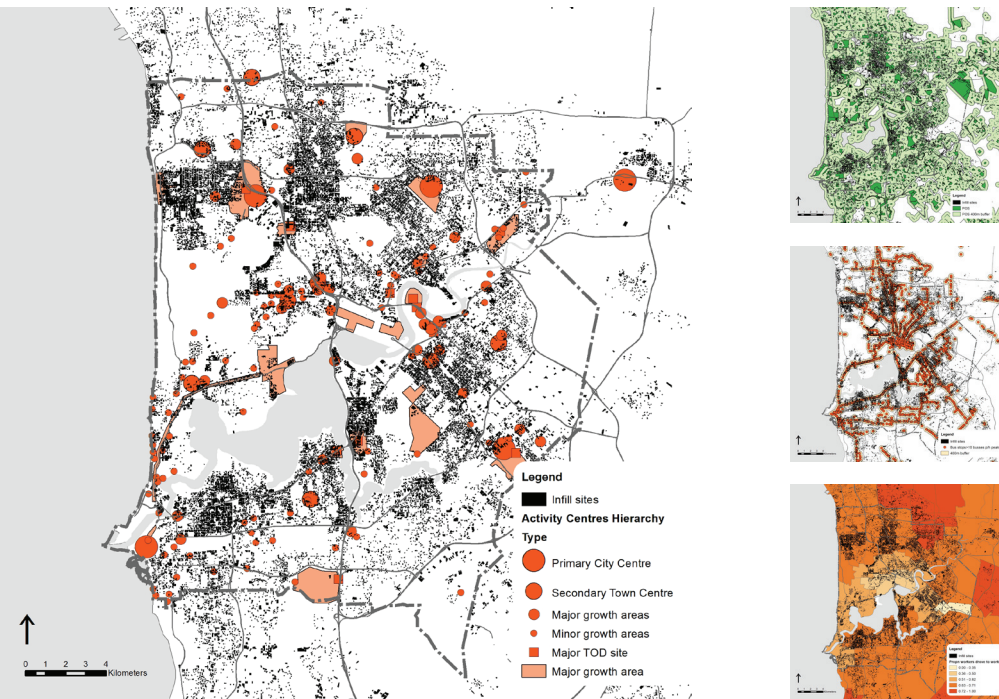


AUDRC Research Note

Background Noise: a review of the effects of background infill on urban liveability



Is background infill delivering urban liveability?

Background

- While Activity Centres and Activity Corridors are the flagships of the Western Australian State Government urban infill policy, much of the infill development being delivered is 'background infill' – the subdivision of suburban lots to create two to five new dwellings.

- This background infill is characterised by semidetached, survey strata, group dwellings (generally single-storey) organised around a communal driveway leading to private garages adjacent to the dwellings.

- This project assessed this background infill with reference to the State Government's goal of enhancing 'liveability' using criteria such as access to nature, cultural assets and public transport.

Key findings

- An 'infill good, sprawl bad' polarity has tended to pervade arguments about urban form in Australia. In contradistinction, background infill delivers mixed results with respect to urban liveability.

- Arguably, the public open spaces in these densifying urban areas are not well adapted to the needs of people living in background infill – a situation compounded by diminished, residual outdoor space and a reduced urban forest cover associated with much background infill development.

- Furthermore, because of the incremental and ad hoc way background infill is delivered, it is not producing the precincts of denser urban

form that can support cultural and commercial assets to any significant degree.

- Finally, much of the background infill is not well connected to public rail transport. This situation is reflected in stubbornly high levels of car usage for commuting to work.

- One of the by-products of some of the negative liveability aspects of background infill has been increasing resistance by local communities to infill development

Links to publications

Background noise: a review of the effects of background infill on urban liveability in Perth, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07293682.2016.1245201>

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