Locating Social Exclusion: The Case of Sydney

Bill Randolph

City Futures Research Centre
Faculty of the Built Environment UNSW
Locating social exclusion

• Growing social diversity and physical obsolescence of the older suburbs built broadly between 1940s and 1960s – the issues here are social as much as physical, but driven by the housing market
• Growing concentration of disadvantage in some aging suburbs – the Stressed Suburbs
• Few examples of strategic approaches to address these issues
• Planning has permitted *ad hoc* renewal often with poor outcomes
• No obvious housing policy options for these areas – only urban consolidation and Rent Assistance (the ‘Waiting List’ suburbs)
• New metropolitan planning policies now targeting these areas for higher density renewal – but this may intensify problems
• *Lack of integrated policy response to these areas – housing, planning and a plethora of fragmented social programs*

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Locating Social exclusion: The problem is suburban and its intensifying
...severely disadvantaged CDs by suburbs in:
2001 and 2006
But it's not all about public housing – private housing areas also feature strongly: So what about policy?
Degree of Exclusion by Tenure in Western Sydney: Proportion of respondents scoring on one or more dimension

2002 Survey of 612 households in 4 highly disadvantage areas, Western Sydney

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Policies to address locational disadvantage/exclusion – the NSW case

Issues:

- Mainstream vrs place focused policies

- “Policies for places” or “policies in places for people”

- Most interventions in NSW are policies in places for people

- Lack of “spatially aware policy” in NSW or of the place impacts of many social programs - client focused

- Where do private housing markets fit into the policy framework when it’s a problem generated by the market – the renewal policy vacuum

- Fragmentation and lack of coordination of funding and programs

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Place Focused Policy: The importance of housing

- Locality and neighbourhood – key component in the construction of social exclusion

-The housing market ‘creates’ and maintains disadvantaged localities

- Access to housing assets a key component of long term life chances

- “Neighbourhood effects” compound individual disadvantage

- Policy interventions to tackle exclusion must therefore include locality and housing as key components: public housing renewal – but what about private suburbs?
Middle ‘Stressed’ Suburbs: What are the issues?

- Typically built between 1940 and 1970 – poor quality housing & amenity
- A range of problems have become concentrated in these areas
- Issues:  
  * Interrelationship between social and physical problems  
  * Migrant reception areas  
  * Private rental and higher density – poor quality urban consolidation has made the problem worse  
  * Housing stress due to very low incomes  
  * Marginal home ownership and an ageing population  
  * Loss of higher incomes to the new suburbs  
  * Stock condition and repair/renewal – no incentives to upgrade
- Few policy levers or resources to manage and direct change in these areas?
- Undergoing pressure for change – urban consolidation (town centres and rail/road routes) under new urban renewal planning policies.

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New Strategies for Stressed Suburbs: A proposal to address dysfunctional housing markets

Six key components for a new locally based Urban Renewal Programs – bringing planning, housing and social interventions together:

- Local Renewal Strategies in Target Areas
- Local Renewal Master Plans – part of the LEP process
- Local Renewal Corporations - Partnership arrangements and intervention powers
- Local Renewal Fund - directing current programs and added HAF?
- Affordable Housing Investment Strategies - NARS? Public land?
- Integrated Place Focused Policy Framework
- State or Federal Government could set up this framework

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Sources:

Randolph, B. (2003) Poverty and Place: New Thinking in Communities and their capacity to tackle disadvantage, ACOSS Paper 130, Australian Council for Social Service,


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