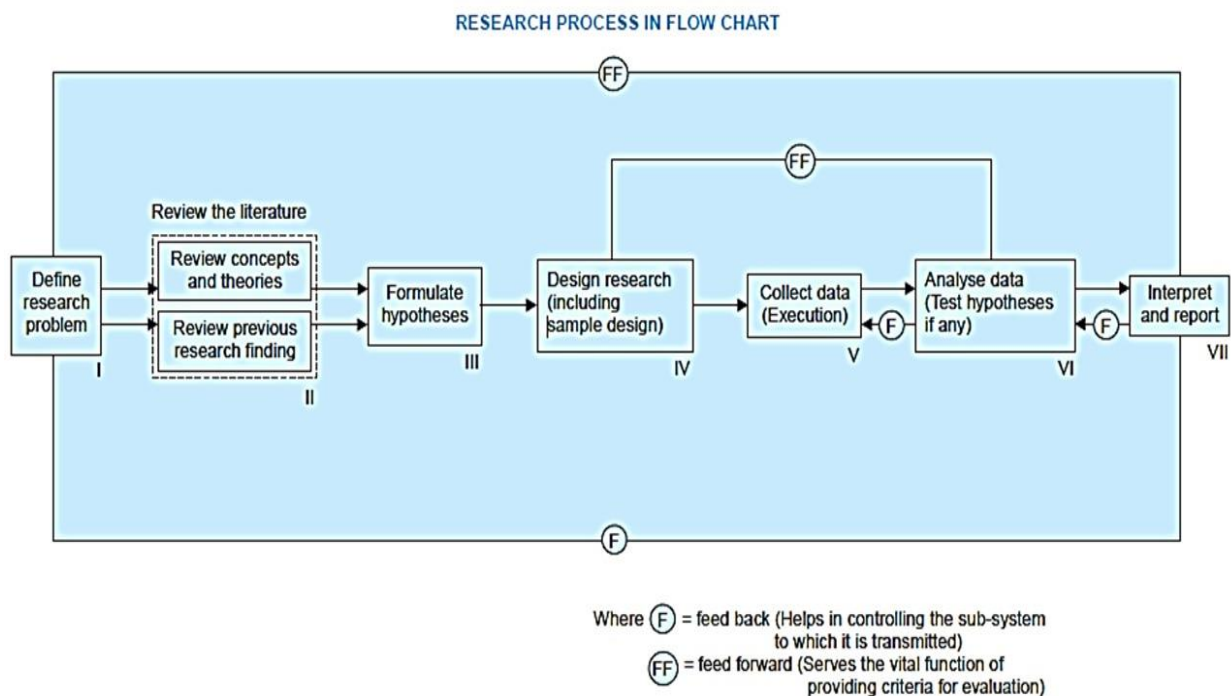
Research design and method is one of the significant components of research that guides the entire research process. Research is a process of investigating and discovering evidence and particulars about a subject matter or topic (Esterberg, 2002). Research inquires, discovers and apprehends our domain in an approach that goes beyond a simple context or description (Kitchin & Tate, 2000; Lampard & Pole, 2015). In this process of investigating context and evidence, research methods lead the investigator to subsequent results to achieve targeted objectives. Chapters three discussed the theoretical framework and relevant literature. Theory, background and analysis are strongly linked with the research method (Kitchin & Tate, 2000). Researchers must understand the methodology and conceptualise the research hypothesis, and then create a research procedure to start an investigation.

Research methodology directs and supports the research study to get the answers to research questions and helps reach an understanding. Successful research depends on the appropriateness of understanding and using the research methods accurately and effectively. Therefore, all research needs methods to study a multifaceted, vibrant and comprehensive topic (Payne et al., 2007). This research project has followed a suitable research method to achieve the research aims and objectives. This chapter presents the methodological subjects of this research, including research design, approach, methods, rationality, data sources and data collection techniques and analysis for validation.

4.2 Research process and methodology

The research process uses several methodical steps to manage and progress the research effort and successfully achieve its objectives. The research procedure may vary depending on the subject matter; however, in common, the research process involves sequences of phases that are inevitably crucial to move beyond operative research (Kothari, 2004). Figure 4.1 describes some steps of the research process to reach an effective result. Thus, the research study requires a suitable applicable research process, design and methods to elucidate the context.

Figure 4.1: Research process flow chart



Source: Kothari (2004).

The term research design and methods are used to describe the whole process, from defining a question to gathering data, processes, analysis, outcomes and interpretation. Creswell (2009) argues that research designs are the plans and procedures for exploration that include expansive theory to specific data collection methods and analysis. Identifying a rigorous, flexible and systematic research design is to integrate various viewpoints is challenging (Payne et al., 2007).

However, Creswell (2009) argues that selecting a research design is grounded on the nature of the research subject, researchers' skills and experiences, and targeted audiences.

According to Berg (2009), the research design consists of various significant choices about the research background or questions: What types of data will be collected over what method? Where will research commence and involve what group or groups of individuals? When will research be piloted? Berg (2009) also claims that in the design phase, the researcher outlines the entire research mission in an effort to anticipate any possible glitches that might emerge. A research methodology is an approach to logically explaining the research subject (Kothari, 2004). The research methodological approach outlines how the researcher will explore an issue (Silverman & Marvasti, 2008). Research methodology discusses the choices about the research, data collection approaches, data analysis procedures, organisation and achievement of a research study (Silverman & Marvasti, 2008). There are various types of research methodology in practice. Kothari (2004) identifies some research types, such as descriptive and analytical research, applied and fundamental research, quantitative and qualitative research, conceptual and empirical research, and other types of research, including one-time research or longitudinal research. Goddard and Melville (2004) identify numerous categories of research, including experimental research, innovative research, descriptive research, ex post facto research, action research, historical research and expository research. Thus, the researcher selects the research designs depending on the research types.

Kothari (2004) identifies two basic research tactics, qualitative and quantitative research, among the various research approaches. Creswell (2009) designates three types of research designs: qualitative research, quantitative research and mixed methods research. Considering the scopes, objectives and methodological suitability, this research is descriptive or analytical in nature. It adopts the qualitative approach to reveal the insights of the intra-urban inequalities and unequal policy outcomes of Greater Sydney.

The below sections and subsections explain this research's methodological approach and rationale for choosing a particular research approach for this project.

4.3 Methodological approach of this research

Qualitative research elucidates human experiences within various conceptual frameworks (Winchester & Rofe, 2010), the broad approach to exploring social phenomena in naturalistic and interpretive ways (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Qualitative research deals with social complexity and conducts experiments in natural settings instead of laboratory sites; thus, it is 'pragmatic, interpretive and grounded in the lived experiences of the people' (Marshall & Rossman, 2014, p. 2). Qualitative research clarifies human settings and individual experiences within various theoretical frameworks (Winchester & Rofe, 2010). Qualitative research is most suitable in stating issues, which cannot be expressively conveyed by the quantities (Berg, 2009). It is a form of critical investigation in which researchers hunt to explain what they see and hear and draw a compound and extensive demonstration of the issue being examined (Creswell, 2009). It captures an in-depth understanding of the interactional processes manifested during a particular study (Wainwright, 1997). Qualitative research discusses the 'what, how, when and where of a thing – its essence and ambience' and thus refers to the 'meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and descriptions of things' (Berg, 2009, p. 3). It also explores unforeseen and regular connections of research subjects (Stake, 1995).

Qualitative study searches for answers to research questions by examining various backgrounds and delivers a means of measuring unidentifiable evidence through people experiences, documents and observations (Berg, 2009). Thus, the selection of research methods in qualitative research is practically driven by the nature of the research queries. However, qualitative research mainly accumulates data from multiple sources rather than a single source, such as interviews, observations and documents (Creswell, 2009). Stake (1995) claims that it

concentrates on the instances, tries to pull them apart, and puts them back together again with more meaningful analysis and synthesis of indirect interpretation.

Creswell (2009) references various types of qualitative research:

- ethnography to discover facts of the cultural cluster in a natural situation for a long time;
- grounded theory to originate a common perception and action stranded in the opinions of the participants;
- case studies to explore an issue comprehensively;
- phenomenological research to investigate the attitude of human understandings about a phenomenon; and
- narrative research to discover an issue by studying individuals' experiences.

In qualitative research, the interrogations usually display cases to narrate the issues (Stake, 1995). On the other hand, Goddard and Melville (2004) argue that descriptive research is similar to case study research. Marshall and Rossman (2014, p. 105) claim that qualitative research usually depends on four methods for gathering data: participation in the setting, direct observation; in-depth interviewing; and analysing documents and material culture. Kitchin and Tate (2000) argue that qualitative research is a commonly unstructured style and contains words and pictures. Qualitative research's principal data includes opinions, thoughts and insights and can be collected in several methods (Bolderston, 2012). Winchester and Rofe (2010) branded three major qualitative research types: oral, textual, and observational data. However, instead of relying on a single method, a diverse or combination of research methods is beneficial to discover varied issues in a research project. Cope and Elwood (2009) argue that diversified research methods are imperative to comprehend and study compound subjects. Also, a particular method is often inadequate, and various approaches can be advantageous in defying the research queries. Thus, it is essential to outline the depths and limitations of the various quantitative research methods.

A qualitative, mixed-methods approach to research has also been adopted in much urban research. For example, in their climate change policy analysis, Kenis and Mathijs (2014) analyse an extensive range of leaflets, press releases, booklets and other documentary materials and conduct in-depth interviews. Likewise, O'Callaghan et al. (2014) analysis of the development project process used critical discourse analysis of print media as a primary methodology. Vento (2016) also uses a mixed-methods approach relying on interviews and analysis of newspapers to study urban regeneration mega projects. This research applies a mixed qualitative approach, drawing together case studies, interviews and textual data analysis to deliver a rich data set for exploring urban inequality issues.

4.3.1 Qualitative cases

Qualitative research attempts to institute a concerned and thoughtful explanation for the audiences, and qualitative case study is the crucial technique to be acquainted with the research subject comprehensively and intensively (Stake, 1995). The case study picks suitable cases to respond to the specific research queries (Rosenberg & Yates, 2007). Payne et al. (2007) argue that the study may emphasise single or multiple cases and single or multiple data sources; however, the key objective is to deliver a comprehensive analysis. The case study approach's procedural elasticity provides the researcher with suitable practical techniques to ensure the correct research methods (Rosenberg & Yates, 2007). A qualitative case study seeks a greater understanding of the case, and appreciates the uniqueness and complexity of its embeddedness and interaction with its contexts (Stake, 1995).

Regardless of the case study, methods may be restricted mainly to the demonstration of sample cases, mostly limited to similar typology and hard to summarise case studies; however, the case study method in broad spectrum can contribute to explore research subjects with examples and convey productive thoughts (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Payne et al., 2007). Concerning intervention in social and political affairs, Abbott (1992, p. 79) has rightly observed that narratives would

provide “far better access for policy intervention than the present social science of variables” in terms of a typical case. Mattingly (1991) pointed out that narratives give meaningful form to experiences we have already lived through and provide us with a forward glance, helping us to anticipate situations even before we encounter them, allowing us to envision alternative futures.

Thus, the case study approach in this research proposes an exceptional opportunity to discover the approaches of urban policy applications in metropolitan Sydney. This method involves several critical urban planning policy cases of the NSW state government, which allows examining issues, such as policy application, uneven outcomes, politics of planning, and public participation in planning. The case study method applied in this research is similar to that adopted in other research, such as Makarychev and Yatsyk’s (2014) investigation of urban approaches. Thus, this research applies the case study and narrative or descriptive qualitative research to explore Sydney’s intra-urban inequalities. This research adopted an instrumental approach to examine NSW urban planning policy application to understand urban planning practices. The instrumental case study approach explores critical issues concerning the urban planning policy application processes and their outcomes by focusing on urban policy cases. The research has presented three cases related to Sydney’s urban policy practices.

4.3.2 Qualitative documents analysis

Creswell (2009) argues that the researcher may gather data from publicly accessible qualitative research documents. Analysis of documents is a self-effacing method, rich in expressing the ideals and philosophies of study issues in the research setting (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Documents analysis provides methodical and neutral techniques to create usable interpretations from verbal, visual or written data (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992). Marshall and Rossman (2014, p. 117) define documents in research as the ‘content analysis’ methodical approach. The content analysis helps categorise and measure the script’s outlines (Kitchin & Tate, 2000).

Likewise, it allows valid extrapolations of the research queries by analysing documents (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992). It is also a vigilant, comprehensive, organised investigation and explanation of a particular research subject to classify outlines, themes and implications (Berg, 2009).

However, Berg (2009) pointed out that a single severe weakness of content analysis is deliberating previously documented information. Nevertheless, content analysis determines the most appropriate relations of evidence and addresses some topics more appropriately than any other method (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992). Content analysis has some considerable advantages for exploring data in order to describe and quantify specific phenomena, including being very economical in terms of time and money (Babbie, 2013), easily and inexpensively accessible (Berg, 2009), and minimal loss of information from the original data (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992).

The content analysis includes varied sources of documents. Berg (2009, p. 339) argues that content analysis admits various sources, including ‘written documents, photographs, motion pictures or videotape and audiotapes’. Marshall and Rossman (2014) identify primary content analysis resources: communication, political speeches and written materials (textbooks, novels, newspapers, email messages). ‘Minutes of the meeting, logs, announcements, formal policy statements, letters and so on’ are all used as essential sources of quality documents (Marshall & Rossman, 2014, p. 116), and written documents or transcription of recorded verbal communication (Berg, 2009). Creswell (2009) identifies various documents like newspapers, reports and journals as a vital source of documents analysis. In this research project, content analysis has helped to illuminate the urban planning policy applications’ contextual issues while exploring critical issues of intra-urban inequalities. This research has considered some reliable sources of qualitative documents such as newspapers, web pages, annual reports and

existing literature like research works, articles, books, reports, and seminar and conference papers.

4.3.3 Qualitative interviews

The most frequently used qualitative research technique is an interview that permits the researcher to gather various accurate data in a reduced amount of strict situations. DeLyser and Sui (2013) claim the interview is a lively and dynamic research technique, and the researcher has the capacity to examine and explain the research issues (Bolderston, 2012). Most significantly, interview-based research reveals far more than available works, and the individuals exchange their thoughts openly (Hitchings, 2012). The qualitative research interview reveals discerning problems in more acuity and gives the investigator evident thoughtfulness of the research tactics (Flowerdew & Martin, 2005). Qualitative interviewees offer alternative methods for discovering issues in detail by using tentative questions and open avenues to understand issues highlighting the insights, feelings and approaches (Flowerdew & Martin, 2005). Dunn (2010) argues that research interviews examine difficult situations and add new data where other approaches cannot link effectively.

Interview facilitates direct communication among two people and benefits collecting data by collaborative conversation (Matthews & Ross, 2010), where an investigator and a respondent have the opportunity to effectively communicate following a general strategy of the inquest (Babbie, 2013). There are significant advantages of qualitative interview techniques of research methods:

- It involves limited time or energy (Payne et al., 2007).
- People can actively interact and expose far more than words alone (Hitchings, 2012).
- It is a rich data source that relies on people's understandings, feelings, desires and state of mind (Kitchin & Tate, 2000) to create a sense of experiences (Seidman, 2013).
- It provides discernments of dissimilar thoughts or generates arguments (Dunn, 2010).

It is essential to frame an interview structure to ensure that the entire issue is covered by questions (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). There are three critical categories of the interview: structured, unstructured and semi-structured (Dunn, 2010). The semi-structured interview is frequently used in qualitative research (Bolderston, 2012; Matthews & Ross, 2010; Moser & Korstjens, 2018). Semi-structured interviews collect information in a broad range of research arrangements and primarily collect qualitative data from people's experiences, behaviour and understandings (Matthews & Ross, 2010). The outline in the semi-structured interview design is somewhat sketched, and the investigator has the opportunity to follow the respondent's sequence of understanding and explore further issues which emerge (Bolderston, 2012). It is less rigid than structured interviews, helps discover a subject more profoundly, and allows respondents to express their opinions adaptably (Esterberg, 2002). The interview can be conducted in various methods, including face-to-face, group or remote interviews through phone or the computer (Bolderston, 2012). Conventionally, qualitative interviews involve a face-to-face interview; however, qualitative interview data is being collected in progressively more different ways, such as by focus groups and by telephone, email and internet (Bolderston, 2012).

This research had aimed to include residents and community groups in comparable numbers from all four Sydney subregions. Fifty individuals or organisations from across Greater Sydney were invited to participate in this research. However, not much response was received from some regions. In addition, some informants initially agreed to participate but later apologised due to the COVID-19. Thus, this research has conducted qualitative interviews of 30–70 minutes with 23 people in Greater Sydney. This research interviewed state and local government officials, state and local politicians, experts and other stakeholders, and finally, the residents and community groups. These groups were chosen in order to gain essential insights

into urban policy applications and policy reforms. The interviews used a semi-structured questionnaire to gather essential data.

4.4 Ethical issues

All research must attain and maintain ethical concerns. Esterberg (2002) argues that there is the possibility of a significant reason for complications or distress in a research project. Thus, it is crucial and indispensable to consider ethical issues in research (Esterberg, 2002). Dowling (2010) defines research ethics as the investigators' and the research project's behaviour, responsibilities and accountabilities in conducting the research tasks. Every country and organisation has a framework to evaluate, guide and monitor research projects to standardise the research process and minimise any possible harm or discomfort.

Ethical issues are associated with the research protocol; however, the researchers need to monitor ethical issues during the field study to ensure no harm or distress to the respondents. The researcher should brief and debrief the component of the study, be clear how long the interview will take, collect the respondents; details, encourage the respondents to contact the researcher in case of any concerns or queries or counselling is needed during field study as well as in case the interviewee wants to withdraw or change their opinions (Berg, 2009; Bolderston, 2012). Informed consent and confidentiality issues are essential ethics in research studies (Eysenbach & Till, 2001). Thus, taking informed consent from the respondents to contribute to the research is essential. Berg (2009) defines informed consent as people's explicit written consent to knowingly join in all aspects of the research. During the interview, the interviewer should be nonjudgmental (Bolderston, 2012).

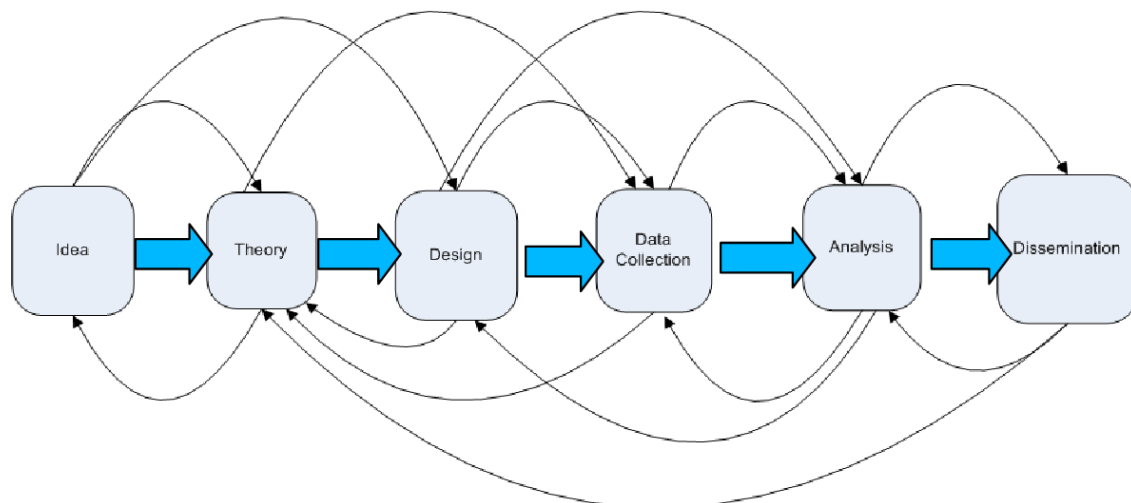
Considering the importance of ethical concerns and to fulfil the institutional requirement, this research study has been evaluated and approved by the Western Sydney University Human

Research Ethics Committee (Appendix 1). This research has followed ethical principles for interviews, including interviewees' consent, privacy and confidentiality.

4.5 Research design and approaches of this study

It is essential to follow a specific, productive and flexible research approach for the smooth operation of the research project, which leads to achieving projected outcomes. Thus, a practical research approach or model is essential in the research project. This research followed the 'spiralling research approach' of Berg (2009, p. 26). In the spiralling research approach, the researcher begins with an idea, collects theoretical material, reviews and polishes the research idea, commences scrutinising probable strategies, and tests theoretical assumptions and upgrades data. The researcher then takes a phase or two backward before proceeding with any advance with every two stages forward. It is not an old-fashioned linear progression model in a single-forward course; instead, the researcher moves forward vigorously, not entirely leaving any step behind.

Figure 4.2: The spiralling research approach



Source: Berg (2009).

4.5.1 Research idea and concept map

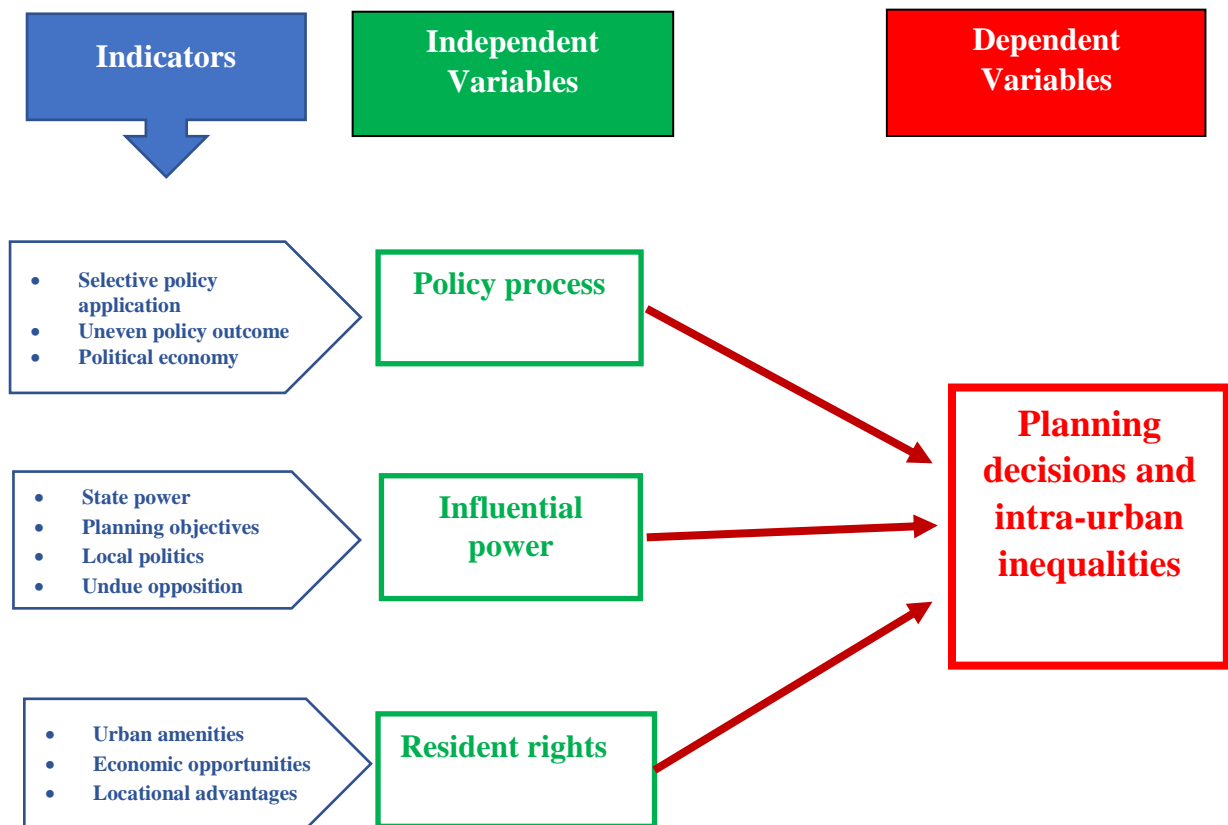
It is imperative to generate a relevant research idea before jumping to the research. Berg (2009) claims appropriate research ideas as an essential part of the assumed research project or process

and support developing methods and theory. The research idea or concept generally arises from the researcher's interest, understanding, knowledge and aspiration to analyse a research subject or solve a research problem (Toledo-Pereyra, 2011). The research idea is important because the project results are dependent on its elaboration and execution based on a well-outlined research plan (Berg, 2009). Good research ideas are the basis for developing excellent protocols and, at the same time, integrating successful studies with the best conclusions (Toledo-Pereyra, 2011). Research ideas or concepts are the groundwork of research statements and propositions, and the researchers need to establish concepts to lead specific insights (Berg, 2009). The research has generated a broader idea or concept at the beginning of the research by analysing various scholarly articles and books that consider the planning policy processes, influential powers and residents' rights.

A conceptual framework describes the arrangement of reports and categorisations of the associated facts. Developing a research concept is a challenging job. However, Berg (2009, p. 43) highlighted the challenges of forming research design, theoretical framework and concept, suggested a tool 'concept mapping' to understand better the relationship between ideas, concepts and plans of actions.

A concept map allows visualising direct relations between thoughts and ideas and supports associating with new concepts about perception and thus permits the better organisation of research designs and ideas (Berg, 2009). Conceptual frameworks are deliberate to construct a researcher's thoughtful reflections and support a rational plan in a methodical style. In short, conceptual frameworks are prototypes that guide and facilitate logic making and understanding. The research develops a conceptual framework (Figure 4.3) on what variables and indicators will be considered. The description below also shows the theoretical connection of the research concepts. The fundamental purpose is to illustrate the relationship between various variables and concepts.

Figure 4.3: The conceptual framework



Source: Developed by the author.

- i. *Policy process:* Gleeson (2017, p. 206) claims that Australia’s contemporary urban policy practices are ‘technocratic and econometric characteristics of contemporary neoliberal urbanism’. Therefore, urban post-politics moves parallel to the neoliberal market dynamism (Swyngedouw, 2009). Troy (2018) argues that urban elites could secure a sustainable future for themselves while the impoverished pay for it. This research hypothesises that NSW state planning practices align with the neoliberal objectives and follow a managerial policy process. Thus, this research explores how NSW planning policy processes are directed to achieve neoliberal objectives using the post-political managerial consultation process.
- ii. *Influential power:* Richardson (1996), citing Bachrach and Baratz (1962), contends that power was not merely related to decision-making but extended to the creation or

reinforcement of social and political values and institutional practices agenda-setting to protect the interests of particular groups. The dominant class of socio-political groups uses planning to facilitate and retain control in a society (Fainstein & Fainstein, 1979). This research argues that various socio-political powers' significant presence and influence in NSW planning practices contribute to unequal urban policy applications and uneven outcomes. This research explores the role, various socio-political power play in urban growth and development processes and how they influence intra-urban inequalities in Sydney.

- iii. *Residents' rights:* Urban planning systems prompt inequitable outcomes in the metropolitan area (Fainstein, 2005). The failure of employment and residential opportunities has imposed higher accessibility costs for some groups (Harvey, 1973). Subsequently, underprivileged residents are deprived of numerous urban rights. Henry Lefebvre's right to the city theory supports marginalised groups (Marcuse, 2009). It explores various inequalities and strengthens residents' demands. This research assumes that unequal applications of urban policy are influencing place-based disadvantageous situations in Sydney. This research intends to analyse Sydney's urban inequality in the framework of the right to the city and aims to draw attention to western Sydney residents' urban rights.

4.5.2 Theory and literature review

It is vital to search and reveal relevant literature in the preliminary research stage to reflect the association between theories and research subjects (Esterberg, 2002). Berg (2009) claims that as soon as we form the related research concept or idea for the study, it is crucial to study the remaining works related to the research topic. Exploring and reading literature or theory is essential, as the analysis may lack a sound theoretical basis and link with the existing literature

(Esterberg, 2002). There are various sources of literature available to explore, physically and virtually.

The research used the resources of Western Sydney University Libraries and resources in the virtual domain, easily accessed by the internet. However, all resources are not authentic; thus, the research has chosen well-accepted, quality and authentic literature from the WSU Library search engine, Google Scholar, Google Books, and ProQuest. The research has generated a broader theoretical and analytical framework grounded on neoliberalism, post-politics, theory of power and the right to the city in Chapter three by analysing various sources, such as scholarly articles, books, research reports and prior studies.

4.5.3 The study style

A combination of qualitative methods is applied to attain the objectives of this study. In its initial stage, this research analysed the available published material on urban policy applications and urban inequalities to form the conceptual background. This research project also adopts a case study approach to support the insights of the urban planning application and its outcomes in Sydney. Finally, the research collects valuable data from the research participants through face-to-face and online interviews. The research has chosen policy documents, cases and informants within the areas of Sydney relevant to the research project.

4.5.4 Data collection and organisation

This research has gathered various documents to test the hypothesis and create a broader analysis of Sydney's urban policy applications, outcomes and place-based inequalities. The below subsections outline the methods and details of data collection and organisation processes.

- i. Data sources:* This research has applied combined data sources to gather relevant data (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Data sources for combined approaches

Concepts	Indicators	Sources of data
Policy process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning system • Selective policy application • Unequal policy reform • Uneven policy outcome 	<p><i>Qualitative cases:</i> Recent NSW policy applications and reforms related to urban growth and development.</p> <p><i>Qualitative documents:</i> Urban policies, act, regulations, government websites, published books, articles, and reports.</p> <p><i>Qualitative interviews:</i> Interviews.</p>
Influential powers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State power • Residents socio-economic conditions • Local politics • Undue opposition 	<p><i>Qualitative documents:</i> Newspaper reports; websites; published books, articles, and research reports.</p> <p><i>Qualitative interviews:</i> Interviews.</p>
Residents' rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban amenities • Economic opportunities • Locational difficulties 	<p><i>Qualitative documents:</i> Australian Bureau of Statistics, websites; newspaper reports; published books, articles, and research reports.</p> <p><i>Qualitative interviews:</i> Interviews.</p>

ii. Documents gathering: Gathering documents by sorting various documents to accumulate data is essential for data collection. This research study gathered required documents and data from reliable sources, including newspapers, reports, websites, and scholarly books and journals. The research also gathered statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to explore Greater Sydney's socio-economic situation and used various data from secondary sources, specifically from various research and newspapers reports.

iii. Informant size: The sample size in qualitative interview research is important. Nevertheless, there are debates about the quantity of the sample size. Malterud et al. (2016) define the sample size as the strength of data. Morse (2000) argues that sample size depends on the extent of the research question, scope, topic, study design and data settings. Warren (2002) suggests a minimum of 20 to 30 participants in interview studies and interviews, Lincoln and Guba (1985) praise between 12 and 20 interviews,

and Bernard and Bernard (2013) commend 10 to 20 well-informed respondents to reveal and comprehend the practical experience.

On the other hand, Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) and Sandelowski (1995) do not commend exact numbers; however, they suggest an adequate sample size that is not too large or too small to examine respondents' experiences. Hanson et al. (2019) suggest a lower number of information-rich participants. Thus, the research initially targeted information-rich and purposive respondents and targeted interviewing 24 individuals from four groups of respondents to get appropriate responses and avoid any hurdles. However, the field study conducted 23 interviews considering various limitations.

iv. The participants: Qualitative research broadly analyses a broad range of information, and the sampling essentially requires including informants from diverse backgrounds (Hanson et al., 2019; Sim et al., 2018). In general, the research uses the researchers' unique knowledge and expertise to select subjects who represent the population (Berg, 2009). In qualitative research, samples are selected based on association and understanding about the research subject (Bolderston, 2012). Thus, this research applies purposive sampling grounded on the investigators' choice to ensure the most prospective research. The politicians (state and local), stakeholders (property developers, consultants, experts), officials (state government and city councils) and community groups participants have been selected based on their involvement in the urban planning policy application process in Greater Sydney. Resident participants were selected from various residential locations in Greater Sydney. Other informants were identified from state parliament, city councils and organisational websites based on their involvement. Potential participants were also identified from various publications (reports, submissions and articles) and

publicly available databases. Participants were also recruited through referrals from people approached and/or interviewed and discussed.

All interviewees were over 18 years old and had a basic understanding of Sydney’s demographics. This research conducted face-to-face and Zoom interviews of around 30–70 minutes with each of the 23 informants in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Details of informants

Group	Code	Background
Politicians (State and local level) Total informants: 4 Code: P1 to P4	Informant P1	A local politician and councillor at a western Sydney council.
	Informant P2	A local politician and councillor at a western Sydney council.
	Informant P3	A state politician and member of NSW parliament.
	Informant P4	A local politician and councillor at an eastern Sydney council.
Stakeholders (property developers, consultants, and experts) Total informants: 7 Code: S1 to S7	Informant S1	A principal policy officer in a non-profit organisation in NSW working on homelessness and affordability.
	Informant S2	A director of an Australian national property developers and property owners lobby group.
	Informant S3	A director of NSW’s leading development industry body works on urban development.
	Informant S4	An academic and urban studies expert.
	Informant S5	Chief executive of a research and advocacy body in western Sydney.
	Informant S6	An executive director of a property development and advisory firm in Sydney.
	Informant S7	A director of a city planning advisory organisation and former executive at the NSW Department of Planning.
Officials (local government) Total informants: 4 Code: O1 to O4	Informant O1	A senior executive in a local government organisation in western Sydney.
	Informant O2	A planner of a local government organisation in western Sydney.
	Informant O3	A senior executive in a local government organisation in western Sydney.
	Informant O4	A chief planner of a local government organisation in western Sydney.
Residents and community groups Total informants: 8	Informant R1	A senior executive in a not-for-profit community group about western Sydney.
	Informant R2	A leader of a prominent community group in eastern Sydney.

Code: R1 to R8	Informant R3	A western Sydney resident.
	Informant R4	An eastern Sydney resident.
	Informant R5	A western Sydney resident and former executive at the NSW Department of Planning.
	Informant R6	A western Sydney resident.
	Informant R7	An executive of a not-for-profit community group in western Sydney
	Informant R8	A western Sydney artist and resident.

- v. *Interview questions:* Designing good and real interview questions is very important for qualitative research. The interview questions should be flawless, concise and discursive and need good preparation avoiding academic or technical language or jargon (Stake, 1995). This research aims to analyse urban inequality, unequal policy application and its impacts surrounding urban policy and urban reforms in Greater Sydney. The results reveal the existing urban planning policy disparities and intra-urban inequalities and will change the existing policy formulation and implementation process relating to urban development. Thus, the research is guided by clear, short and purposeful semi-structured questions (Appendix 2). The research developed four sets of questions for the four groups of respondents to get useful answers and avoid hurdles for informants. There were no right or wrong answers in the interview, and this research was simply interested in the participants' opinions.
- vi. *Communication:* An initial contact (in person, by phone, or by email) with the introduction, information sheet and consent form of the research is essential to understand the interest of the participants to be questioned (Bolderston, 2012). Emails were sent (Appendix 3) to potential interviewees from a university email address, asking whether they would be interested in taking part. In some cases, where individuals could not be identified, emails were sent to the general email address of government

departments and community groups. These groups were requested to nominate a representative. A potential participant had four weeks to consider participation. One gentle reminder or follow-up email (Appendix 3) was sent one week after the initial invitation, and a final reminder request was sent in week three. However, where potential participants did not respond to the initial email, follow-up contact was made by phone. Potential participants were also identified from publicly available community groups websites and social media (Facebook and Twitter). Another convenient method to reach informants is snowball sampling, chain referral sampling or respondent-driven sampling (Berg, 2009). A snowballing method was used to identify potential participants, and one respondent led the researcher to multiple potential respondents.

vii. Interview location and techniques: The interview should be conducted in a suitable and comfortable place for the informants (Bolderston, 2012). The interview took place at any location of the participants' choosing (office or nearby location to minimise inconvenience) and at a convenient time (9 am to 5 pm). Interviews with representatives of state and local government took place at their offices. Interviews with residents and community groups took place at a local café. Due to the COVID-19 lockdown, the field study was paused, and it was not possible to travel anywhere due to lockdown and other restrictions. Thus, the research faced significant challenges in conducting face-to-face interviews. However, the internet has become a prevalent technique for conducting qualitative interviews (Bolderston, 2012).

Consequently, the ethics committee approved (Appendix 2) adding virtual or electronic platforms to conduct interviews as remote interviews are the only way to continue field study during movement restrictions. It is convenient and inexpensive (Bolderston,

2012). Thus, remote interviewing using a computer and Zoom software is an alternative means for a research interview.

- viii. Consent:* The participants were approached by an email invitation and given a project description (Appendix 4), a copy of the semi-structured questions (Appendix 2) and the consent form (Appendix 5). If they agreed to undertake the interview, they were asked to sign the consent form before starting the interview. During the Zoom interviews, the participants were requested to send back the scanned copy of the consent form or sign the consent form digitally. However, verbal consent was taken where it was impossible to collect the signed consent form.
- ix. Audio recording:* Typically, research interviews are audio or video recorded to ensure the data's accuracy (Bolderston, 2012). However, recorder use should be outlined in the research proposal. An information sheet and the device can be used only with the participants' formal consent (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). All research interviews were audio-recorded upon necessary consent to ensure accurate data was collected. The research did not face any difficulties in obtaining recording permission.
- x. Managing the interviews:* The interview settings should be noiseless and ensure an uninterrupted environment (Bolderston, 2012). Bolderston (2012) has suggested some details, such as turning off electronic devices, taking notes in addition to the audio or video record, testing the recording device in advance, and retaining different devices and batteries for emergency use. Also, as the participants are volunteering their time, the researcher should be careful about the schedule and should start and finish the interview on time, offer water, coffee or tea as a way to shape empathy and start with a small conversation before the interview start (Bolderston, 2012). It is also an excellent custom to send a note or email thanking the participant for their involvement and provide a copy of the research report or publication (Bolderston, 2012). The researcher

must be ready to cope with any problems, such as debates, disagreement, participant dominance, unwelcome behaviour, little or no communication, and discussion (Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

Furthermore, possible harm should be limited, and the researcher should be aware that there is a risk of mental or emotional distress from sensitive questions (Bolderston, 2012). A quiet and uninterrupted environment was ensured by turning off electronic devices. The audio recording device was tested in advance, and additional devices and batteries were retained for emergency use to avoid any disruptions. Any debates or disagreements were avoided, and all responses were welcomed with positive behaviour. Furthermore, the researcher was very conscious about the schedule and started and finished the interview on time. The informants were offered water, coffee or tea, and there was a welcoming conversation before the interview. The research fund covered expenses for field study travel and entertainment. Finally, an email was sent thanking the participants for their involvement.

- xi. Data validity and reliability:* The research's validity and reliability mean that the research follows a proper research design (Creswell, 2009). Creswell (2009) also recommends illustrating all the research actions as much as possible to ensure validity. Bolderston (2012) argues that the informants should be aware of the research subject, the risks and benefits that need to be explained, and the sorts of questions and how the data will be stored and used should be clarified, so the respondents are capable of making an informed decision to participate or not in the research. During the field study, the risks and benefits of participation were explained to participants before the interview, so they were able to make an informed decision as to whether to participate. Informants were also given a list of indicative questions and a written information and consent form before the interview.

- xii. Data confidentiality:* The privacy of the informants and confidentiality of the data is paramount in qualitative research. Bolderston (2012) argues that participants should be informed of the data confidentiality plan. All personal information should be made as anonymous as possible using a code number for each respondent. A transcription service guaranteeing privacy fully transcribed all interviews to assist in ensuring confidentiality. All identifiers (names, locations, dates) were removed from interview transcripts to ensure participants' confidentiality. The participants were informed about the data withdrawing option as the participant has the right to retract any information anytime without mentioning any reason (Bolderston, 2012).
- xiii. Participants' informed decision:* Each participant's decision to participate in the research was voluntary and based on sufficient information. Participants' information sheet and consent were stated in writing. As per the NHMRC (National Health and Medical Research Council) guidelines, sufficient information was provided in the participants' information sheet and consent form to understand the research's purpose, methods, risks, and potential benefits. The participants' information sheet said the research is supported by Western Sydney University and not sponsored by any organisation. No payments for participation were made, and it was the participant's voluntary decision to participate. There was no coercion or pressure in deciding whether to participate or not. The expected benefits for the wider community were mentioned in the participants' information sheet, and the dissemination of the research results was clearly mentioned.
- xiv. Risks and burdens:* There was a very small or negligible chance of discomfort involved. The participants were burdened with undertaking the face-to-face or Zoom interview that consisted of non-intrusive questions. There was also a very small or negligible risk that participants were unaware of, or did not comply with,

internal organisation procedures that may limit their ability to express their opinions freely. There were no concerns relevant to the research project regarding social, political, economic or institutional sensitivities. In case of emotional distress or discomfort, participants were advised to seek counselling services. The participants were not asked any questions that may cause uneasiness, and the participants did not have to answer any question that made them feel uneasy or found too distressing. There was no coercion or pressure in deciding whether to participate and no right or wrong answers. If the participants choose not to participate in this research project, they did need not to give any reason for the decision. Furthermore, the participants could withdraw at any time without giving a reason and sending an email to the chief investigator.

4.5.5 Data management and analysis

Data analysis is the process of creating direction, structure and interpretation of the mass of collected data (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Qualitative data analysis is the search for a general statement about the relationship of the data (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). The qualitative analysis aims to develop a conceptual framework that provides an in-depth and broad understanding of the phenomenon (Hanson et al., 2019). There are many different frameworks for qualitative analysis (Hanson et al., 2019). Berg (2009), by citing Miles and Huberman (1994), identifies three major approaches to qualitative data analysis: interpretive approaches, social anthropological approaches and collaborative social research approaches.

This research follows the interpretative approaches to analyse urban planning policies as a text and narratives. Interpretative approaches allow the researcher to convey social actions and human activity text and open avenues for discovering meanings and actions' practical understandings (Berg, 2009). The nature of the study, the focus of the research questions, and the researcher's curiosities determined what analytic strategies should be followed (Stake,

1995). The data analysis process implicates creating meaningful explanations out of the collection of text or images (Creswell, 2009). Data analysis is the matter of giving the meaning of first impressions as well as final compilations (Stake, 1995).

Figure 4.4: Data analysis in qualitative research



Source: Creswell (2009).

By considering the nature of the research, the research questions and analytic strategies, the study has chosen a suitable data analysis process to create significant explanation by using the data. The below subsections outline the data use and analysis details of the research.

- i. The rationale for data use:* The concise, discursive interview questions were asked about urban inequality, unequal policy application, and its impacts on urban policy and urban reforms in Greater Sydney. This research considered the participants' opinions valuable data to reveal the existing urban planning policy disparities and intra-urban inequalities. All informants were purposefully chosen as having knowledge and

understanding of urban planning policy and community issues. All the interviewees are non-identifiable in all publications and the thesis where they are quoted. The interview informants' data is delivered so that the participant cannot be identified, and all identifiers (names, locations, dates) are removed from the interviews to ensure privacy.

Various data was also gathered from secondary sources, including the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), and the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DoPIE) publicly available data. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data is valid, authentic, and publicly available from its official website. The Australian Bureau of Statistics provides the bulk of its free and customised data with Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licensing, which reduces the restrictions on using that data and meaning the Australian Bureau of Statistics is acknowledged as the source of the data. The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment has publicly supported information. It endorses using the data as per the Australian Governments Open Access and Licensing Framework (AusGOAL), which provides support and guidance to government and related sectors to facilitate open access to publicly funded information.

ii. Transcription: Interview recordings are the primary data sources of this research. In analysing qualitative data, interviews can be transcribed into written text to get the informants' insights and valuable opinions (Berg, 2009). All interviews were audio-recorded as the audio recording helps ensure accurate data is collected. All interviews were fully transcribed by a professional transcription service that guarantees confidentiality to assist the analysis. All identifiers (names, locations, dates) were removed from the recording to ensure privacy.

iii. Data usage: Qualitative data is generally full of narratives and stories (Esterberg, 2002). The interview data was primarily accumulated in a form that could identify

individuals, then coded for analysis and correlation to other collected data or information. In any publication and presentation of the research, the interview informants' data are delivered in such a way that the participant cannot be identified, and all identifiers (names, locations, dates) are removed from the interviews to ensure privacy. All the contents, documents, literature and interviews were thematically analysed in the NVivo environment to organise and characterise the analysis.

- iv. Illustration:* Maps are not merely used as illustrations. Instead, they are increasingly used as the medium to tell stories, even in whole narrative atlases (DeLyser & Sui, 2013). The research has applied a geographic information system (ArcGIS Software) to create maps and analyse geographic information.
- v. Interpretation:* The final steps of the data analysis involve interpreting and making meaning of the data. It highlights what the researchers have discovered and raises new subjects. Creswell (2009) suggests that narrative explanation is the most frequent form of interpreting qualitative data. The result is presented as the narrative and descriptive form instead of a scientific report, allowing the holistic picture to be presented to the broader audience (Creswell, 2009).
- vi. Data privacy:* All identification was removed from the recordings and transcripts. Each interview is given a code and a numerical number based on the interview chronological sequence before being stored. However, a master file with the original and code details is kept by the chief investigator.
- vii. Data storage:* The data is stored in the Western Sydney University provided cloud storage CloudStor, where it is secured and systematically backed up. On completion of the project, all hard drives will be wiped clean, and the data will be archived in

the University's Institutional Repository "ResearchDirect". The archived data will be kept for five years in line with NHMRC guidelines.

4.6 Research constraints

Marshall and Rossman (2014) identify three main challenges of qualitative research: developing a comprehensive, concise and elegant conceptual framework, planning a manageable research design, and integrating it into a coherent document. In the primary stage, the research faced constraints regarding the conceptual framework, research design, and effective outcomes. As the research applies numerous theories, it was initially challenging to integrate them with the research concept and apply them in analysing data.

However, this research project faced some other constraints. First, the study took place within the context of ongoing public and political debate surrounding the urban planning policy application process and the argument around the Sydney inequality divide. It is likely that this context limited state government politicians' and officials' willingness to volunteer to participate. Second, residents seemed to have limited interest in taking part in the interviews. Third, the relatively short project timeline limited the number of participants and minimised opportunities to explore the data and findings from numerous perspectives. Fourth, the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic has significantly affected the research. When the Western Sydney University campus closed on March 2020 due to the COVID-19 nationwide lockdown, the researcher had to work from home and faced infrastructure problems, such as internet connection, work desk and lack of appropriate work environment.

The research field study was paused for a long time due to movement restrictions and disrupted the field study as the participants cancelled interviews. In addition, due to the campus closure, the researcher could not collect essential books or documents or access external sources.

As an international research candidate, the researcher needed to care for the family at home in Sydney while also worrying about extended family overseas, which placed additional burdens on the researcher.

4.7 Conclusion

The research applied a valid and effective methodology to test the study's hypotheses and investigate research questions. The qualitative case study, document analysis and semi-structured interview approaches are suitable to find urban inequality and urban policy application insights. The chosen qualitative methods help the research gather purposeful data that reveals the strategies and outcomes of metropolitan Sydney's urban policy applications. This research's qualitative approach leads the research in discovering and portraying the multiple views of the urban policy cases, descriptions, and interpretations of others through document analysis and interviews. Based on the case study, the above-discussed research design and methods guide a comprehensive analysis of urban planning policy application, its outcomes and impacts on Greater Sydney's socio-demographic deprivation or disadvantaged situation. Despite various limitations, a significant number of interviews were conducted, and a large volume and wide range of textual sources of data were explored. This provides a satisfactory body of data to generate meaningful insights into the urban policy applications, outcomes and urban inequalities that are demonstrated in the subsequent chapters five, six and seven.

Chapter Five: Case studies – A tale of two cities: Contemporary urban planning policy and practice in Greater Sydney¹²

5.1 Introduction

Chapter two illustrates that Greater Sydney is spatially divided based on socio-economic advantage and urban amenities. In deregulated planning settings, community engagement, urban planning policy implementation and outcomes can also vary by area. This chapter analyses three cases of spatially differentiated community participation and urban policy practice in the planning process in NSW through the theoretical prism of post-politics. It identifies why the techno-managerial process causes suppression of community input into planning matters only in socio-economically disadvantaged areas and how the formal planning process could be contributing to gaps between different parts of Greater Sydney.

The New South Wales (NSW) planning process is in a continuous state of reform to respond to urban challenges (Brunner & Glasson, 2015; Piracha, 2010). These reforms are meant to streamline the planning and development decisions to facilitate urban and economic development (Piracha, 2015). The urban planning policy changes are strongly guided by political discourses (Gurran & Phibbs, 2014). The substantial reforms also reduce community input in the planning practices and their outcomes (MacDonald, 2018; Piracha, 2010). The reforms are a strategy applied to manage urban development and related disagreements (MacDonald, 2018). The NSW government favours the post-political technocratic administrative and supervisory community engagement methods in policy development and

¹² This chapter has been published in a peer reviewed journal, with some changes.

implementation (Farid Uddin, 2019; Greiss & Piracha, 2021). MacDonald (2015) recognises the intent of the NSW urban planning policy reform efforts as a noteworthy instance of post-politics. Post-political planning is a managerial planning process, defined as the practice of independent assessors, structured participation and loss of local political power (Bond et al., 2015; Zizek, 2008).

The ability of communities to participate in urban planning policy development, reforms, and implementation varies across Greater Sydney. There has been strong and high-profile local resistance to urban policy changes in some areas of Greater Sydney (Gurran & Phibbs, 2013). However, the less advantaged, the less educated, non-English speaking background communities with little socio-political influence have much less engagement with urban policy, development and political decisions (Bovens & Wille, 2010; Connor et al., 2001), which leads to very different built environment outcomes for the less affluent parts of the Greater Sydney Metropolitan. This could be conceived as discriminatory planning policy application.

Numerous scholars (Haughton & McManus, 2019; Legacy et al., 2017; MacDonald, 2015; Schatz & Rogers, 2016) have explained Greater Sydney urban planning policy direction through various theoretical constructs, including neoliberal, post-political, rational, communicative and participatory planning. NSW urban planning reforms have been identified as a critical issue (Kent et al., 2018); however, there is a dearth of critical investigations on contemporary unequal planning policy and practice. By and large, spatially and socio-economically differentiated urban planning policy and practice in Greater Sydney has not been explored. Urban research needs to critically analyse the geographical division in Greater Sydney in planning policy and practice emanating from different community abilities to participate in the planning process and to influence planning outcomes. To fill the gap, this research analyses how planning policy and practice contribute to the spatial variation in Greater Sydney.

This chapter presents three empirical case studies of contemporary policy practices and community engagement aspects of NSW planning. A post-political framework is adopted as a theoretical lens that offers valuable understandings of recent changes to planning arrangements (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2012). It attempts to answer the specific questions: what are the contemporary urban planning policy practice trends in Greater Sydney?, how does the techno-managerial community engagement process progress in Sydney?, and do the formal community engagement processes, and planning practices contribute to gaps between various areas of Greater Sydney?.

Chapter three described the theoretical and conceptual contexts of the research extensively. However, a summarised contextual perspective related to this chapter is helpful to understand the arguments and analyses of the three cases described in this chapter. The below section highlights the contextual background about planning practices and community engagement.

5.2 Conceptual contexts

Contemporary planning is deep-rooted in modernity, i.e. scientific or instrumental rationality. In the late 1960s, the disillusionment with the rational–comprehensive model pushed new planning paradigms, including transactive, advocacy, Marxist, bargaining and communicative theoretical approaches. All of these had the mutual goal of overcoming the shortcomings of earlier models (Friedmann, 1994; McDonald, 1989). Rational planning is entrenched in systematic rationalism and has robust and fast-growing roots in neoliberal economics. Since the 1970s, there has been an increasing apprehension about rational planning as it ignores social justice considerations. Criticisms of rational planning resulted in two new directions (Healey, 1992).

The first was to increase the scope and understanding of the scientific rationality and absolute truth. Jürgen Habermas came up with communicative rationality as a way forward (Bernstein,

1985). Habermas' thinking is the basis for communicative or collaborative planning. Healey (1992) conceptualised "planning through debate" and argued for achieving consensus in planning with the help of a broader understanding of rationality. Habermas recommends reasoning that is encapsulated within communication among various stakeholders (Healey, 1992). Habermas' conceptualisation of rationality is applied reasoning that employs the ways used to comprehend matters (Allmendinger, 2009). Habermas' theory's shortcomings are that it may not be possible to achieve consensus in complex situations involving various actors. However, Taylor (1998, p. 122), pointing out the significance of communicative rationality, claims that limited attention has been paid to communication as 'dialogue, debate, and negotiation'. Besides, communicative rationality can help understand the social difference and empower local communities (Huxley & Yiftachel, 2000).

Postmodern thought or relativism is the second approach that is rooted in the thinking of Antonio Gramsci and Michel Foucault. Postmodern thinking altogether rejects rationality. It claims that consensus benefits the powerful only (Allmendinger, 2009). Agonism advocated by Chantal Mouffe (2000) is a branch of postmodern thinking. Mouffe (2000) argues that agonistic pluralism refutes both instrumental and communicative rationality. Mouffe (2000) proposes providing a platform for confronting differences. However, in practice, it is difficult to translate postmodern thinking into workable planning (Allmendinger, 2009).

Habermas developed the concept of deliberative democracy, which has its background in his earlier work 'Theory of Communicative Action' that places significant importance on implementing the legitimate system to seek public views from all sections of society (Biebricher, 2007). One of the critical goals of deliberative democracy is to produce a realistic approach to connect with the views of underprivileged members of a community (Susen, 2018). Communicative or deliberative policy-making approaches improve public participation practices for democratising public policy (Hopkins, 2010). Carson (2001), citing Moyer's

(Effective and Ineffective) Roles of Activism, argues that an effective citizen leads to an effective reformer, effective change agent thus influential rebel; conversely, an ineffective citizen proceeds to an ineffective reformer, ineffective change agent and consequently ineffective rebel. Effective citizens, reformers, change agents, and rebels are those who promote democracy and freedom through citizen rights, applying the official mechanisms and disagreements; conversely, ineffective citizens are the naive and utopian citizens who unquestioningly agree on administrative rules, are incredibly obedient to government, foster only minor changes and are forlorn voices on society's fringe (Carson, 2001).

Neoliberal planning is another concept that argues for simplifying planning by limiting community engagement and local political action (Wehrhahn, 2015). Neoliberalism creates new structures of control by augmenting the intrusion of the state (Jessop, 2002). In the processes of neoliberal urban planning, the participatory system transformed into prescribed and regulated forms of participation (Haughton & McManus, 2019). The participatory processes used by authorities are instruments to legitimise inevitable governmental preferences and cannot be contested (Legacy, 2017). Bond et al. (2015) argue that the neoliberal idea is the starting point of the post-political tactic.

Haughton and McManus (2019) argue the post-political concept as an ultimate idea to gauge the position of current collaborative and communicative planning thought. Active community engagement is a crucial component of participatory political dominions (Crick, 2004). However, post-politics limits community engagement. Swyngedouw (2009) argues that urban post-politics works parallel to the neoliberal market force and systematically eliminates dissent or differences of opinion with governance mechanisms that coerce consensus. Zizek (2008) defines post-political politics as politics in which conceptual variances are substituted by techno-managerial planning management. Bond et al. (2015, p. 1162) argue that "politics have been closed down in a variety of ways and the notion of power to the people has become the

power to a mantra of economic growth, this closure is often termed a post-political". Allmendinger and Haughton (2012) argue that post-politics has taken antagonism and agonism's place and that deliberative democracy is just a tactic in the practice of the post-politics that is applied for engaging community in the governmental process to advantage the policy process. Haughton and McManus (2019) argue that post-politics introduces stage-managed consultation procedures centred on the institutional engagement techniques that let the government departments present their preferred methods as the only accessible option.

Participation is crucial to ensure social harmony and must be substantial in the urban planning procedure (Berntzen & Johannessen, 2016; Legacy, 2012). Participatory planning approaches allow citizens to engage in the planning process (Blair, 2004), and resident participation in the urban planning process is widely considered an essential component in developing uniform and expressive urban policies (Brody et al., 2003). Nevertheless, contemporary planning practices fail to address the locational complexity and spatially fair urban outcomes as participatory planning extends its domination of regulated community engagement systems (Legacy, 2017).

The following sections cover developments in planning policy and practice in NSW and demonstrate community engagement variations in Greater Sydney in the subsequent sections.

5.3 Planning practice in NSW, Australia

The NSW state government has very strong regulatory powers on urban planning policy direction (Davidson & Gleeson, 2018). To safeguard the interests of local communities in development decisions and to ensure public participation in the planning process, the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (EP&A) was promulgated in 1979. However, amendments to the Act since its inception have given the Minister of Planning with authority

to determine outcomes of development applications and limit local planning entities' authority to evaluate the state agencies' infrastructure development projects.

The NSW government has implied through its various communications that it has taken up discursive democracy and a collaborative planning policy direction. However, in fact, rational planning and neoliberalism with undertones of political imperatives and pragmatism are practised in NSW (Piracha, 2015). The NSW planning arrangements are markedly reducing the democratic engagement opportunity, which is considered a hurdle by the NSW planning department that slows down the planning progression and urban growth, specifically housing and population densification (MacDonald, 2018). Therefore, weakening local community involvement in planning has been the central plank of the past 15–20 years (MacDonald, 2018; Piracha, 2010). The government inclination is to pay lip service to the notion of community engagement, while community involvement mostly proceeds on terms that are directed by the neoliberal government (Schatz & Rogers, 2016). Neoliberal urbanism that relies on a simplification of planning reduces opportunities for public political action and community engagement (Wehrhahn, 2015), thus leading to approaches of post-politics (Bond et al., 2015).

In the past decade, repeated attempts were made to increase state power and encourage development in NSW. Piracha (2010), in evaluating 2004–05 and 2007–08 planning changes in NSW, argues that the planning policy transformations in NSW have sped up and are ever more drastic. Planning reform from 2005 to 2011 concentrated on centralising powers by taking away controversial development decisions from local councils and replacing council decision-making with expert panels (Greiss & Piracha, 2021; MacDonald, 2018). Three-tiered expert panels, i.e. Local Planning Panels (LPPs), Joint Regional Planning Panels (JRPPs), and the Planning Assessment Commission (PAC), were introduced to take over planning decisions from local politics. These changes have been promoting regulatory forms of post-political engagement (Haughton & McManus, 2019).

Haughton and McManus (2019) and Greiss and Piracha (2021) argue that NSW planning has entered into new darkness of depoliticisation and manipulative forms of participation. The essential feature of recent planning thought in terms of community engagement is to emphasise the superiority of government planning institutions (Lane, 2005). Legacy et al. (2019) argue that the new community engagement techniques are based on a ‘consensus-model of decision-making’ and do not accommodate precarious engagement and inhibit residents from questioning the leading planning orthodoxy. The NSW government favours the post-political technocratic administrative and supervisory community engagement methods in policy development and implementation, ignoring extensive community contributions (Farid Uddin, 2019). State planning has successively dictated urban growth to achieve their planning objectives of speedy development assessment (Bunker, Freestone, et al., 2017). The development assessment aspect of planning in NSW remains focused on quick, automated, and privatised assessment through building surveyors to support faster urban development. Supremacy of metropolitan planning initiatives such as the Greater Sydney Commission plans over local strategic planning has also weakened community engagement in planning.

However, the socio-economically advantaged, well-educated, well-resourced and well-connected residents consistently achieve their aims in any planning environment. While successive and unrelenting reforms since the inception of the EP&A Act have changed the participatory process in NSW planning, affluent communities find an alternative to the planning process through social media mobilisation and influencing the political process (Williamson & Ruming, 2015). In contrast, disadvantaged residents are unable to do so. Thus, the consequences of post-political planning in Greater Sydney are that the affluent residents find ways to accomplish their main planning goal of preventing over development or even any new development, despite the limited scope of community engagement in planning policy practices. Post-political planning is unequivocally able to minimise community input into

planning matters in less advantaged western Sydney, where lower-income, less educated residents live, who are primarily migrants who do not speak English as a first language and do not have the capacity to fill the void left by the parting of the political.

5.4 Cases that demonstrate the tale of two cities

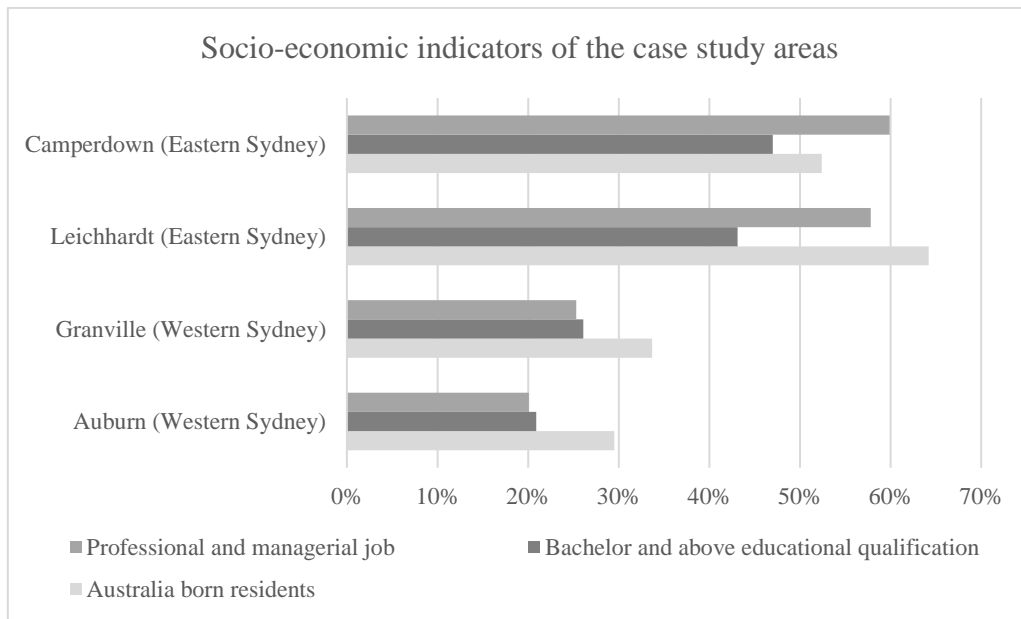
Greater Western Sydney is disadvantaged in many areas (Chapter two), and the socio-economic divide between the ‘have’ and ‘have not’ parts of the city is increasing. This situation is compounded by the unequal application of urban policies, recommending that most proposed new housing be located in the west (Saulwick & Wade, 2016). The NSW planning apparatus does not provide a clear rationale for why most new dwellings have to be located in western Sydney. That might have something to do with politics. The right-leaning political party in power for the last ten years derives its votes mostly from affluent areas that are very active in resisting new residential development in their areas (Bleby, 2018).

Locating most of the new housing in the west will worsen the jobs shortage, lead to more overcrowding and pollution, and related difficulties for people in western Sydney. Saulwick and Wade (2016) pointed out that “the concentration of residential development is in areas to Sydney’s west – and not in Sydney’s relatively affluent inner west, eastern suburbs, lower north or northern suburbs”. That disregards the north and east’s accessibility of better public transport, natural and cultural facilities, jobs, and a clear public choice for living close to the city. This could be explained by the reality that residents of higher-income areas actively engage with planning matters in Sydney and can avoid planning policy being applied in their areas (Urban Taskforce, 2018). The following three cases outline the unequal planning practices and the unequal outcomes.

5.4.1 Parramatta Road corridor redevelopment

Parramatta Road is the 20-kilometre long corridor that links Sydney CBD in the east and Parramatta in the west. The corridor has up to 100,000 vehicle journeys a day on some sections of the road. It is very noisy and has low-level commercial functions, such as second-hand car yards (UrbanGrowth NSW, 2015). UrbanGrowth NSW (currently known as Landcom), the state-owned land and property development enterprise, introduced a preliminary draft of its Parramatta Road Urban Renewal Strategy in November 2014 and proposed a renovation plan for the corridor comprising Parramatta Road and connecting land at least one block back from the road. The strategy identified eight precincts, divided into two sections. Western precincts close to Parramatta include Granville and Auburn, and eastern precincts include Homebush, Burwood–Concord, Kings Bay, Taverners Hill, Leichhardt and Camperdown. The corridor’s western precincts are within the City of Parramatta and Cumberland LGAs, and the corridor’s eastern precincts are within the Strathfield, Burwood, Canada Bay, Inner West and City of Sydney LGAs. There are significant socio-economic differences between the corridor’s western and eastern precincts. For example, figure 5.1 shows socio-economic indicators for four local government areas along the Parramatta Road corridor to highlight the socio-economic and cultural differences. For Camperdown and Leichhardt, a very high proportion of residents are highly educated, Australian-born, and employed in professional and managerial jobs. On the other hand, residents of two areas in the west that did not oppose the Parramatta Road corridor development, Auburn and Granville, have a low level of education, a lower proportion of their populations in professional and managerial jobs, and are mostly overseas-born.

Figure 5.1: Socio-economic indicators of two case study areas



Source: Generated by the author with ABS Census 2016 data.

The Parramatta Road Strategy is part of the NSW government’s 30-year plan for densification and increasing the amenity of the Parramatta Road corridor, and aimed for 50,000 new dwellings and 50,000 jobs in the corridor (UrbanGrowth NSW, 2015). The strategy was displayed for public comment from November 2014 to February 2015, and residents were surveyed for opinions. UrbanGrowth NSW published the Draft Parramatta Road Urban Renewal Strategy in February 2015 and the Draft Parramatta Road Urban Transformation Strategy in September 2015 based on the initial consultation on the preliminary draft. The initial community consultations were limited to displays and submissions. The later draft strategies were displayed for public comment. After a couple of months of consultations in 2014 and 2015, UrbanGrowth NSW finalised and published the Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Transformation Strategy in November 2016.

During the consultation for the redevelopment plan for the eight precincts along the corridor, UrbanGrowth NSW faced strong opposition to any increase in population density from the more advantaged communities in the eastern part of the corridor. The smaller councils in the

East are very sensitive to the views of the local residents who vote for. Some councils denied signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the NSW government and refused to implement the strategy. On the other hand, western Sydney residents were not very vocal about the strategy. The difference in community opposition seems to have heavily influenced the final strategy, which recommended providing most new dwellings towards the corridor's western end. This location could be considered the opposite of sensible planning as job opportunities, and natural and cultural amenities are much higher in the east, and providing more dwellings in the west would increase commuting distances (Hulse & Yates, 2017; Wiesel, 2018).

5.4.2 Council amalgamations

State governments in Australia have strong regulatory powers over local councils, including restructuring them (Tiley & Dollery, 2010). NSW undertook council amalgamation process from 2011 to 2017. Initially, in 2011, the NSW state government commenced local government reforms with a two-day strategic planning conference and workshop that was themed 'Destination 2036', and the actional plan suggested forming an expert review panel. Subsequently, in April 2012, the state government appointed the Independent Local Government Review Panel (ILGRP) to recommend options for reform. Running parallel to the ILGRP, a Taskforce reviewed the Local Government Act of 1993 in March 2012. The ILGRP published its interim report in April 2013 and many of the recommendations centred on forced amalgamation.

Considering the Panel and the Taskforce recommendations, the government put forward the 'Fit for the Future (FFTF)' discussion paper in September 2014 to reduce the 152 councils to 112 in entire NSW and 43 councils to 25 in Greater Sydney. To execute the FFTF plan, the government assigned the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) to assess the councils' submissions on the amalgamation proposal and to determine their financial fitness.

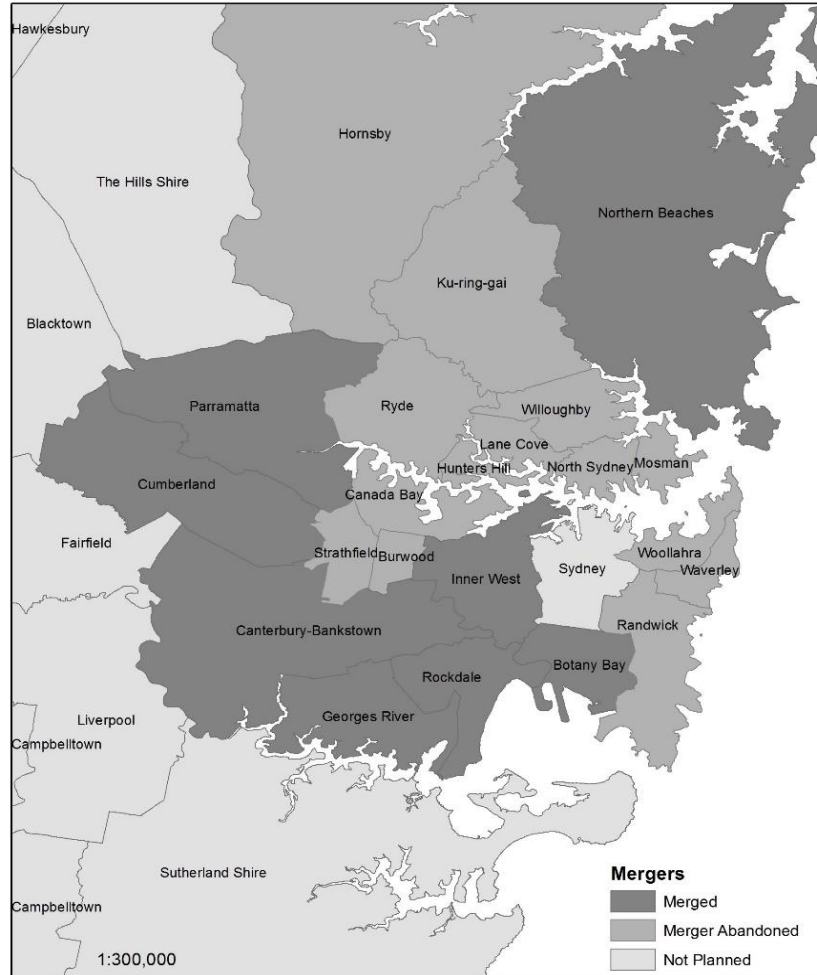
In addition, the state government recruited the NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp), KPMG, and Jeff Tate Consulting Pty Ltd to evaluate the councils' financial sustainability. After numerous assessments in December 2015, the government revealed a council amalgamation plan. However, the amalgamation processes were halted for some council mergers due to excessive community opposition. By September 2016, the government formed 20 new amalgamated councils in NSW, but another 11 planned amalgamations had been shelved because of legal battles and resident opposition. Finally, in July 2017, the state government altogether dropped its efforts to implement the remaining amalgamations.

The residents of Sydney's eastern and northern councils formed various community groups and actively opposed the amalgamation plans citing their fears of reduced services, poor service quality, higher council rates, and damaged local democracy (Farid Uddin, 2018). Opponents delivered submissions to expert panels, organised rallies, and arranged public awareness campaigns by distributing flyers to residents to convey their concerns. Opponents also wrote letters to the planning bodies, to elected representatives and the media. Based on residents' opposition, Botany Bay, Hunters Hill, Ku-ring-gai, Mosman, North Sydney, and Strathfield councils in Sydney voted to take legal action against the forced amalgamations. Thus, the amalgamation plans for some councils were delayed by legal action.

Finally, at the end of July 2017, the NSW government altogether dropped its proposal to merge Greater Sydney's Burwood, Canada Bay, Hornsby, Hunters Hill, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Mosman, North Sydney, Randwick, Ryde, Strathfield, Waverley, Willoughby, and Woollahra councils due to community resistance which had translated into court challenges. The councils that avoided mergers and the communities which actively opposed the amalgamation process were all from the advantaged and active eastern and northern parts of Greater Sydney (Figure 5.2). In contrast, amalgamations occurred smoothly in western Sydney. The lack of local

communities' ability to engage with policy matters contributed to the outcome (Gurran & Phibbs, 2013; Williamson & Ruming, 2015).

Figure 5.2: Council mergers in Greater Sydney



Source: Drawn by the author using ABS standard local council digital boundaries 2016.

5.4.3 Medium density housing code

The NSW government announced its Low-Rise Medium Density Housing Code (Housing Code) on 6 April 2018 to ease housing scarcity and provide more affordable housing. The policy was mainly about easy approvals for the subdivision of land and rebuilding an existing house into two new houses. The new Housing Code was put in place in 82 council areas across

NSW on 6 July 2018, but it was deferred until 1 July 2019 for 50 council areas due to local resistance.

Deferment of the Housing Code application was granted to the advantaged and vocal Ryde council due to the push from the council and local representatives (Saulwick, 2018b). Other active Sydney councils followed the Ryde tactic so that they could also avoid the planning policy. In June 2019, the NSW Planning Minister formed a review panel to amend the code for the application by the end of 2019. However, in September 2019, the NSW Department of Planning delayed the implementation of the code until July 2020, meaning the exemption of 45 councils from the code was prolonged until July 2020. On 1 July 2020, minor amendments were made to the Housing Code in response to the review panel recommendation that consisted of modifying the name to 'Low Rise Housing Diversity Code' and finally, the Housing Code was put into place for all councils in NSW.

The deferment of the Housing Code in some councils seems to reflect strong community engagement and resistance. As a result, new dwelling approvals are higher in western parts of Sydney and lower in the east and north. Blacktown and Fairfield were notable non-exemptions in the west with a combined population of about 500,000 or 10% of Sydney's population. Waverley and Lane Cove are the only two councils in the east that were not exempt, and their combined population is about 100,000 or 2% of Sydney's total. Much higher exceptions from the medium density code for the affluent areas close to the city reflect the influence of socio-political leverage within the post-political planning system.

The following section further discusses these cases and analyses the socio-economic advantage and its connection with the community's ability to respond to the planning process.

5.5 Discussion and analysis

The NSW government is practising a collaborative planning system where community participation is ensured by a formal discussion method in the form of submissions, hearings or surveys. It is difficult for residents who are socio-demographically disadvantaged, have lower education, and are from a non-English speaking background to understand and participate in this process. As Western Sydney has a larger proportion of these residents, it is more difficult for western Sydney residents to participate in these planning processes (Healy & Birrell, 2003; Scheurer et al., 2017). Also, migrant communities in the west are often from countries where citizens are fearful of coming into contact with government agencies.

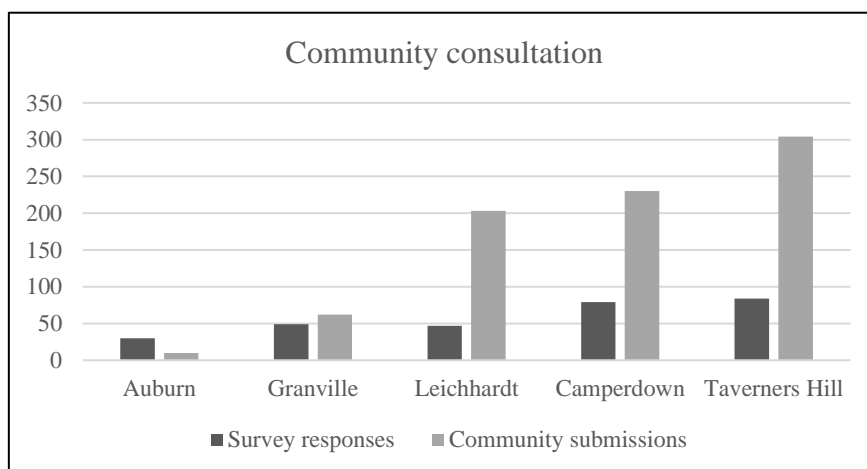
The planning reforms are associated with multiple steps and numerous official documents. Relevant information is conveyed to residents by strategic documents, reports, information sheets or displays. The existing consultation system in NSW is overly complicated and managerial (Haughton & McManus, 2019). Residents require a reasonable level of education to understand the formal planning language and legislative terms. The formal planning process is narrowed through consensus-generating community engagement processes in the managerial and structured planning system influenced by the post-political thought (Legacy et al., 2019). However, the high-income suburbs residents are aware of the planning framework and mostly willing to participate in the planning process (Ruming, 2019). The residents are very active and motivate each other to engage in the formal process.

How difficult the complexity of planning for lower socio-economic communities to comprehend is highlighted by the final Parramatta Road Urban Transformation Strategy that was supported by two draft strategies, four implementation tool kits, seven reference reports, two community information documents and six fact sheets. In the council amalgamation community engagement and consultation process, the NSW government initiated six independent reviews and progressed with a four-year administrative discussion, including

various expert panel assessments, hearings and submissions (Farid Uddin, 2019). Such complexity would be frightening for the communities in the west that have lower levels of educational attainment and English language skills.

In the public consultation on the amalgamation of the affluent and active Hunters Hill, Lane Cove and Ryde councils, the Council Boundary Review received 457 written submissions, and 70 local community members conveyed their thoughts at public hearings (Farid Uddin, 2018). The processes of writing an official submission or attending a public hearing can be tough to comprehend for people of lower socio-economic status and can reduce community engagement. The guided formal processes that limited the options for broader community engagement are thus a process of an unquestioned post-political framework of representative democracy (Wilson & Swyngedouw, 2014). Figure 5.3 demonstrates that the community participation in the Parramatta Road Strategy was lower in the Auburn and Granville precincts than the other precincts. The failure to contribute to the political process of local engagement in urban matters can lead to community disengagement with planning (McAuliffe & Rogers, 2018), which is an adverse outcome of the post-political approach.

Figure 5.3: Community engagement on the Parramatta Road Urban Transformation Strategy



Source: Generated by the author with data from Draft Parramatta Road Urban Transformation Strategy Consultation Outcomes Report (Retrieved from <https://www.landcom.com.au/assets/Publications/Parramatta/9d3d989b93/parramatta-road-outcomes-report-050516.pdf>)

Community antagonism characterises an influential and vital form of urban democracy and community engagement in the formal planning processes. Ruming et al. (2012) characterised the absence of community consultation as undemocratic. Socio-economically advantaged residents are active and vocal about their democratic participation. When UrbanGrowth NSW sought community opinions from the ten councils along the corridor for the Parramatta Road Urban Transformation Strategy, the agency encountered stiff opposition to any new dwellings or population growth from the well-off residents of the councils in the east of the Parramatta corridor.

The socio-economically advantaged communities were active in protesting the post-political form of the consultation process. The well-connected community groups conveyed their thoughts proficiently and secured their interests (Williamson & Ruming, 2019). An indication of grave community concern is the eastern council Leichhardt's refusal to cooperate with UrbanGrowth NSW. Leichhardt refused a proposal to rezone some industrial areas to residential areas to build 300 new residential units (FitzGerald, 2016). Due to such resistance, the final strategy stipulates that the three western-most precincts of Auburn, Granville and Homebush should provide 70% of the additional dwellings while the two eastern-most precincts of Camperdown and Leichhardt should provide only 5% (Piracha & Hardie, 2018).

The NSW government faced substantial hurdles during the council amalgamation process, especially from well-off northern and eastern region residents, community groups, and councils. The eastern and northern suburbs residents used several effective methods to involve fellow residents, get more comprehensive support, and stymie the decision-making process. Opponents organised protests, attracted elected representatives' attention and the media, and pushed the councils to take legal action against the amalgamation. The councils that avoided mergers and the communities which actively opposed the amalgamation process were from the advantaged and active eastern and northern parts of Greater Sydney. In contrast,

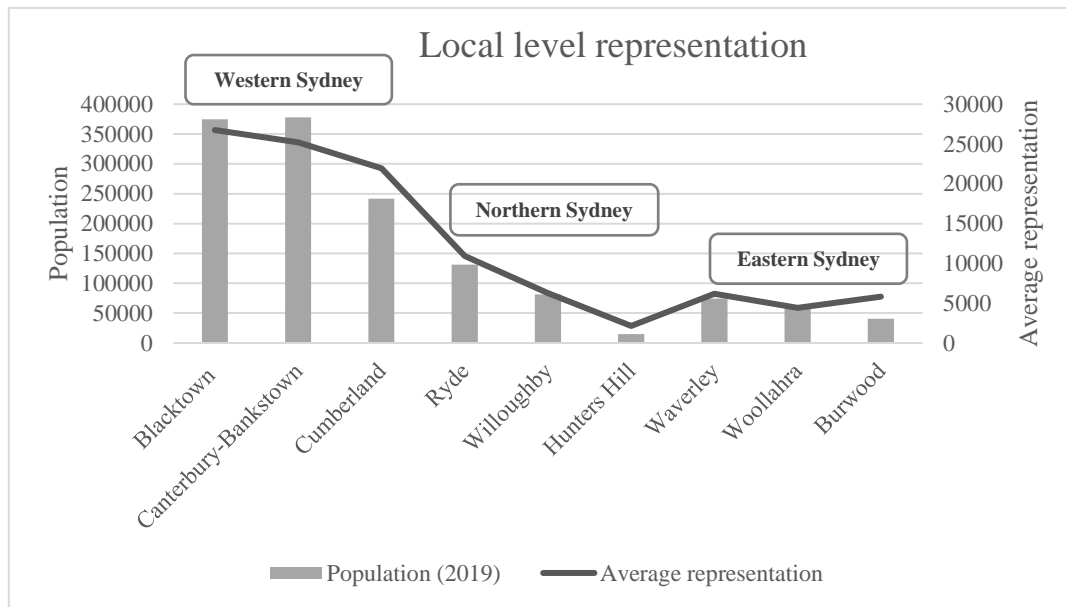
amalgamations proceeded without much resistance in western areas. The lack of community capacity to organise and oppose the reform contributed to it.

The Housing Code deferment started in the affluent Ryde council area due to influence from the local council. Consequently, the NSW government's Housing Code was applied in some councils, while others were exempted. Strong community engagement and local politics contributed to the deferment of the Housing Code application for some councils.

Local councillors are democratically voted in to represent the local community and to care for local wellbeing in the policy process through their leadership and communication. If a councillor is unable to protect the local interest, it is unlikely they will be re-elected in the position. The Local Government Act 1993 (2016) states the Governor may create any part of New South Wales as a council area by declaration (Section 204), and a council ought to have a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 15 councillors (Section 224). However, clear direction and rationality about the total area and number of populations are not stated. Access to councillors and communication with residents are both affected by the size of the ward (a local area, typically used for local government management and electoral purposes) and population. A councillor in an affluent area represents, on average, fewer residents compared to councillors in western councils. Figure 5.4 shows that a ward of a council in western Sydney has around 22,000 to 25,000 residents, whereas the average in the northern and eastern councils is 2,000 to 11,000 residents per ward.

Community engagement is a political action and politically driven play in planning (Greiss & Piracha, 2021; Legacy, 2017). The councillors in the affluent areas are playing a proactive role in protecting the community's interests. National politics and political power also play a significant role in planning policies and favouring the affluent areas (Saulwick, 2018a).

Figure 5.4: Average population in each ward in selected LGAs



Source: Generated by the author with data from council websites and <https://home.id.com.au/demographic-resources/>

In the case of the council amalgamation antagonism and the Ryde Housing Code deferment, local politics played a critical role. Unequal reform initiative of 2016’s council amalgamation combined lower socio-economic Auburn and Holroyd councils with lower socio-economic Parramatta’s south-west to form new Cumberland Council; and the remainder of the Parramatta City Council, high socio-economic Sydney Olympic Park (formerly Auburn Council), and slivers from high socio-economic councils of Hornsby Shire, and the Hills Shire to the north were amalgamated into the new City of Parramatta Council. That is the case of policy reforms being used as a tool to get political gains. By analysing the voting patterns of pre and post amalgamated council boundaries, Munro (2017) asserted that the creation of the new (higher socio-economic) Parramatta Council would produce a secure majority for the governing Liberal party, as higher socio-economic areas typically vote Liberal.

The unequal policy implementation also formed a mega-council of lower socio-economic southwestern and western areas with the merger of Canterbury and Bankstown councils with a combined total of 360,000 residents. In contrast, the socio-economically advantaged council of

Hunters Hill, with a population of only around 14,000, had its planned merger cancelled. Small councils mean close and accessible communities which can quickly be organised to engage and influence the planning policy.

The state government paused the implementation of the Medium Density Housing Code and advancement of all new planning proposals in Ryde, where a state government local member and Minister pushed the government to restrict development (Saulwick, 2018a). It is claimed that the Ryde decision was made just to save the political position of the Minister facing re-election in the face of a local community annoyed with the code (Saulwick & Gladstone, 2018). Under the post-political community engagement framework, the elite and their allies are advantaged (Wilson & Swyngedouw, 2014). Western Sydney residents are unable to express their disagreement due to their inadequate social connections, weak local democracy and poor networks. Loss of politics at the local level affected the west more than the north and the east.

The housing in the advantaged areas is beyond the affordability of the majority of Greater Sydney residents. Active community engagement and opposition is preventing additional dwellings in the affluent areas. The inability to provide more dwellings in the east is exacerbating housing unaffordability there. Consequently, more and more dwellings are being built in the west to accommodate the growing Sydney population. Thus, this research argues that the disadvantaged groups living in Western Sydney experience adverse effects on their lives from the decisions they cannot fully comprehend or resist. Moreover, it is not only the community engagement in planning process that causes the differential outcomes but also engagement with the politics and socio-economic power in general. It is about who is able to set the discourse.

The NSW Department of Planning and the independent statutory body Greater Sydney Commission (GSC) have initiated policies and strategic plans to ensure most residential growth occurs in western Sydney. Greater Sydney Commission's 0–5 year, 6–10 year, and 20-year

strategic housing targets have placed western Sydney LGAs as the prime destination of additional housing (GSC, 2018a, 2020). However, these efforts have been criticised. Allchin (2019, p. 22) regarded the 2016's Greater Sydney Commission metropolitan strategy "Our Greater Sydney 2056 – A Metropolis of Three Cities – connecting people – Western Parkland City" in outer western Sydney around the new under-construction airport site as a 'hybrid solution' and argued that the aim is to shift urban growth into the arbitrary areas that have limited political exposure (opposition) in Sydney's west. The metropolitan strategy 'A Metropolis of Three Cities' (GSC, 2018a) requires local governments to implement the housing targets through council housing strategies. Thus, it is argued that the Greater Sydney Commission's idea of the parkland city is a politically agreeable way of accommodating most of Sydney's growth in new greenfield parts on the city's western edge where community resistance is lower than in the conveniently located inner suburbs of eastern and central Sydney (Allchin, 2019).

The new housing growth projections by the NSW Department of Planning (DoPI&E, 2021a) for five fiscal years (2020–21 to 2024–25) are lower for the northern and eastern parts of Greater Sydney, whereas western Sydney has high targets. For instance, in the west, Blacktown LGA, with a population of 336,962 in 246.9 square kilometres, is required to build 22,300 dwellings, and Cumberland LGA, with 216,079 inhabitants in 40 square kilometres, is targeted to build 11,600 new houses. However, Northern Beaches LGA in the east, with 252,878 people in 254 square kilometres, is required to accommodate only 1,750 houses, and Ryde LGA in the north, with 116,302 residents in 40.65 square kilometres, has a target of 5,500 dwellings. The wealthier councils have much lower targets (Gellie, 2019), even when considering their areas and populations.

Four of the top five LGAs with the highest new dwellings targets for the next five years (2020–21 to 2024–25) in Greater Sydney are located in western Sydney; Blacktown 22,300;

Parramatta 16,550; the Hills 11,850; and Cumberland 11,600 (DoPI&E, 2021b). Also, of the top five LGAs with the most new dwellings constructed over the last five years, three were in western Sydney, Parramatta 18,850; Blacktown 15,350; and Camden 11,600 (DoPI&E, 2021b). The population living in highly disadvantaged areas have increased by a comparable amount of 39% (Randolph & Tice, 2017). The planning policies and strategies are placing additional population and higher densities in the western Sydney areas that have poor access to jobs and urban amenities.

The construction of more dwellings in western Sydney, away from good jobs and facilities, which increases socio-economic exclusion, which is the worst outcome for the western Sydney residents (Bull, 2019). The housing development is an opportunity for high income and non-local investors who have weak ties with western Sydney communities (Pawson & Martin, 2020). Consequently, due to the concentration of lower socio-economic status residents and the concentration of housing in the hands of ‘generation landlord’ (Pawson & Martin, 2020, p. 20), western Sydney residents’ ability to engage in the policy process remains poor. These planning practices are deepening the divide between ‘have and have-not’ areas of Greater Sydney.

5.6 Conclusion

Housing affordability, access to jobs and infrastructure and services disparities within Sydney have long term effects on urban inequities (Hurni, 2005; Lee et al., 2018; Randolph & Tice, 2017; Roggema, 2019). Low and moderate-income residents and non-English-speaking migrant communities are concentrated in Sydney’s western suburbs (Healy & Birrell, 2003). Unequal urban policy practices have promoted intra-urban inequalities in Greater Sydney by accommodating excessive housing and population growth in western Sydney. There is also a significant job deficit in Western Sydney.

In recent times, the NSW governance system entered into new depoliticisation, limited public participation, minimised political debate, combined with the marginalised planning system and manipulative forms of participation in the processes of neoliberal infrastructure planning (Haughton & McManus, 2019). The institution of neo-liberalisation in urban planning policy has institutionalised the technique of directing consensus by post-politics (Bond et al., 2015). Legacy (2017) argues that residents' engagement in the participatory planning channels aims to modify or prevent an alternative set of plans to become effective. The advantaged areas' communities fare well in the participatory planning process. They are able to lobby their interest and avoid undesired urban outcomes.

Conversely, communities in western Sydney lack both attributes of lobbying and avoiding undesired outcomes due to less engagement with participatory planning because of their prevailing socio-economic challenges. Thus, affluent areas are now driving the planning systems in Sydney as they are capable of dealing with the planning system and avoiding unwanted policies due to their active community engagement (Ruming, 2019), while disadvantaged areas are unable to fight back because of community inability and lack of tactics to challenge post-political efforts. The post-political policy initiatives and lack of active community engagement by the lower socio-economic areas in western Sydney are thus increasing the socio-economic divide in Greater Sydney.

Locationally disadvantaged western Sydney residents do not focus on planning policy issues. Thus, this research argues that the implication of the ascendancy of the post-political form in Greater Sydney is that community engagement effectiveness is spatially differentiated, with active northern and eastern residents still able to secure their local interests. On the other hand, inadequate community engagement has failed to focus on existing concerns in Sydney's less affluent western areas.

This chapter has presented three case studies that show that urban policy practices and community engagement take a very different shape in the socio-economically advantaged northern and eastern areas and the disadvantaged western areas in Greater Sydney while functioning under a uniform planning system guided by the same planning concept. The chapter shows how socio-economically advantaged, and well-connected people in the north and east can oppose and avoid even very modest urban policy applications and developments, while lower socio-economic people in the west are incapable of resisting even the most drastic urban expansions.

Chapter Six: Empirical insights: Cities within a city in Sydney¹³

6.1 Introduction

Cities worldwide have been experiencing increasing transformation in urban settings for a long time (Foote & Walter, 2017; Iveson, 2013). However, a great deal of urban growth, socio-demographic evolution and geographic restructurings have complex effects on neighbourhoods within metropolitan areas (Foote & Walter, 2017), establishing new citizens, new economic opportunities, new forms of power and new prospects (Grant, 2010). Brown and Kristiansen (2008) argue that cities are bases for renewed opportunity, advancement and modernisation for many people and stand for the most significant promise of avoiding hardship. However, cities offer enormous advantages and are often responsible for growing urban inequality. Brown and Kristiansen (2008) argue that urban development and economic expansion has not always led to affluence and success for all, and it widens the disparity between rich and poor. Subsequently, the growing inequality has become a prominent concern in urban life (Davidson & Arman, 2014). In addition, Gupta (2020) argues that though citizens play a role in urban affairs, the city does not belong to ordinary citizens as the formal system of government regulates the urban space and its development. The city's physical structures do not build the urban inequality; the urban planning philosophy, practices and regulations produce the circumstances that promote disparities in metropolises (Hyötyläinen, 2019; Yiftachel &

¹³ Parts of the chapter has been published in conference proceedings, and a manuscript is under review in a peer-reviewed journal, with some changes.

Hedgcock, 1993). Thus, exclusion and marginalisation appear to be a significant consequence rather than the process (Horsell, 2006).

Numerous scholars have used the term ‘cities within a city’ to spark the concept of city transformation, urban inequalities and intra-urban comparison of infrastructure (Iveson, 2013; Marcuse, 1989; McFarlane et al., 2017; Oyarzún & Vera, 1850). Marcuse (1989, p. 697) argues that the ‘cities within a city’ symbol is often applied as a narrative of the growing population split between ‘rich and poor’ and ‘haves and have nots’. Greater Sydney is socio-economically divided (Roggema, 2019; Scheurer et al., 2017; Wiesel et al., 2018). In support of empirical data, this chapter argues that residents of lower socio-economic areas are increasingly experiencing poor urban rights due to market-driven policy practices and imbalance in socio-economic and political power. This research hypothesises that the urban planning system and its practice produce situations that promote inequalities in Sydney.

Several scholars have explained urban planning theory and practice through various critical philosophical lenses. For example, O'Neill and Weller (2013) analyse Australia's political economy as influenced by neoliberalism across the past four decades. Bunker, Crommelin, et al. (2017) investigate the evolution of the city model in Australia and argue that the transition is supported by neoliberal policies, which have become influential in powering urban progress and renovation. Richardson (1996) explores the consequences of Foucault's theory of power on debate, knowledge and power, analysing policy process and planning theory insights. Klein (2006) explores the socio-economic status and its relation to cultural capital in schools applying Foucault's theoretical framework. Nail (2013) analyses the constellation of political strategies and numerous types of power at the US and Mexico border wall, drawing on Foucault's theory of power. Duff (2017) explores the public domains of homeless urban residents' livelihood, experiences and expressions, and Barrett (2021) discovers the right to the fair use of physical spaces by applying right to the city theory.

Research on urban inequality is essential to identify and reduce socio-economic disparities. Critical theory is a crucial lens for analysing urban spaces' socio, economic, and cultural disparities above their traditional analytical strengths in urban planning theory and practices. However, the single critical urban theory does not advocate existing urban challenges sufficiently, specifically socio-economic disparities and place-based discrimination. Existing academic work has overlooked some basic questions: How are the neoliberal planning policy practices producing or enhancing place-based inequalities? What are the influences of the dominant socio-economic powers in generating urban inequalities? How may the right to the city be embodied for disadvantaged geographies whose daily livings are confined by their assumed exclusion from the city? Theorists and analytics have mostly ignored these questions, focusing on critical theories' social, political and economic aspects. Thus, the key research questions are: how is Sydney transforming into an increasingly unequal city? how do influential socio-economic actors contribute to urban inequalities? and what is the situation of the rights to the city in the disadvantaged geographies of Sydney? This chapter aims to fill the existing gap and theorises the urban planning practices, their impacts and outcomes in the Greater Sydney metropolitan region in the aspects of evolving critical urban thoughts of neoliberalism, post-politics, the theory of power, and theory of the right to the city, to conceptualise the urban inequality in Sydney.

The market-driven policy practices have shaped divisions in cities, and the unequal access to opportunities created by urban amenities favours the need of some groups above the needs of others in Sydney. Theorising the socio, economic and locational disparities in the same planning arrangement and geography is essential to outline the existing inequities and generate a consensus to reduce exclusion. However, the single critical urban theory does not adequately advocate addressing existing urban challenges, specifically socio-economic disparities and place-based discrimination.

Table 6.1 explicitly outlines the key focus of the applied critical theories and the relevant indicators to demonstrate their appropriateness in exploring and elaborating the existing urban inequality in Sydney.

Table 6.1: Key focus and indicators of critical analyses

Critical approaches	Key focus	Indicators
Neoliberalism and post-politics	Neoliberal urbanism is a practice that commodifies urban growth and generates complications in public political action, and limits community engagement opportunities through the post-political framework.	Housing approval, population growth and weaker community engagement.
Influential power	Socio-economical positions possessed by advantaged neighbourhoods and their influential talent to ensure their interests.	Unequal policy application due to affluent communities' higher level of community engagement with urban policy and community opposition.
Citizen/Resident rights	Collective rights to existing urban opportunities rather than individual rights and change of urban settings as per citizens' needs.	Disadvantaged conditions, lack of access to infrastructure and opportunities.

Source: Author.

This research argues that analysing the implication of an unequal city allows for critical thinking of urban growth and development changes in contemporary cities. Drawing on the existing critical urban literature, this research presents diverse views of urban growth, activism, engagement and inequality in urban settings. A combined critical theoretical approach helps shed light on the changing role of urban theory and practice in these transformational worlds. In this process, critical urbanism has transformed in response to unequal urban processes, the influential dominant actors and urban rights, particularly unequal access to opportunities.

6.2 Findings and analysis: urban divide in Sydney

The NSW urban planning system has been reformed over the last two decades by encouraging fast-paced urban development and economic growth. The state government has also enacted a wide variety of urban policies and programs to administer the planning and development of

Greater Sydney. Searle and Bunker (2010, p. 163) define these features of the urban planning system as the 'Australian style of metropolitan planning'. The NSW state's urban planning arrangements are complex (Brunner & Glasson, 2015) and in a constant state of reform (Piracha, 2015). Khan et al. (2015) assert that numerous reforms have been initiated in the state planning systems over recent years. The NSW planning reforms are to centralise, speed up and privatise the planning systems (Piracha, 2010). The urban planning reforms in Australian states are informed by various theoretical political approaches (Legacy et al., 2014). Neoliberalist economic efficiency is a strong motivation underpinning the reforms in NSW (Gleeson, 2017; Piracha, 2010; Rogers, 2016; Troy, 2018).

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 was enacted to increase community engagement in urban planning. However, the Act has been reformed several times in the past two decades by the state to limit local participation (MacDonald, 2018; Piracha, 2015). NSW urban planning is criticised for not ensuring desirable community engagement (Gurran, 2007). In the process of planning reforms inspired by the neoliberal framework, community engagement has become compromised (Schatz & Rogers, 2016). The reduced scope for community engagement has not uniformly affected all areas in Greater Sydney. In some affluent areas of Greater Sydney, there has been significant community engagement in the form of community opposition (Gurran & Phibbs, 2013). The implementation and outcomes of the urban planning policy reforms are different in the affluent and poor areas of Greater Sydney. Thus, some Sydney areas face significant deficiencies in gaining access to their urban rights.

Planning policy application in Greater Sydney is unequal and could be increasing the gap between higher and lower socio-economic areas of the city. Even when the urban policy is applied uniformly across Greater Sydney, the outcomes are not the same everywhere (Piracha, 2016). The disparity in planning policy application could be partially explained by vigorous local opposition in affluent areas. A typical case of opposition would be very high resistance

to the provision of any additional dwellings. On the other hand, under pressure from local communities, the state exempts affluent areas from specific urban planning policies.

Cities around the world have experienced a great deal of change in their socio-demographic geographies over a long period. These transformations also have complex effects on the neighbourhoods within metropolitan areas (Foote & Walter, 2017). Sydney, like other cities, has been experiencing urban transformation and socio-economic changes for a long time (Stilwell & Hardwick, 1973). However, Sydney's urban growth is leading to cities within a city divide. Urban planning considers Greater Sydney's overall urban needs instead of focusing on the needs of underprivileged regions. This research argues that Sydney's urban inequalities are somewhat different from other cities as its urban planning policy practices reinforce the socio-economic divide through state mechanisms and unusual influences. The following subsections analyse the existing urban divide from the critical urban theoretical perspectives.

6.2.1 Neoliberal and post-political urbanity

The neoliberal process transforms the state's intentions concentrating on economic and market-centric approaches (Springer, 2012). Neoliberalism has taken a dominant position in urban programs that harshly affect cities and urban life (Purcell, 2009). Urban planning in Sydney has a long history of neoliberal influence, and the critical concentration of policy reforms is to ensure the market's interest. The NSW government introduced the Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act in 1979 to ensure public participation in the planning process; however, numerous amendments have been made to the EP&A 1979 since then. Urban policy reform inventions, such as state significant infrastructure development, complying development, the low rise housing diversity code and the provision of private certifiers, are the instruments to facilitate new development with an easier and faster process. One informant said,

“... it is (policy reform) persuaded by politics and politicians, particularly from the right side. They are obviously for development and pro-development, and they want to make development a lot easier to occur, and they feel that doing it through a SEPP (State Environment Planning Policy) and then obviously having the opportunity for complying development, because it happens quicker, that there will be more opportunities for development to occur and they will not be held back from doing those sorts of developments. So it is (complying development) a pro-development opportunity.” (Informant O4)

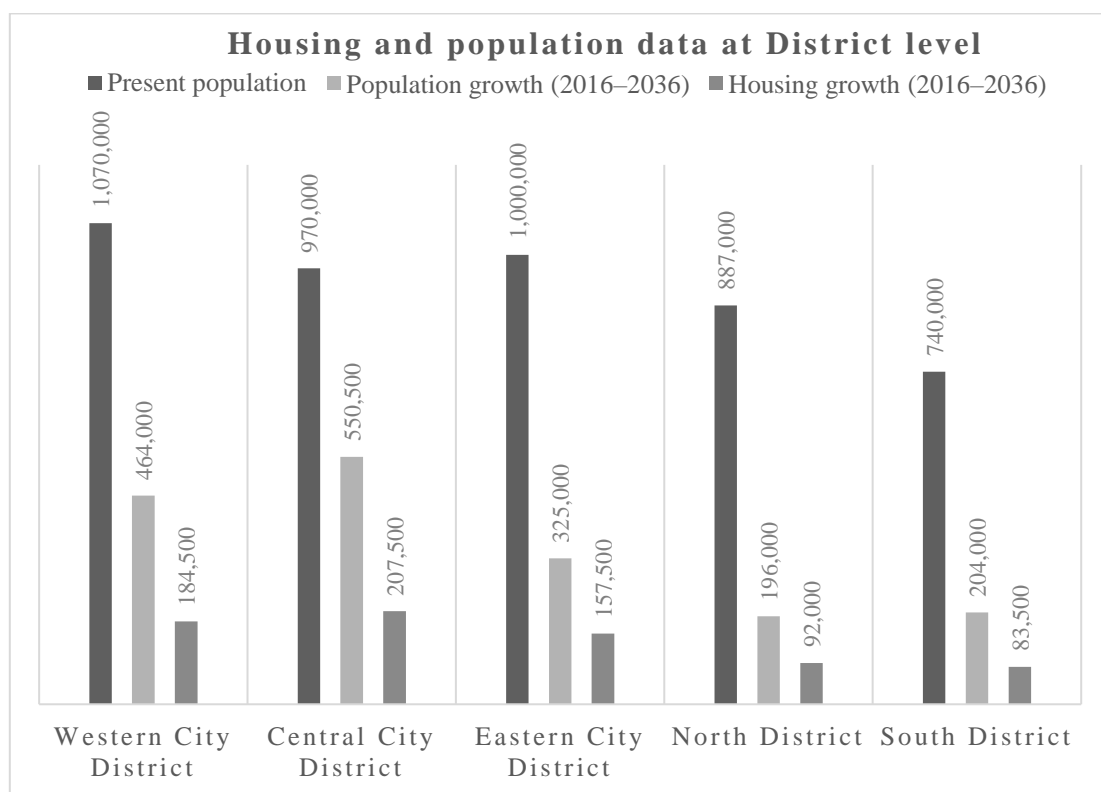
There has been a growing push by the state authorities to increase density and make more land available for new housing in the west of Sydney. Western Sydney currently comprises 44% of Sydney’s populace and is predicted to accommodate around 60% by 2036. The latest metropolitan strategy, the 2018 ‘The Greater Sydney Region Plan– A Metropolis of Three Cities’ and the associated District Plans, have set a new housing supply target of 725,000 for the next 20 years (GSC, 2018a).

Although the goal of creating good jobs and enhanced opportunities closer to people residence is at the forefront of the strategies, the key objectives of the state planning departments are to promote housing and population growth in NSW. Subsequently, the urban strategic plan ensures urban growth by setting housing and population targets for the local government areas. One informant said,

“For 25 years in Sydney, the state government used to produce urban development programs, and this basically sets out where all new development was scheduled to be happening across the Greater Sydney area and was updated on an annual basis with interaction with all the key developers and state government agencies to have a robust and one source of truth about where new housing was going to be provided over a five-year period.” (Informant S3)

One of the urban planning objectives is to balance the distribution of jobs as the journey to a work problem is produced by the high level of employment and other commercial activities concentrated in Sydney’s CBD and surrounding areas, remote from residents in the west. Urban planning has positioned Western Sydney as the urban area to accommodate Sydney’s population growth. Of the housing supply target of 725,000 in ‘A Metropolis of Three Cities’, Western Sydney received a higher target than other districts.

Figure 6.1: Housing and population statistics by District 2016–2036



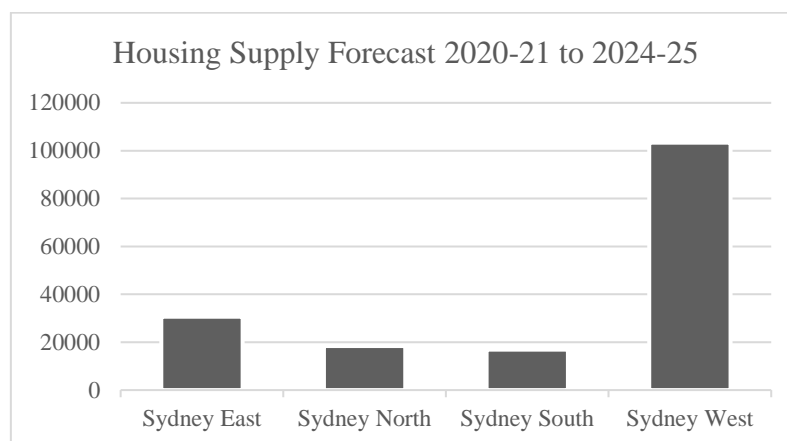
Source: Author by using data from the Greater Sydney Commission District Plans (accessed from <https://www.greater.sydney/strategic-planning>).

Figure 6.1 shows that the two districts that are part of Greater Western Sydney, the Western City District LGAs of Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Liverpool, Penrith and Wollondilly and the Central City District LGAs of Blacktown, Cumberland, Parramatta and The Hills, collectively received 54% of the total new housing

target. In contrast, the East District received 22%, and North District received 13%. Central City is a new designation for a part of Western Sydney. In reality, Central City and Western City together form Greater Western Sydney.

In this process of neoliberal urban growth, more and more population and housing is being directed to Western Sydney suburbs, while the advantaged areas have much lower housing targets than Western Sydney (Gellie, 2019). Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DoPI&E), the state's urban planning assessments, infrastructure priorities, industries development and environment protection organisation, also targets Western Sydney for most new housing.

Figure 6.2: Greater Sydney housing supply forecast by areas 2020–21 to 2024–25



Source: Generated by the author using data from Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DoPI&E) (<https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Research-and-Demography/Sydney-Housing-Supply-Forecast/Forecast-data>)

Like the 2019–20 fiscal year's housing supply targets (Figure 2.21 in chapter two), the following year's targets are also higher for Western Sydney. The DoPI&E (2021b) Sydney LGAs housing supply forecast over the five years from 2020–21 to 2024–25 has significantly high targets for new housing in Western Sydney (Figure 6.2). Around 61% of the new housing supply is estimated for Western Sydney LGAs, whereas Sydney's eastern and northern LGAs have a very small-scale target. It is also worth noting that Sydney's eastern and northern regions

are unlikely to meet their new housing provision targets because of strong local opposition. Western Sydney has always been a target of neoliberal economic gains and a place for more development or additional housing. One informant said,

“Urban development gets further and further from the city, more impacted largely by traffic congestion and air quality problems....it is not a strategic planning shift; it is just a response to the market.” (Informant P3)

Vigorous community engagement is essential for participatory planning and political dominions (Crick, 2004). However, in the neoliberal urban process, the state pursues a political procedure and technical alternative (Coleman, 2004). Participatory planning is replaced by techno-managerial planning management, which Zizek (2008) defines as the post-political political process. The managerial planning process relies on expert ideas (Coleman, 2004), including independent assessors, structured participation, and loss of local political power, thus limiting community engagement. NSW’s urban planning practices that follow the rapid economic growth and neoliberal economic influences favour the technocratic (post-political) planning process.

The existing community consultations in planning policies are limited to indirect community engagement processes, including displays and submissions. In the consultation procedure, the NSW government tends to avoid community inputs by depending on post-political strategy by hosting independent assessments and proceeding with administrative consultation techniques, comprising various expert panel evaluations, hearings and submissions. One informant said,

“I think the current laws (planning regulations) are completely not fit for purpose. They are intensely complicated. There are multiple consent bodies, multiple ways for developers to get re-zonings and get development approvals. The community is now – has been – exhausted and driven out of the planning system.” (Informant P3)

Within the limitation and barrier of neoliberal and post-political community engagement, the affluent communities in Sydney find their active engagement by opposing state policies, as neoliberalism fosters a distinct form of citizenship to local elites (Peck & Tickell, 2002). Sydney's affluents' active community engagement drives into antagonism and opposition (Ruming, 2014; Searle & Filion, 2011).

Community opposition in urban areas is defined as NIMBY (not in my backyard) (Barlow, 1995). NIMBYism enables resistance to the implementation of urban change in their neighbourhood (Esaiasson, 2014). Participating in planning activities differs in different Sydney regions depending on community capabilities and consequences. The residents of affluent areas are very vocal and active in matters related to planning due to their socio-economic abilities. The differential community engagement ability is significantly influencing policy application. One informant said,

“Community resistance to growth in a lot of communities, particularly where you have got a greater number of retired, well-educated, and wealthier individuals. They have got more time on their hands to oppose developments and write submissions and organise citizen action groups and the like, as opposed to younger working families, potentially less well-educated and less familiar with the planning system. So, you are always going to have that disparity in terms of NIMBYism.” (Informant S3)

The Sydney affluent neighbourhood's NIMBY opponents vigorously oppose any form of housing and population growth. They also assert Sydney's west as a suitable place for new housing (Bull, 2019). According to Piracha (2016), “among the NSW planning apparatus, the community engagement philosophy for Sydney seems to be ‘NIMBY land’ is too hard,” and if you “dump” excessive development on BOGAN land (a euphemism for have-nots) “they will

not even notice it.” In any case, it is easy to add new development in Western Sydney due to the lack of community engagement in planning issues. Bull (2019) also points out that:

“Lack of density and population growth in posh Sydney is now becoming an established fact that is hiding in plain sight in the Greater Sydney Commission’s metropolitan policies.”

The NIMBY resistance is positioned against social equity as it opposes a small number of people. Through the active opposition, NIMBY areas allow less new housing development than those in the west and south-west of Greater Sydney (Taylor & Gladstone, 2018). Cities are facing new ghettoisation as the affluent residents are keeping themselves exclusive (Harvey, 2003). The NIMBY opposition results in the adverse outcome of high density and low amenity ethnic ghettoisation of the south-west and west, and low density and high leafy amenity in the east and north of Greater Sydney.

The planning department’s neoliberal ‘growth-first’ and development approach (Peck & Tickell, 2002, p. 394) place more housing in Western Sydney, widening Greater Sydney’s place-based inequalities. The population projection plan is extensive and consistently higher for Western Sydney. The western parts of Greater Sydney are transforming into lower socio-economic ethnic ghettos because of their poor capacity to understand post-political planning arrangements. NSW planning policies intend to provide more dwellings and related infrastructure to accommodate the growing population. In the same vein, NIMBY opposition of affluent communities in Greater Sydney pushes exclusion from the application of planning policies. Affluent NIMBY communities typically do not want more people to come in even when their inner-city suburbs are the most suited for an increase in population and in density. Consequently, Western Sydney residents seem unable to oppose even excessive housing

approvals, landfills, recycling facilities for odorous and hazardous waste, motorways and warehouses with massive movements of polluting trucks in their midst.

6.2.2 Exercise of power

Power is instituted in societies and institutions; consequently, it successively dominates the social order (Innes & Booher, 2015). Power is often also masked within government structure (Stein & Harper, 2003). Njoh (2009, p. 302), argue, “power is often taken to mean control over others” and “people in capitalist societies are increasingly living under the shadow of the state.” The continuing planning reforms and practices reflect the presence of various powerful actors in the planning system. Moghadam and Rafieian (2019, p. 2) argue that according to Foucault’s views, power is “a sort of software; whereas, in the past, power was assumed to be a hardware or an object belonging to a specific class of society”. In NSW urban planning, the software is the functional aspect that includes government regulations, plans, procedures and the community’s role.

The key institutional actors, the state government of NSW and the state planning authority as a legislative institution, are the dominant authority in the urban planning system in NSW, while individuals or communities and local governments are powerless. Throughout the last couple of decades, the continuous reforms of planning systems have strengthened NSW planning institutional power (MacDonald, 2018; Piracha, 2010). An example of exclusive power in the NSW planning system is the introduction of Ministerial Directions. The Planning Minister may direct a council in any planning matter, and the directions have the statutory effect, meaning they must be considered in any planning decisions. One informant said,

“The government reserves the power to intervene and take over local councils’ planning powers if they do not deliver enough up zones. So the community find that very depressing... They do not even pretend to listen.” (Informant P3)

Every planning decision is rigorously associated with power, and planning practice is widely motivated by the dissemination of power (Albrechts, 2003). Richardson (1996) (citing Bachrach and Baratz, 1962) contends that power was not merely related to decision-making but extended to reinforcing social, political and institutional interests in agenda-setting. NSW planning reform is highly focused on consolidating powers by eliminating development assessments from local councils and replacing them with expert panels (MacDonald, 2018). In NSW, three-tiered expert panels have taken over planning decisions from local levels: Local Planning Panels (LPPs) mandatory for all Sydney metropolitan councils, Wollongong City Council and Central Coast Council; five Sydney Planning Panels and four Regional Planning Panels across NSW; and the Independent Planning Commission. One informant said,

“They have removed any kind of democratic say on development matters. It has happened in a series of stages. First, they took away the large developments from councils, the councillors – elected councillors – and they gave them to joint regional planning panels, which have then converted to Sydney planning panels. So any sizeable developments can have a real impact on the community.” (Informant P3)

Planning accompanies the power dominator of the organised state system of government, which is one-dimensional and enforced following the top-down approach (Richardson, 1996). The constant reforms of planning arrangements have fortified the NSW planning utilitarian power (MacDonald, 2018; Piracha, 2010). Multiple planning organisations and complex community engagement processes have made individuals and the community powerless. One informant said,

“If you do not come from a planning background, you need to do a lot of research. There are so many things that you can potentially be following; you have to prioritise

which ones. You do have to teach yourself in a way and connect with people who can give you good advice and who have professional expertise.” (Informant R5)

However, in the existing community engagement scopes, the advantaged areas find ways to actively participate in the planning process to control the planning outcomes. However, the citizens’ NIMBY power in Sydney also depends on the competencies, skills and socio-economic and political situations. Thus, the differential community engagement ability is significantly influencing policy application. One informant said,

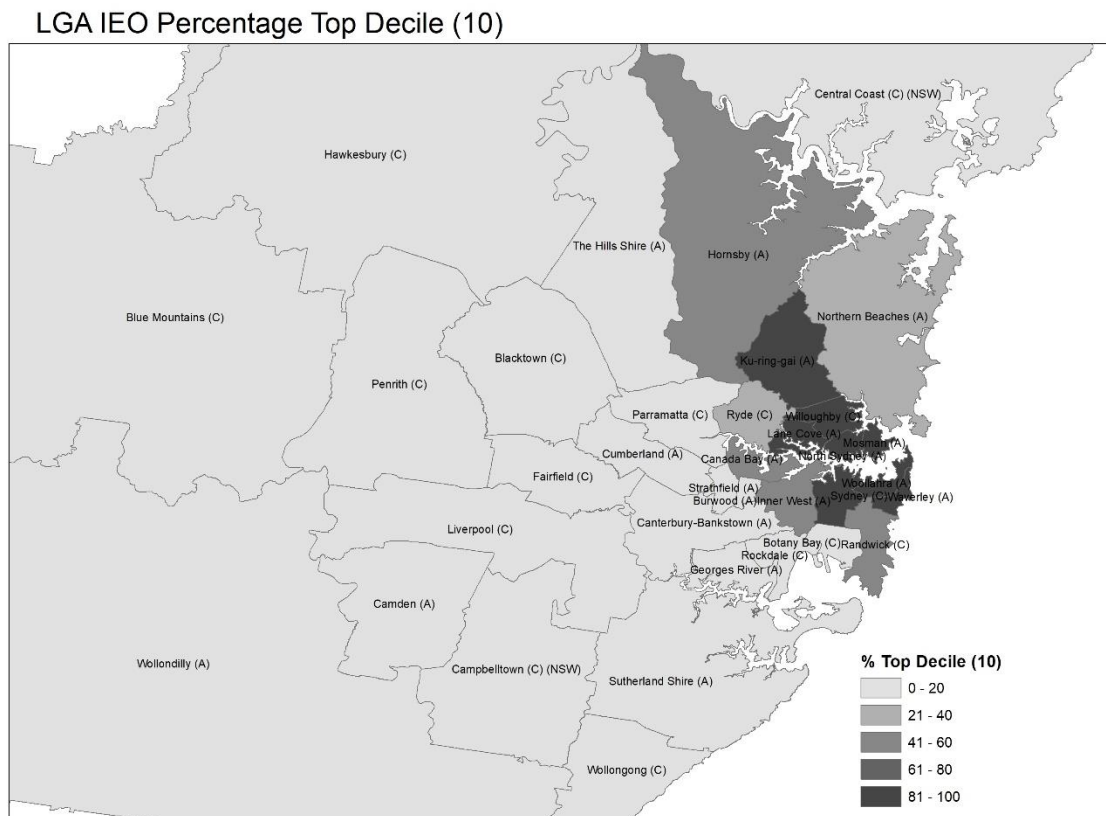
“There are some parts of Sydney that people are very active, and again they are active on the local level because they care about what is happening to them. So that sort of just skews how the plan is happening a little bit. In an affluent area, people usually have a lot more resources, so they have time, finances, access to computers all day, and access to people’s skillsets, so it is easy to organise groups around a particular issue. Which, when you are in the outer suburbs again, people are less affluent, so they struggle.” (Informant P2)

Sydney communities' communal associations and resources vary by their socio-economic and geographic position. Ruming (2019) claims that high-income and inner suburbs peoples are conscious of the planning context and typically enthusiastic about playing a part in planning consultations; on the other hand, the lower-income Western Sydney residents lack planning knowledge and engagement. Gurran and Phibbs (2013) also argue that there has been a higher disagreement with urban policy applications and practices in some regions of Sydney. The west of Sydney lags behind in education level and job status associated with other portions of Sydney; consequently, the residents’ skills and competencies are different, producing divides in planning practices and outcomes.

The ABS Index of Education and Occupation (IEO) is considered as the residents' occupational and educational positions. The occupation variables divide the employees into the significant clusters and skillfulness ranks of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) and the jobless. A lower score specifies comparatively lesser education and occupation positions of individuals in the region. In general, if there are a lot of people short of qualifications or lots of people in low skilled jobs or a lot of people out of work, and a minor amount of people with a high level of qualifications. A higher score directs fairly more outstanding education and occupation position of publics in the area if there are a lot of people with better educations or lots of people in very skilled jobs and only some individuals short of qualifications or a small number of individuals in low skilled jobs.

Figure 6.3 shows the IEO for Sydney LGAs with the proportion of decile ten areas, illuminating people's occupational and educational positions. The map demonstrates the ratio of the people in individual LGA. 100% of individuals of Hunters Hill, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Mosman, North Sydney, Sydney City, Waverley, Willoughby and Woollahra LGAs is in the top IEO decile. In contrast, 11 of the LGAs out of 13 Western Sydney LGAs are positioned at the lowest level. That means none of Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Canterbury-Bankstown, Cumberland, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Liverpool, Penrith and Wollondilly local government areas is in the top decile considering the educational and occupational position.

Figure 6.3: IEO of decile 10, 2016 of Sydney LGAs



Source: Author by applying Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census data.

Community opposition is the ideal community engagement tactic of affluent residents. Community opposition to urban development has usually been defined as NIMBYism (not in my backyard), and NIMBY community opponents are high salaried, educated, skilled and homeowner activists (Dear, 1992). The socio-economic competencies serve as the power of the community, and the residents of affluent areas in Sydney’s north and east are very vocal and active in matters related to planning due to their privileged position. The elites increasingly apply resources and networks effectively to maximise their benefits; on the other hand, the excluded disadvantaged groups are left behind in bargaining with institutional powers. One informant said,

“Some people are going to have louder voices than others and be more convincing – they are going to be better resourced to make more convincing cases than others.”

(Informant P3)

Njoh (2009, p. 302) argues that ‘power is often taken to mean control over others’. The political consideration, along with community opposition, plays an influential role in the planning system. The political force also performs a power in NSW planning. One informant said,

“There were some organised residents groups, they opposed it, but the only places the government listened were in a couple of their [a political party] seats and then a couple of marginal seats, state electorates and the local councils that related to those state electorates. It was just an utterly political decision.” (Informant P3)

The community’s socio-economic conditions are also powerfully evident in NSW planning practices. The NSW Department of Planning (DoPI&E, 2021b) targeted a High Growth Scenario to build 171,200 new homes in Sydney metropolitan areas by 2025. The highest housing development suburbs are located mainly in the lower socio-economic and less vocal Western Sydney areas, such as 5,580 new dwellings in Rouse Hill, 4,545 in Parramatta, 4,320 in Schofields and 4,305 in Marsden Park. In contrast, no new dwellings are projected to be built in 223 Sydney suburbs. A higher proportion of northern and eastern suburbs are targeted with zero or a small number of new dwellings, as the socio-economically advantaged residents are highly active in opposing new development. Powerful and active councils and local politicians deny implementing moderate housing projections. For example, the Ku-ring-gai council in northern Sydney refused to meet its housing targets and amend the council’s draft housing strategy (Thompson, 2020). The battle of power is also evident while the Planning Minister vows to take statutory action to implement the planning objectives. Planning has

appeared as a power game, while a local politician also labelled the minister's message as threatening government intrusion (Thompson, 2020).

The above analysis and evidence show that power dominance is intensely prevalent in NSW's urban planning system. The state government planning systems are exclusively powerful in administering urban planning. Active community opponents or NIMBYism also strongly appear as compelling in urban planning practices. Residents' power or the community's ability to engage or oppose planning is also centred on affluence, place, professional capability, political connection and form of influence.

6.2.3 The rights to the city

Lefebvre (1976) argues that 'the right to the city' is a point of view where specific communities will not be placed in a location that generates place-based inaccessibility. The residents must have the right of entry to the opportunities and access to the benefits of the city (Friendly, 2013). However, the NSW planning approach has been putting nearly all of the new population in Western Sydney, which is far from the city, with higher unemployment rates and with areas considered disadvantaged in lifestyles and opportunities. The notion of urban rights in Sydney is that a higher proportion of Sydney's population stays in an underprivileged condition due to their lack of access to opportunities. One informant said,

“I think out in the south and western Sydney, they have put large blocks – large estates out there with no transport other than a road. I think that that has been a really, failure of state government transport planning.” (Informant P4)

The western part of Sydney is short of qualifications, skills and jobs (Figure 6.3). The residents of Western Sydney have to struggle for access to better jobs, good education and modern urban facilities. Consequently, the unequal position creates a place-based unequal situation where

residents fight for their fundamental rights to maintain their lives and livelihood. One informant said,

“The bigger point here is no point increasing the density of population if you do not actually create more jobs, create more facilities. If people have to travel to Sydney or somewhere, North Sydney or somewhere in Parramatta, then what is the point of having too many people here in Western and South Western Sydney. Government should put in supports to create jobs locally, so people do not have to travel.” (Informant R3)

The residents of Western Sydney make a significant contribution to the state and country’s socio-economic progress. The right to the city’s appeal of Western Sydney is not for added opportunities; however, it appeals to fulfil their existing rights available in the cities, such as urban amenities, jobs, education and natural environments.

NSW urban planning has been racing to place more population and housing in Western Sydney, which places disadvantaged residents in a deprived position and unsustainable environments, thus impacting their civic rights and responsibilities. On the other hand, secondary evidence (Chapter two) shows that Western Sydney lacks sufficient infrastructure. One informant said,

“Investment in public transport, but it has been delivered to one of the most affluent growth areas in Sydney. People who already have money and capacity have got a significant improvement in public transport. That is good for them, but again, what about those big missing arcs in south-west Sydney? Surely a far better investment in terms of lifting people’s – a far larger number of people’s – improving a far larger number of people’s lives would have been linking Campbelltown to Parramatta or Campbelltown to Penrith to Parramatta and driving those kinds of major missing public transport links in western Sydney, but we did not. We got major public transport delivered to one of the most affluent parts – growth parts – of the city.” (Informant P3)

Though Western Sydney is getting attention in current strategies for more significant infrastructure projects, such as the new airport, parklands and aerotropolis, informants contend that the initiatives are not sufficient to address the existing deficiencies. One informant said,

“Once the Badgerys Creek Airport goes in, well, it might only create 1000 jobs in terms of the baggage handlers and the plane management and everything.” (Informant P4)

Also, it is not likely the generated jobs and facilities will be exclusively for Western Sydney residents. One informant said,

“There is a whole bunch of issues about what sort of jobs will come and is it going to be jobs in the region or jobs for the region. So that is quite different. Because there is nothing that says that you are going to build these high-tech jobs and the people of Western Sydney are going to be employed in it. No, it might be the people of North Sydney coming in every day to work in it and pushing away the people of Western Sydney further out west.” (Informant P2)

Governments imagine minimising the disadvantaged Western Sydney residents’ unfortunate position by emphasising the more extensive infrastructure development. However, the residents of Western Sydney need more local and small-scale job opportunities. One informant said,

“Government is thinking to create more jobs in Western Sydney based on the new airport and all this. I do not know how it will happen in reality, how many thousand jobs will be created in the future. But I wish whatever they said would happen, so people have more jobs in this area. People can stay local if they work local. It could improve life as well.” (Informant R3)

Evidence shows that housing in parts of Sydney is costly and not affordable for Sydney’s average residents. Conversely, within the existing framework, the Department of Planning is

placing additional housing in the western parts of Sydney. In the competing market, the housing prices in the west are also increasing and exceeding the capacity of Western Sydney people. Thus, the housing supply has offered the right to buy a shelter. However, the shelter is not safe enough within the pressure of income, mortgage interests and market competition. It is essential to realise the public desire and ensure housing rights by providing more housing at reasonable prices and settings to increase the housing affordability within the capacity of most residents. One informant said,

“It would need to be subsidised supply. So, yes, but I do not think that providing more private housing supply is necessarily going to improve the situation very much. I think you need to provide affordable housing, community housing, and public housing in those locations. So, subsidised housing.” (Informant S4)

Ethnicity or cultural background provides a safe entrance to the city for new arrivals; however, it blocks them from broader urban connections and is less convenient for urban living (Connell, 2011). The notion of rights to produce the city should be to the people based on their tradition in the city (Iveson, 2013). Western Sydney is the dominant location of ethnic migrant residents. The scarcity of cultural facilities also impacts their life, and the traditional and cultural rights of Western Sydney should also be considered, based on their traditions. One informant said,

“You have got quite a lot of localised sites, with quite cultural significance, but having something that can also bring in people from other parts of Sydney into Parramatta, I think is a good thing at the end of the day.” (Informant R7)

People of Western Sydney are worried about their civic rights as the excessive housing, and population growth is putting additional pressure on the existing facilities. The environmental drawbacks of higher heat, fewer trees and less rain have affected Western Sydney residents’

lives for a long time. In addition, the existing hazardous condition is deteriorating and will be affected more by ongoing urban growth. One informant said,

“So those of us that have probably grown up in Western Sydney or lived there for long enough, we have almost acclimatised to that 40 plus degree summer, and in doing so, you have just got to learn how to, I do not know what the word is, cope, manage, survive, get through it. So, I guess my concern is that when you bring in more people, that puts stress on the movie cinemas, you are putting the stress on those places where people already go to avoid the heat. I think I am coming back to this point about the quality of life. Can they afford to run air conditioning? Is power going to become more affordable? Is there going to be enough consideration for the cooling effect of trees, and in how many generations are we going to feel that benefit?” (Informant R8)

The concept of a city’s right is a dynamic, practical slogan for disadvantaged classes. Mayer (2009) claims the right to the city as a living slogan that transforms cities. Thus, the right to the city offers the opportunity to disadvantaged residents to portray and demand their urban rights, which allows the courage to question the existing government and urban settings. One informant said,

“Why is Parliament House in Macquarie Street? Why isn’t it at Blacktown or Penrith or Campbelltown or Liverpool? Why isn’t it at the new Aerotropolis, where there are the airport connections to the whole state? Why is that? They put the decision-makers in the western city, and that might help the situation too. But definitely, the issue is the jobs. Somehow they have got to get the jobs out to where the people are now.” (Informant O3)

Governments’ policies and strategies are intended to progress and empower disadvantaged residents and the whole society. However, there is a difference between traditional

empowerment and right to the city empowerment as customary enfranchisement strengthens nationwide citizens, whereas the right to the city lets disadvantaged citizens have an everyday life in the spaces of the city (Iveson, 2013). In addition, Marcuse (2010) claims that the motto of the theory of the right to the city does not appeal for an individual right in a specific city. Marcus also argues that there is a difference between ‘rights in cities’ (in the plural form), and ‘the right to the city’ (in the singular form). Instead of specific rights, such as jobs, income, housing affordability or amenities, this research highlights the ‘right to the city’ slogan for enfranchisement and freedom from the poor conditions of impoverished Western Sydney communities.

6.3 Discussion

The presented evidence and empirical insights indicate that the NSW state authorities are dominating urban planning and advancing the interests and aspirations of the socio-economic and political elites. In Sydney’s existing urban planning system and practices, influential forces of the market and socio-political power are responsible for bringing numerous changes in urban settings. The urban planning policy practices and outcomes indicate that the state advances the market’s interests by accommodating Greater Sydney’s population and dwelling growth in Western Sydney. The affluent groups have social and political control over planning policies, and consequently, they are getting privileged in the urban system. On the other hand, certain groups are effectively excluded from the negotiating and bargaining urban planning power game.

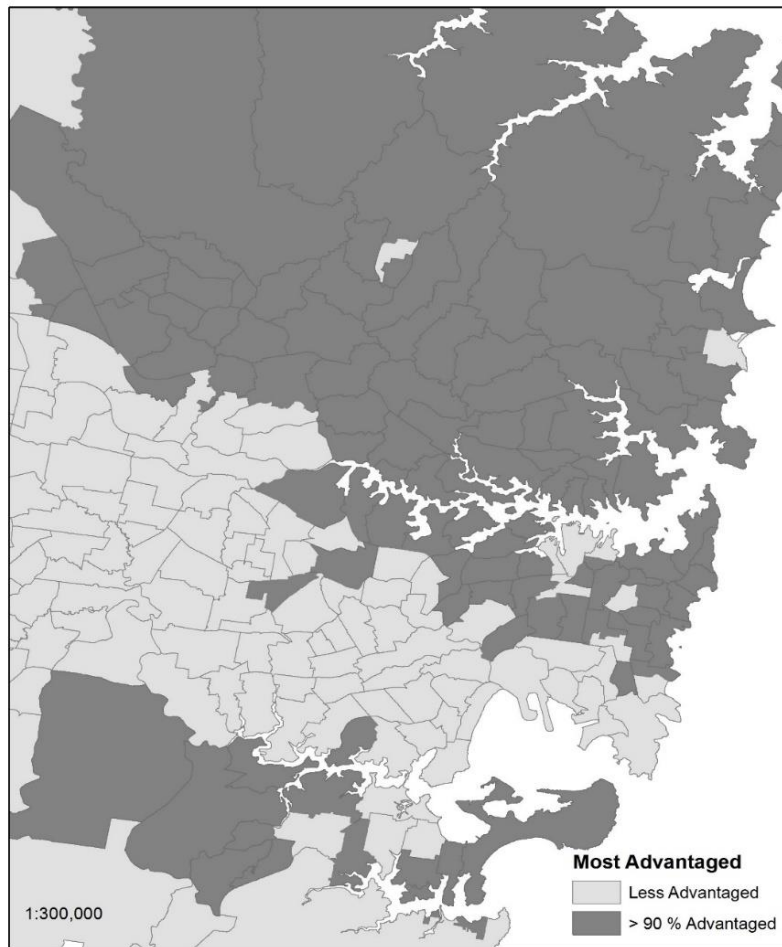
The NIMBY groups have social and political control over planning policies, and thus, they are getting privileged in the urban system. As a result, power successively forms domination in the social order, and the marginalised groups face unequal consequences in their everyday life (Innes & Booher, 2015). Dear (1992) argued that undue opposition inspires selective application of urban policies and regresses urban communities into a new feudalistic society.

In the same vein, this research argues that the NIMBY opposition of affluent communities in Greater Sydney pushes exclusion from the application of planning policies. Government strategies and policies anticipate providing more dwellings and related infrastructure to accommodate the growing population. However, affluent NIMBY communities typically do not want more people to come in even when those suburbs are the most suited for population and increase in density.

Exemption from the planning rules has promoted exceptionalism in Greater Sydney. Exempting affluent parts of the city from medium-density planning policy has set a precedent and encouraged affluent councils to demand exemptions from various long-existing state planning policies. In June 2018, the affluent Northern Beaches Council requested an exemption from Affordable Rental Housing and Housing for Seniors or People with Disability state planning policies (Northern Beaches Council, 2018). Similarly, in July 2018, North Sydney Council asked for an exemption from planning proposals from the private sector (Urban Taskforce, 2018), and in February 2019, Lane Cove Council requested a change in planning rules to permanently prohibit the operation of the housing code in its R2 low-density zone (Lane Cove Council, 2019). Affluent areas are now capable of manipulating and avoiding urban planning policies (Urban Taskforce, 2018).

Thus, Sydney's urban expansion in the disadvantaged west has large areas of low-income housing, rapid densification, poor quality development and lack of employment opportunities, leading to cities within a city divide and unbalanced urban expansion. The neoliberal influence and exercise of power in urban planning practices are higher in the highly advantaged areas located mainly in the north and east of Greater Sydney. Figure 6.4 shows that more than 90% of the residents in the dark grey areas in the map are in the top three deciles of the ABS Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage – IRSAD.

Figure 6.4: Most privileged areas of Greater Sydney, 2016



Source: Drawn by the author using ABS SEIFA–IRSAD (Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas – Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage) 2016 data.

The government predicts that the construction of Western Sydney International Airport will generate thousands of jobs and facilities for Western Sydney residents. However, it is argued that the jobs projection is ‘exaggerated and inflated at least four-fold’ (Madigan, 2018). In addition, the most disadvantaged areas in Western Sydney have had significantly lower levels of infrastructure investment (Wiesel et al., 2018). Thus, the metropolitan strategy is unlikely to reduce existing employment challenges and will be incapable of generating jobs for the additional residents in Western Sydney. Many highly disadvantaged Western Sydney residents live in poor quality natural and physical environments. New houses are built on small lots

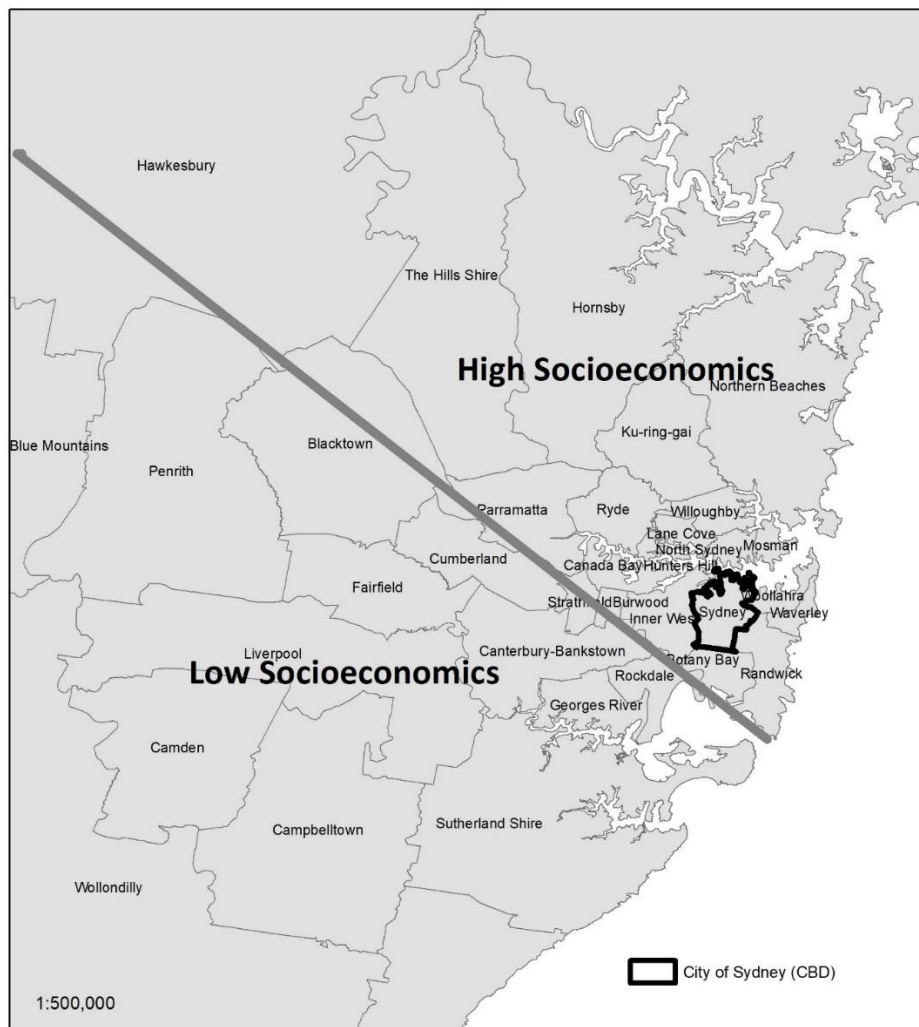
leaving minimal spaces between neighbours and with tiny front or rear gardens (Roggema, 2019) that have little space for trees.

Many highly disadvantaged Western Sydney residents live in poor environmental conditions. The area is often 5–10 degrees Celsius hotter than the east in summer and has half the annual rainfall of eastern Sydney (Allchin, 2019). During the 2018–19 summer, the Harbour CBD and Terrey Hills areas suffered only six hot days (<35 degrees Celsius); in contrast, Penrith in the outer west suffered 37 such hot days, Parramatta had 19 hot days, and Bankstown had 20 hot days (GSC, 2019). In January 2020, parts of Western Sydney recorded up to 52.0 degrees Celsius (Pfautsch et al., 2020). On those blazing days, the coastal inner eastern and northern neighbourhoods were much cooler. Many houses in the west must have air conditioners to cope with high temperatures, increasing electricity costs. Residents in Western Sydney suburbs face longer commute times and higher travel costs to reach amenities and jobs, which strains household budgets and reduces disposable income (Roggema, 2019).

Inequality in Greater Sydney is growing; consequently, Sydney's standing as a global city is declining (Vogel et al., 2020). In Greater Sydney, the urban planning system and its reforms reinforce the city division by favouring the affluent areas in urban policy applications, particularly those related to accommodating additional dwellings or populations. Housing and population growth impose a hefty burden on urban opportunities as the current opportunities cannot cope with the increasing density (Olajide et al., 2018). Western Sydney currently houses nearly half of Sydney inhabitants and is expected to contain close to two-thirds of the total population by 2036. More new dwellings are in disadvantaged Western Sydney than the affluent eastern and northern suburbs, reflecting that the majority of the Sydney population struggles to fulfil their urban rights. The critical analysis of this research outlines Sydney's urban policy practices, planning powers and urban rights divide by a socio-economic split line (Figure 6.5).

This study recognises the division as an ‘east–west divide’ as Sydney's north and south parts are essentially northeast and southeast, which is also to the east. The dividing line splits the affluent and well-positioned east from the less affluent and underprivileged west. The diagonal line extends from northwest to southeast to define Sydney’s division. The line separates the well-off and well-served north and east from the less well-off south and west.

Figure 6.5: The socio-economic divide in Sydney, 2016



Source: Author by applying Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 digital local government boundaries).

Significant distress and difficulties about urban inequality and disadvantaged conditions have substantial adverse socio-economic impacts on cities and their residents (Whiteford, 2015; Zanganeh & Akbari, 2019). Inequality has significant social and psychological adverse impacts

on populations, and numerous difficulties are connected with deprivation and underprivileged condition (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2010; Wilkinson, 2004). The disadvantaged areas in Western Sydney face various difficulties, and the advantaged areas in eastern and northern Sydney are places of wealth and opportunities.

6.4 Conclusion

The high socio-economic areas in Sydney north and east attract digital, technological, and modern ventures (Vogel et al., 2020). Conversely, the low socio-economic Western Sydney suburbs have significantly lower levels of investment. While capital is directed to western suburbs, it is often in new housing development and state needed infrastructure, reinforcing both the concentration of poverty and lack of access to urban amenities (Wiesel et al., 2018). The affluent are prioritised in neoliberal urban growth with less housing and population targets and expanded opportunities, whereas the disadvantaged regions have extreme urbanisation instead of much-needed opportunities and infrastructure support on transport, urban amenities, education, job and environment. The NSW urban planning practices are strongly influenced by socio-economic power, consequently, high socio-economics areas influence the urban growth and development. On the other hand, the less affluent residents of low socio-economic areas of Sydney are deprived of their urban rights and their livelihoods are challenged by the cities within a city divide.

This chapter outlines Sydney's urban inequalities from the urban planning perspective in support of secondary evidence and empirical study. It has described how neoliberal planning objectives, post-political planning and influential power is leading to unequal urban outcomes. It is deepening the urban division in Sydney and ignoring the urban rights of disadvantaged Western Sydney residents. This chapter argues that providing more housing in Sydney's advantaged areas and more jobs and opportunities in the disadvantaged areas are essential to reduce Sydney's cities within a city divide and ensure sustainable urban growth.

Chapter Seven: Analysing urban inequality and disproportionate COVID-19 impacts in Western Sydney ¹⁴

7.1 Introduction

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)¹⁵ is a continuing global crisis that originated in Wuhan, China, in December 2019 (Chang et al., 2020). The virus has subsequently spread to 220 countries and territories. Discussion of the COVID-19 pandemic was not part of the original research plan. However, the pandemic offered an opportunity to further contextualise and clarify Western Sydney's disadvantages related to planning policy and place-based inequalities. The empirical research of the interviews took place during COVID times, and the interview participants invariably brought COVID impacts into the discussion. Thus, the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences have sparked a focus on existing challenges. Che et al. (2020) argue that the impact of the pandemic on disadvantaged people is a critical matter, and the pandemic serves as a magnifier to explore the pre-existing inequalities, which is also unevenly affecting the disadvantaged. Thus, this research is an excellent opportunity to explore the unequal impacts of COVID-19 on Sydney's disadvantaged to highlight their continuing struggles in the framework of community resilience and sustainability. Community resilience and sustainability are increasingly gaining researchers' and policymakers' attention across the globe as communities face the effects of numerous disasters (Madsen & O'Mullan, 2016). Specifically, Australia experienced three particular large-scale economic shocks from 2006 to 2011 and is particularly at risk from the effects of climate change, heatwaves, bushfires,

¹⁴ Parts of this chapter have been published in a peer reviewed journal, edited book and digital media with some changes.

¹⁵ The COVID-19 cases and deaths data of this article are gathered from the website: <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

droughts and floods (Dinh et al., 2017; Kippen et al., 2020; Shakespeare-Finch et al., 2020; Singh-Peterson & Lawrence, 2015) and the recent COVID-19 catastrophe is a new risk.

Socio-economic impacts of coronavirus outbreaks have been widely researched as the global outbreak has significantly impacted people's personal, work, and social lives (Khalatbari-Soltani et al., 2020). Flack et al. (2020) explore the COVID-19 pandemic socio-economic impacts in Australian schooling. They argue that teachers and schools in the least advantaged regions are not well-positioned to switch to online education than those in more wealthy locations. Chang et al. (2020) evaluate various Australian government intervention strategies to alleviate the impacts of the pandemic. Biddle et al. (2020) explore the COVID-19 impact on the labour market, income, financial anxiety, wellbeing, and psychological distresses, and Callinan et al. (2021) investigate the impacts of COVID-19 restrictions on Australian alcohol consumption. Yashadhana et al. (2020) investigate the Australian Indigenous peoples' challenges related to health and socio-economic impacts due to COVID-19. O'Sullivan et al. (2020) study indicate the link between Australian government COVID-19 responses and socio-economic inequities, and van Barneveld et al. (2020) concentrate on COVID-19 global and Australian political-economic effects on various marginalised groups. However, not much research has explored spatial differentiated unequal socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. Despite the importance of the topic and substantial research on COVID-19, the outbreak's disproportionate impacts in urban settings remain a puzzle.

In addition, research on sustainability and community resilience is well-traversed in Australian academia. For example, Madsen and O'Mullan (2016) and Boon (2014) explored community resilience in rural Australian towns during a series of flood events; and West et al. (2020) discussed community resilience and Australian bushfires. Burnside-Lawry and Carvalho (2016) studied the approach to building community resilience, and Morley et al. (2018) examined the status of community resilience in two remote towns of Australia. Likewise,

Farmer et al. (2012) examined how rural health services contribute to community sustainability; Xia et al. (2015) compared various sustainable community rating tools in Australia, and Teriman et al. (2011) explored social infrastructure and sustainable development essentials for a sustainable community. However, research on the combination of community resilience and community sustainability, specifically, study on communities' ability and available opportunities related to sustainable growth and resilient communities, has not been conducted. In addition, this research lacks work on the implications of urban discrepancies and the community's ability in terms of resiliency and sustainability. Thus, the research explores the issue of disparities in sustainability and resilience among communities in Sydney and relates it to COVID-19 adversity.

There are place-based disparities of the consequences of the crisis, and it is evident that some communities are better able to cope and recover while others are less capable; consequently, less capable communities face a threat of declining resources and quality of life (Madsen & O'Mullan, 2016; Steiner et al., 2018). Thus, this research is a noteworthy contribution in understanding the disparities of communities in the global and modern city Sydney concerning sustainability and resilience at a time of crisis. In addition, there is a lack of empirical evidence about community resilience levels across geographic and time precincts amongst Australian communities, which is hindering the advance of hands-on policy actions to support communities (Dinh et al., 2017).

Thus, this chapter illustrates COVID-19 impacts in Sydney's unequal urban geographies. It also investigates how the life and livelihoods of Sydney's underprivileged residents are disproportionately affected by the outbreak. This chapter also evaluates the capacities theorised to produce community resilience and sustainability. The chapter uses reliable statistics, reports and empirical data to reflect how the current COVID-19 crisis is challenging the residents of Western Sydney. This analysis brings together numerous unequal effects of the COVID-19

crisis on Sydney's disadvantaged regions across many critical areas of life, including employment, ability to work, domestic responsibilities, health and wellbeing. This chapter correlates the remaining unequal urban settings, including socio-economic background, education, gender, ethnicity and geography.

7.2 The pandemic situation in Australia and Sydney, NSW

The first confirmed case of a novel coronavirus was reported in Australia on 25 January 2020. In January 2020, the Australian federal and state governments started to take action in response to the pandemic, including public statements from the health department and the declaration of several pandemic administrative preparations. On 25 February 2020, the government activated the National Communicable Disease Plan (Bromfield & McConnell, 2020). Significant actions to control the spread of coronavirus commenced in February 2020 with restricted entry into Australia for foreign nationals. On 20 March 2020, the government completely shut down entry for non-residents. By 21 March 2020, the number of COVID-19 cases reached 1000 and COVID cases were doubling every three days (Chang et al., 2020). At the start of July 2020, Australia had quite a few new cases each day, with 8000 total cases and 104 deaths. From July to the end of September 2020, when the second wave hit Australian states, the infection rates had climbed to 27,078 cases and 886 deaths. Then, the coronavirus infection grew slowly from October 2020 to the first week of July 2021. In June 2021 Delta variant of COVID-19 started to spread in Australia. From June 2021 to date, Australia has been facing the third wave of COVID infection. At of 11 September most Australian states and territories were under various forms of lockdown or restrictions. As of that date, the confirmed coronavirus cases had jumped to 69,912 with 1,076 deaths.

Despite the fluctuating number of new cases and the three waves, Australia controlled the scatter of the COVID-19 virus better than other countries (Biddle et al., 2020; Bromfield & McConnell, 2020). The Australian governments had initiated rigorous actions in response to

the pandemic to prevent COVID infections. When the coronavirus incidents began to rise in Australia, the federal and state or territory governments initiated various restrictions on people's movement, shut down educational institutions and businesses and closed the borders for all visitors and non-immigrants from the rest of the world (O'Sullivan et al., 2020; van Barneveld et al., 2020).

In Sydney, NSW, the coronavirus disease was diagnosed on 25 January 2020 in three people arriving from overseas (Chung & Drevikovsky, 2020). Case numbers and deaths continued to grow throughout March and April 2020; however, the first wave had successfully come to an end by late April 2020. By 6 June 2020, there were no more new cases reported in NSW. During the second wave of COVID-19, June–October 2020, the number of cases was not higher than the first wave in NSW. From June to October 2020, NSW recorded around 900 COVID-19 cases. The case number reduced to zero by the First of October 2020 (NSW Health, 2020). The third wave of Australian COVID-19 started in NSW in June 2021 and continued with a record number of daily cases. The highly infectious delta variant of the COVID-19 virus was discovered in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs on 18 June in NSW. A preliminary lockdown was declared for the four Sydney local government areas of Eastern Sydney related to the cluster (Nguyen, 2021). The COVID-19 cases continued to grow every day in September 2021. As a response to the rapid spread of COVID-19, on 26 June 2021, the NSW government declared a lockdown of the entire Greater Sydney Metropolitan for two weeks (Butterworth, 2021). When writing this chapter in mid-September, Greater Sydney Metropolitan was still in lockdown with a growing number of daily new COVID-19 cases. During the latest COVID-19 hit, Sydney has been shaken, pushing the state government to announce various COVID-19 restrictions for metropolitan Sydney. With additional restrictions and extreme lockdown, Sydney's West is experiencing higher infection rates and challenges.

The following section outlines the community resilience and sustainability in the time of crisis and evaluates Sydney's residents capacity in light of secondary data and analytical framework.

7.3 Urban inequality, sustainable and resilient community in times of crisis

7.3.1 Conceptual context

Communities are lively and dynamic social domains that have chased community life and wellbeing throughout history (Zautra et al., 2008). A community's ability, resilience and sustainability are also closely linked with urban inequality and place-based disparities. Communities are bounded by numerous complex and influential built, natural, social and economic settings central to generating progressive growth (Norris et al., 2008). In this growth process, resilience, an individual's adaptive capacities, is vital for maintaining communities' vibrant livelihoods (Norris et al., 2008). The community is the primary component of sustainable development and sustainability capacity (Xia et al., 2015). Sustainable communities use all available social infrastructure and facilities for community wellbeing and maintain a quality life in a safe environment (Teriman et al., 2011).

Community resilience and sustainability is encompassed by the stability of livelihoods, socio-economic opportunities, equitable distribution of resources and balanced growth (Houston, 2018). Our world system has become increasingly connected and complex, and communities worldwide are increasingly confronting various challenges (Norris et al., 2008); some are familiar but unpredictable, such as bushfires or floods, and some are new, such as COVID-19. The provisions of urban sustainability, sustainable city and sustainable community refer to the suitable socio-economic condition and equal concern for social and economic sustainability (Shen et al., 2011). Sustainable development, or sustainability of communities, maintains a dominant role as the preferred development paradigm and plays a critical role in successfully achieving urban sustainability (Lew et al., 2016; Shen et al., 2011). A sustainable community

ensures its members' wellbeing by equal access to opportunities and resources, with the capacity to address various challenges in a time of crisis (Rogers & Ryan, 2001).

Creating resilient communities is imperative to progress individuals' or communities' ability to adapt and overcome any crisis and transform their collective ability to face challenges. However, the rapid urban growth of Sydney is mostly being accommodated in disadvantaged areas which have fewer and low-grade jobs (Lee et al., 2018), lower earnings (Stilwell & Hardwick, 1973), reduced services (Holloway, 2002), poorer ICT facilities (Holloway, 2005), inadequate amenities and much higher densities (Taylor & Gladstone, 2018). Consequently, sustainable urban growth, sustainable community development and community resilience in Sydney's high growth areas face challenges.

Community capacity and sustainability are connected to numerous resources, and many different authors have explored the different types of capital and their roles in underpinning economic growth, human wellbeing and sustainability, focusing on various capitals' economic, social, biophysical and ecological economic viewpoints (Akamani, 2012; Magis, 2010; Norris et al., 2008; Roberts & Townsend, 2016; Rogers & Ryan, 2001; Valentin & Spangenberg, 2000). Different authors have used different terms for these types of community capital and resources. For example, Roberts and Townsend (2016) referred to social, economic, natural and cultural capital, while Akamani (2012) identified five types of capital to ensure community resilience: social, economic, physical, human, and natural capital. Norris et al. (2008) reviewed various literature and identified economic development, social capital, information and communication, and community competence as four principal means of community development and Magis (2010) called for natural, built, human, cultural, social, political and financial resources. Valentin and Spangenberg (2000) defined sustainability based on four social, economic, environmental and institutional elements regarding the sustainability indicators. Also, Rogers and Ryan (2001) identified social, environmental and economic

wellbeing performance and Shen et al. (2011) recognised environmental, economic and social signs as an approach to sustainable community development.

Population flow, growing inequality, increasing migration and increasing development in incompatible and hazard-prone zones place individuals and belongings at more risk and increase the people and assets in danger from catastrophe each year (Aldrich & Meyer, 2015). Thus, various community capitals such as social capital, human capital, economic capital, physical capital and environmental or natural capital embody the numerous scopes of community welfare and the capacity to face any crisis (Akamani, 2012). Sustainable community development aims to synchronise and incorporate the economic, environmental, social and human capitals to ensure a participatory, universal, wide-ranging and sustainable community development practice (Xia et al., 2015).

Table 7.1 defines five types of capital and explains their applications and associated indicators in this study to evaluate community capacity and sustainability. The chosen five community capitals are regarded as combined resources endowed into productive actions and outcomes, which constitute an essential source of resilience and sustainability (Dinh et al., 2017; Valentin & Spangenberg, 2000).

Table 7.1: Definition, applications and associated indicators of five capitals applied in this study

Capital	Definition and applications	Indicators
Social	Communities' ability, support for social participation, mutual social contact and network of relationships that collectively regulate social trajectories (Aldrich & Meyer, 2015; Norris et al., 2008; Sherrieb et al., 2010).	Education, families, skill base, leisure, social support, social participation, organisational cooperation, leadership roles and community understanding (Norris et al., 2008; Payne et al., 2021; Rogers & Ryan, 2001; Sherrieb et al., 2010).
Human	The skills, knowledge and other elements enable communities to engage in creative activities and enhance their wellbeing (Akamani, 2012).	Skills, jobs, qualifications, education and health (Dinh et al., 2017).
Physical/ Built	Physical capital comprises all forms of infrastructure that support the wellbeing of people directly through its role as a production input and indirectly by reducing costs (Akamani, 2012; Dinh et al., 2017).	Effective transport systems, infrastructure, roads, rail, equipment, and housing (Akamani, 2012; Dinh et al., 2017).

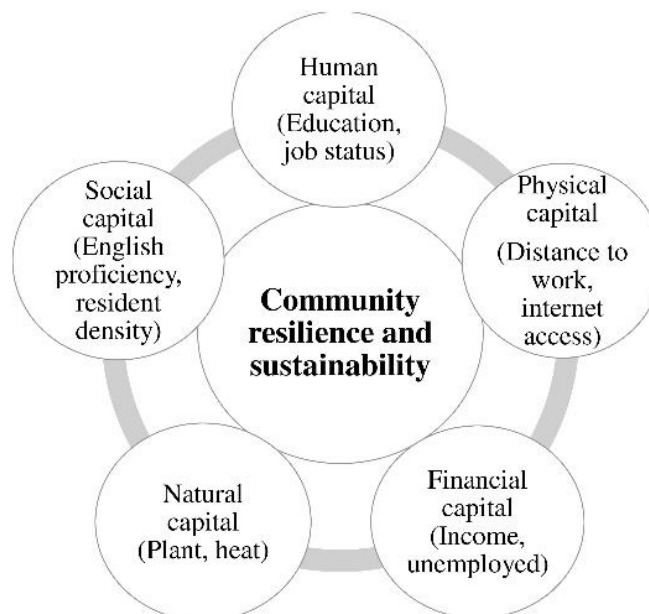
Financial	Economic capital refers to opportunities for income and employment and other sources of livelihoods that contribute to the wellbeing of communities and the local economy performance (Akamani, 2012; Rogers & Ryan, 2001).	Financial assets, employment, infrastructure, technology, innovation, economic development, diverse economic resources, equal distribution of resources (Akamani, 2012; Norris et al., 2008; Payne et al., 2021).
Natural/ Environmental	Nature's capacity to continue people's activities and opportunities to promote community growth (Dinh et al., 2017; Rogers & Ryan, 2001).	Climate change, land, water, landscape, biodiversity, plants, rain (Dinh et al., 2017; Payne et al., 2021; Valentin & Spangenberg, 2000).

Source: Author by analysing various literature.

7.3.2 Analysing community resilience and sustainability

Thus, there is a need to develop analytical frameworks that provide insights into community resilience and sustainability dynamics and provide the theoretical foundation for the exploration. After analysing various variables and indicators guided by the literature (Akamani, 2012; Norris et al., 2008; Rogers & Ryan, 2001; Shen et al., 2011; Valentin & Spangenberg, 2000), this study has considered social, human, physical, financial and natural capital and related indicators to analyse the Greater Sydney community's capacity (Figure 7.1). The indicators have been selected following the rich understanding of various related literature cited above, suitability for the study, appropriateness for analyses and availability of statistics.

Figure 7.1: Communities' capacity indicators applied in this study



Source: Author by reviewing various literature.

7.3.3 Community resilience and sustainability in Greater Sydney

This study explores community resilience and sustainability across different local government areas in Sydney. The socio-demographic characteristics of the study areas are provided at the start. Based on the literature review, the study established four key indicators and two variables for each indicator. The indicators cover the main aspects of sustainability, the social, economic, ecological and built environment. This study investigated whether differences exist in community resilience and sustainability among different communities in Sydney. The community was classified into two groups: Western Sydney LGAs and the rest of Sydney LGAs.

The research limited the focus to eight types of data for 34 local government areas (using 2016 boundaries) in metropolitan Sydney. At the time of the 2016 census, there were 34 LGAs in metropolitan Sydney; however, Rockdale and Botany Bay councils were later merged into Bayside Council, resulting in 33 LGAs. The study combined the data of these two LGAs to fit with the existing administrative boundaries.

The study gathered quantitative data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and analysed human, social, physical and economic capital-related statistics. The numerical analysis has produced statistical evidence to define Greater Sydney communities' sustainability and resilience difference. After analysing the data guided by the indicators outlined in the conceptual framework, this study claims that Western Sydney has poor human, social, physical and financial conditions.

Data in Table 7.2 shows that the residents of Western Sydney work in other regions and must travel far for work. Over three-quarters (76.78%) of the Greater Sydney residents who travel between 30 km and 50 km for work live in Western Sydney. The residents of Western Sydney have lower education levels than the rest of Sydney. The people of Western Sydney mainly have manual jobs. Nearly 65% of the Sydney residents who have manufacturing jobs live in

Western Sydney. Ethnic migrant communities are concentrated in Western Sydney and are mainly from non-English-speaking countries. Greater Sydney residents who have poor proficiency in native English are primarily concentrated in Western Sydney. Due to the higher involvement in low-paid work, Western Sydney has a high concentration of lower-income individuals. Data shows that the individuals who have a weekly income of \$3000 or more are concentrated in the rest of Sydney LGAs. Unemployed people are concentrated in Western Sydney. A significant number of dwellings in Sydney that do not have access to the internet from home are in Western Sydney.

Table 7.2: Community capacities: Western Sydney versus Rest of Sydney, 2016

Sustainability and resilience indicators	Western Sydney LGAs (%)	Rest of Sydney LGAs (%)
Number of dwellings with eight residents or more	77.32 %	22.68 %
Internet not accessed from dwellings	55.50 %	44.50 %
Weekly personal income (\$3000 or more)	18.86 %	81.14 %
Unemployed (looking for full-time work)	60.05 %	39.95 %
Job status (Manufacturing)	64.31 %	35.69 %
Distance to work (30 km to less than 50 km)	76.78 %	23.22 %
Education (bachelor's degree level)	36.41 %	63.59 %
Spoken English proficiency not at all	64.51 %	35.49 %

Source: Generated by the author using Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census data

Sydney is also environmentally or naturally divided, and Western Sydney is also climatically underprivileged. The area is often very hot in summer and has less annual rainfall than other Sydney parts (Allchin, 2019).

Table 7.3 shows that the average hot days are significantly higher in Western Sydney areas; conversely, annual rainfall and the tree canopy cover are lower compared to the rest of Sydney. In January 2020, when bushfires and heatwaves affected Sydney, parts of Western Sydney

recorded the highest temperature, making it one of the hottest places on the earth (Pfautsch et al., 2020; Purtil, 2021).

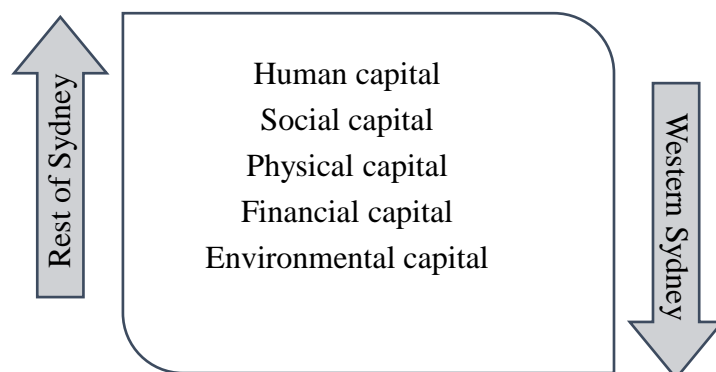
Table 7.3: Environmental characteristics of various parts of Sydney

Sydney regions (GSC, 2018a)	Average annual rainfall	Average annual days over 35 degrees Celsius	Existing urban area tree canopy (%)
Western Parkland City (Mostly Penrith, parts of Blacktown, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Fairfield LGAs in Greater Western Sydney region)	683 mm (Badgerys Creek)	21 days (Penrith)	16 %
Central River City (Mostly Greater Parramatta, parts of Blacktown Cumberland, Canterbury-Bankstown, The Hills LGAs in Greater Western Sydney region)	973 mm (Parramatta)	11 days (Parramatta)	17 %
Eastern Harbour City (Rest of Sydney LGAs – to the East of the River City)	1215 mm (Observatory Hill)	3 days (Observatory Hill)	32 %

Source: A Metropolis of Three Cities – the Greater Sydney Region Plan (2018), Greater Sydney Commission (<https://www.greater.sydney/metropolis-of-three-cities>).

Considering the social, human, economic, physical, and environmental or natural capital, the situation of the Western Sydney region is below standard. Given the above analysis, this research contends that Western Sydney communities are experiencing poor resilience and lower sustainability (Figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2: Community resilience and sustainability situation



Source: Generated by the author analysing various literature and evidence cited above.

The global coronavirus pandemic has tested cities and communities worldwide with their capacity and preparation to govern and manage the disastrous situation. COVID-19 has brought a massive challenge for the disadvantaged communities of cities. In Sydney, the stresses of COVID-19 on disadvantaged Western Sydney communities are more profound than on other communities.

7.4 COVID-19 impacts are deeper for Western Sydney

In Australia, the COVID-19 pandemic hit a situation of ongoing economic pressure caused by the historically most fateful bushfires and a lengthy drought (Bromfield & McConnell, 2020). The impact of the coronavirus disease is unparalleled in recent history, and the restrictions put to stop the spread of the coronavirus pandemic have a highly undesirable effect on the Australian economy. Consequently, the urgent responses to the virus have been massive shocks on individuals' socio-economic life. Though these public health actions are essential for people's well-being, statistics from various countries indicate that the COVID-19 adverse economic effects can intensify the established inequalities among the affluent and underprivileged (Bottan et al., 2020). In short, the pandemic has worsened the ongoing social, economic, and health inequalities (Che et al., 2020). The COVID-19 has enormously affected Sydney's less advantaged and vulnerable regions. The existing disadvantaged conditions and the COVID-19 adversity put their lives at risk. Specifically, the pandemic has badly impacted the underprivileged Western Sydney residents work, study, lifestyle and health. Table 7.4 summarises how the pandemic hugely impacts life and livelihoods.

Table 7.4: COVID-19 challenges in Western Sydney

Challenges	Empirical evidence (slightly modified opinions by keeping the original meaning)
Job shortfalls	Job losses continue to rise because of shutdowns to fight the coronavirus crisis, and the unemployment rate could hit 12% (nationwide) (Khadem, 2020).
Unemployment	With a dependence on construction, retail and hospitality industries, Western Sydney could experience double the national unemployment figure as those sectors' nosedive (Rachwani, 2020).
Vulnerability	The pandemic has exposed just how vulnerable the region (Western Sydney) really is (Rachwani, 2020).

Inequality	The latest iteration of school lockdown has highlighted the widening haves and have nots in the education system (Lattouf, 2021).
Mortgage stress	Millions of Australians could face mortgage stress, and some may lose their homes due to mortgage default (Khadem, 2020)
Housing unaffordability	Increasing housing prices will trigger higher mortgage or rental stress in Western Sydney (Informant R1).
Communication barrier	NSW government's response to the outbreak for the community had been problematic, with the speed and complexity of the information being shared hard to understand for multi-lingual communities to digest (Doyle, 2021).
Working from home challenge	Close to 50% of Western Sydney residents cannot work from home because their jobs did not lend themselves to it (Informant S4).
High density	a third of people in the affected areas in western Sydney could not work from home and lived in high-density complexes (Doyle, 2021).
Difficult everyday life	Due to the longer commute, Western Sydney residents lifestyles take a hit. Also, they cannot spend time with their families (Informant R8).

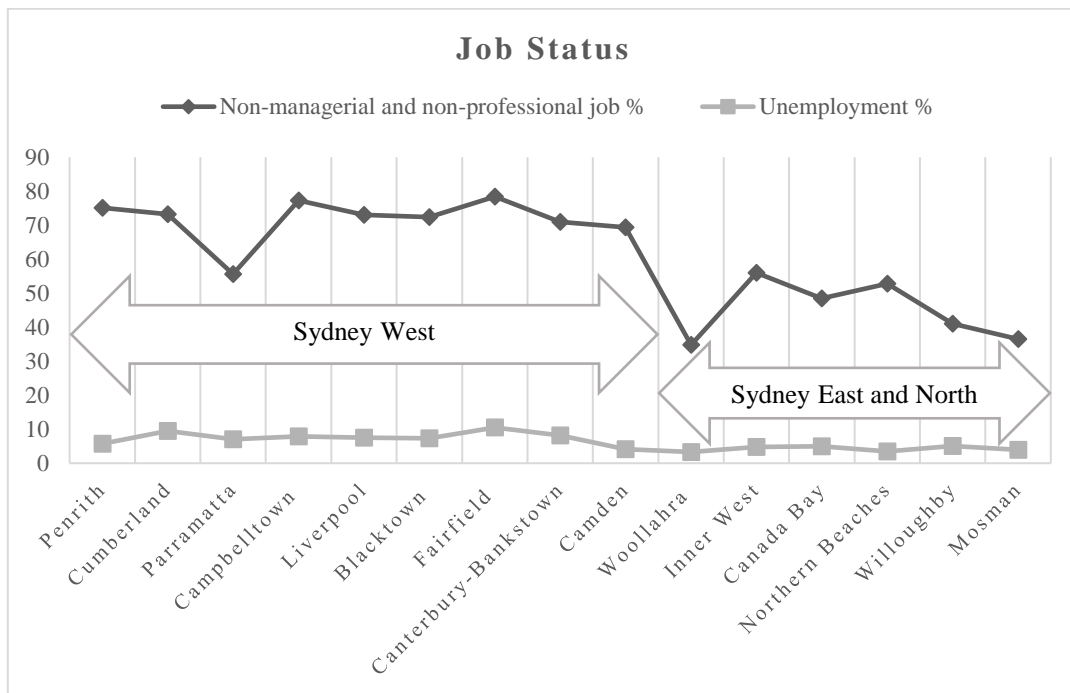
Source: Documents analysis and interviews data of this reserach.

The sub-section below broadly analyses the COVID-19 pandemic's disproportionate adverse impacts on Western Sydney, supporting empirical evidence.

7.4.1 Job losses

Restrictions on businesses and limitations on everyday activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic have caused extensive job losses (Chen et al., 2020). It is projected that due to lockdown, the Australian economy will be hit hard, and the unemployment rate is predicted to increase significantly (Bavin, 2021). Some sectors of the economy are hurt more than others. It is estimated that the most impacted areas are hospitality with 689,800, real estate with 130,000, recreation with 114,000, hotel and other accommodation with 97,800 jobs (Molloy, 2020). Western Sydney has a higher reliance on jobs in these sectors (Fagan & Dowling, 2005). About 70% to 80% of individuals in Western Sydney are involved in non-professional and non-managerial jobs (Figure 7.3) that are the most affected areas by the COVID-19 crisis.

Figure 7.3: Job status in selected local government areas (LGAs) of Sydney, 2016



Source: Generated by the author using Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census data.

It is projected that the coronavirus debacle will raise Australia’s unemployment rate (Worthington, 2020). Western Sydney has been evaluated as a ‘job deficit’ region as it has fewer local jobs than those seeking work (Fagan & Dowling, 2005). The existing 5% to 11% unemployment rate in Western Sydney (Figure 7.3) is forecasted to rise way above the nationwide average. A Chief Executive of a Not for Profit Organisation explained in his interview in Rachwani (2020) that,

“More and more people [in Western Sydney] will be reliant on Centrelink [social security payments and services to Australians] ... And we will be going back to increasing rates of people living below the poverty line.”

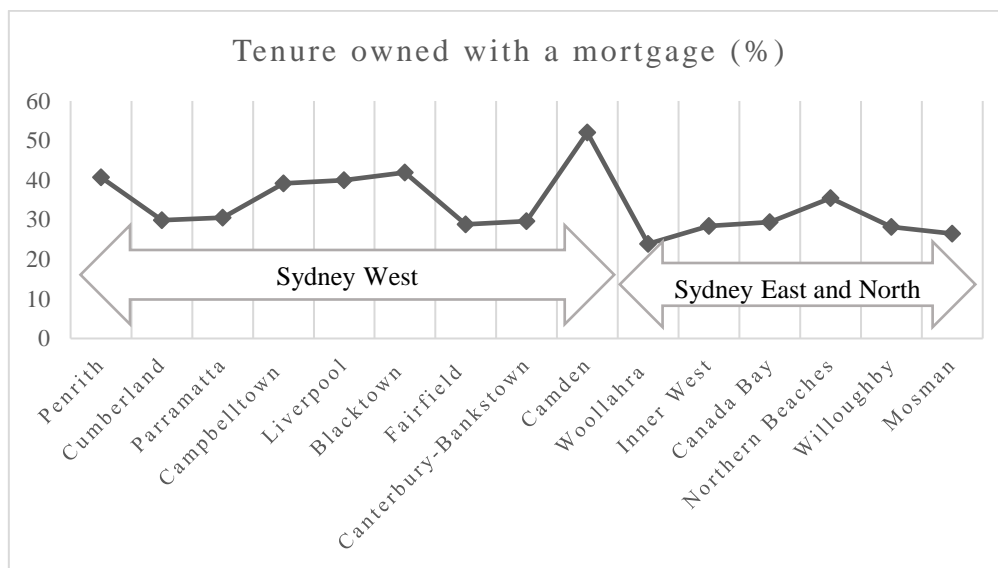
While government support has maintained some of these jobs, many jobs are predicted to be lost forever (Sullivan, 2020).

7.4.2 Mortgage default

In Australia, 3.4 million owner-occupied houses are mortgaged to financial institutions (Maalsen et al., 2020), and about 32% of those were already struggling to repay their home

loans (Khadem, 2020). An unanticipated loss of earnings puts them at additional risk of mortgage default. Australians have been cautioned that more than 1.5 million will experience further debt pressure shortly and may end up failing to pay on their house mortgages (Khadem, 2020). The number of tenures owned with a loan in Western Sydney is significantly higher than other parts of Sydney (Figure 7.4).

Figure 7.4: Residences owned with a mortgage in selected LGAs of Sydney, 2016



Source: Generated by the author using Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census data.

Therefore, credit pressure and loss of the home is substantially higher in Western Sydney.

7.4.3 Housing (un)affordability

During the pandemic government’s income and housing development support and very low-interest rates have added additional buyers’ pressure to the housing market. As a result, house prices in Sydney are forecasted to grow significantly (Lutton, 2021). The unexpectedly escalating housing market has put Western Sydney residents under stress. One informant said,

“A spike in prices is going to cause higher mortgage stress or rental stress in Western Sydney because of the relatively lower ability of people to access the higher paying jobs.” (Informant R1)

Besides, COVID-19 has been employed as a basis for the fast-tracking planning system and development approvals to increase housing development activity, specifically for Western Sydney (DoPI&E, 2020). One informant said,

“You have now got COVID, which is going to make a difference there is some evidence that having greenfield new housing is very attractive. They are seeing strong demand in that area.” (Informant S7)

In addition, due to comparative lower housing prices and larger blocks, people are moving to Western Sydney. The additional demand has increased housing prices. One informant said,

“People are moving there, out to the country and things. If they can work from home because the prices of houses apparently have gone up in the Blue Mountains, and that was after - because people could not - because all the houses down the coast became over a million dollars just like that.” (Informant R6)

7.4.4 Work and study from home

Due to the COVID-19 public health order, workplaces began directing staff to work from home. However, not all jobs can be done from home. It is hard for the less affluent Western Sydney residents to work from home because of the manual nature of their jobs. Doyle (2021) argued that,

“They cannot afford to stay at home. If they stay at home, they cannot put food on the table.”

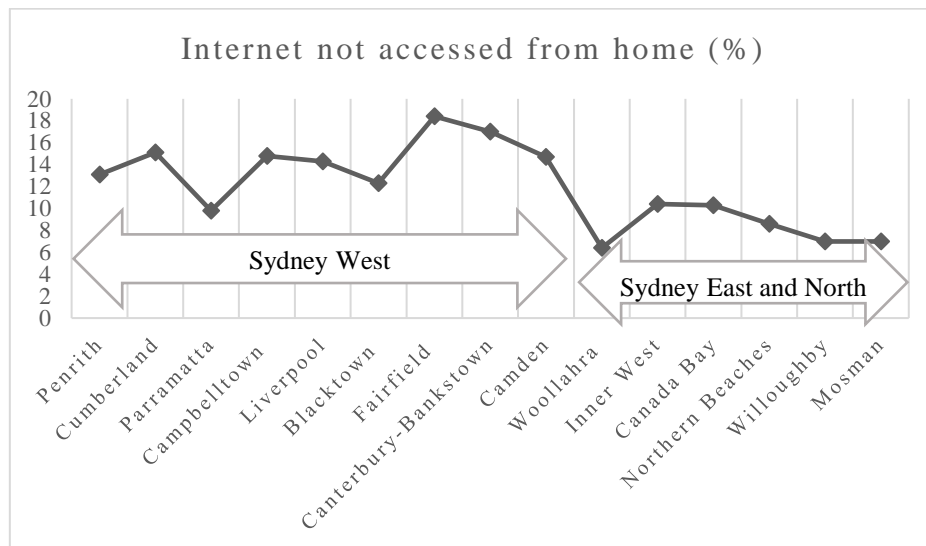
Western Sydney people work much more in areas where the nature of the jobs does not lend itself to work from home. Working from home is only practical in managerial and professional positions. As shown in figure 7.3, Western Sydney residents are highly concentrated in non-managerial and non-professional jobs; thus, they cannot work from home. One informant said,

“During the lockdown, we had many people across Greater Sydney electing to work from home. For many Western Sydney residents, close to 50% that was not

possible because their jobs did not lend themselves to work from home.” (Informant S5)

On the other hand, the Western residents who can work from home were challenged by their infrastructure’s limitations as computer and internet usage is much less in Western Sydney (Holloway, 2005). Besides, universities switched to online classes, and students in Western Sydney were disadvantaged due to poor equipment and less internet access. Data shows the internet is not available in 10 to 20% of Western Sydney homes (Figure 7.5). A significant number of Western locals are thus struggling to work and study from home.

Figure 7.5: Internet access from home in selected LGAs of Sydney, 2016



Source: Generated by the author using Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census data.

A significant number of Western Sydney residents thus struggled to work and study from home.

7.4.5 Home-schooling responsibility

The COVID-19 pandemic pushed a rapid shift to online learning across Australia. Parents are handling pressures on their time to home-school their children. Besides, the educational facilities disparities have caused additional anxiety for parents. Flack et al. (2020) argue that the Australian school system is unequal, where the school resource levels of the least advantaged communities are significantly lower than the affluent areas. A journalist and

mother, Lattouf (2021) of Western Sydney, expressed her distress concerning Western Sydney's educational disadvantage. She opined,

“This (home schooling) was not my finest parenting moment. It was an even worse educator moment. It was the culmination of pandemic fatigue, trying to home school my children full-time while also doing my job.”

As mentioned earlier, Western Sydney residents are primarily engaged in employment that does not lend itself to work from home. They are thus unable to supervise and/or assist their children in online learning. It is apparent that these circumstances will expand an already noticeable education attainment disparity between children from less advantaged and more advantaged backgrounds in Sydney.

7.4.6 Wellbeing impacts

COVID-19 wellbeing effects have been disproportionate and more severe among people who have significantly lost their income. The impact on wellbeing is higher among residents in poorer localities. One informant said,

“You are spending a lot of time and money in travelling (travel to work) to get to your place of employment, and you also are lowering your lifestyle because you are not able to spend time with your family and that because you are travelling. So, there is a lot of factors involved in that.” (Informant O4)

Thus, the adverse impacts of COVID-19 may also lead to an increase in psychological disorders among disadvantaged Western Sydney residents.

7.4.7 Family concern

Young people's work is more affected by COVID-19. As a result, they find themselves unable to pay for their rent and other costs. Experts assert that children in Australia's grownup are being pushed to continue living with their parents due to the COVID-19 crisis (Clegg, 2020). An economist argues in Clegg (2020),

“If young people lose their jobs or have their hours cut and they are looking to save costs, they might move home – if they can.”

A study shows that more young people are living at home with their parents for a prolonged time (Clegg, 2020). Thus, COVID-19 disruptions have added additional pressure on parents and young people to extend homestay. In addition, Roy and Lowrey (2020) argued that young people are at threat of falling behind in their education,

“At the moment, we will have a lot of young people who are studying, who will not receive any assistance, who are out of work and might have to consider dropping out of their studies.”

Western Sydney has a higher number of jobless young adults, which causes additional stress in the household (O'Neill, 2017). Western Sydney has elevated rates of domestic violence (Brook, 2019), which are projected to surge throughout the coronavirus lockdown.

7.4.8 Communication barriers

It is essential to communicate government guidance on COVID-19 effectively. However, Western Sydney has a higher proportion of non-English-speaking migrant communities. It is difficult for them to understand the complicated and constantly changing public health orders. The coronavirus cases in 2021 were concentrated in Western Sydney, and it is argued that the inability of communities to understand the health instructions is worsening the COVID situation. The NSW government has countered that spread with harsher lockdowns and a nighttime curfew in Western Sydney, further exacerbated the region's disadvantaged situation. NSW Minister for Health argued on Nine News (2021),

“We are hearing some families, particularly in Southwest Sydney and Western Sydney, are staying at home when they have symptoms and not coming out and getting tested, ... presenting not alive, but dead.”

In addition, residents with a low level of English proficiency might get infected unknowingly by no fault of their own. After a COVID-19 outbreak in a Western Sydney hospital, frontline workers were anxious about their safety. One frontline worker stated in Scherer (2021) that,

“[The] majority of patients are [from] non-English-speaking backgrounds. You cannot organise a translator every single time you need to communicate with a patient. It is hard to convey to a patient even if they speak and understand English what they need to do to keep us safe ... sometimes, patients cannot understand the risk of transmission.”

7.4.9 Supporting extending families overseas

Migrant communities are clustered predominantly in Western Sydney (Smith et al., 2019). Many regularly need to financially help their expanded families who are outside of Australia. However, with the extensive income shortfalls, many of them are not capable of assisting families overseas. Consequently, it is a substantial cause of grief among them. An affected individual claims in Roy and Lowrey (2020) that,

“We work here, but we do have our family back in [...], and this is what worries me the most – if I am going to be able to keep helping them.”

Western Sydney has a long history of disadvantage that is now exacerbated and intensified by the adverse consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak. It is clear from the discussions that COVID-19 has a disadvantageous differential impact on the people in Western Sydney compared to affluent areas. COVID-19 is an opportunity to realise Western Sydney’s disadvantaged condition and find solutions to improve this situation. The below sections outline the critical approaches for building better post-pandemic Western Sydney.

7.5 Discussion

The socio-demographic features of cities worldwide have been changing for a long time, consequently generating diverse and complex patterns in the various regions of metropolises (Foote & Walter, 2017). Sydney’s ongoing urban growth is similar; Sydney has been

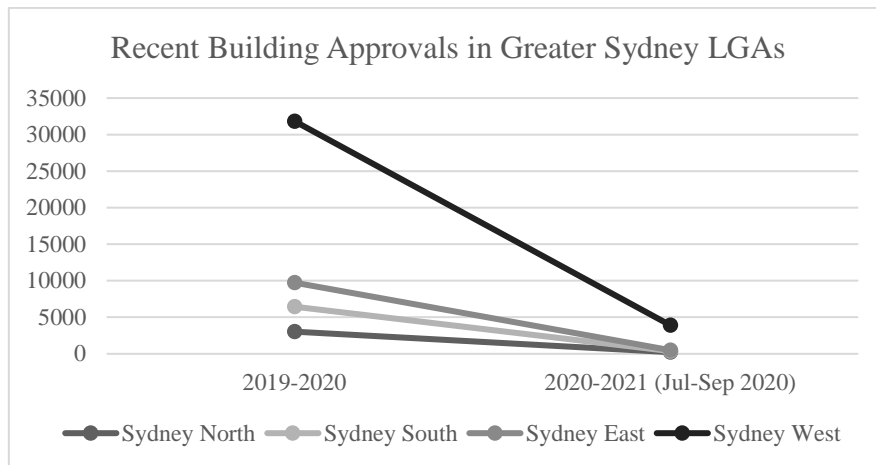
undergoing socio-economic transformations for a long time (Stilwell & Hardwick, 1973). Consequently, Sydney's urban growth and development provisions intensify its residents' human, social, physical and financial capital disparities (Vogel et al., 2020).

Communities are inspired to become accustomed to socio-economic transformation and have the ability to develop into more vigorous, more dynamic and pre-emptive approaches (Steiner et al., 2018). However, community resilience and sustainability are contingent on the community's resources, ability to advance, and capacity to face challenges. Cities need to establish a baseline for their residents to strengthen a community's resilience and sustainability, and an initial measure that allows strengthening its communities' capacities is needed. However, in Sydney, residents of specific areas face significant resilience and sustainability challenges due to a lack of facilities. Figure 6.3 in the previous chapter shows the Index of Education and Occupation (IEO) percentage of decile ten areas for Sydney LGAs, highlighting communities' educational and occupational standards. The map shows that none (0%) of the population of the 11 LGAs in Western Sydney is the top decile.

The existing human, social, economic, physical and environmental resources are essential to adapt to a crisis and eventually overcome adversity, return to a normal situation, and even sometimes perform well in the restored situation (Rapaport et al., 2018). While 78% of residents of the Eastern City District live and work within their district, this compares to only 57% in Western City District and 52% in Central City District; also, the proportion of jobs in the knowledge and professional services sector is highest in the Eastern City District and lowest in the other districts (GSC, 2019). The socio-economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic were geographically segregated in Sydney due to unequal socio-economic and environmental situations. It was estimated that the sectors most impacted in Australia by job losses from the COVID-19 crisis areas were hospitality with 689,800, real estate with 130,000, sports and physical recreation with 114,000, hotel and other accommodation with 97,800 (Molloy, 2020).

Western Sydney has a high reliance on jobs in these sectors; about 70% to 80% of workers in Western Sydney have non-professional and non-managerial jobs that were the most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic (Farid Uddin & Piracha, 2020). While the JobKeeper allowance from the Commonwealth government maintained some of these jobs, other jobs were affected more severely. It was estimated that the coronavirus disaster would increase Australia's unemployment rate from 5.1% to closer to 15% (Worthington, 2020). Unemployment is higher in Western Sydney, and the COVID-19 crisis had devastating effects on unemployment rates in Western Sydney. Also, Western Sydney residents have a lower ICT skill level, and the internet is not accessible from 10% to 20% of its dwellings (Farid Uddin & Piracha, 2020). Many Western Sydney residents were thus struggling to work and study from home, and many Western Sydney residents were not employed in sectors that were suitable for work from home. The outcomes of community resilience are significant from the sustainability perspective (Akamani, 2012). Sustainable urban growth is a dynamic process that denotes the well-balanced relationship between urban development and the existing human, social, financial, physical and environmental resources in society to undertake sustainable life (Shen et al., 2011). Australian Bureau of Statistics data on building approvals in Greater Sydney shows Western Sydney has been the centre of urban expansion. Figure 7.6 shows that in the recent financial year of 2019–20, nearly 70% of all dwellings were approved in Western Sydney local government areas.

Figure 7.6: Building approvals in Greater Sydney by four subregions



Source: Generated by author by using Australian Bureau of Statistics data (http://stat.data.abs.gov.au/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=ABS_BLDG_APPROVALS_LGA201)

Western Sydney has been getting the most housing development in recent years. COVID-19 has been used as a base for accelerating planning procedures and development approvals to increase jobs, adding housing growth, particularly in Western Sydney (DoPI&E, 2020). Once again, additional dwellings have been dropped in the Western Sydney areas where there is a lack of opportunities and urban amenities. The excessive placement of new housings in the pandemic is making the Western Sydney condition worse, and the cities within a city divide continue in the wake of COVID-19.

Hot days and heatwaves represent a significant hazard in Western Sydney. The urban heat island effect across Sydney shows it is highest in the Western City District and lowest in the North City District, and the percentage of residents with exposure to high urban heat is highest in Western City District at 46% and lowest in North City District at only 2% (GSC, 2019). There are substantial adverse environmental impacts on Western Sydney resident lifestyles. For example, walking trips are highest in Eastern City District and lowest in Western City District, and there is also a considerable difference between access to open space (GSC, 2019). Increasing tree canopy in the urban area is a means to reduce urban heat and make a sustainable city; however, tree canopy cover is also lower in Western Sydney. With the higher proportion

of housing approvals, many highly disadvantaged Western Sydney residents live on smaller lots. New dwellings in Western Sydney are constructed on small lots, leaving little space between neighbours and minimal front or rear gardens (Roggema, 2019) with less space for planting trees.

Unsustainable development and unequal distribution of opportunities negatively impact residents' everyday lives (Burton, 2001). A wide range of community resources and their effects are connected with disadvantages in the social order, and community problems are prevalent in unequal societies (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2015). There has been widespread concern about inequality, and inequality has huge adverse socio-economic impacts; besides, many of the undesirable features of the effects of inequality may indicate further fundamental societal problems (Whiteford, 2015). Inequality has significant psychosocial and behavioural special effects on communities, and many social problems are acute in disadvantaged peoples (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2010; Wilkinson, 2004). People who live in more impoverished socio-economic situations tend to face worse consequences (Whiteford, 2015).

The existing urban development trends have complex effects on Sydney residents. Urban expansion in the areas which are more and more detached from opportunities and have less capacity to develop opportunities leads to unsustainable Western Sydney communities. The distance from jobs, fewer employment opportunities, and poor socio-economic conditions have placed Western Sydney residents in an unfavourable and imbalanced situation. Consequently, instead of minimising urban inequality, the situation progressively deteriorates.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter supporting secondary sources of data and empirical study shows that Western Sydney, which contains nearly half of Greater Sydney's population and is also expected to absorb two-thirds of the Sydney population growth, has been facing more COVID-19 hardship than other parts of Sydney. Socio-economic inequity has been deepening worldwide over the

years (van Barneveld et al., 2020). The more extreme unequal conditions may eventuate as the coronavirus shocks severely devastated the underprivileged population (Florida et al., 2021). At the time of analysing evidence and data of this chapter in September 2021, Sydney faced a new wave of virus infection with a stronger COVID-19 upsurge in Western Sydney. The socio-economic impacts are likely to be extremely harsh in Western Sydney, where the COVID-19 lockdown has been more strict than in other areas of the metropolitan (Wade, 2021).

This research argues that the coronavirus pandemic has given a chance to understand Sydney's unequal situation and to take action to ameliorate it. Western Sydney keeps Sydney running, a reality reinforced by the COVID-19 pandemic, and has substantial significance to the rest of the country. The concept of a sustainable and resilient community is highly relevant for cities. This study's analyses suggest that Sydney is lagging in promoting equality in communities' opportunities and capacities. This study argues that comprehensive actions are needed to ensure sustainable and resilient urban growth. The study's importance lies in its academic debate and its implications for existing urban strategic transformation. The disadvantaged Western Sydney communities require evidence-based, long-term, inclusive strategic responses concentrating on broader education opportunities, a creative economy, better health, balanced urban growth, and smart living environments to form sustainability and resilience. The following chapter outlines some insights and recommendations for a sustainable and resilient post-COVID Western Sydney.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion¹⁶

This chapter summarises the research findings and analysis of the thesis and presents recommendations to reduce Sydney's urban inequalities. It contends that in Greater Sydney, the urban planning arrangements and applications reinforce the city division by their selective application. The planning system favours affluent areas by accommodating additional dwellings or populations mostly in less affluent areas. Consequently, disadvantaged Western Sydney, which currently contains 44% of the Sydney population, is predicted to accommodate around 60% by the year 2036. Western Sydney has poor transport, education, employment, health facilities, natural and cultural amenities. This research also identifies the adverse planning outcomes resulting from the low ability of the disadvantaged areas in Western Sydney to engage with and influence planning. The sections below outline the key findings and arguments and suggest potential way-outs to Sydney's urban planning disparities and place-based differences.

8.1 Key findings

Due to fast economic and population growth, Greater Sydney has been facing growing demand for land and housing. The state government has needed to boost the housing supply. Thus, the state government has introduced various strategies to increase the housing supply in Greater Sydney. Due to the state's planning decisions, Sydney has been expanding towards the West. The existing urban policies governing this urban growth lead to geographical disparities by increasing population density in Western Sydney, where access to job, transport, and amenities is very poor and where summers are excruciatingly hot.

¹⁶ Parts of the chapter has been published as part of numerous publications, with some changes.

By citing numerous policy cases, data and analyses, this thesis shows that urban planning policy applications and outcomes produce an urban divide in Sydney. Table 8.1 outlines the key findings and arguments of the thesis.

Table 8.1: key findings and arguments of the thesis.

Features	Findings	Arguments
Greater Sydney's urban inequality	<p>A significant portion of Greater Sydney residents experiences substantial locational adversity and underprivileged condition.</p> <p>The Greater Western Sydney region lacks sustainable and resilient communities due to a lack of capacity.</p> <p>Coronavirus shocks have severely impacted underprivileged populations in Sydney, and the socio-economic impacts are incredibly harsh in Western Sydney.</p>	<p>This research argues that Sydney's urban expansion in the dispossessed west leads to rapid densification, low-income housing and poor quality development, a significant challenge for establishing sustainable and resilient cities and communities.</p> <p>The severe pandemic impacts have provided an opportunity to both understand and improve Sydney's place-based inequality.</p>
Unequal planning policy practices and uneven outcomes	<p>Contemporary policy applications and reform cases show that affluent residents strongly contribute to the neighbourhood's policy matters to secure their local interests. In addition, advantaged residents are able to fight post-political planning arrangements due to their socio-economic and political power.</p> <p>On the other hand, Western Sydney residents are not very active in policy matters, and inadequate community engagement has failed to focus on existing concerns in Sydney's less affluent western areas. Consequently, Greater Sydney establishes 'cities within the city' and enhances urban geography's socio-economic divides.</p>	<p>This research argues that Sydney's urban inequality and spatial difficulties are underpinned by making exceptions for advantaged areas in the urban policy.</p> <p>It also argues that the techno-managerial policy process can overcome community input only in socio-economically disadvantaged areas, and the formal planning process creates a divide between different parts of Greater Sydney.</p>
Urban planning policy and other measures to reduce inequalities in Greater Sydney	<p>The development of more new dwellings and placing more population in disadvantaged Western Sydney than in the advantaged eastern and northern suburbs reflects that the majority of the Western Sydney population have to struggle to fulfil their needs.</p>	<p>This research argues for the expansion of affordable housing in the north and providing more white-collar jobs and infrastructures in the west to reduce the divide in Greater Sydney. This research also urges expanded opportunities in Western Sydney to enhance community capacities.</p>

8.2 Recommendations

Cities ensure opportunities for their residents by their innovations to deliver equitable, sustainable and resilient futures (Frantzeskaki et al., 2021). Steil and Connolly (2019) argue that as urban inequality remains and exclusions increase, attention to justice in the principle of urban policies is very significant. An equal or just city quest for a means headed for a fundamental transformation in city planning and policies that ensure more justice, intense democracy, and inclusiveness in the urban settings (Steil & Connolly, 2019). Cities' success depends on the community's ability to adapt to changes and challenges. The most effective methods of constructing a community's ability and making community resilient are producing positive urban growth, fostering community ties, ensuring essential amenities, and keeping key community capital vigorous (Miles & Chang, 2011; Zautra et al., 2008).

The NSW state government has advanced various policy reforms and initiated strategies to form an innovative, sustainable and connected Greater Sydney. To meet the growing and changing needs of the residents of Sydney, the latest metropolitan strategy, 'A Metropolis of Three Cities', aims to transform Greater Sydney into a city of three connected cities (GSC, 2018a). NSW urban planning bodies continuously initiate various policy reforms to ensure smooth and strengthen urban growth and development. Urban transformation in Sydney is being challenged by urban inequality and place-based disadvantaged condition. Urban inequality, weaker capacities and poor resilience in communities put economic, social and political progress at risk; thus, it is crucial to expand the conditions of the disadvantaged groups for the city's progress (Vale, 2014). Cities must reconsider the distribution of socio-economic opportunities for public service delivery and prioritise budgets and investments in the less advantaged regions. The empirical study data reflects various initiatives and arguments to minimise place-based inequality in Sydney and ensure broader opportunities for disadvantaged

Western Sydney residents. Table 8.2 below summarises the key features and arguments of the empirical study.

Table 8.2: key recommendations and arguments of the empirical study.

Features	Recommendations (slightly modified opinions by keeping the original meaning)
Collaboration	All the government departments work for the residents, communities, and citizens of Greater Sydney. Why can't they do a good framework of collaboration among the departments? (Informant S1)
Engagement	An actual and adequate process to engage with residents, so not just doing engagement as a tick box exercise. Ensure proper engaging tools, including educating and capacity building amongst residents on urban planning issues. (Informant S4)
Education and job opportunities	More educational establishments, more catalyst employers and genuine movement of government offices to the west. There needs to be an increase in the higher-level jobs and the knowledge jobs in the west. (Informant O3)
Redistribution of resources	The poor condition can be improved by better redistribution of resources across the city, by prioritising state and federal government resources towards areas with less investment. (Informant S4)
Capacity building	People in Western Sydney have come from overseas. It requires a long-term education project and a real engagement project. (Informant O2)
Educational infrastructure	The best way to get better outcomes is to deliver proper educational infrastructure in Western Sydney. They need schools that are linked to TAFEs and universities. You need to improve quality educational outcomes for kids in Western Sydney. (Informant S1)
Infrastructure	Placing infrastructure enables people to connect more efficiently and affordably to other parts of the city. (Informant S4)
Social infrastructure	Improve and start delivering essential urban infrastructure and social infrastructure in western Sydney. (Informant S1)
Social transformation	A lot has to do with education. Many people have come from many areas. It is not that they are not educated; they are educated in where they have come from. But they do not understand the Australian way of life. Residents need more education on fitting in in the Australian way of life. (Informant R4)
Economic opportunity	Develop more business parks in Western Sydney. (Informant R6)

Source: Interviews data.

This thesis has also analysed advanced, sustainable and resilient city and community development models in the following sub-sections to explore possible solutions to ease Sydney's urban inequality and improve the Western Sydney community's lifestyle.

8.2.1 Equal, resilient and sustainable city and community:

Numerous scholars have acknowledged the urban inequality, urban sustainability, community resilience issues and provided models for a community's capacity building, equal city and empowered community. For example, Fainstein (2010) debates urban political philosophy,

spatial phenomena and social justice and introduces the “Just City” theory to develop an urban philosophical and practical concept to ensure urban justice in the city planning and development policy domain. The just city theory specifies three governing principles, equity, diversity, and democracy, as the essential tools for urban justice and emphasises a change in the rhetoric around urban policy to improve the quality of urban resident’s life (Fainstein, 2010, 2014). Equity emphasises the equal distribution of socio-economic and political opportunities, diversity stress on confirming that people are not excluded for their social, political and economic conditions, and democracy involves establishing democratic processes in urban plans and policies focusing on the participation of minor, disadvantaged people and enhanced consultation in the underprivileged areas (Fainstein, 2010; Steil & Connolly, 2019). Fainstein (2014, p. 7) argues that ‘the stronger the role of disadvantaged groups in policy decisions, the more redistributive will be the outcomes; thus, broad participation and deliberation should produce more just outcomes’.

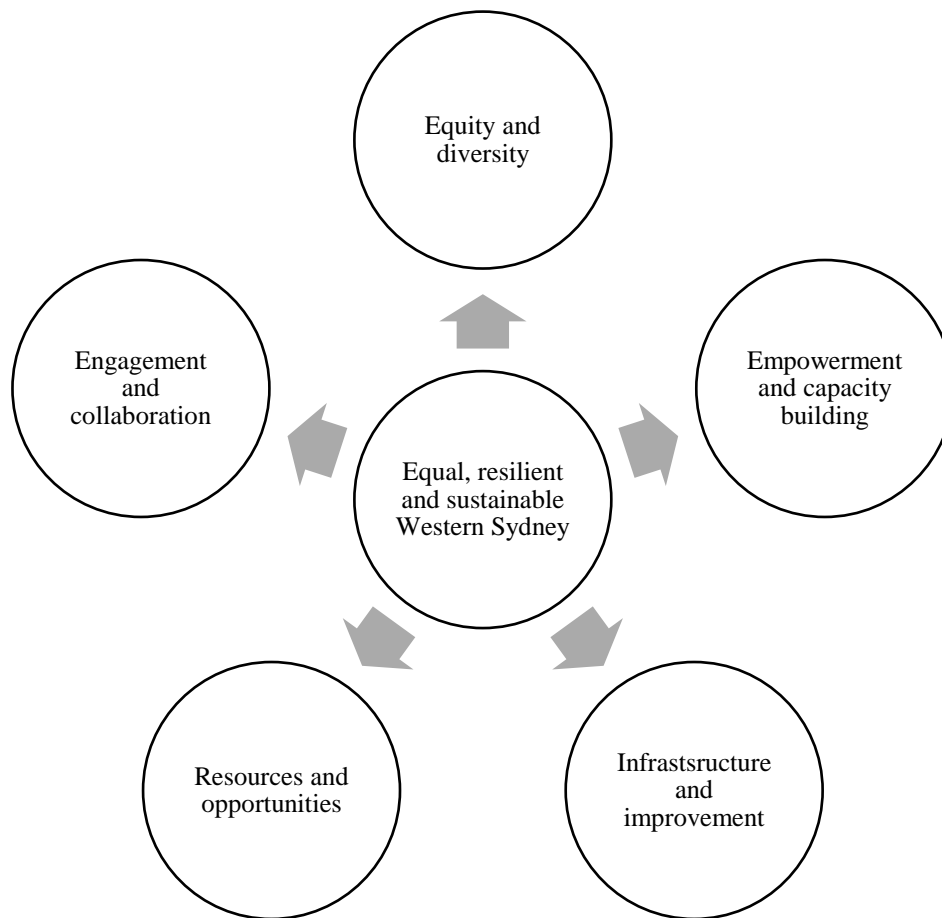
Frantzeskaki et al. (2021, p. 1652) research on urban sustainability and transformation identifies three conceptual innovations to trace the progression of urban sustainability: first, urban sustainability needs combined actions from social, natural and technological structures; second, evidence-based interactive and coordinated measures to associate individuals, places, values, and ideas, and third, profound strategic, authoritative, structural, and relational transformations. In addition, Miles and Chang (2011) study refer to a community resilience conceptual model, ‘ResilUS’, to enhance community capacity. The model emphasises the socio-economic means (households and businesses) to be positioned in the specific neighbourhoods and expressly implies three fundamentals for ensuring community capital: the physical built environment, economics, and personal resources. Steiner and Farmer (2018) explore a method to empower disadvantaged groups. The research presents the ‘Engagement-Participation-Empowerment Model’ drawing on an extensive study of an empowerment project

in Scotland. The model demonstrates phases in transmitting power from external actors to local populations. The study emphasises the significance of community empowerment with strong engagement and participation.

Cavaye and Ross (2019) also argue that capacity building, empowerment, neighbourhood improvement, and connections are integral to community development and resilience. The research identifies numerous elements that include ‘people–place connections; values and beliefs; knowledge, skills and learning; social networks; engaged governance (involving collaborative institutions); a diverse and innovative economy; community infrastructure; leadership; and a positive outlook, including readiness to accept change’ to progress community development and resilience processes (Cavaye & Ross, 2019, pp. 13-14). Cafer et al. (2019) research develop the ‘Community Resilience Framework (CRF)’ to ensure equal, adaptive and resilient community capacity. The proposed model highlights the essentials of extent, value, and multiplicity of community resources needed to avoid failure and address existing difficulties. In addition, fundamental inequalities, weaknesses, uneven access to resources, disadvantaged places and underprivileged communities should be given special consideration in the policy.

Sydney needs to rethink urban planning policy practice and community development strategies. Thus, this research realises the need to introduce a critical combined approach to address the crisis and build community capacity for equal, sustainable and resilient cities and communities (Figure 8.1).

Figure 8.1: Equal, Resilient and Sustainable Western Sydney Model.



Source: Author.

Equity and diversity are significant elements to ensure a just, sustainable and resilient city and community. The proposed model emphasises the equal distribution of socio-economic, political and cultural infrastructure, resources and opportunities to ensure a just Sydney city. In addition, the Sydney city must ensure diversity in neighbourhoods and communities so that people are not excluded from any opportunities considering their spatial location, social, political, economic and cultural positions.

Through community empowerment and capacity building, cities produce social, economic, and environmental value. Cities' success depends on the community's ability to adapt to the transformations and changing trends; thus, better and accessible education, improved resources, innovation and technological transformation, efficient infrastructure, and a corporate

environment that stresses enterprise based on a modern and smart knowledge economy are vital to helping disadvantaged Western Sydney residents' capacity building and empowerment. The government must also need to ensure necessary support by adding infrastructure, improving existing facilities, resources and opportunities by considering the disadvantaged region's needs.

Furthermore, every place matters and has unique features. Economic development, wellbeing, social and political progress depend on making the most of the potential of places. The place-based policy has emerged as a popular concept for urban academics, researchers and policymakers (Bradford, 2005; Neumark & Simpson, 2015). Place-based urban policies are essential in contemporary cities, providing solutions to existing challenges to prevent the long-term decline of cities and regions. The place-based policy can be a robust approach to combat existing inequalities and challenges in Sydney. The disadvantaged Western Sydney communities require place-based strategic responses that emphasise Western Sydney's existing resources. In addition, adding extensive resources and opportunities in the disadvantaged west can generate ways out of inequality and place-based difficulties.

In this regard, universities, higher education institutions and research centres have considerable local influences directly as employment and revenue generators and indirectly as developers of knowledge and human resources for a robust, more competitive and entrenched local economy. Universities have shaped society and the economy by educating and training individuals in the modern age. Universities bring convenient learning opportunities and additional skills to a city. The economic stimulus and cultural adaptation bring benefits to diverse city populations. Universities contribute to education and human capital improvement, innovation and technological transformation, efficient infrastructure and a business setting highlighting enterprise based on the modern knowledge economy.

Knowledge-based communities are essential to face many challenges (Florida, 2003; Satterthwaite, 1997). Cities and regions have attained substantial benefits from their knowledge economy concentrating on universities, principally by urbanisation and vibrant economic benefits. Western Sydney University is the primary higher education provider in Sydney West, and most of Sydney's other universities are located in the eastern half of Sydney. Though there are some campuses of numerous universities in Western Sydney, very few, have engaged in the local community. However, developing strong connections among universities and the local community is essential to establish a knowledge-based economy, especially in areas distant from the central city. In a progressively competitive, transforming and globalising economy, metropolises and regions look to develop education, research, technology, intellectual property, urban amenity and city businesses, recognising their significance for the knowledge-based economy. University campuses are strongly associated with their location and urban setting, and knowledge towns deliver the necessary social capital, physical infrastructure and innovative atmosphere that stimulates progress and success. Western Sydney University has ten campuses across Sydney West and has the potential to lead the region's socio-economic progress. Thus, this study urges empowerment and capacity building in the transformation of Western Sydney.

Lastly, state government in NSW play a crucial role in policy-making, regulatory and implementation functions. In contrast, local governments have a more functional role in providing and maintaining local green spaces, roads, bridges, libraries and swimming pools. The continuing growth of Sydney has increased the need for efficient and effective coordination of metropolitan governance structures. Strong collaboration between government departments is essential to the liveability, development, and functioning of smart and sustainable government initiatives. State government strategies need to be supported by a more united approach by all levels and departments of government. In addition, the dominant actor

in metropolitan strategy formulation is the state government, while local governments are only partly involved. In addition, Western Sydney residents have poor involvement with the policy process. Equal, sustainable and resilient western Sydney require strong engagement and collaboration among state authorities, local governments and residents to address critical issues.

The application of inventive thinking and digital technologies to urban growth and development promotes smart cities, and the strategy also emphasises technological transformation and improving management systems. Building a smart city and community through technical knowledge, modern technology, innovation, and technical infrastructure should be the foundation of city and community building strategies. Equal, sustainable and resilient urban planning practice must be ensured with a creative economy, creative people, adequate transport, active mobility, better health, sustainable cities, sustainable energy and smart living. Satterthwaite (1997) emphasises the commitment to other sustainable development, integrating the discussions about sustainable cities and confirming that urban concerns are thoroughly deliberated in environmental plans and national strategies. Modern universities, comprehensive education, smart classrooms, intelligent learning environments and active learning are essential in forming a knowledge base, and empowerment, community-building, community participation, and partnership should be at the centre of policy-making to form a resilient and inclusive city (Florida, 2003; Godschalk, 2003). In addition, to ensure sustainable urban development, Western Sydney regions and the disadvantaged local communities require green physical and environmental architecture, better spatial planning of suburbs and improved educational programs. Similarly, sustainable city initiatives aim to establish sustainable transport, housing, waste, energy and land use.

8.2.2 Active community engagement

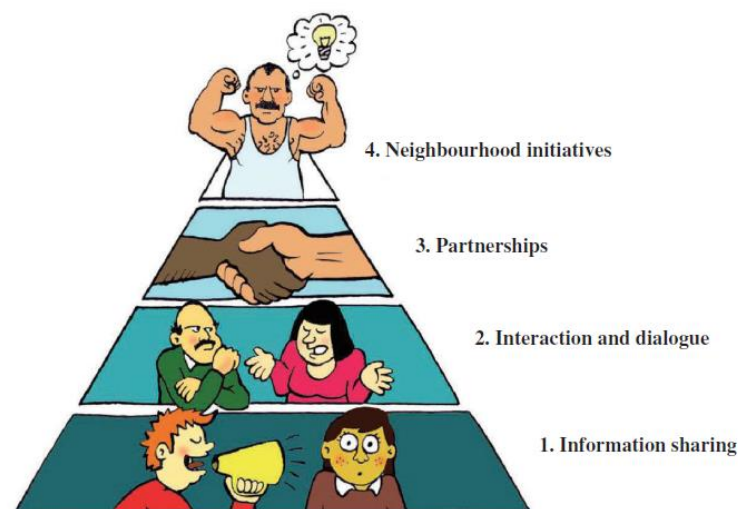
The planning process and practices need community engagement (Legacy, 2012), and active community involvement is imperative for the growth of cities (Berntzen & Johannessen, 2016). However, in the case of NSW's urban planning policy reform strategies, the reform process worsened rather than resolved antagonisms as the state endeavoured to arbitrate disagreements by concentrating decision-making in their own hands and their chosen professionals (MacDonald, 2015). Exhibitions, submissions, local hearings and expert assessments, community engagement, appears little more than part of a prescribed and technocratic post-political policy exercise to enable desired policy execution. This research urges that empowering local politics, increasing information, enhancing consultation, and improving community engagement mechanisms are needed to effectively engage Western Sydney residents in the planning process.

Numerous efforts are being made to revitalise robust community engagement in urban planning, primarily to engage disadvantaged communities in various countries. For example, Villanueva et al. (2017) conducted a study guided by communication infrastructure theory (CIT) that made intensive efforts to involve Northeast Los Angeles neighbourhoods in river and community revitalisation projects. This study shows how CIT's societal natural direction is applied actively to pursue community participation in the Los Angeles planning decision. This study identifies and brings together multiple community actors (residents, businesses, local media, and local organisations) in urban planning processes. It promoted strong collaboration from storytelling networks of community actors for community engagement processes that are often essential but lacking in contemporary urban planning initiatives. In addition, the study identified community needs, anxieties, and local media dialogue, thus facilitated gathering community feedback on the planning development grounding the societal power dynamics between the actors and communities at the critical matter.

Konsti-Laakso and Rantala (2018) study propose a process model for managing community engagement in Finland’s urban planning, focusing on the theory of community operational research (community OR) and innovative management. The model is constructed on the organised approach and ideas of supportive modelling, problem-structuring techniques and creative management of community involvement. The collaborative model is a vehicle for discussion and relationships between stakeholders, e.g., residents, public sector organisations, and initiators. The main idea of the structure is to utilise innovative community engagement methods to enable the entire community to contribute to the urban planning consultation process in a structured manner to gain adequate community consent on critical urban planning issues.

Teernstra and Pinkster (2016) study discovered how residents contributed to and influenced urban policies in their neighbourhood to the Dutch urban planning policy. A case study was implemented at the disadvantaged neighbourhood of Transvaal, Amsterdam, the Netherlands. A ‘Participation Pyramid (Figure 8.2)’ was designed to communicate residents’ participation in an urban regeneration project.

Figure 8.2: Participation Pyramid



Source: Teernstra and Pinkster (2016, p. 67)

The case showed various new participation mechanisms: new forms of formal resident representation involving residents in specific projects and a ‘Neighbourhood Initiatives Program’, in which residents were able to develop their self plan for the area. The Transvaal participation project placed added resources, time and effort into the organisation of resident participation to build up the local community. The case study reveals that generating resident engagement opportunities in neighbourhood governance to promote active citizenship may lessen residents’ day-to-day difficulties and accelerate long-standing strategic changes.

Participation and partnership between communities and government are essential to ensure strong local-level democracy and community empowerment. NSW state planning system must ensure enhanced and true partnership with the community. A mandatory portion of community inputs can be imposed in the planning projects or any reforms considering the total population. In addition, the consultation process should be led by the communities instead of the planning bodies. Furthermore, the community consultation and enjoyment should focus on local-level engagement. Numerous wide-ranging community engagement techniques, such as civic meetings with residents, citizens’ juries, consensus conferences, group dialogue with diverse communities, deliberative polls, televoting, debates and online discussion forums, can reach residents (Carson, 2001; Hopkins, 2010). In addition, Western Sydney has a dominant presence of migrant communities. They are unaware of planning systems and not keen to participate in government urban planning activities. Just translating an information flyer into a foreign language is not sufficient. This research advocates more initiatives for easily accessible information and rigorous support to enhance community participation.

Now a day of technological development, the planning system should incorporate new technologies and innovative ways to engage the broader community in the consultation process. Delitheou et al. (2019) study outlined that new technologies contribute to the promotion of community engagement in urban planning practices in Greece. The study located the effects of

using technologically advanced community engagement applications in the local community and explored the benefit of residents integration in urban planning processes. The case studies emphasise electronic-participation tools applying collectable environmental data (noise recording) and collecting residents' thoughts through web platforms and formal consultations. The case studies received effective feedback, and potential suggestions from citizens as the local communities are aware of their difficulties in specific regions and circumstances. The use of modern technology can ensure the disadvantaged Western Sydney community's involvement in the NSW planning system.

8.2.3 Post-pandemic urban transformation in Western Sydney

Various pandemics in the past have caused extensive social, cultural, civic and city strategy changes (Florida et al., 2021). However, the global COVID-19 pandemic reveals that people are unable to escape the impact of a global disaster. The actions undertaken to control the spread of the virus have had enormous impacts on individuals (Eltarabily & Elghezanwy, 2020). In addition, COVID-19 has brought massive transformations and challenges for governments and societies worldwide (Biddle et al., 2020; Eltarabily & Elghezanwy, 2020; Hu, 2020). The pandemic has changed people's lives, and this will continue post-COVID-19. Although COVID-19 has had disastrous global impacts, it also drives transformations and developments that turn into new prospects (Hu, 2020). Thus, the adverse impacts of the pandemic have pointed to the need for restructured post-COVID-19 societies. Adverse consequences in the disadvantaged communities arising from the suppression of COVID-19 require socio-economic, political, cultural and environmental changes. Australian governments have introduced various economic packages to help businesses and individuals (Bromfield & McConnell, 2020). However, this support is only temporary to overcome the disastrous situation. COVID-19 is not the first disaster, and it will clearly not be the last (Florida et al., 2021).

Community capacities and actions are imperative in tackling prevailing inequalities and facing any crisis that also establishes a solid social foundation for future arrangements to create resilient communities (Den Broeder et al., 2021). In the post-pandemic urban transformation and socio-economic recovery program, the disadvantaged Western Sydney community should get enhanced support. Den Broeder et al. (2021) study shows the UK and The Netherlands cases of community initiatives in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Their research demonstrated wide-ranging actions of how the publics rapidly put up the effort and how communities and government systems may shape community capacities and resilient societies. The study (Den Broeder et al., 2021, p. 7) outlined six robust community activities:

- increased mutual aid
- greater neighbourhood ties,
- the central role of community-based organisations (CBOs),
- changing patterns of volunteering,
- use of digital media to connect people and to organise activities and
- health promotion community activities.

The research also suggested enhanced investment in community development programs to create active citizens, promote innovative community engagement opportunities and renew partnerships between public services and community-based organisations. In addition, policy or strategic plan considering the local context, disseminating knowledge or awareness programs in progressive ways, involving communities in doing social research, learning and co-creation activities focussing on citizen inventiveness are advocated to enable community capacities and sustain resilient communities.

Socio-economic and physical settings affect daily life and the health outcomes of communities. The availability of opportunities and facilities for recreation, work and residence in close proximity is a standard for community advancement. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the concept of the nearby neighbourhood or area, a '15-minute neighbourhood' (Weng et al., 2019) or a '20-minute neighbourhood' (Grodach et al., 2019), has become prominent. A 15-minute

neighbourhood is a location that gives residents access to essential public services within 15 minutes of walkability (Weng et al., 2019). A 20-minute neighbourhood is defined as an integrated place that contains a good and active transport system and a superior community domain with easy access to jobs, vital local services and infrastructure that supports residents' livelihood by promoting community interactions and a strong local economy (Grodach et al., 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic has strengthened the idea of nearest or close neighbourhoods for better health outcomes and reducing the risks of non-communicable diseases (Mackness et al., 2021; Weng et al., 2019). Western Sydney is detached from opportunities and amenities; thus, the closest neighbourhoods model can be a solution for post-COVID-19 Sydney's west to minimise the disadvantaged conditions.

In addition to the neighbourhood facilities, population and housing density also impact an individual's life. Salama (2020) argues that the growing population of urban areas has intensified the quick distribution of communicable diseases. Moreover, cities need to reconsider strategic planning to cope with future outbreaks in a sustained approach, and new metropolises will likely emphasise urban settings with lower intensities (Eltarabily & Elghezanwy, 2020; Salama, 2020). Along with the growing urban population of Australian cities, similarly, the population of highly disadvantaged people is also rapidly increasing (Randolph & Tice, 2017). The current trend and future projection is for increasingly higher population and housing density in Western Sydney than in any other area of Greater Sydney (Taylor & Gladstone, 2018). Newly built houses in Western Sydney also have built-in unsustainable environments on small lots with less open space (Roggema, 2019). Thus, there is a need to reconsider the densification and housing forms in Western Sydney.

Florida et al. (2021) argue that the normalisation of a home office and remote work will take the lead in job and working modes. The mid and lower-paid jobs will be affected adversely compared to higher-paid knowledge-based and significantly fewer people will travel far for

jobs. By generating a knowledge-based economy, advancing smart and innovative jobs can uplift Western Sydney. Expanded modern knowledge and digital tools are also essential. Accessible walkways, outdoor parks and green areas can help reduce anxiety and improve natural, mental and intellectual health (Eltarabily & Elghezanwy, 2020). The housing and population density and the quality of houses need significant government attention. Finally, when discussing reorganising and redesigning Sydney post-COVID-19, the new norms for disadvantaged Western Sydney should be considered with a greater priority that focuses on sustainable, innovative and resilient approaches.

8.3 Key contributions to knowledge and practices

The main contribution of the thesis is to highlight that urban policy, planning system, and practice is deepening the intra-city divide. The urban planning practice in Sydney is not uniform. The neoliberal and post-political planning is fully applied in Western Sydney. Eastern/Northern Sydney receives exemptions from it because of its politics, clout, and ability to resist. The case studies in this research demonstrate the selective application of the planning rules in different parts of Sydney.

The thesis research points out that most new residential development is going into disadvantaged areas creating high density marginalised non-English speaking immigrant communities engaged in manual labour. Higher densities and the inability to work from home has made these areas highly vulnerable to COVID. Planning has reduced the resilience of the disadvantaged parts of Sydney.

Although NSW urban planning policy has been acknowledged as an essential topic for research, there is a shortage of contemporary studies on urban planning policy's selective application and its consequences. Numerous Australian studies (Brunner & Glasson, 2015; Bunker, Crommelin, et al., 2017; Gleeson, 2017; Gurran & Phibbs, 2013; MacDonald, 2015;

Piracha, 2010; Rogers, 2016; Ruming et al., 2014; Ryan & Woods, 2015; Troy, 2018) have investigated urban planning policy process, outcomes and community participation in planning using various theoretical constructs such as managerialism, post-political theory, NIMBYism and agonism. However, very little of that research identifies or acknowledges that planning policy reform and selective application of reform are creating unequal cities within a city in Greater Sydney. There is a lack of research that identifies urban inequalities from planning perspectives. It has not been explored that selective application of planning policies can create outcomes of unequal cities within a city.

This research has enriched existing urban studies knowledge by exploring and showing that the unequal application of planning policies enhances place-based inequalities in Sydney. A single theory is inadequate to analyse complex urban situations. This research develops a combined critical approach by relating critical theories of neoliberalism, post-politics, theory of power and the right to the city. The neocritical analytical approach of this thesis helps explore the changing features and unusual consequences of urban geography. This research has significantly enriched the existing urban literature by integrating critical urban theories and urban inequality in the framework of neocritical discourses. The research critically theorises neoliberal urban growth, post-political planning arrangement, power relations in controlling urban policy application, residents' rights to the city and place-based discrimination.

The practical outcome of this research is that the evidence and analysis of this research is an indication for policymakers, practitioners, urban managers and politicians. The research result will contribute to strengthening existing urban policy initiation, formulation and implementation. The city's governance and management can be eventual, rational, sustainable and responsible in establishing balanced cities and communities. By ensuring a sound and just urban policy framework, cities can add value to their activities and improve their international credentials as desirable places to live, work and invest.

8.4 Limitations

There were some significant constraints on this research, as discussed below.

First, the research applied qualitative research methods. However, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods can offer more insights. The qualitative interviews were limited to only 23 informants. More informants could provide additional insights. Other qualitative approaches, such as focus group discussions, seminars and workshops, could help gather more informants' remarks.

Second, another constraint was that some prospective research participants characterised the project's arguments and objectives as politically debated issues and did not want to participate. Notably, the lack of participation from state government officials is a missing link in the research. Their participation would likely have provided more critical information.

Third, the research cited three cases on urban growth and development. More cases could be explored to explain how planning policies are contributing to urban inequalities in Sydney.

Fourth, this study is limited to some variables and indicators which fulfil its objectives; however, more socio-economic variables and indicators could be added to develop a broader picture. A comparative analysis of socio-economic data from the last two to three censuses, combined with data from the August 2021 Census conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, could give more understanding and insights into urban transformation impacts.

Fifth, statistical analysis software, such as SPSS or STATA, could be applied to analyse the secondary data sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the state planning department.

Sixth, framing Sydney's urban inequality from the urban planning perspective was a challenge. Sydney's planning arrangement and place-based inequality is such an enormously complex and diverse issue that it was difficult to incorporate the numerous matters within the research space.

Seventh, conducting this research as an international student created some challenges. Initially, the researcher was unaware of the demographics, history, government structure and politics of NSW. Considerable time in the early stage of the project was devoted to understanding Sydney's government, history, politics, and geographies. In addition, the lack of good local networks and connections caused delays in finding research informants.

Nonetheless, despite these challenges, this project has provided significant insights into urban inequalities and place-based discrimination in Sydney. The research has filled substantial gaps in the existing literature and added a new theoretical and analytical context. Significantly, the project exposes how the global city of Sydney is urbanising into an unequal city.

8.5 Further research scope

Finally, the findings of this research have opened avenues for subsequent research.

First, this research can serve as an outline to understand the socio-economic divide in Sydney. Future research can explore urban inequality, resilience and sustainability more broadly by including wider indicators and applying robust statistical analysis.

Second, the research has drawn some recommendations. However, future research can explore ways to address the challenges of urban inequalities and identify techniques to ensure just and better urban policy practice for better and liveable cities.

Third, this study is limited to understanding the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 only as additional research as part of the broader research project. The COVID-19 outbreak in Sydney is not yet over, and its full and long-term consequences are yet known. However, this research provides an understanding of the socio-economic divide in Sydney and how COVID-19 is exacerbating it. Future research can evaluate the broader COVID-19 unequal impacts and post-pandemic living in Western Sydney.

Fourth, the interest and capability of residents make community engagement very important in

forming cities. Residents must have the opportunity to contribute their abilities profoundly and purposefully to developing a citizen-centric city. Traditionally, city planning is the role of planning authorities; however, residents think that they limit their involvement by using formal participating approaches that do not suit all residents. More in-depth research can be conducted to explore the ways to enhance community engagement in planning.

Fifth, this research has advanced the recommendation of inclusive urbanisation and the knowledge economy. It can ensure sustainable development of the Western Sydney regions and disadvantaged communities. Extensive research can be conducted to draw tactics from the recent research and successful case studies to accommodate them in Western Sydney perspectives.

Sixth, cities and regions have achieved significant benefits from their universities. The role of university campuses is intensely connected to their urban environment. Knowledge cities deliver the essential social capital, improved atmosphere and physical infrastructure that impacts urban and regional improvement. Universities in Western Sydney can significantly improve disadvantaged conditions, contributing to urban growth and vibrant economic benefits. Further research can outline the beneficial role of universities in urban development to meet institutional and urban demands to address specific unequal socio-economic circumstances.

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Appendix 1 Ethics approval

WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY



HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

4 September 2019

Associate Professor Awais Piracha
School of Social Sciences and Psychology

Dear Awais,

Project Title: "Cities within a City: Planning Policies and Intra-Urban Inequalities in Greater Sydney"

HREC Approval Number: H13384

Risk Rating: Low 1 - LNR

I am pleased to advise the above research project meets the requirements of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 (Updated 2018).

Ethical approval for this project has been granted by the Western Sydney University Human Research Ethics Committee. This HREC is constituted and operates in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 (Updated 2018).

Approval of this project is valid from 4 September 2019 until 4 March 2021.

This protocol covers the following researchers:

Awais Piracha, Khandakar Farid Uddin, Rosemary Leonard, Peter Phibbs

Summary of Conditions of Approval

1. A progress report will be due annually on the anniversary of the approval date.
2. A final report will be due at the expiration of the approval period.
3. Any amendments to the project must be approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee prior to being implemented. Amendments must be requested using the HREC Amendment Request Form.
4. Any serious or unexpected adverse events on participants must be reported to the Human Research Ethics Committee via the Human Ethics Officer as a matter of priority.
5. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the Committee as a matter of priority.
6. Consent forms are to be retained within the archives of the School or Research Institute and made available to the Committee upon request.
7. Approval is only valid while you hold a position or are enrolled at Western Sydney University. You will need to transfer your project or seek fresh ethics approval from your new institution if you leave Western Sydney University.

B. Project specific conditions:

There are no specific conditions applicable.

Please quote the registration number and title as indicated above in the subject line on all future correspondence related to this project. All correspondence should be sent to humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au as this email address is closely monitored.

Yours sincerely

Professor Elizabeth Deane
Presiding Member,
Western Sydney University Human Research Ethics Committee

Western Sydney University
ABN 55 014 069 881 CRICOS Provider No. 00917K
Lockwood Bag 1797 Parrish NSW 2751 Australia
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Research method amendment approval

**WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY**



Ethics Reference: H13384
Expiry Date: 4 March 2021

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

1 April 2020

Associate Professor Awais Piracha
School of Social Sciences

Dear Awais,

RE: Amendment Request to H13384

I wish to formally advise you that the Human Research Ethics Committee has approved your request to amend your approved research protocol H13384 "Cities within a City: Planning Policies and Intra-Urban Inequalities in Greater Sydney".

The approved amendments are:

Conduct interviews via digital platforms (audio, video call, Zoom, Skype etc).

Project specific approval conditions:

Just like a written consent, a copy of the recorded consent should be stored safely separate from the data. The original approved application said identifying information will be removed from the data for storage, and this should be extended to the new consent process if it will be kept in the recorded data. If this is the case, then the consent with identifying information should be kept as a separate copy in a different secure location to the data. It should be kept as long as the data is kept.

Please quote the registration number and title as indicated above in the subject line on all future correspondence related to this project. All correspondence should be sent to humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au as this email address is closely monitored.

Regards



Professor Brett Bowden
Presiding Member,
Western Sydney University Human Research Ethics Committee

Appendix 2 Interview questions

Four groups of respondents and four sets of questions:

Respondents group 1: Residents and Community Groups

Respondents group 2: Stakeholders (property developers, consultant and experts)

Respondents group 3: State and local politicians

Respondents group 4: Officials/Executives (State and Local Government/City Councils)

Respondents group 1: Residents and Community Groups

1. What town planning related activities have you/your group participated in? What is your experience from that engagement- the obstacles you faced and the successes you achieved?
2. What do you think are the effects of your efforts for town planning and city development for Greater Sydney?
3. The latest council amalgamations (2015-2017) were implemented in Western and South-western Sydney; however, they were abandoned for Northern and Eastern Councils. The low rise medium density housing code (Housing Code- 2018) has also been applied in some parts of Greater Sydney and not others. In your opinion what explains that?
4. NSW Department of Planning and Environment data shows proportionally more dwellings have been approved in the South-western and Western Greater Sydney in recent years. The population density is higher and is growing faster in those areas. In your view what factors may be contributing to that phenomenon?
5. According to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment data, South-western and Western areas are building more granny flats than North and East. Why are there are such variations in urban policy outcomes?
6. Housing in some parts of Greater Sydney is extremely expensive. Can housing affordability be improved by providing more dwellings in the parts of Greater Sydney where it is more expensive? Please explain your thinking on this matter.
7. Some councils opposed council amalgamation in 2015 which could have resulted in more efficient councils with expanded resources. How can communities be encouraged to consider the needs of the entire metro not only their local areas?
8. Southwest and Western parts of Greater Sydney are experiencing transport, health, education, lack of access to good jobs and other disadvantages. What measures can be used to reduce the inequalities between different parts of Greater Sydney?

Respondents group 2: Stakeholders (property developers, consultant and experts)

1. What urban planning and development related activities have you/your organization participated in? What is your experience from that engagement- the obstacles you faced and the successes you achieved?
2. What do you think are the effects of your efforts for urban planning and development for Greater Sydney?
3. The latest council amalgamations (2015-2017) were implemented in Western and South-western Sydney; however, they were abandoned for Northern and Eastern Councils. The low rise medium density housing

code (Housing Code- 2018) has also been applied in some parts of Greater Sydney and not others. In your opinion what explains that?

4. NSW Department of Planning and Environment data shows proportionally more dwellings have been approved in the South-western and Western Greater Sydney in recent years. The population density is higher and is growing faster in those areas. In your view what factors may be contributing to that phenomenon?
5. According to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment data, South-western and Western areas are building more granny flats than North and East. Why are there are such variations in urban policy outcomes?
6. Housing in some parts of Greater Sydney is extremely expensive. Can housing affordability be improved by providing more dwellings in the parts of Greater Sydney where it is more expensive? Please explain your thinking on this matter.
7. In recent times building defects, complaints about private certifiers and poorer compliance with the building rules have been reported. Have you noticed any differences across Greater Sydney in relation to the quality of the built environment? What are the reasons behind this difference?
8. Some councils opposed council amalgamation in 2015 which could have resulted in more efficient councils with expanded resources. How can communities be encouraged to consider the needs of the entire metro, not only their local areas?
9. Southwest and Western parts of Greater Sydney are experiencing transport, health, education, lack of access to good jobs and other disadvantages. What measures can be used to reduce the intra-urban inequalities in Greater Sydney?

Respondents group 3: State and local politicians

1. What urban planning and development related activities have you participated in? What is your experience from that engagement- the obstacles you faced and the successes you achieved?
2. What do you think are the effects of your efforts for urban planning and development for Greater Sydney?
3. The latest council amalgamations (2015-2017) were implemented in Western and South-western Sydney; however, they were abandoned for Northern and Eastern Councils. The low rise medium density housing code (Housing Code- 2018) has also been applied in some parts of Greater Sydney and not others. In your opinion what explains that?
4. NSW Department of Planning and Environment data shows proportionally more dwellings have been approved in the South-western and Western Greater Sydney in recent years. The population density is higher and is growing faster in those areas. In your view what factors may be contributing to that phenomenon?
5. According to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment data, South-western and Western areas are building more granny flats than North and East. Why are there are such variations in urban policy outcomes?
6. Housing in some parts of Greater Sydney is extremely expensive. Can housing affordability be improved by providing more dwellings in the parts of Greater Sydney where it is more expensive? Please explain your thinking on this matter.
7. Some councils opposed council amalgamation in 2015 which could have resulted in more efficient councils with expanded resources. How can communities be encouraged to consider the needs of the entire metro, not only their local areas?
8. What role can electoral politics play in reducing the existing intra-urban inequalities in Greater Sydney?

9. Southwest and Western parts of Greater Sydney are experiencing transport, health, education, lack of access to good jobs and other disadvantages. What measures can be used to reduce the intra-urban inequalities in Greater Sydney?

Respondents group 4: Officials/Executives (State and Local Government/City Councils)

1. The latest council amalgamations (2015-2017) were implemented in Western and South-western Sydney; however, they were abandoned for Northern and Eastern Councils. The low rise medium density housing code (Housing Code- 2018) has also been applied in some parts and not others. Why do you think it is happening?
2. NSW Department of Planning and Environment data shows proportionally more dwellings have been approved in the South-western and Western Greater Sydney in recent years. The population density is higher and is growing faster in those areas. In your view what factors may be contributing to that phenomenon?
3. According to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment data, South-western and Western areas are building more granny flats than North and East. Why are there are such variations in urban policy outcomes?
4. Housing in some parts of Greater Sydney is extremely expensive. Can housing affordability be improved by providing more dwellings in the parts of Greater Sydney where it is more expensive? Please explain your thinking on this matter.
5. In recent times building defects, complaints about private certifiers and poorer compliance with the building rules have been reported. Have you noticed any differences across Greater Sydney in relation to the quality of the built environment? What are the reasons behind this difference?
6. Some councils opposed council amalgamation in 2015 which could have resulted in more efficient councils with expanded resources. How can communities be encouraged to consider the needs of the entire metro, not only their local areas?
7. Southwest and Western parts of Greater Sydney are experiencing transport, health, education, lack of access to good jobs and other disadvantages. What measures can be used to reduce the intra-urban inequalities in Greater Sydney?

Appendix 3 Emails to informants

Primary email:

Dear XXX,

Project Title: Cities within a City: Planning Policies and Intra-Urban Inequalities in Greater Sydney

You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted by Khandakar Al Farid Uddin, Doctoral Research Candidate at the School of Social Science and Psychology, Western Sydney University.

This research aims to analyse the intra-urban inequalities and planning policies role in the city's division. It is hoped the results will unveil the urban planning policy disparities and intra-urban inequalities and will contribute to improving the policy formulation and implementation process relating to urban development.

Participation in this project will involve an interview of approximately 30-45 minutes in length. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and you can withdraw from your participation at any time without having to give a reason and without adverse consequence.

If you are agreed to participate in the study, you will be asked to participate in face to face interview at your convenient time and location. Your responses and contact details will be strictly confidential. The data from the study will be used in research publications and reports. You will not be identified in any way in these publications. All identifiers (names, locations, dates) will be removed from the interviews to ensure privacy.

Find attached indicative interview questions; and Information and Consent Form. If you have any questions about this project, please feel free to contact me.

Regards,

Khandakar Al Farid Uddin
Doctoral Research Candidate
School of Social Sciences and Psychology
Western Sydney University
56 Second Avenue, Kingswood, NSW 2747

Follow-up email:

Dear.....

Greetings. Hope you are doing well. This is for your kind attention that I have sent an interview invitation to participate in a PhD research study and waiting for your kind response. I am writing for a gentle reminder and warm request to you.

You are a valuable and potential participant; participation in this project will involve an interview of approximately 30-60 minutes in length at your convenient place and time. The interview will explore the approaches of New South Wales (NSW) urban planning policy reforms, their applications and outcomes.

Your opinions are invaluable to this project; please reply to this email if you wish to participate in this project. If you have any questions about this project, please feel free to contact me.

Kind regards,

Appendix 4 Project description

WESTERN SYDNEY
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Participant Information Sheet – General (Extended)

Project Title: Cities within a City: Planning Policies and Intra-Urban Inequalities in Greater Sydney

Project Summary:

You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted by Khandakar Al Farid Uddin, Doctoral Research Candidate at the School of Social Science and Psychology, Western Sydney University. The research is under the supervision of Associate Professor Awais Piracha and Professor Rosemary Leonard of the School of Social Science and Psychology, Western Sydney University; and Professor Peter Phibbs of the School of Architecture, Design and Planning, the University of Sydney. This research explores the recent New South Wales (NSW) urban planning policy reforms, their applications and outcomes. It will analyse the role planning policies' play in reinforcing socio-economic disparities within Greater Sydney. It is hoped that this research will contribute to improving the urban policy formulation and implementation processes.

How is the study being paid for?

This research is supported by the School of Social Sciences, Western Sydney University. There are no corporate or commercial partners involved in this project.

What will I be asked to do?

In this research, a series of interviews will be conducted with the NSW State and Local Government officials and politicians, community groups and residents, who are over the age of 18 years and willing to participate voluntarily. In case you agree, you will be asked to participate in a face to face or Zoom interview at a time and location convenient for you to answer a few questions about your experience with urban planning policy applications and existing urban inequalities in Greater Sydney.

How much of my time will I need to give?

The interview will take approximately 30-45 minutes.

What benefits will I, and/or the broader community, receive for participating?

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. No payment for participation will be made. This research will benefit the wider community by improving urban policy and practice.

Urban planning policy and its reforms in Australia have been identified as an important research topic. However, there is a shortage of contemporary research that investigates links between urban policy and urban inequality. This research aims to analyse the urban inequality, unequal policy application and its impacts in Greater Sydney. Your opinion can help better understand urban disparities.

Will the study involve any risk or discomfort for me? If so, what will be done to rectify it?

There is a very small or negligible chance of discomfort involved. There are no right or wrong answers in an interview of this kind. This research is simply interested in your opinions. You do not have to answer any questions that would make you feel uncomfortable. In case of emotional distress or discomfort, you are advised to take the assistance of the below counselling service:

Anglicare counselling services: 1300 111 278

<https://www.anglicare.org.au/services/counselling/>

Wesley Mission counselling services: 1300 924 522

<https://www.wesleymission.org.au/find-a-service/mental-health-and-hospitals/counselling/>

Sydney Emotional Fitness: 1300 790 550

<https://www.sydneyemotionalfitness.com.au/>

How do you intend to publish or disseminate the results?

It is anticipated that the results of this research project will be published and/or presented in a variety of forums, such as PhD thesis, journal articles and conference papers. The research will use quotes from the interviews to help illustrate the points that are being made. Some of these quotes may come from you. However, this research will not use any quotes that might reveal who you are. In any publication and/or presentation, the information will be provided in such a way that the participant cannot be identified, except with your permission. All identifiers (names, locations, dates) will be removed from the interviews to ensure privacy.

Will the data and information that I have provided be disposed of?

Only the researchers will have access to the raw data you provide and your data will be primarily used in this project. On completion of the project, the data will be archived in the University's Institutional Repository "ResearchDirect". The data will be available for future research in line with the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) guidelines. Please note that a minimum retention period for the data collection is five years post-publication. The data and information you have provided will be securely disposed of after this period.

Can I withdraw from the study?

Participation is entirely voluntary, and you are not obliged to be involved. There is no coercion or pressure in deciding whether to participate or not. If you choose not to participate in this research project, you do not need to give any reason for the decision and you will suffer no disadvantage as a result of your decision. However, if you do participate, you can withdraw at any time without giving a reason and sending an email to K.FaridUddin@westernsydney.edu.au

University of Western Sydney
ABN 53 014 069 981 CRICOS Provider No: 00917K
Locked Bag 1797 Penrith NSW 2751 Australia
westernsydney.edu.au

Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you can tell other people about the study by providing them with the Chief Investigator's contact details. They can contact the Chief Investigator to discuss their participation in the research project and obtain a copy of the information sheet.

What if I require further information?

Please find below Chief Investigator's contact details, should you wish to discuss the research further before deciding whether or not to participate.

Khandakar Al Farid Uddin
Doctoral Research Candidate
School of Social Sciences
Western Sydney University
56 Second Avenue, Kingswood, NSW 2747
Email: K.FaridUddin@westernsydney.edu.au

What if I have a complaint?

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through Research Engagement, Development and Innovation (REDI) on Tel +61 2 4736 0229

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to sign the Participant Consent Form. The information sheet is for you to keep and the consent form is retained by the researcher/s.

This study has been approved by the Western Sydney University Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is H13384

Appendix 5 Consent form

WESTERN SYDNEY
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Consent Form – General (Extended)

Project Title: Cities within a City: Planning Policies and Intra-Urban Inequalities in Greater Sydney

I hereby consent to participate in the above named research project.

I acknowledge that:

- I have read the participant information sheet (or where appropriate, have had it read to me) and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher/s
- The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

I consent to:

- Participating in an interview*
- Having my information audio recorded*

I consent for my data and information provided to be used in this project and other related projects for an extended period of time.

I understand that my involvement is confidential and that the information gained during the study may be published and stored for other research use but no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without affecting my relationship with the researcher/s, and any organisations involved, now or in the future.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Western Sydney University. The ethics reference number is: H13384

What if I have a complaint?

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through Research Engagement, Development and Innovation (REDI) on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 or email humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au.

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.