

Create a network of Activity Hubs as places for meeting, shopping, creating, learning and working for local communities

CITY NOW



Lack of identified locations for a more intense mix of activities to provide a focus for new strategic investment in established areas and support local level sustainability.

The City has traditionally been conceptualised at two distinct levels:

- City Centre, containing higher order business, cultural and tourist activities and services
- Village, or 'main street' and surrounding residential areas.

Recent growth in population and employment in some of the Villages, and a review of community, economic and sustainability imperatives, suggests that there is a need for a 'middle' level of urban place. This middle level includes existing areas or precincts that have come to serve wider needs beyond their local population, such as King Street, Newtown, Crown Street, Surry Hills and Darlinghurst Road, Kings Cross. These places contain greater concentrations of economic, social and cultural activity and infrastructure than one would expect in a Village. They are more than service centres for a residential population. They are destinations for visitors and contain businesses and activities that contribute to the City's status as a global city.

These Activity Hubs have not been formally distinguished or recognised in strategic planning frameworks. Without such a designation there is no broad guide for significant strategic investment by government or the private sector. Importantly there is no focus for investment in stations or interchange hubs for new Inner Sydney transport networks.

Narrow view of the role of the City Centre as Global Sydney.

The most prominent global cities contain a number of economic precincts with different characteristics. While most have a finance and business district with corporate headquarters and the major financial institutions, these are also supported by entertainment, medical, media, arts and shopping districts. In the City, the independent and economic support roles that the surrounding main streets and activity centres play in a strong and diverse economy have been under acknowledged. Places such as Surry Hills, Glebe, Kings Cross, Darlinghurst, Newtown, Ultimo and Chippendale are very strong economies in their own right—whether as host to higher order businesses with national and international clients or as a focus for metropolitan Sydney's residents. A better understanding of and support for the role of these local economies is required.

ACTIVITY HUBS

Core

Transport interchange/hub
Business hub
Primary school*
Library*
Community space*
Learning centre*
Wi-Fi hotspot*
Childcare*

Health/medical
City of Sydney service centre / shop-front*
Fresh food market
Bike parking, showers and lockers
Place shaping (non-spatial)

Optional

Recycling centre
Community garden
One-stop governance shop (including other government services)*
Car share pod
Cultural live sites
Workshops/studios*
Secondary school*
Places of worship

* Any or all of these elements could be provided in a multi-purpose facility





A recognised layer of Activity Hubs for meeting, shopping, creative activities, learning and working.

The Activity Hubs concept is about deepening the economic, cultural and community offering available in key locations around the City.

The network of Hubs supports the Villages, and will ensure equitable access to services and opportunities, and meet the needs of the City's diverse communities. Each Activity Hub should support 15,000 to 25,000 residents (and therefore encompass two or three Villages of say 5,000 to 10,000 residents).

The development of Activity Hubs means focusing community, business, retail and cultural assets in a cluster, within a walkable area, to service and underpin surrounding residential communities. As the residential population of the City grows it will be necessary to identify additional Activity Hubs, or better distinguish those that might play this role. Already, the City of Sydney has been proactive in proposing a collection of community-related facilities in the Green Square town centre.

An Activity Hub should be a place for meeting, creating, learning and working. It should be a place for community interaction where all people feel welcome. It should be a place where the principles of Sustainable Sydney 2030 have full expression.

Each Activity Hub should be shaped by the character of the surrounding communities and economic activities. For one, the focus might be on creative activities and enterprise, for another it might be on Indigenous cultures. The business and retail mix should complement the surrounding residential character. Most Hubs would be expected to contain key elements, some in multi-purpose facilities, such as a business hub, primary school, library, community spaces and programs, learning centre, Wi-Fi hot spots, childcare, health-medical services, City of Sydney service centre and fresh food market. They should be the focus for investment in sustainable transport infrastructure such as new metro rail stations and interchange hubs, bike parking and hire, cycling and pedestrian showers and lockers and car share pods.

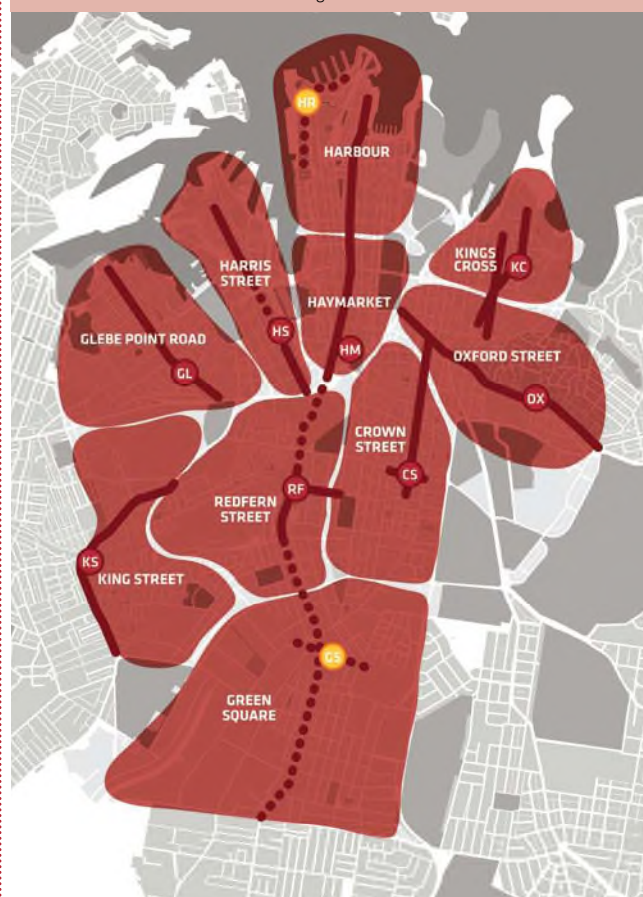
City Centre, Villages and Activity Hubs for an integrated Global Sydney.

The aspiration for the City is for the traditional heart to be better integrated and connected with the diverse economies and activities in surrounding precincts. This 'greater' whole of the City Centre and surrounding precincts interacts and trades with the world as Global Sydney. Elements of this concept are already in place; the heart is already complemented by the strong satellite employment centres of the University, the Australian Technology Park and Surry Hills. The integration of these clusters of activity with the surrounding residential areas, and the roles of the village economies, has not been sufficiently recognised.

The development of Activity Hubs therefore means better recognising the economic role of the key job centres outside the City Centre and nurturing the conditions for further development.

FIGURE 6.1
ACTIVITY HUBS AND 'CATCHMENTS'

Source: SGS Economics and Planning



ACTION 6.2.1 Prepare development and directions plans that identify and support the role and character of the existing Activity Hubs at Crown Street, Kings Cross, Oxford Street, Redfern Street, Harris Street, Glebe Point Road, King Street, Haymarket, Green Square, Harbour.

The existing population already sustains a number of Activity Hubs that, given the collection of assets and facilities, can be identified as King Street Newtown (in the vicinity of the Station), Glebe Point Road, Glebe (from around Bridge Road to Parramatta Road), Harris Street, Ultimo-Pyrmont (in the vicinity of William Henry Street), Hay Street, Haymarket (near Paddy's Market), Darlinghurst Road, Kings Cross, Crown Street, Surry Hills (from Foveaux to Cleveland Street) and Oxford Street (in the vicinity of the Paddington Town Hall at Oatley Road).

The character of residential and social life, and economic activity, in the catchments for these Activity Hubs should be identified through research and consultation. Development plans for each area should be prepared. The Local Area Plans provide an excellent base for this. The key aspect to be included is an economic opportunities and directions component. This would guide physical development, local business planning and promotions and related activities.



ACTION 6.2.2 Plan for new Activity Hubs at Barangaroo, Redfern Street and Green Square.

New Activity Hubs should also be developed where significant additional future residential population is anticipated. The population in these areas will need to be sufficient to support key elements such as a primary school, community and cultural services and infrastructure and a marketplace with a mix of local shops.

- The City of Sydney is planning for a library, cultural and community centre, child care facilities and multi-purpose recreational facility, as well as shopping and business services, at **Green Square**. This approach anticipates the incoming residential population and can be something of a model for other renewal areas.
- **Redfern** is an established community but significant new development and renewal is proposed, particularly around Wilson Street in North Eveleigh and also at 'The Block'. The City of Sydney has developed a successful community centre, upgraded Redfern Street and is renewing Redfern Park. The Redfern-Waterloo Authority has restored and revitalised a number of state-owned properties and sites. Planning for additional cultural and retail offerings, an upgraded railway station and enhanced connectivity and traffic arrangements is required.
- A modest residential population is currently being planned for **Barangaroo**. In combination with Walsh Bay, Millers Point and the Rocks the eventual, anticipated population in this area is currently not sufficient to support anything more than a small supermarket and a few convenience shops (demand from tourists and workers will generate some additional expenditure, though not for community-based services and shopping). To create a sense of community and a sense of place—and a viable Activity Hub—a greater intensity of residential development, including affordable housing, should be considered. Active planning for an array of community and cultural services could then be undertaken.

ACTION 6.2.3 Plan for appropriate development to support the core elements of future Activity Hubs.

Through design review studies and from preliminary work for Sustainable Sydney 2030 a solid idea of development potential and constraints in the different parts of the City is emerging. Further detailed work is required to identify development opportunities that will ultimately support a sustainable city and the core elements in each of the proposed Activity Hubs. As mentioned it is anticipated that each of the Activity Hubs will support 15,000 to 25,000 people. Currently, the proposed Hub catchments for Barangaroo and Green Square do not reach this figure.

Ultimo-Pyrmont is at the lower end of the threshold population and existing and new facilities here would be better supported with additional development. Medium to longer term redevelopment around Darling Harbour and in the monorail corridor would support this Activity Hub.

In the longer term, as additional renewal areas are developed and the population continues to grow, additional Hub locations may be required.

ACTION 6.2.4 Plan for community assets, facilities and elements consistent with the desired future of role and character of the Activity Hubs.

The Activity Hubs and their catchments provide a basis for a review of the geographic distribution of facilities and assets which have a residential community catchment. This includes the City of Sydney's community facilities (see Actions under Objective 6.3) but also education, transport, cultural, business and housing assets and elements. Strategies for development and provision of facilities and services should reflect the desired future role of each Activity Hub, with particular reference to their distinct cultural, economic and residential character. While the mix of facilities in each Hub should reflect their desired future role there are some common, core elements. Other elements might be considered optional or appropriate for provision following further analysis and evidence of community support. The City of Sydney should not be expected to provide all the core elements, but it should facilitate their provision if possible.



FIGURE 6.2
2006 HUB CATCHMENT
POPULATIONS (PERSONS)

Source: ABS, SGS Economics and Planning

