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Remaking of Central Sydney: Evidence from Floor Space and Employment Surveys in 1991–2006

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ABSTRACT The global city discourse and the neoliberal urbanism in the literature on transformative central cities in contemporary globalization provide partial explanation and present theoretical limitations. This study makes a theoretical ‘cross-fertilization’ of globalism and neoliberalism to construct an integrative analytical framework, and applies it to Central Sydney. Using the data from a series of floor space and employment surveys in 1991–2006, this study systematically examines the functional changes in Central Sydney from the lenses of industry divisions and space use divisions. The empirical findings reveal new insights into a trend of strengthening capacity of the knowledge services and the experience services, and increasing living and amenity spaces in Central Sydney; applying the integrative analytical framework sheds light on the functional changes in association with the exogenous factor of Sydney’s emergence as a global city and the endogenous factor of neoliberal strategies and planning.

Introduction

One direct impact of contemporary globalization on Sydney is its emergence as a global city, which is argued and measured by a rapidly growing global city discourse (Beaverstock, Taylor, and Smith 1999; Friedmann 1986, 1995; Globalization and World Cities [GaWC] 1998, 2009; Godfrey and Zhou 1999; Hall 1995; Hu 2011; MasterCard Worldwide 2008; Ni and Kresl 2010; Searle 1996; Taylor et al. 2011). With globalization as an exogenous driving force, significant transformations have occurred in Sydney, especially in the central city area (or Central Sydney as delineated in this study). It is contended that ‘Sydney’s global city status is based firmly on an essentialisation of the Central Business District (CBD) and historic core’ (McNeill, Dowling, and Fagan 2005, 939).

Scholars have addressed the transformations of Central Sydney in contemporary globalization from a range of angles: for example, on the agglomeration of corporate headquarters, knowledge-based economy, advanced business services, producer services, and emergent multimedia (Hu 2012a; Searle 1998a; Searle and Valence 2005; Spiller 2003; Tonts and Taylor 2010); on the reconfiguration of the office work, office workers, and workspaces towards practices of association, interaction, and shared workspaces

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(O'Neill and McGuirk 2003); on a neoliberal agenda for the planning of a global Sydney and a shifted focus on promoting economic competitiveness (McGuirk 2003, 2004); on the political agenda and community effects of urban consolidation, redevelopment, and gentrification of the traditional industry districts (Bounds and Morris 2005, 2006; Bunker et al. 2002; Searle 2007; Searle and Filion 2011); etc.¹ The diversity of the angles of the previous studies has contributed to a better understanding of the transformations of Central Sydney. They have laid the foundation of, and at the same time, called for the need to carry out a systematic study of the transformations of Central Sydney underpinned by a rigorous theoretical framework.

This study investigates the transformations of Central Sydney pertinent to its urban functions in the context of contemporary globalization. It constructs an integrative analytical framework that combines both globalism and neoliberalism, built upon a literature review on theorizing transformative central cities. Then, it makes a systematic examination of the functional changes in Central Sydney to identify patterns, using the time-series data collected from surveys on floor space and employment in 1991–2006. The integrative analytical framework on transformative central cities is applied to better understanding Central Sydney's functional changes in association with Sydney's rise as a global city and the local neoliberal strategy and planning. Following this introduction, the next section offers a literature review and proposes an integrative analytical framework. The third section explains the methods and the delimitation of the study area. The rest of the paper presents the results, discussion, and conclusion.

Transformative Central Cities

The impacts of the contemporary process of globalization on cities are ubiquitous, no matter whether cities in the developed countries or in the developing countries, whether prominent cities or less prominent cities. The urban impacts of globalization are the most imprinted in the transformations of the central city areas. Numerous scholarly works have been produced on globalization and cities, many of which focus on the central city areas. The literature on the transformative central cities in contemporary globalization fall into three broad strands: economic restructuring, spatial reorganization, and neoliberal urbanism. The former two strands address the functional changes of central city areas under the global city discourse; the third strand deals with the local policy and planning responses to the increasing globalism.

Economic Restructuring

The economic restructuring of central cities in globalization is mostly related to the discourse of global cities. The argument is that a group of 'world cities' or 'global cities' emerge in contemporary globalization as the centres or nodal points of the global economy (Friedmann 1986; Friedmann and Wolff 1982; Hall 1998; Knox and Taylor 1995; Sassen 1995, 2001; Taylor 2004). Sassen (1994, 2001) proposes the paradigmatic global cities to capture their roles in the economic shift from production to finance: global cities are the command and control posts of the integrated world economy, home to transnational corporations, banks, financial, information, and specialized service companies and international organizations of all kinds. Alternatively, global cities are the decision places, and production places of advanced producer services and finance.

These defining functions of global cities are usually located in the central business districts (CBDs) (Sassen 1994, 2001). Consequently, the functions of central cities have been transforming towards financialization and specialization in advanced producer services.

Some empirical studies have been carried out to attest the thesis of global cities as the centres of leading financial and highly specialized services. Taylor (2004) indicates a far more complicated set of relationships connecting global cities through the providers of the advanced producer services. Some cities have experienced globalization-led economic restructuring in the central city areas, although they are not necessarily the leading global cities of financial centres. Examples include the rise of the information technology (IT) economy in Stockholm (Stahre 2004); the role of foreign direct investment in Philadelphia as a centre for both the headquarters and the operations of globally active non-financial firms in manufacturing, business services, and trade (Hodos 2002); and the transformation of the old residential districts in central Istanbul towards commercial and tourism functions (Ergun and Dunder 2004). These studies have enriched the literature on the transformative central cities in globalization on an empirical ground. However, these studies have been made from a predominantly economic perspective. One criticism is that these global city theories might result in a form of economic reductionism (Öktem 2011; Robinson 2002).

Spatial Reorganization

The impact of globalization on the transformations of central cities has been more than economic restructuring. Another strand of literature focuses on spatial reorganization, encompassing important social and political implications. In the central city areas of emergent production clusters, there has been an increasing demand for commercial spaces to accommodate the production, transaction, and transmission of the specialized producer services, such as office, hotel, convention and exhibition, entertainment and cultural facilities, and apartment buildings (Hall 1996). The spatial reorganization of the global cities' central areas is reflected by the emergent production clusters, residential mega-projects, and spaces of consumption and spectacle in Vancouver (Hutton 2004), or by the new entertainment-retail spaces in Hong Kong and Los Angeles (Irazábal and Chakravarty 2007).

A symbolism is often attached to the urban redevelopment projects, through having celebrity architects produce architectural luxuries in the most desirable locations to present a global image, as part of a globalized city marketing strategy. The aspiration for a globalism has been pursued in cities around the world, and resulted in significant spatial transformations, despite their different local contexts, such as Shanghai (Wu 2003), emerging Asian cities (Marshall 2003), Istanbul (Enlil 2011; Öktem 2011), Tokyo (Sorensen 2003), and Sydney (Hu 2012b; Punter 2005). In the process of making global urban forms and spaces, urban design is a ready tool under the paradigmatic New Urbanism; it is largely elitist, deployed in the direct promotion of economic competitiveness, in the direct aspiration of capital interests and values, and in the direct attraction to the creative classes in their desire for gentrification and inner city living (Gospodini 2002; Gunder 2011).

One intrinsic element of the globalist urban redevelopment is gentrification, a process of transforming traditionally industrial zones (or harbour districts) for low-income residents in central cities to quality apartments and facilities for new urban upper and middle classes. By the 1990s, gentrification had occurred in cities around the world to different

degrees (Smith 2002), as documented for New York (Smith 2002), London (Hall 1996), San Francisco (Hu 2012c; Robinson 1995), Vancouver (Hutton 2004), Stockholm (Stahre 2004), Sydney (Bounds and Morris 2006), Istanbul (Ergun and Dundar 2004), etc. In terms of spatial reorganization, gentrification has led to the emergence of new central city spaces, often in the form of high-rise apartment buildings and related services, to accommodate people whose work has been linked with the afore-mentioned economic restructuring towards highly specialized producer services. Gentrification has presented more a social dimension of the spatial reorganization in central cities — the class transformation in association with the creation of affluent neighbourhoods together with displacement and polarization (McFarlane 2006; Smith 2002; Stahre 2004).

Neoliberal Urbanism

The transformative central cities in the forms of economic restructuring and spatial reorganization are related to the global process of growth and change as exogenous factors. On the other hand, an endogenous instrument in the form of neoliberal urbanism had been in practice globally by the 1990s. Planning and local politics have represented influential and decisive agencies of change: the local policy role in the reconfiguration of central area has extended well beyond conventional regimes of regulation, in the form of development control and growth management, to include transformational visions and assertive implementation programmes (Hutton 2004), in a global spread of ‘Authoritative Neoliberalism’ (Lovering and Türkmen 2011). Theories on neoliberal urbanism, or ‘neoliberalising urban regeneration’ (Lovering 2007), or ‘new urban politics’ in a broad sense (Cox 1993), have considerably added to the understanding of the changes in urban development in the past two decades, including urban entrepreneurialism, urban regimes, growth coalitions, urban growth machines, and public–private partnerships (Ancien 2011). Although locally based, neoliberal urbanism has played an important role in constructing a neoliberal globalism, making itself a ‘globalized’ force.

Despite different local settings, the global practices of neoliberal urbanism share a few common features pertinent to transformative central cities: (1) an interventionist approach towards new competitive forms of urban development in association with an expansion of the urban political system from ‘government’ to ‘governance’; (2) the erosion of traditional welfare rights and policy tendency towards capitalist production rather than social reproduction; (3) prioritization of global competitiveness in the urban strategy; and (4) concerted and systematic public–private partnerships in entrepreneurial urban planning and development (Smith 2002; Stahre 2004). The neoliberal paradigmatic shift impacted not only urban development, but also regional development (non-metropolitan and rural areas) in the developed nations, including Australia (Tonts and Haslam-McKenzie 2005).

Theoretical ‘Cross-fertilization’

Neoliberal urbanism has been developing parallel to the global city discourse, providing a different explanatory framework for urban transformations. Both groups of theories provide partial understanding of contemporary urban development, and present theoretical limitations. The global city discourse is criticized for its over-simplification of the restructuring of the world economy and the roles of cities, and for its insufficient engagement with the political realities of the era of neoliberalism; as a result, the orthodox approach

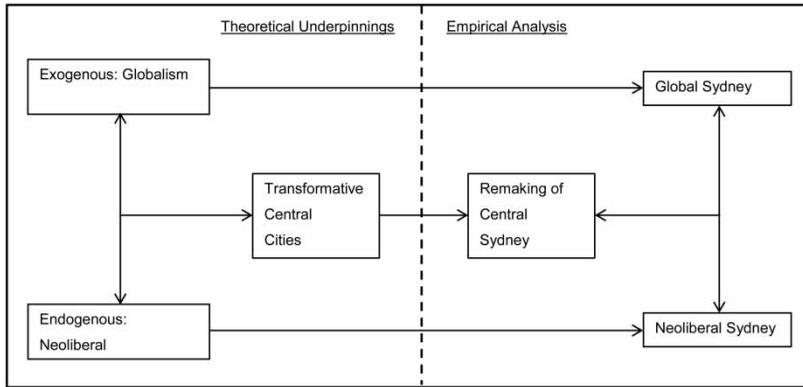


Figure 1. An integrative analytical framework.

fails to recognize that links between the ‘global’ and the ‘local’ are always politically constructed (Öktem 2011). There exists a potential of ‘cross-fertilization’ of the two groups of theories (Ancien 2011). The theoretical ‘cross-fertilization’ of the ‘global’ and the ‘local’ can address the insufficiency of the global city discourse as processes of changes, and of the neoliberal state and policies as actors of changes, in explaining the transformations of the central city areas of global cities.

This study draws on the literature on theorizing the transformative central cities, and on the identified opportunity of theoretical ‘cross-fertilizing’ of the global and the local forces, to underpin the understanding of the functional changes in Central Sydney. It follows the dichotomy of the ‘global’ as exogenous and the ‘local’ as endogenous, to construct an integrative analytical framework. Theoretically, it combines the exogenous globalism and the endogenous neoliberal urbanism to approach the transformative central cities in contemporary globalization; empirically, it investigates the functional changes of Central Sydney, and explains the changes in association with Sydney’s rise as a global city and the local neoliberal strategy and planning (see Figure 1). Linking the exogenous factor of Sydney’s rise as a global city and the endogenous factor of the local neoliberal urbanism provides a new explanatory framework for understanding the functional changes of Central Sydney, and sheds new light on the transformative patterns.

Study Area, Data, and Measures

The study area of Central Sydney was delimited by the local government area (LGA) of the City of Sydney in 2001² (see Figure 2). It had an area of 6.7 km² and a resident population of 30,858 in 2001 (ABS 2003). The city council carried out the Floor Space and Employment Survey for the central city area from 1976 to 2006 at an interval of five years to monitor the city’s growth. This study is based on the data collected from the four surveys from 1991 to 2006 with regard to the delimited Central Sydney area.

Two sets of measures are used to analyse the functional changes of Central Sydney: one set is defined by industry divisions and the other is defined by space use divisions. The industry divisions are based on the 17 broad divisions of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification 1993 version. The space use divisions are based on the 14 broad divisions according to how the floor space with areas as small as

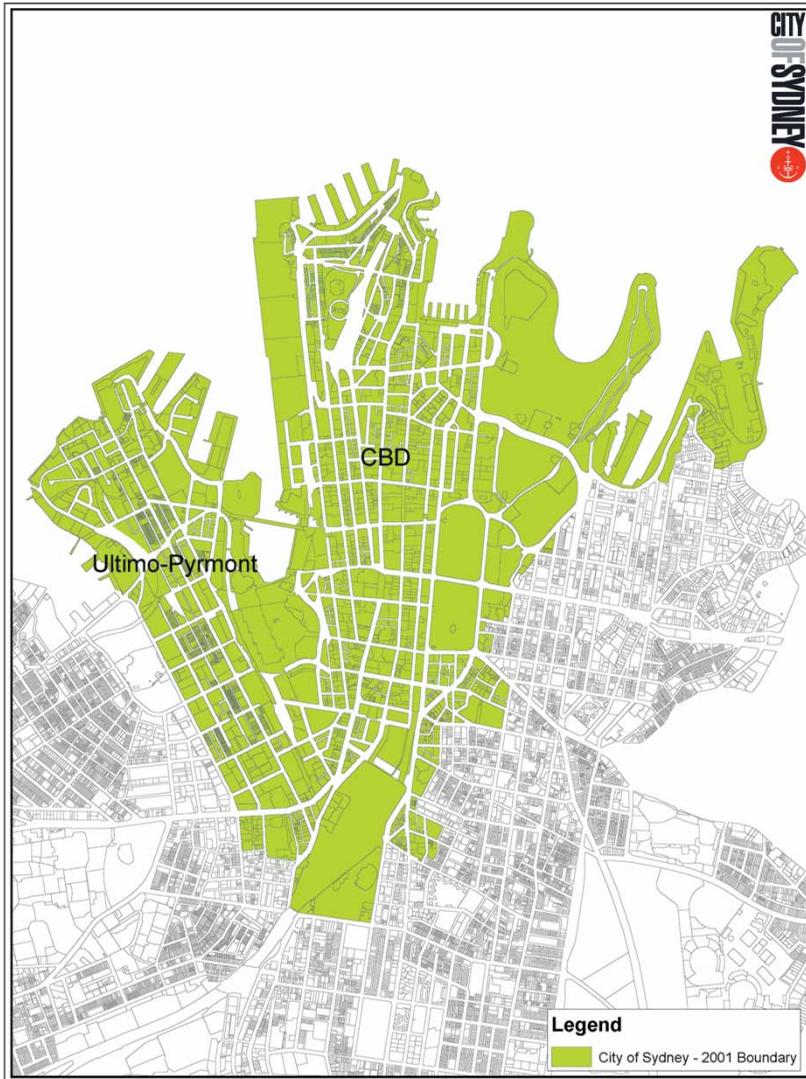


Figure 2. Map of Central Sydney. Image reproduced with the kind permission of the City of Sydney Council © 2007.

Source: The City of Sydney Council, downloaded from www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au, reworked by the author.

5 m² is used (e.g. office, residential, storage, and parking). The measures by industry divisions include internal floor space by industry divisions, employment by industry divisions, and business establishments by industry divisions. The measures by space use divisions include internal floor space by space use divisions, and employment by space use divisions. This study makes a time-series analysis of these measures to summarize the patterns of functional changes in Central Sydney in 1991–2006. This study is a *systematic* analysis in the sense that it examines the function changes in the whole area of

Central Sydney during the time span of 15 years, using a diversity of measures by industry divisions and space use divisions.

Results

Overall Functional Changes

Central Sydney witnessed significant growth in internal floor space, employment, and business establishments in 1991–2006 (see Table 1). Both internal floor space and employment increased by close to 50%. Much of the internal floor space growth was attributed to residential development. With private household space and vacant space excluded, the occupied commercial internal floor space increased by 24%, nearly half the growth rate of the overall internal floor space. During the same period, the number of business establishments increased by 11%.

Functional Changes by Industry Divisions

Changes of internal floor space, employment, and business establishments. Growing and declining industry divisions are classified according to their gain or loss in internal floor space, employment, and business establishments in 1991–2006 (see Appendix 1). The majority of the industry divisions gained in all of the three measures. The major industries (occupying an average of more than 4% of total internal floor space in 1991–2006) that grew in the three measures include: finance and insurance; accommodation, cafés and restaurants; business services; cultural and recreational services; education; and retail trade. On the contrary, two major industries — transport and storage, and manufacturing — decreased in the three measures. Despite a tiny employment growth, government administration and defence is classified as a declining industry, as a result of its significant loss in internal floor space and business establishments.

Of the non-major industries (occupying an average of less than 4% of total internal floor space in 1991–2006), the growing industries in the three measures include personal and other services, and communication services. The industry division of health and community services is classified as a growing industry because of its significant growth in internal floor space and employment, despite a modest loss in business establishments. Two small industry divisions gained in the three measures: agriculture, forestry, fishing and mining,

Table 1. Internal floor space, employment, and business establishments in Central Sydney (1991–2006)

	1991	1996	2001	2006	Change (1991–2006) (%)
Internal floor space (m ²)	11,842,285	12,982,809	15,114,765	17,582,722	48.47
Occupied commercial internal floor space ^a (m ²)	8,046,172	8,287,179	9,261,196	9,938,416	23.52
Employment	204,742	231,854	260,025	300,010	46.53
Business establishments	11,233	12,281	12,603	12,416	10.53

^aExcluding private households, vacant, and others.

and construction. Albeit the smallest industry division, construction had striking growth rates in the three measures (53% in internal floor space, 137% in employment, and 38 in business establishments). The declining non-major industries are wholesale trade; and electricity, gas, and water.

Changes of share of internal floor space, employment, and business establishments. The shares of industry divisions are compared by the three measures of internal floor space, employment, and business establishments in 1991–2006 (see Figure 3). Both converging and diverging time-series patterns emerge. Internal floor space was spread among more industry divisions, followed by employment. Business establishments were concentrated in a few industry divisions.

Measured by share of internal floor space use, leading industry divisions included finance and insurance; accommodation, cafés and restaurants; business services; transport and storage; government administration and defence; and cultural and recreational services. However, they demonstrated different time-series trends. On average, finance and insurance was the largest internal floor space use industry; its time-series share did not change much in 1991–2006. Two industry divisions — accommodation, café and restaurants; and business services — enjoyed sharp increase; they surpassed finance and insurance in 2006. The share of cultural and recreational services enjoyed an impressive increase too. The shares decreased markedly in three industry divisions: transport and storage; government administration and defence; and manufacturing. Education had a modest increase while retail trade had a modest decrease.

Measured by share of employment, the top two industry divisions were finance and insurance; and business services, followed by industry divisions of government administration and defence; accommodation, cafés and restaurants; and retail trade. Finance and insurance had a stable and modest time-series growth. The sharpest growth occurred in business services, which surpassed finance and insurance and became the largest employment industry division in 2006. Significant share growths occurred in accommodation, cafés and restaurants; and cultural and recreational services. A few industry divisions, whose internal floor space shares reduced, decreased their employment shares too, such as government administration and defence; transport and storage; and manufacturing.

Measured by share of business establishments, business services and retail trade were far more than the other industry divisions. As in internal floor space and employment, the business establishment share of business services increased significantly in 1991–2006, too. The share of retail trade remained mostly constant. Noticeable increase occurred in finance and insurance; and accommodation, cafés and restaurants, while transport and storage; and manufacturing had a marked decrease in business establishment shares.

Changes of internal floor space per employee, internal floor space per business establishment, and employees per business establishment. Overall, internal floor space per employee was decreasing, while both internal floor space and employees per business establishment were increasing in 1991–2006: internal floor space per employee decreased from 40 to 36 m²; internal floor space per business establishment increased from 716 to 800 m²; and employees per business establishments increased from 18 to 24. However, the increasing or decreasing trends differed pretty much by industry divisions (see Figure 4).

Measured by internal floor space per employee, most industry divisions reduced. The two most space-intensive industry divisions — finance and insurance, and business

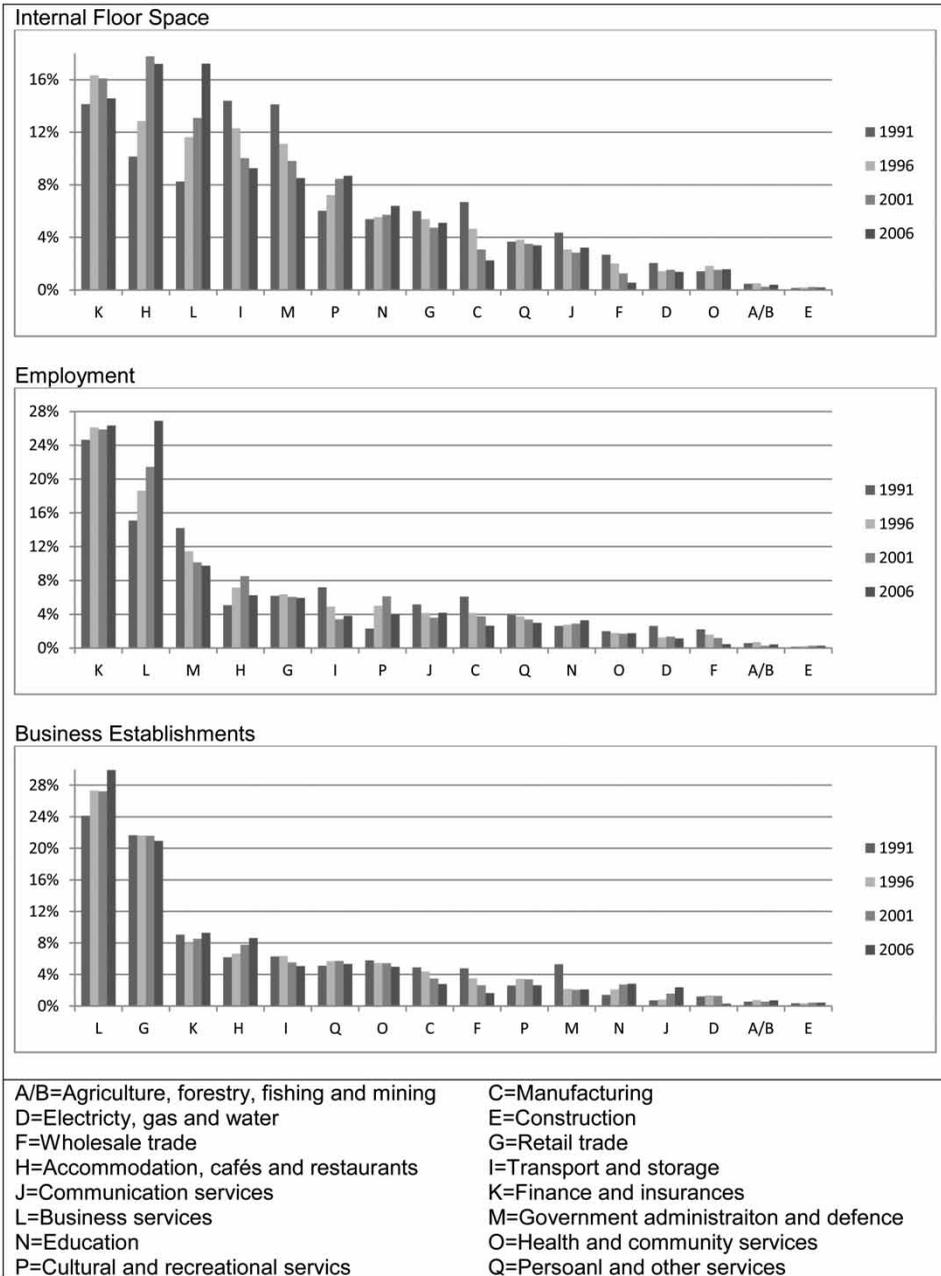


Figure 3. Shares of internal floor space, employment, and business establishments by industry divisions in Central Sydney in 1991–2006.

Note: Based on occupied commercial internal floor space; industry divisions are organized by their respective average values in 1991–2006 from the highest to the lowest.



Figure 4. Internal floor space per employee, internal floor space per business establishment, and employees per business establishment by industry division in Central Sydney in 1991–2006.

services — had a very modest decline, maintaining an average of a little more than 20 m². Some less space-intensive industries had a significant reduction, including communication services; retail trade; construction; government administration and defence;

manufacturing; wholesale trade; and education. Meanwhile, two less space-intensive industries — cultural and recreational services; and accommodation, cafés and restaurants — enjoyed a significant increase. The rest of the industry divisions, which are mostly obscure in terms of internal floor space use and employment, maintained a constant internal floor space per employee.

Measured by internal floor space per business establishment, more industry divisions indicated a general increase despite fluctuations. The industry division of government administration and defence used the largest internal floor space per business establishment. Major increasing industry divisions include: finance and insurance; accommodation, cafés and restaurants; cultural and recreational services; education; and government administration and defence. Industry divisions with an impressive decrease include manufacturing, communication services, and wholesale trade.

Measured by employees per business establishment, most industry divisions increased. The industry division of government administration and defence hired the most employees per business establishment. Significant growth occurred in major industry divisions: business services; accommodation, cafés and restaurants; cultural and recreational services; communication services; finance and insurance; and government administration and defence. Decreasing industry divisions include: education, manufacturing, transport, and storage; and agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining.

Functional Changes by Space Use Divisions

Changes of internal floor space and employment. Space use divisions are classified into growing space uses or declining space uses according to their gain or loss in internal floor space and employment in 1991–2006 (see Appendix 2). For space use divisions whose internal floor space and employment contradict in gain or loss, internal floor space prevails over employment in determining whether they should be classified as growing or declining space uses. Of the major space use divisions (occupying an average of more than 4% of total internal floor space in 1991–2006), all — office, common area, parking, residential, and visitor accommodation — are classified as growing space uses because of their increases in internal floor space, except for storage that declined in both internal floor space and employment. Office is the only major space use division that enjoyed a significant growth in both internal floor space and employment. The other major space uses are mostly employment extensive; and all reduced employment to a great extent. The exception is residential, which involved no substantial employment. Residential and visitor accommodation had a remarkable growth rate in internal floor space: the former grew by 463%; and the latter grew by 274%.

Of the non-major space use divisions (occupying an average of less than 4% of total internal floor space in 1991–2006), retail and amenity-related space uses had growth in both internal floor space and employment in 1991–2006, such as shop/showroom, entertainment/leisure, and restaurant/eating. Industrial and transport lost in both internal floor space and employment. Utilities and community demonstrated opposite patterns: the former gained in internal floor space, but lost in employment; the latter lost in internal floor space, but gained in employment.

Changes of share of internal floor space and employment. The shares of space use divisions are compared by the two measures of internal floor space and employment in

1991–2006 (see Figure 5). The internal floor space is spread among more major space use divisions, while employment is the most concentrated in office, making it a predominant space use division.

Measured by share of internal floor space, major space use divisions demonstrated opposite time-series trends: office, common area, and storage were declining; parking, residential, and visitor accommodation were increasing. Residential had the largest increase by almost 9%. Small traditional space use divisions tended to reduce too, including industrial, community, and transport.

Measured by share of employment, office was the predominant space use division, and its predominance had been strengthening: its share of employment increased from 82% in 1991 to 86% in 2006. Of the other minor space use divisions, only restaurant/eating and entertainment/leisure indicated a noticeable increasing trend. All the other space use divisions reduced their employment shares, albeit very modestly.

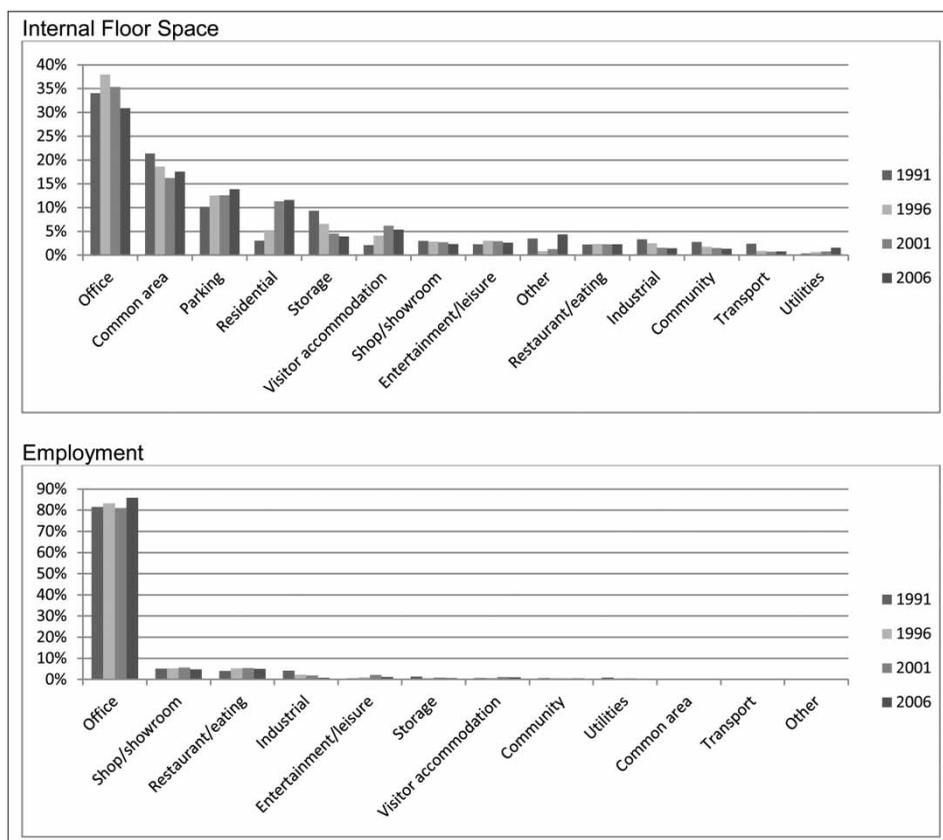


Figure 5. Share of internal floor space and employment by space use divisions in Central Sydney in 1991–2006.

Note: Measurement of internal floor space is based on occupied commercial internal floor space; employment measurement is not applicable for residential; industry divisions are organized their respective average values in 1991–2006 from the highest to the lowest.

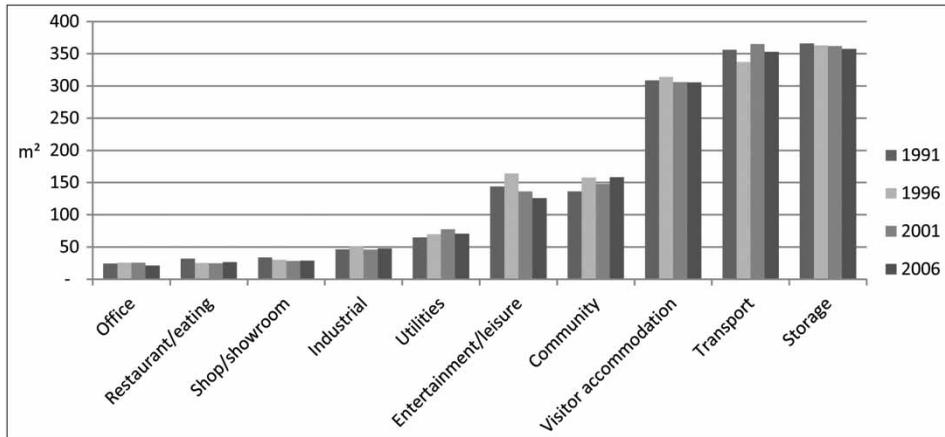


Figure 6. Internal floor space per employee by space use division in Central Sydney in 1991–2006. *Note:* Excluding residential, parking, common area, other.

Changes of internal floor space per employee. On average, internal floor space per employee in 1991–2006 was decreasing: it fell from 36 m² in 1991 to 31 m² in 2006³. But the time-series patterns differed much by space use divisions (see Figure 6). The three most space-intensive space uses — office, restaurant/eating, and shop/showroom — decreased. The less space-intensive space uses — industrial, utilities, and community — increased, but entertainment/leisure decreased. Of the three space-extensive space uses, visitor accommodation and transport maintained constant, while storage — the most space-extensive division — slightly reduced.

Remaking of Central Sydney: Globalism vs. Neoliberal Urbanism

The results indicate significant functional changes occurring in Central Sydney in 1991–2006 as measured through the lenses of industry divisions and space use divisions. Both sets of measures reveal some distinct patterns. The measures by industry divisions indicate the dominance and strengthening dominance of service industries that can be broadly categorized as the knowledge services and the experience services: finance and insurance; business services; accommodation, cafés and restaurants; and cultural and recreational services. The measures by space use divisions indicate an impressive increase of living and urban amenity spaces, including residential, visitor accommodation, and entertainment/leisure. The dominant space use of office reduced its share in the total floor space, despite a significant absolute growth. The central question for discussion is how these functional changes in Central Sydney occurred in association with the exogenous globalism and the endogenous neoliberal urbanism, under the integrative analytical framework for explaining transformative central cities (see Figure 1).

A Global Sydney

The functional changes in Central Sydney need to be integrated with the impact of globalization on Sydney and Sydney's emergence as a global city. Sydney was the main urban

beneficiary of Australia's increasingly globalized commodity and financial markets (Searle 2008). By 1988, Sydney had 150 head offices of international institutions (43 in Melbourne), and 155 of the 185 Australian head offices of foreign banks (Daly and Stimson 1992). In 1997 and 1998, some 61 multinational corporations set-up Asia Pacific regional headquarters in Sydney, more than four times the total for any other Australian or New Zealand city (Daly and Pritchard 2000). Comparing Sydney's employment structure with overseas cities indicated that Sydney's performance in finance and business services in the mid-1990s was approaching that of New York and London in the mid-1980s (Searle 1996). Compared with seven international cities (New York, London, Frankfurt, Singapore, Atlanta, Vancouver, and Kuala Lumpur), Sydney was performing reasonably well across a wide range of measures (Price Waterhouse Coopers 1998). In the mid-1990s, Sydney was placed in the ranking of sub-global cities by Peter Hall (1995). Some scholars argued that Sydney's economic characteristics of finance and producer services were indicative of its emergence as Australia's global city in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Baum 1997; Lepani et al. 1995; Newton 1995; O'Connor and Stimson 1995; Searle 1996).

A global city's status is defined by its capacity of providing the advanced producer services such as finance, banking, accountancy, advertising, marketing and management consultancy, and the complexes of the knowledge services are usually located in the CBDs of a few global cities (Sassen 1995, 2001). One important reflection of Sydney's rise as a global city is the concentration of the knowledge services in Central Sydney, which is attested by the findings of this study, as well as other studies from different angles. Forrest (1996) examined the spatial clustering of the journey to work in Sydney and identified a decreasing dependence on the central city as a focus of employment other than those employed in the business, finance and information service sector. Searle (1998a) investigated the locational changes of the four producer services — management consultancy, insurance, graphic design, and data processing — in Sydney and concluded that 'globalization appears to have reinforced the traditional central city focus of Sydney's producer services sector' (237). O'Neill and McGuirk (2002) observed that the surge of finance-based economic activities in Central Sydney helped sustain Australian economic prosperity in the late 1990s. Hu (2012a) pointed out the strengthening of the concentration of the knowledge-based economy in Central Sydney at the turn of the century measured by employment of industries. The advancement of this study is its *systematic* examination, which covers the whole area of Central Sydney during the time span of 15 years, using a diversity of measures by industry divisions and space use divisions.

The other dimension of the functional changes in Central Sydney is its growing capacity of the experience services, such as amenity facilities, and cultural and recreational services. Central Sydney has witnessed a growing presence of experience space and creative industries, as a consequence of Sydney's increasing integration with the globalization process. An inner Sydney multimedia cluster including graphic design, advertising and related media was emerging (Searle and Valence 2005). In a global context, Sydney's performance in the cultural and creative industries has been pretty impressive. In the index ranking produced by the GaWC programme, Sydney ranked the fifth in advertising (Taylor 2008, 56). Compared to other benchmark global cities, Sydney's competitive advantages are more in the cultural and creative sectors (Shaw 2006).

Florida's (2002, 2005) thesis of creative class seems to help explain the increasing concentration of the creative cultural and media services in Central Sydney. The creative workers required and driven by the IT are urban lifestyle class (Florida 2002). They are globally mobile electronic migrants (Blakely 2001; Florida 2005), and are willing to live and work in the central city areas of global cities with favourable environments. Sydney's cityscapes — built and natural lifestyle environment, and social tolerance and cultural diversity — are important assets of the city's competitiveness for a creative economy and creative city (Gibson 2006; Throsby 2006). The growing amenity services and facilities — accommodation, cafés and restaurants; and cultural and recreational services — reflect Central Sydney's growing capacity in attracting the creative workers and nurturing a creative economy, and in accommodating another important base of the experience services: international tourism. In line with the measures by industry divisions, the most impressive growth by space use divisions in Central Sydney occurred in the experience services too — visitor accommodation and entertainment/leisure — in addition to residential and office. Residential had the highest growth of internal floor space of all space use divisions. In the mid-1990s, Sydney's residential construction in inner areas continued at 'unprecedented levels' (Vipond, Castle, and Cardew 1998, 215).

The space use division of office enjoyed a significant growth in both internal floor space and employment, but it demonstrated contradictory patterns in share changes: throughout 1991–2006, office occupied around one third of total floor area with a slight declining trend, while its employment share was on a firm rising trend with an average share of 83%. These seemingly contradictory patterns occurred as a result of the changes of office work, workers, and workplaces in the CBDs of global cities under contemporary globalization. In Central Sydney, 'complex processes of reconfiguration' are being experienced in the 'new forms of office work and new subjectivities of office workers' under the impact of 'economic financialization', including 'association' and 'interaction' in financialized office work, new knowledge office workers, and 'shared' and 'communalization space' in work places (O'Neill and McGuirk 2003, 1751). The reconfiguration infers a transformative shift towards 'less workspace per worker' in office. As observed in the space use of office, the overall workspace use per person was declining; the workspace use per person in both partitioned office and open plan office was decreasing, while the shared workspace use per person was increasing.

A Neoliberal Sydney

The emerging global city status of Sydney has impacted the functional changes in Central Sydney, reflecting the influences of global forces. Meanwhile, the exogenous factor of globalism has been coupled with the endogenous factor of an emerging neoliberal urbanism in the local strategy and planning to take effect. The rise of the neoliberal urbanism in Sydney was heralded by a global Sydney vision that began to evolve in the 1980s, and became a consensus in the 1990s (Hu 2012b). The New South Wales (NSW) state government and the City of Sydney council shared a rare common vision on a global Sydney,⁴ which was joined by the private sector and the general community. The 2000 Olympic Games was one prominent effort to celebrate and market a global Sydney, which entailed a series of state-city joint actions, including pre-Olympic urban renewal programmes, and design excellent initiative for the city's global form and image. Reflecting a greater integration with the global economy and accelerated by the Olympics, the Sydney CBD in the

mid- and late-1990s was ‘an extraordinary construction zone at the mercy of a patchwork of ambitious private, state government, and council development’ (Freestone 2000, 139).

The remarkable growth of urban spaces for the knowledge services and the experience services resulted from new urban development driven by market demands and policy interventions. Important planning actions included the Living City⁵ and City West⁶ programmes in the late 1980s and the 1990s: the former programme was promoted by over-generous residential and hotel bonuses to revitalize city life (Punter 2005); the latter programme included redevelopment of Darling Harbour, and urban consolidation and gentrification of the Ultimo-Pyrmont areas (Bounds 2001; Bounds and Morris 2006; Searle 2007). By the early 1990s, the CBD development boom had run its course, and an emerging demand for inner city apartment dwellings took its place, which meant that ‘Ultimo-Pyrmont’s redevelopment became focused on high-rise apartments in a drive for consolidation’ (Searle 2007, 6–8). In addition to providing inner city apartment living for the new CBD workers, the City West redevelopment focused on providing amenities of urban lifestyle, hotels, meeting centres, and entertainment to compete for ‘global activities’ and ‘global entertainment’, such as the 2000 Olympics and the Sydney Casino (Searle 1998b; Searle and Bounds 1999). Consequently, the inner city population in Sydney grew by 19% in 1994–1999 (Stein 2002, 32).

The key actor of the neoliberal urbanism was the NSW state government, which turned to an interventionist approach for an entrepreneurial style of urban development. At the metropolitan level, a state-orchestrated urban coalition (including government, private sector, non-government organizations, and community groups) mixed with multiscalar politics (federal, state, and local) has been emerging, to produce the capacity to govern a ‘global Sydney’ in an environment of competitive globalization (McGuirk 2003, 2004; McGuirk and O’Neill 2002). Crucial to understanding this, argued by McGuirk (2003, 219), is Sydney’s ‘unique and strategic positioning in global space as Australia’s global city and as a key strategic lever in the pursuit of the national goal of achieving global economic competitiveness’. The neoliberal aspirations for a global Sydney and economic competitiveness have re-energized the state government’s metropolitan strategies and planning for the Sydney region (Bunker and Searle 2007; McGuirk 2005; Searle 2000, 2004).

In Central Sydney, the state government assumed a leading role in its strategy and development. It established agencies overseeing development in Central Sydney (e.g. Darling Harbour Authority in 1984, Central Sydney Planning Committee in 1988, and Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority in 1998), orchestrated entrepreneurial urban strategies (e.g. Central Sydney Strategy in 1988, and a series of metropolitan strategies in the 1990s), encouraged expansive urban development (e.g. the City West programme to redevelop the traditional industrial waterfront zones), and marketed Sydney through events and activities (e.g. Olympics, casino). At an operational level, the entrepreneurial urban strategies were summarized as prioritization of economic development, neutralization of social planning, and place making through urban design (Hu 2012b). The paramount aim has been to enhance Sydney’s competitiveness in its ever-deeper global integration through a set of neoliberal strategies and planning efforts. The functional changes of Central Sydney are associated with a globalized process, as well as the local actors of strategies and planning under a ‘globalized’ neoliberal urbanism.

Conclusion

This study has been interested in understanding the transformations of the central city areas under the contemporary discourse of globalization and cities, using Central Sydney as a case study. The literature on the transformative central cities provides two groups of theories — the global perspective of the global city discourse to explain the economic restructuring and spatial reorganization, and the local perspective of neoliberal urbanism in urban strategy and planning to respond to the increasing globalism. It is argued that the two groups of theories provide partial explanations, and present theoretical limitations. An integrative analytical framework based on a theoretical ‘cross-fertilization’ of the ‘global’ and the ‘local’ is constructed to address the theoretical deficiency, and to underpin the understanding of the functional changes in Central Sydney.

The functional changes in Central Sydney are analysed through the lenses of industry divisions and space use divisions, using the data from the floor space and employment surveys in 1991–2006. Different from other empirical studies, this study is a *systematic* examination, which covers the whole area of Central Sydney during the time span of 15 years, using a diversity of measures by industry divisions and space use divisions. The converging patterns demonstrate a trend of strengthening capacity of the knowledge services and the experience services, and increasing living and amenity spaces in Central Sydney. The findings provide new insights into the functions of the central city areas of global cities such as Sydney, which have been mostly understood as sites of the advanced producer services under the global city discourse, and have been narrowly approached from an economic reductionism. Understanding the significant functional changes in Central Sydney is underpinned by the proposed integrative analytical framework. Approaching the functional changes of Central Sydney in association with the exogenous factor of Sydney’s rise as a global city and the endogenous factor of an emerging neoliberal urbanism in the local urban strategy and planning provides a deep understanding of the nature of the changes, as well as the global and local forces that have shaped the changes.

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Notes

1. Other approaches to the transformations of Central Sydney include: on the challenges to the multi-scalar urban governance presented by the imperatives of sustainability and the need for a metropolis-wide authority (Acuto 2011); on the undertaking of urban design initiatives towards the promotion of a global image and the enhancement of living and amenity spaces characterized by a neoliberal planning regime and commercial culture (McNeill 2011; Punter 2005); on the planning and development of global entertainment, activities, and cultural facilities (Gibson and Freestone 2002; Searle 1998b; Searle and Bounds 1999); on the socio-cultural changes with increasing younger populations and accompanying urban lifestyles and cultural imaginaries (Shaw 2006; Vipond, Castle, and Cardew 1998).

2. The City of Sydney LGA was amalgamated with the South Sydney LGA in 2004. As a result, the current City of Sydney LGA (as of 2011) is much larger than its boundary in 2001, incorporating both the central city area as well as the original LGA of South Sydney.
3. The figures of internal floor space per employee measured by space use divisions (36 m² in 1991 and 31 m² in 2006) are lower than those measured by industry divisions (40 m² in 1991 and 36 m² in 2006). This inconsistency occurs because the measurement of industry divisions excludes the category of 'private households' and 'other', which respectively have considerable amount of internal floor space and some employments, while the measurement of space use divisions accounts for internal floor space and employment of all categories.
4. One important aspect of urban politics in Central Sydney has been the power conflicts between the state government and the city council. The culmination of the recent conflicts was the dismissal of the city council by the state government in September 1987. Commissioners were appointed by the state government to replace the elected city council. This was the fourth time in the history of the City of Sydney that the council was dissolved. Previously the city council had been dissolved in 1853, 1928–30, and 1967–69.
5. The Living City concept was initiated by the Lord Mayor Frank Sartor in 1994. The booklet *Living City: Sydney City's Council's Blueprint* announced the civic aspiration for a vibrant city of world standing that will be prosperous in the long term and pursuit for a global Sydney. The overall objective of the Living City programme was to draw people back in the central city area, especially after office hours, by enhancing the public spaces and promoting mixed uses of commercial, residential, and tourism.
6. The City West programme was proposed by the NSW state government in the Central Sydney Strategy 1988 and later implemented to expand the CBD which was in a north-south linear spine westward across Darling Harbour to include the industrial districts of Ultimo-Pyrmont. In the 1990s, these traditionally industrial districts were gradually redeveloped and gentrified.

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Appendix 1. Change, Share Difference and Average Share of Internal Floor Space, Employment, and Business Establishments by Industry Divisions in Central Sydney in 1991–2006

	Industry division (ANZSCI)	Internal floor space			Employment			Business Establishment		
		Change (%)	Share difference (%)	Average share (%)	Change (%)	Share difference (%)	Average share (%)	Change (%)	Share difference (%)	Average share (%)
Growing industries	Finance and insurance	27.27	0.43	15.29	57.14	1.67	25.74	13.69	0.26	8.70
	Accommodation, cafés and restaurants	109.50	7.06	14.49	80.91	1.16	6.74	54.24	2.45	7.31
	Business services	157.73	8.97	12.55	162.34	11.80	20.50	37.16	5.81	27.15
	Cultural and recreational services	78.14	2.67	7.60	153.33	1.67	4.36	11.26	0.02	3.02
	Education	46.75	1.01	5.77	84.64	0.67	2.89	121.38	1.42	2.27
	Retail trade	5.42	-0.88	5.31	41.22	-0.25	6.12	6.91	-0.71	21.46
	Personal and other services	14.67	-0.26	3.60	12.32	-0.92	3.50	15.16	0.21	5.47
	Communication services	-8.71	-1.14	3.38	19.29	-0.98	4.27	262.96	1.65	1.38
	<i>Health and community services</i>	36.76	0.15	1.59	30.19	-0.23	1.81	-5.08	-0.82	5.41
	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and mining	3.73	-0.07	0.40	10.18	-0.15	0.50	42.86	0.16	0.65
Construction	53.40	0.04	0.20	137.43	0.10	0.23	37.50	0.09	0.40	

Declining industries	Transport and storage	-20.51	-5.13	11.50	-22.18	-3.38	4.83	-10.91	-1.22	5.82
	<i>Government administration and defence</i>	-25.47	-5.60	10.90	0.77	-4.48	11.38	-56.23	-3.19	2.90
	Manufacturing	-58.49	-4.44	4.17	-36.27	-3.45	4.16	-37.02	-2.11	3.89
	Wholesale trade	-74.23	-2.13	1.63	-70.19	-1.77	1.37	-61.68	-3.11	3.14
	Electricity, gas and water	-17.05	-0.67	1.60	-35.75	-1.46	1.59	-72.06	-0.90	1.04
	Total establishments ^a	23.52	0.00	100.00	47.16	0.00	100.00	10.53	0.00	100.00

Note: Italicized industries have both growth and loss in internal floor space, employment, and business establishment.

^aExcluding private households, vacant, and other.

Appendix 2. Change, Share Difference and Average Share of Internal Floor Space and Employment by Space Use Division in Central Sydney in 1991–2006

		Internal floor space			Employment		
	Space use division	Change (%)	Share difference (%)	Average share (%)	Change (%)	Share difference (%)	Average share (%)
Growing space uses	Office	34.60	-3.15	34.56	54.61	4.30	82.90
	<i>Common area</i>	22.05	-3.78	18.44	-100.00	-0.40	0.21
	<i>Parking</i>	102.76	3.72	12.28	-78.47	-0.06	0.04
	Residential	462.48	8.52	7.80	NA	NA	NA
	<i>Visitor accommodation</i>	273.27	3.24	4.46	-85.97	0.30	0.91
	Shop/showroom	15.55	-0.67	2.73	36.34	-0.37	5.19
	Entertainment/leisure	71.01	0.35	2.72	231.54	0.68	1.24
	<i>Other</i>	85.21	0.87	2.51	-86.21	-0.05	0.06
	Restaurant/eating	52.26	0.06	2.29	84.18	1.02	4.92
	<i>Utilities</i>	521.43	1.21	0.86	-81.29	-0.77	0.53%
Declining space uses	Storage	-37.83	-5.43	6.10	-36.28	-0.83	0.92
	Industrial	-34.89	-1.86	2.20	-71.46	-3.31	2.29
	<i>Community</i>	-28.76	-1.44	1.84	6.25	-0.19	0.59
	Transport	-52.61	-1.63	1.20	-79.22	-0.33	0.18
	Total	48.34	0.00	100.00	45.46	0.00	100.00

Note: Italicized industries have both growth and loss in internal floor space and employment.