

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP SERIES

NIGHT WORKS

JOB FOR THE 24-HOUR ECONOMY

March 2021

BUSINESS
SYDNEY



COPYRIGHT

BUSINESS SYDNEY - February 2021

Published By

© Business Sydney, 2021.

GPO Box 4280, Sydney NSW 2001

Level 23, 45 Clarence Street Sydney NSW 2000

www.businesssydney.com

For more information about this publication, please contact:

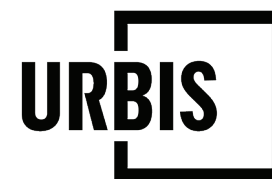
+61 2 9350 8119

enquiries@businesssydney.com



**BUSINESS
SYDNEY**
NOW

For two hundred years, we have worked to advance Sydney as a global, competitive, and liveable city. Now, to reflect our broader reach, influence, and strength, we have transformed to become Business Sydney – the voice for business in Sydney.



Urbis is a market-leading consulting firm with the goal of shaping the cities and communities of Australia for a better future. Drawing together a network of the brightest minds, our firm consists of practice experts, working collaboratively to deliver fresh thinking and independent advice and guidance – all backed up by real, evidence-based solutions.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	1
One Night Shift	4
Two Night Workers	5
Value of the Two Precincts	6
Research Methodology	7
Three What We Found	8
Sydney Central Business District	8
Northern Gateway	9
Camperdown Health and Education Research Precinct	13
Lessons from the CBD Precincts	19
Four A Jobs Blueprint	21
Beyond the Traditional	21
Better Public Transport	23
A Safer Night Time Experience	25
Five Delivering a Mixed-use Metropolis	27
Key Moves	29
With Thanks	30



FOREWORD

As our cities and towns, our places of work, our interaction, and commerce, have been shuttered to safeguard us and our way of life from the penetrating pandemic it is challenging to think about our city's future.

Despite the disruption of our day-to-day activities, curtailed by the stringencies of social distancing, the epidemiological complexities, and the economic impact of lock down, we know that the windows will reopen, and social and economic activities will resume.

Now is the time to lift our eyes above the horizon and explore, plan, and set the wheels in motion to make our global city what we want it to be. Now is the time to take the lessons and opportunities borne out of the pandemic and rethink, reset and reshape how our city functions, what policies

should govern its operations, and what must change to make it an even greater, more prosperous, and more resilient city.

Integral to Sydney's future is the development of a strong, diverse, and vibrant 24-hour economy. This means not only enabling and expediting the recovery of the hospitality and tourism sectors, but also capitalising on the new norm of people working more flexible hours and days, leveraging assets and infrastructure and the revived focus on localism, as well as broadening our view of 'after dark' to think of the night as both a time and a place.

In May 2020 Business Sydney published the paper [*Night Shift: Planning for a 24-Hour Sydney*](#). This Paper called on civic leaders, business, and the community to make a shift in views, policies and practices that drive and govern the night.



“Now is the
time to take the
Night Shift further
and deliver jobs for
Sydney's 24-hour
economy.”

Key big moves included; adopting a precinct-based approach, cutting the red tape that restricts trading hours for businesses, venues, and services, ensuring transport enhances connectivity and mobility, and instilling a coordinated approach across State and local government.

We are pleased that many of the *Night Shift* recommendations have been adopted. The Lock Out laws have been replaced with a regime for the hospitality industry that better balances vibrancy and safety, much of the bureaucratic red tape preventing businesses wanting to operate at night has been reduced and cost imposts eased. A new NSW Commissioner for a 24-Hour Economy to lead, coordinate and advocate for the night time economy across government and industry has been appointed and many Local Councils have revised their planning controls to remove

hurdles for operating a business after dark as well as establishing targeted night time economic development programmes.

In a relatively short period, the *Night Shift* has begun.

However, there remains much more work to do to. Fueled by economic imperatives and opportunities created by the covid pandemic we must keep firmly pressing down on the accelerator to make a strong, diverse, and vibrant 24-hour economy a reality.

At the centre of the development of this 24-hour economy must be a focus on jobs. Sydney needs initiatives that facilitate recovery and stability of employment in the hospitality and tourism sectors, programmes that foster, attract, and retain talent and a planning framework that stimulates

investment in infrastructure including a dedicated SEPP for arts and cultural institutions.

Critically, a jobs focused 24-hour economy also means understanding and delivering on the opportunities for employment at night. For too long the economy has been based on a traditional view of the day worker and the night worker, with the latter largely overlooked and underserved.

Currently, working at night means limited access to transport, meal choices, medical services such as chemists and doctors, some government services, libraries and other meeting and recreation places. For Sydney to be a 24-hour city this needs to change.

Change is also possible in terms of who works at night.

With the surge in employee demand for greater flexibility as to when and where to work, traditional mindsets have been disrupted. This has opened the door for a night time that is more than the hospitality worker, nurse on shift, or the cleaner. But a period that embraces office workers, professional services, and university employees. Supporting these people with flexibility to work outside 8am to 6pm will not only support their wellbeing but will also increase demand for more businesses and services to be open at night as well as ease congestion on our roads and enhance social distancing on public transport.

There is no place in greater need for this job focused night shift than the Sydney Central Business District (CBD). The Sydney CBD represents over seven per cent of the total national economy and over thirty per cent of the Greater Sydney economy and nearly a quarter of the NSW GDP¹. The nation, State and city need this economic engine room to hum - day and night.

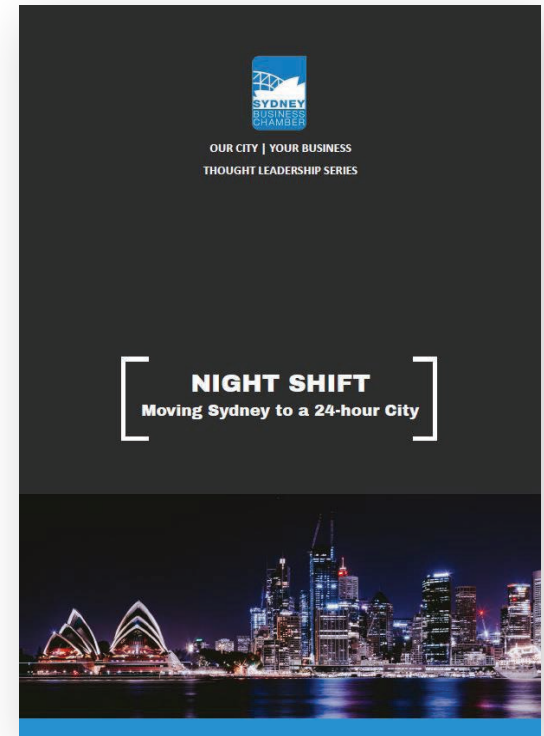
This Paper puts a jobs focused microscope over the Sydney CBD. With our expert partner, Urbis, we have conducted a forensic examination of two key areas in the CBD - the Northern Gateway and

the Camperdown Health and Education Precinct - to understand who currently works at night, the opportunities of who could work at night, and what interventions and policies are needed to ensure our metropolis emerges from the pandemic as a strong, vibrant, and diverse 24-hour economy.

This jobs first analytical approach and the Key Moves outlined in the Paper reconceptualises the night as a place rather than simply a time. It is founded on the enduring principle that successful places and precincts are underpinned by a diverse and strong economy.

While this Paper unashamedly focuses on the Sydney CBD the path it sets for citizens. Civic leaders, community, and the cohort of industry players applies equally to precincts and places across Greater Sydney.

Now is the time to take the *Night Shift* further and deliver jobs for Sydney's 24-hour economy.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'K. O'Regan', is written over a thin vertical black line.

¹Sydney City Council. <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/guides/city-at-a-glance>

ONE NIGHT SHIFT

In May 2020, with Sydney in the middle of its first pandemic induced lock-down, Business Sydney released *Night Shift, Planning for a 24-hour Sydney*. This Paper was a call for a better, more diverse, and vibrant night time economy and to end the rancor which had challenged public policy and delayed action on Sydney's night life.

In championing a different approach to fostering a night time economy, the Paper recommended our civic leaders and planners take a precinct-based approach to different parts of Sydney as the most efficient and effective way to develop and curate a more vibrant Sydney. That by focusing our efforts on those town centres and precincts where most of Sydney's day time economy operates, changing key policies, and incentivising and enhancing investments, we could advance a more vibrant and diverse night time economy.

Nightshift outlined six key moves that are critical for Sydney to develop a vibrant, diverse, and safe night time economy. An economy that accommodates and supports everyone who wants to work or play after dark.

Move One: A SEPP for the night economy

Reassess land use and planning to ensure planning controls for key precincts actively facilitate an inclusive and diverse night time economy and cutting unnecessary red tape and regulation.

Move Two: Strategic investment in precincts

Focus public and private investment in enabling infrastructure and services to where they will be most effective.

Move Three: Transport and mobility

Adopt a precinct-based approach to support expansion of public and private transport for enhanced connectivity and access.

Move Four: Curating the night time economy

Coordinate public and private sector efforts to plan and curate these precincts and reconceptualise the night not just as a time, but a place.

Move Five: Governance and joined-up Government

Resolve the confusion and complexity of who is responsible for developing the night time economy. Coordinate priorities and delivery across and between different levels of government including appointment of a coordinator.

Move Six: Culture Change

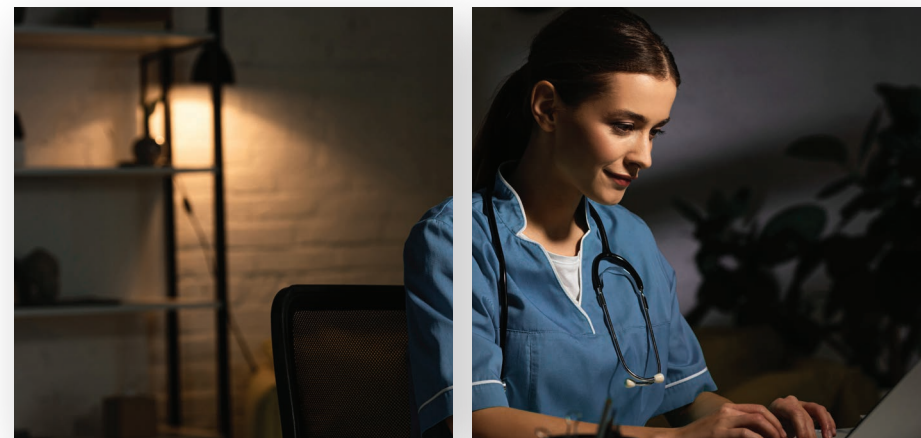
Foster a culture across business, government, and the community of the economic value of a strong and vibrant night time economy and that the night is accessible for all and not something to be scared of.

TWO NIGHT WORKERS

Jobs are at the centre of the lives and livelihoods of citizens and, equally jobs are at the centre of the economic health of a city. The economic recovery and future growth of Sydney as a global 24-hour city must be jobs led.

A jobs focused development of a 24-hour economy for Sydney means delivering initiatives that facilitate recovery and stability of employment in the hospitality and tourism sectors, programmes that foster, attract, and retain talent and a planning framework that stimulates investment in infrastructure including a dedicated SEPP for arts and cultural institutions.

A jobs focused development of a 24-hour economy also means enabling and energizing a workforce that can function equally during the day and the night. To put in place policies, programmes and processes to support cross industry employment participation in the night requires an understanding of who currently works at night, the experiences, and barriers to working outside the traditional 8am to 6pm, as well as capitalising on the opportunities to expand the night workforce.



To facilitate efficient use of capital, public and private investment in enabling infrastructure, and service provision, this Paper takes a precinct approach. It examines two Sydney precincts in the central business district that typically have a large number of people working in them both day and night. Through the data collected and analysed this Paper assesses how these precincts are performing as both a place and a time and how well they accommodate and support a 24-hour economy.

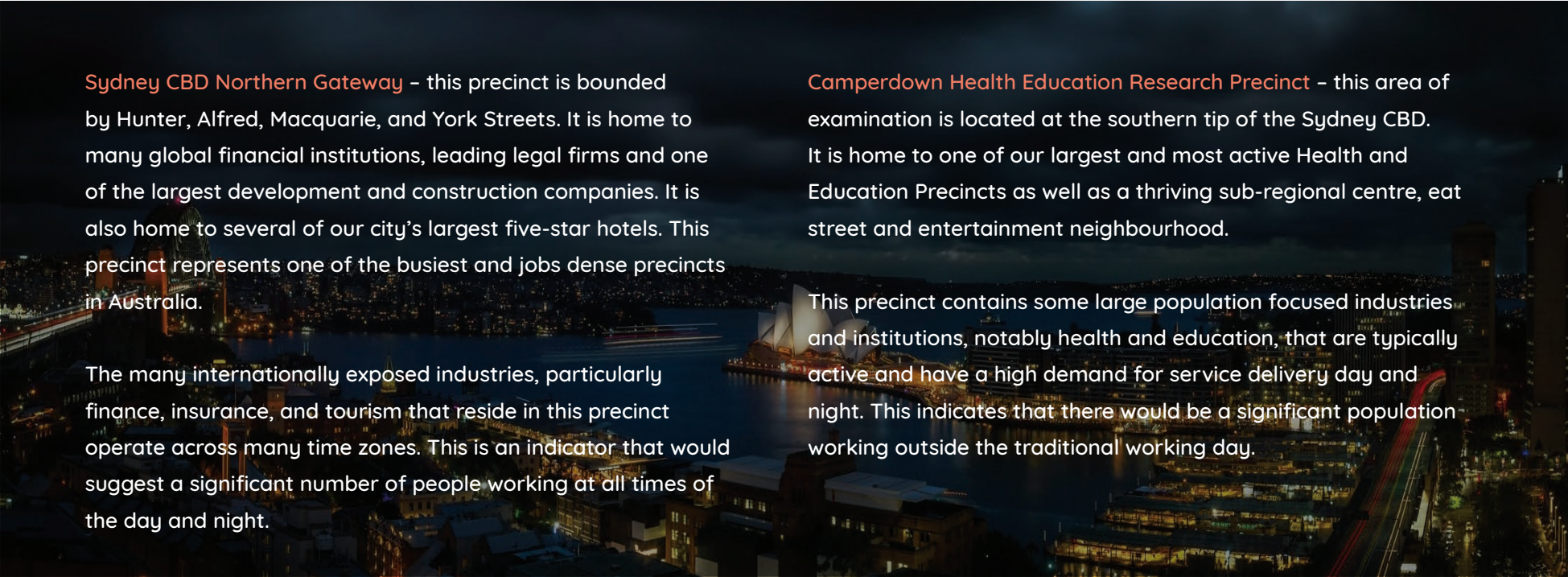
Using the six Key Moves outlined in *Night Shift: Planning for a 24-hour Sydney*, the Paper then provides a blueprint that can be applied to realise the full economic potential of these precincts and for other precincts across Greater Sydney.

Utilising the expertise of Urbis, pre-covid human movement data and activity levels in two key precincts was collected and analysed to provide the underpinning evidence for the way forward.

Value of the Two Precincts

Two CBD precincts, the Northern Gateway and Camperdown, were identified and selected as areas of study as they both contain critical common attributes to enable them to be strong proxies for the many precincts that scatter across Greater Sydney. These precincts have high jobs density, with large numbers working in them both day and night as well as a large visitor population. This density and volume also enable the collection of a valid source of data and information as to how and when people are using the precinct and what they are doing.

Tracking and analysing this movement of the workforce in, out and within these two precincts provides valuable insights as to how well these precincts support, or fail to support, a night time workforce and therefore how these precincts contribute to Sydney's night time economy and performance as a 24-hour economy.

An aerial night photograph of the Sydney CBD, showing the city lights and the Sydney Opera House in the water. The image is used as a background for text overlays.

Sydney CBD Northern Gateway – this precinct is bounded by Hunter, Alfred, Macquarie, and York Streets. It is home to many global financial institutions, leading legal firms and one of the largest development and construction companies. It is also home to several of our city's largest five-star hotels. This precinct represents one of the busiest and jobs dense precincts in Australia.

The many internationally exposed industries, particularly finance, insurance, and tourism that reside in this precinct operate across many time zones. This is an indicator that would suggest a significant number of people working at all times of the day and night.

Camperdown Health Education Research Precinct – this area of examination is located at the southern tip of the Sydney CBD. It is home to one of our largest and most active Health and Education Precincts as well as a thriving sub-regional centre, eat street and entertainment neighbourhood.

This precinct contains some large population focused industries and institutions, notably health and education, that are typically active and have a high demand for service delivery day and night. This indicates that there would be a significant population working outside the traditional working day.



Human movement data is data collected from mobile phone apps. The dataset includes more than 6 million Australian devices and anonymously identifies the location of a device and allows us to study where people move to and from and how long they spend in each place.

Research Methodology

To understand the number and movement patterns of night workers in the Northern Gateway and Camperdown Health Education Research Precinct (CHERP), Urbis analysed human movement data.

Based on algorithmic programming, the researchers identified each device's common day time and evening locations. Night workers were defined as those people with a common night time location – once residential locations in the same area were extracted from the dataset.

Night time work is not isolated to those who work overnight, or start after 6 pm, it also includes those day time workers who finish in the evening. For these latter workers to be classified as night workers, they needed to be at their place of work at least 2 hours per day after 6pm, 5 days a week.

The data covers the period September 2018 to August 2019, a normalised pre-covid period for which to form a baseline view of how these areas have generally functioned.

This data collection period also provides a valuable datapoint to identify ways these areas can bounce back, adapt and capitalise on opportunities in a covid safe operating environment.

To support the data collection, a series of focus group sessions were conducted to gain qualitative information on the experiences, challenges and aspirations of night time workers. These focus groups included participants from the financial services, hospitality, and legal and professional services sectors as well as local government, higher education and health

THREE WHAT WE FOUND

Sydney Central Business District

When considering all of the Sydney Central Business District, the human movement data indicates that night time activity accounts for twenty six per cent of total activity across the twenty four hour period. That is, when considering the CBD as the economic engine room of the State, near three quarters of visitation and activity occurs during half of the time, namely between 6.00am and 6.00pm. The remaining fifty per cent of the 24-hour period underperforms, generating only twenty-six per cent of total activity.

Despite this dominance of the day, the data does show that one in ten visits to the CBD is a night worker. It is this group of CBD night workers who, right now, do not have access to the same services, quality of amenity and comfort of safety as that afforded to CBD workers who work in the CBD during the day.

Looking forensically at the night period 6.00 pm – 6.00 am, workers account for one in seven of the total visitors to the CBD during this period. Reflecting on the pre-covid environment (September 2018 to August 2019) this was a period where tourists and those staying in hotels across the city, day time workers or visitors are out at a show, drinks, or a meal. One in ten visitors being a night worker is a solid representation of the current small contingent of people in the CBD at night.

This data highlights not only the dependency on the day to drive the CBD economy, but also the significant economic opportunity being missed through our traditional approach to work as an activity that is conducted in the confines of the traditional 6.00am – 6.00pm.

It highlights the opportunity to put in place measures that support and incentivise an increase in total work activity during the period 6.00pm – 6.00am to drive the economy and jobs across the CBD.

This opportunity for growth and night workforce participation goes well beyond the hospitality worker. We have the opportunity to diversify the night workforce, one that includes office workers who right now are seeking greater flexibility as to where and when they work, health care workers who need not have their shift structured based on transport timetables, and education professionals who can reach broader audiences.

By supporting and incentivising a diversified night workforce, working at night becomes a real option rather than a last option, or to many, not an option.

Sydney CBD: Only 26 per cent of all activity in the CBD occurs between 6.00pm and 6.00am. Night workers currently account for one in ten people who visit the CBD every 24 hours. One in seven people who visit the CBD at night are there to work.

Key CBD Precincts: An examination of two key CBD precincts, each with unique night worker profiles: Northern Gateway and Camperdown Health and Education Research Precinct.

Northern Gateway

Many cities across Australia and globally, have diverse activities scattered across their central business districts. However Sydney, because of its history and planning controls economic agglomeration and industry clustering has produced a CBD that contains specific zones of activity.

This unique characteristic of the Sydney CBD was explored by Gehl and Associates' in their critical study Public Space, Public Life commissioned by the City of Sydney in 2007. This work identified four CBD zones: Fun District, Consumer District, Business District and Cultural District.

The Northern Gateway, bounded by Hunter Street in the south, the Alfred Street interface with Circular Quay in the north, and to the east and west by Macquarie and York Streets, straddles Gehl's Business and Cultural Districts. When examining this area, Gehl makes the observation, *"The lack of diversity and mix in functions within specific areas has a number of side effects.*

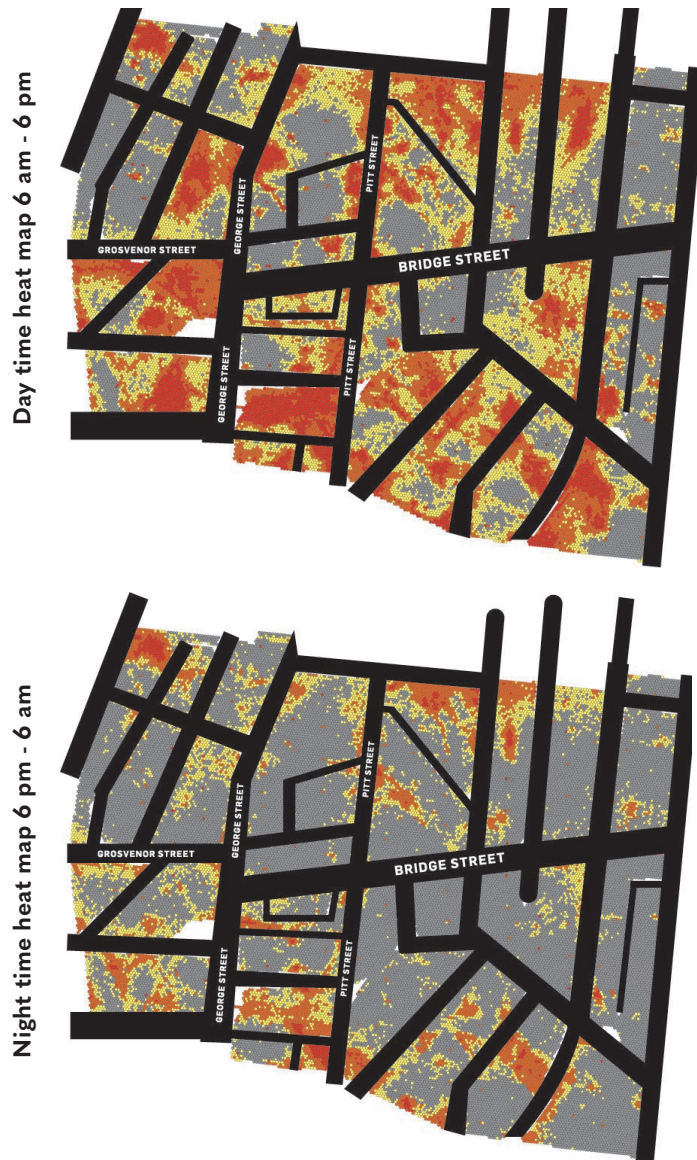


Generally, there are fewer experiences and fewer attractions in each area leading to a lack of mixed user groups making the population more uniform and the user patterns quite alike. A number of areas appear overcrowded at night time while others appear deserted." (Gehl, 2007, P: 14).

Yet this area contains significant commercial activity with a high density of jobs. It is home to workers in professional services. It is the major headquarters of global finance and professional services companies, property management and construction, tier one law firms, and many of Sydney's international hotels.

Yet the density of workers and the intensity of activity that occurs during the day in this precinct is in stark contrast to the emptiness and black spots that envelopes the streets, buildings, and spaces in this area after 6.00pm.

Human movement activity concentration and distribution across the day and night



Night Worker Experience

Our research data highlighted in the maps support Gehl's observations. These images show that the Northern Gateway, is punching well below its weight in terms of creating and supporting a viable night time worker economy.

This low level of night time activity in the Northern Gateway is a product of the lack of scale and diversity of this precinct's night time workforce.

Night workers account for a relatively small number of individuals in the Northern Gateway, at only four per cent of all visitors at night however their share of visitation, at twelve per cent, is relatively large.

In the Northern Gateway of the City we have a precinct with a night time economy that is largely geared towards the early evening economy, servicing day time workers out at night socialising as well as visitors from other parts of Sydney, and tourists.

After 6.00pm, key services such as pharmacies, and retail close and after 9.00pm there are very few available services for night time workers to access. After 9.00pm, any workers or tourists who remain in the precinct are essentially on their own. There are very few or no services available to meet their needs.

A deeper examination of the human movement data underscores this point as it shows that these night workers are accessing the Northern Gateway area during the day time before they start work. This is an indication they are arriving early in the city to access services not available during their working hours.

Accessing basic services during working hours, something day time workers take for granted, is denied to those who work at night. This impacts quality of life as what is otherwise 'rest time' needs to be used to undertake the activities associated with daily life.

Moving Around at Night

In the Northern Gateway, night time workers are much less mobile in their movement across the CBD compared to their day time counterparts. Unsurprisingly, given that Sydney does not operate a 24-hour public transport system, the movement of night time workers in and around transit nodes such as train stations, and surrounding blocks, is relatively low.

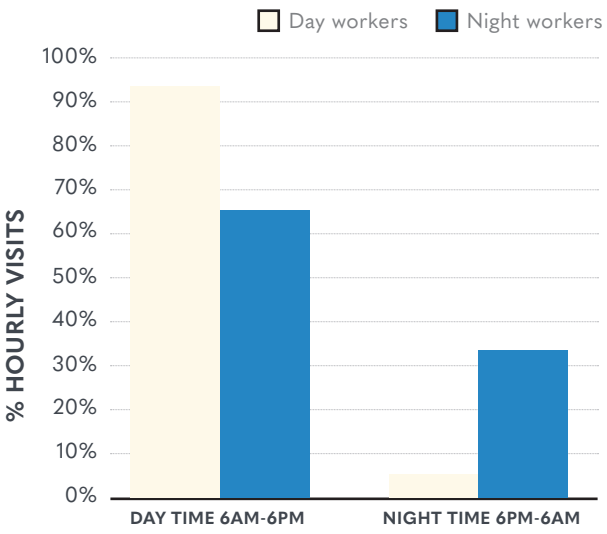
It is more common for night time workers to attend their place of work, then travel straight home, meaning their participation in the night time economy is limited. While there are several late-night attractions and theaters adjacent to the Northern Gateway precinct, notably the Opera House, The Rocks and Walsh Bay, these are not accessed by night workers.

We can see this in the usage patterns which depict the percentage of night timeworkers as a percentage of all workers who move through these areas.

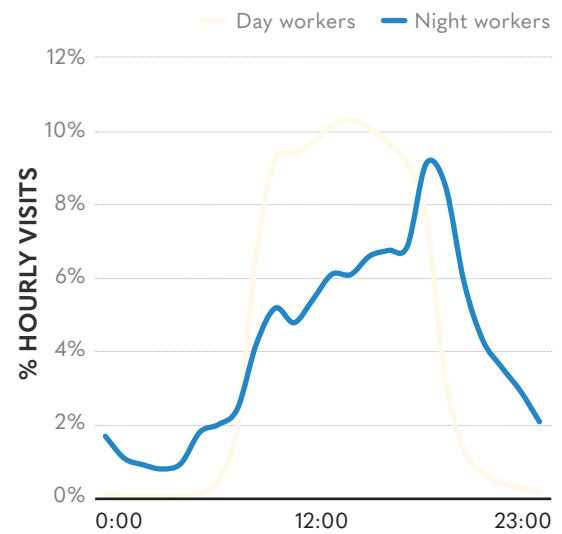
What also appears in the data is that these night workers exit from their place of work through a range of transport nodes including some outside of the precinct such as Martin Place and Town Hall Stations. This suggest that transport nodes in the precinct are not serving these workers adequately and not serving them as well as day workers.



*Proportion of visitors and visitation across a 24 hour period and at night (6.00pm-6.00am)



*Share of visitation for day and night workers



*Visitation profile for day and night workers

What is evident is that a decade after Jahn Gehl identified the Northern Gateway precinct of Sydney's CBD as 'boring' at night, it remains so.

Key Takeouts

- The Northern Gateway, while busy during the day, is deserted at night. Its local economy is geared towards servicing the day time population and offers little to attract, retain or service night time workers.
- The data shows that night time workers are forced to spend more of their spare time accessing essential services outside working hours.
- Unlike their day time colleagues, those working at night are left with little to do after work so leave their precinct, taking their wallets with them.

	Night time workers	Daytime workers
Wynyard	9%	14%
Martin Place	10%	13%
Circular Quay	6%	8%
Town Hall	9%	8%

*Share of workers entering/exiting the precinct via transport nodes

NORTHERN GATEWAY

NIGHT WORKER JOURNEYS

In the Northern Gateway, night time workers are less mobile in their movement across the CBD compared to their day time counterparts.

CIRCULAR QUAY

THE ROCKS

POTTS POINT

GLEBE

CHINATOWN

"Almost 70% of our workforce is female. We're concerned about the safety of our people and after 8 o'clock we pay for taxis home."

Nathan Deveson
Managing Partner,
Minter Ellison

"We need experiences to keep people in the city afterwork. The places where Sydneysiders want to go will attract everyone else... snowballing the activity. Live music will make a difference, public activation and more regular, small-scale place making are key [initiatives]."

Michael Wheatley
Development Director,
AMP Capital

"We have a real problem with transport. We've got people who travel long distances to work and sometimes they have to finish at 11pm to make the last bus or train, even if there's a restaurant full of people."

Jan McKenzie
Director of Operations,
Café Sydney

Camperdown Health and Education Research Precinct

The Camperdown Health and Education Research Precinct (CHERP) is one of the largest and most comprehensive integrated precincts of its kind in Greater Sydney.

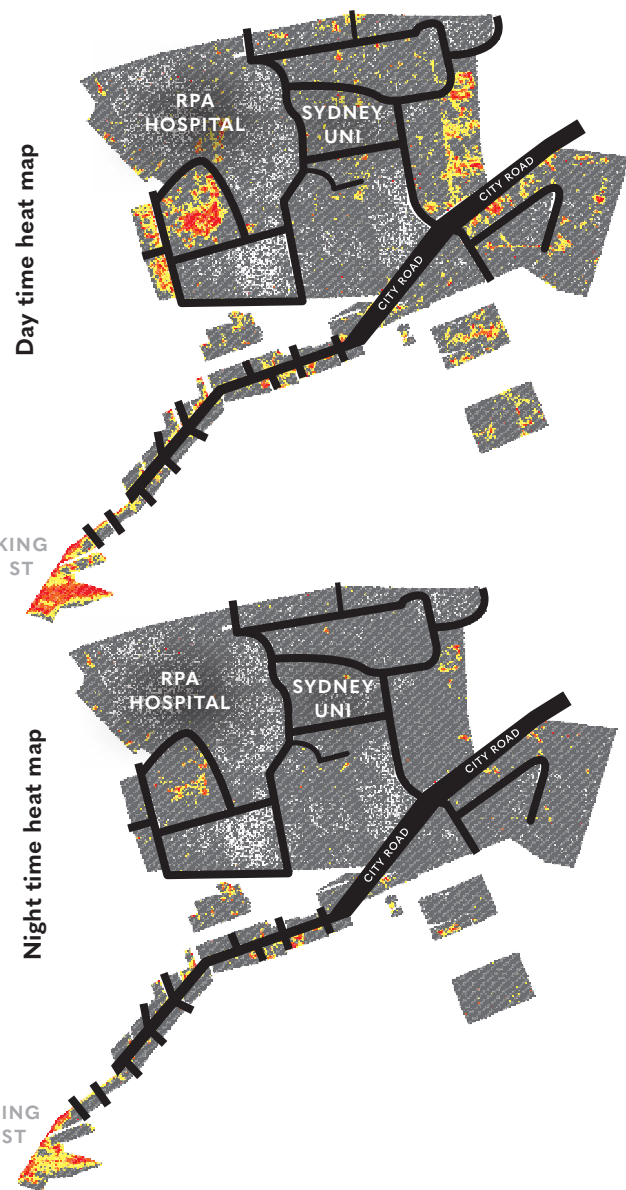
Two of the largest institutional employers are the Sydney Local Health District, that has 5,500 employees across the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and associated medical services, and the University of Sydney which employs 8,000 people across its 72-hectare Camperdown-Darlington campus. These two principal employers are joined by many smaller ancillary companies and services such as student housing, pathology, and primary health providers. These workers are combined with some 40,000 students and thousands of visitors, patients, and their families to make this precinct one of the busiest in Australia.



Payroll data from Sydney Local Health District indicates that there is a significant night time workforce throughout the shades of the night: although the size of this diminishes as the night progresses:

- Between 6.00pm - 9.00pm, approximately 655 employees are working on any given night at the hospital and surrounding services.
- Between 9.00pm - 2.00am that number falls to approximately 580 employees; and
- In the late night between 2.00am - 6.00am, approximately 290 employees are at work.

Human movement activity concentration and distribution across the day and night



24 HOURS

Night time economy workers:

2%

of visitors
(1 in 50)

Night time economy workers:

8%

of visits
(1 in 13)

NIGHT TIME 6PM-6AM

Night time economy workers:

4%

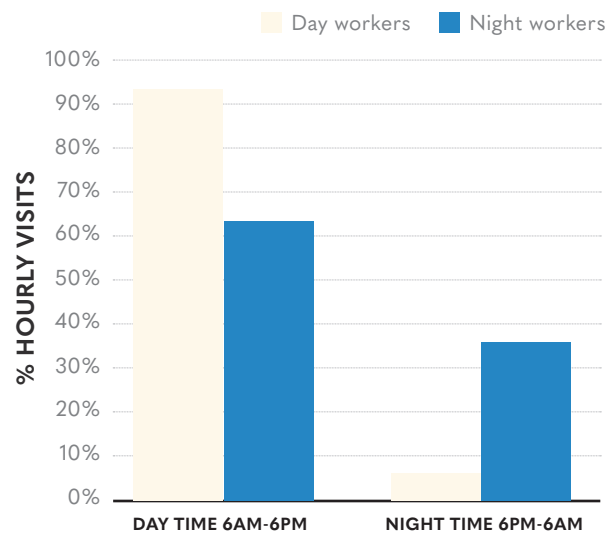
of visitors
(1 in 25)

Night time economy workers:

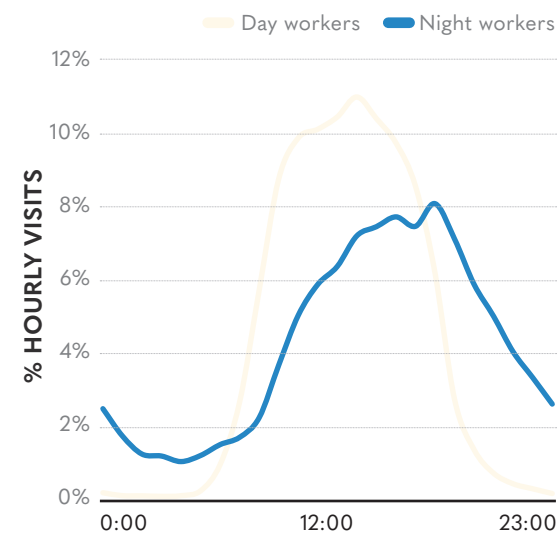
14%

of visits
(1 in 7)

*Proportion of visitors and visitation across a 24 hour period and at night (6.00pm-6.00am)



*Share of visitation for day and night workers



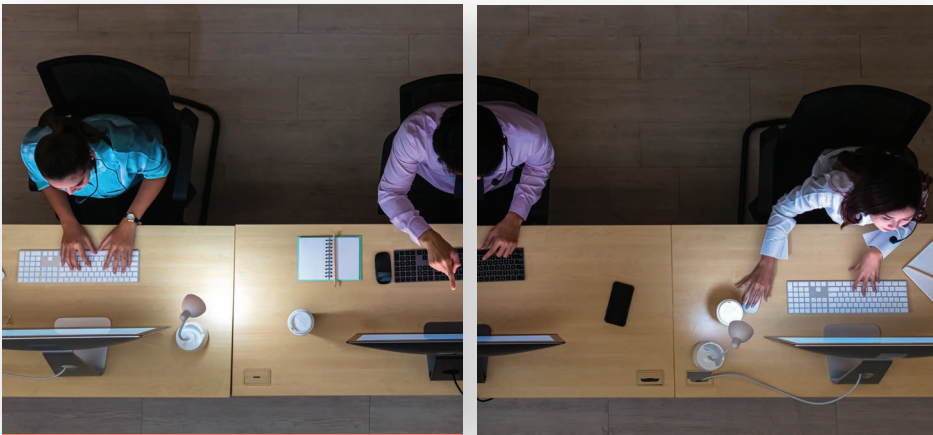
*Visitation profile for day and night workers

The workers in the health district include medical professionals, food services and other services, such as pathology, which operates 24/7.

Unlike the health district, the University is largely dormant for workers throughout the night.

Both the Sydney Local Health District and the University of Sydney have committed to a vision for an activated, integrated campus that will attract people 24/7. The University's current master plan includes several 24-hour zones, which are planned to be visible, safe areas that enable night time activities, both working or socialising.

Like the patterns evident in the Northern Gateway, in the CHERP there is a predominance of night workers also participating in the day time economy. These workers, unable to access services during their work time, are forced to access them before work. This lack of amenity highlights a significant downside and barrier for night workers.



"Historically, shift workers have not been served as well as they should be.

For our shift workers, that's a big issue. If they want to go home and sleep before their next shift and then get ready the next day... they can't access services the rest of us can, like banking."

Teresa Anderson
CEO, Sydney Local
Health District

	Royal Prince Alfred Hospital	University of Sydney	King Street Newtown
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital	-	4%	1%
University of Sydney	1%	-	2%
King Street Newtown	0%	2%	-

*Low levels of movement between key precinct destinations at night (6pm-6am)

	RPA Hospital		Sydney University	
	Day workers	Night workers	Day workers	Night workers
Redfern Station	16%	7%	20%	22%
Newtown Station	11%	8%	7%	6%
Central Station	20%	17%	21%	21%
Redfern, Newtown or Central Stations	28%	20%	31%	33%

*Share of workers entering/exiting the precinct via transport nodes

NIGHT WORKER JOURNEYS

Despite being surrounded by one of Sydney's premier night time districts, King Street Newtown, the human movement data shows that there is very low movement to and from this destination or between the RPA and the University.



Both institutions run shuttle bus services to Redfern station up to 10pm and do not encourage staff to walk to the station. Both institutions report employees not feeling safe walking to this station or, in the case of RPA, to King Street. The human movement data shows exceptionally small movement here.

"We're looking to international health precincts such as those at Yale or Harvard University, where their services go into the evenings to at least 9pm and support their shift workers to access essential services like the rest of us."

Teresa Anderson
CEO,

Sydney Local Health District

Moving Around at Night

Despite being surrounded by one of Sydney's premier night time districts, King Street Newtown, the human movement data from this precinct shows that there is exceptionally low movement to and from this active destination or between the Hospital and the University.

Both the Hospital and the University run shuttle bus services to Redfern Station up to 10.00pm and do not encourage employees to walk to the station. Both institutions report employees not feeling safe walking to this station or, in the case of the Hospital, to King Street. The human movement data reflects the outcome of this policy and approach with an exceptionally small number of movements between these places or to the train stations. This data also suggests that for Hospital workers other train stations, notably Central, are places of exit from the precinct potentially due to inadequate train service levels.

Key Takeouts

- The CHERP, while busy during the day has little to offer those working the night shift.
- Workers leave the precinct quickly after their shift is over but arrive early in order to access local services unavailable after traditional working hours.
- Few workers feel safe enough to access the nearby late night precinct of King Street after dark and there is little for students to do on campus after 6pm.
- Transport service levels are not meeting the needs of current night workers in the precinct.

Agglomeration – a tipping point

Sydney's economy is overwhelmingly dominated by service industries. We are the education, finance, technology, and health capital of Australia. While we also have a large manufacturing and construction sector, the vast majority, some eighty per cent, of our citizens work in service industries.

The main driver of growth in the service industries is what economists and geographers call 'agglomeration'. This clustering of likeminded companies together seeks to access a particular workforce and market or to take advantage of the 'spillover' of ideas and innovations that proximity brings. Clustering is increasingly taking place in our major town centres and central business districts and has been the main driver of new job creation in our economy. In the decade following the global financial crisis, fifty per cent of all new jobs in Australia were created within just two kilometres of the CBDs of Sydney and Melbourne.

While agglomeration and clustering are key drivers of jobs and economic growth, it is important that these clusters are planned to ensure they do not become economic monocultures or become 'boring' and lifeless. The financial services which cluster around Martin Place, and more recently Barangaroo, employ many thousands of people and is acknowledged to contribute nearly ten per cent of national gross domestic product.

However, Martin Place has increasingly become an economic monoculture. The cafes and restaurants are all geared to servicing the large day time workforce with coffees and lunchtime sandwiches and when the peak demand for coffee passes, they close.

This focus on just a single market crowds out other food and beverage offerings as well as other services. This is replicated across the various other clusters that shape Sydney's CBD, such as the legal services cluster around Phillip Street, or the retail cluster around Pitt Street Mall.

This pattern of the driving force of agglomeration exceeding its tipping point is replicated across various precincts as they organically evolve and grow creating some perverse economic and social outcomes. One such oddity exists in the Sydney CBD as while there is an array of harbourside restaurants, Sydney has one of the few central business districts in the world that does not have at its heart a clearly defined and distinct eat street.

While there are also some restaurants in the Northern Gateway, these are few and far between, with most outlets only catering for the more profitable day time coffee and lunch runs. Most night workers looking for a late-night meal need to journey to a somewhat distant Chinatown or the CBD fringe neighbourhoods of Surry Hills and Chippendale to find a place to eat.

As a result, these monocultures lack economic resilience. A weakness that has only been highlighted by the covid pandemic induced lock down where the hardest hit businesses have been those cafés and outlets whose financial dependency has been on the sole market generated from the workers that daily populate the buildings during the day.



Lessons from the CBD Precincts

Both the Northern Gateway and CHERP precincts provide good insight into how so much of Greater Sydney operates. During the day, these places support their workforce with a range of services which make working in them engaging and enjoyable. They have good transport infrastructure, are safe and walkable and have plenty of food options. Importantly they have a range of secondary services, such as banks, pharmacies and the like which we all need and want on a regular basis. However, after dark, amenity drops significantly, and services are mostly non-existent. Transport services wind down and close completely at midnight. The streets become dark, uninviting and feel unsafe. Food and beverage options become limited and secondary services close.

While these precincts have a relatively high number of night time workers, these workers are largely left wanting.

Both the Northern Gateway and CHERP are centered and structured around accommodating and catering for a day time workforce. Cafes serve a morning rush of commuters with coffees and a snack. These remain open to catch the lunchtime crowd but come 4.00pm they close for the day. In the case of the Northern Gateway many of the food outlets are housed in food courts on the lower level of office towers. They face inward to capture the day workers of the building and very few address the street.

When the food court closes in the mid-afternoon, the place becomes deserted and the streets become inhospitable and uninviting.

Any worker seeking a meal after 6.00pm is left with very limited choice.

Likewise, our transport system is heavily scheduled to service day workers, and mostly only those that work the traditional 9.00am -6.00pm working day. Our buses, trains and ferries gear up for the peak surge in passengers before 9.00am and likewise for the closing 5.00pm surge. After 6.30pm these transport services quickly scale down, offering less frequent services and to fewer locations. By 10.00pm most services have slowed to a trickle or stopped. Anyone needing transport after dark must make do with a limited public transport system, or opt for taxis or the private car.

Both the Northern Gateway and CHERP precincts suffer from being planned and built for daylight. The movement data demonstrates that while they both have a significant night time workforce; these workers do not move about in the same way their day time colleagues do.

Few access services at night and most quickly exit after their working day is over. These workers simply leave the city that does not work for them.

The Night time economy matters

With a history of advancing Sydney as a global, competitive, and liveable city for some two hundred years, we understand the critical relationship between the urban environment and productivity. We know that Sydney's productivity is being constrained by an economy centered and constrained by a 8.00am to 6.00pm economy.

We currently are not realising the full potential of our investments and assets. Our buildings and businesses, both public and private, are only being used half the time. We are also not realising the full potential of the skills and experience in the workforce as we are not supporting options providing a real and viable safe choice as to when to work.

Too often our investments and workforce sit idle after 6.00pm and only spring to life after 8.00am. It need not be like this.

Our city's economic vibrancy matters to business, community and to citizens. No one wants our city to be boring or dull. Sydney must be a city, and region, that has a reputation and a reality that enables the recruitment and retention of the best talent and attract the capital and investment our growing population needs.

We cannot afford to have a city that does not work for all of us.



FOUR A JOBS BLUEPRINT

The data underpinning this Paper was collected immediately prior to the covid pandemic and was at a time when the Sydney's economy was in its twenty ninth year of continuous economic growth. This has highlighted that even during 'normal' times these precincts' support for their night time economy, and their night workers, was poor.

With the covid induced lock down the low capacity of these precincts, and that of the CBD as a whole, to foster and facilitate a 24-hour economy was exacerbated.

It need not be like this. As our society and economy emerge from the pandemic it is critical that we take the opportunity to rethink, reshape and reinvest in these precincts to make them more interesting, attractive, vibrant, and resilient across the shades of night. We must consider what interventions, investments, and initiatives we can implement to not only recover from the pandemic, but now build back better and create a jobs blueprint.

Beyond the Traditional

One of the unforeseen benefits of the pandemic was the dramatic reshaping of how, when and where many of us work. Needing to keep our distance to keep safe, many of us were forced to work from home or to stagger our time in the office or workplace to ensure social distancing.

While disruptive, many found this new flexibility both liberating and productive. Freed from the strictures of the traditional 9.00am - 5.00pm working day, many have found they can deliver their work commitments when and where it suits them best. Some find the early morning a good time to start, preferring to have the afternoon to spend with family. Others prefer working into the evening leaving the morning free for exercise or even a sleep in.

Many have enjoyed not having to commute during the morning or evening peak and have been going to work at less congested times, saving time for more productive pursuits.

While some 'end' of the pandemic is in sight, and more and more workers are returning to the physical office, these employees are not seeking to revert to the confines of the traditional 9-5 working day. Many businesses and organisations are adopting staggered times for office work, encouraging employees to start their day earlier or later to ensure social distancing in office and transit and redesigning workspaces and practices to balance office collaboration and home-based work.

As can be seen from our analysis of the CBD and two of its key precincts, business as usual did not deliver for workers and did not deliver for a 24-hour economy.

We can address this by embracing the growing demand for a hybrid working day. Empowering employees to have some choice as to when and where they work is likely to support productivity. Employees will be better able to manage their work life balance and spend more quality time with family and loved ones. Employers and managers will still be able to meet their employees in person, instill corporate culture and manage outcomes while being able to ensure the workplace is operating in a safe, less congested, and efficient way.

At the city scale level this approach will drive significant benefits through a restructuring of Sydney's employment precincts to operate for longer, opening earlier and staying on into the evening. Cafes, restaurants, and other services will have the opportunity to open at 6.00am, knowing that there will be a strong market of workers looking for a caffeine hit, a healthy breakfast or a chemist. These businesses will also have the demand to stay open longer as the afternoon shift transitions into the evening with a density of workers that still need services, amenity, and safety. The later and longer working day will also allow these precincts to support those working into the night. Night workers will not have to access the services during the day because these will now be open and available before or after their nightshift.

Clustering for inclusion: revitalisation of the MLC Centre

Economic agglomeration and clustering is the leading driver of productivity and employment growth in cities across the world. It is one of the reasons why places like the Sydney CBD are the economic engines of the nation. While this clustering of industries into a few precincts is strongly supported, there is a better way to ensure these precincts are vibrant and more resilient as well as being better equipped to support their workforce, day and night.

One way to deliver this is to plan and manage these precincts to ensure they do not become purely economic monocultures, crowding out other economic and social activities and enterprises. One company trying to do just this is DEXUS which is redeveloping the lower levels of Sydney's iconic MLC Centre. With support from the State Government, DEXUS are reopening the long defunct Theatre Royal as a full-service live performance space. With the Theatre reopening there is an opportunity to refresh the MLC food court to cater for more than just the 9-5 legal and financial sector workers in the tower above. With a 1400 seat venue operating six nights a week, the plan is to keep the cafes, restaurants and bars in the MLC open well past the current mid-afternoon closing. In doing so the MLC has a real potential to become active and vibrant for workers and the well-heeled into the night.

This public – private collaborative and focused effort will be valuable for the businesses and outlets that will operate for longer and improve the amenity and services for the night workers both in the office towers and nearby. These night workers and potential night workers will have access to food outlets well into the night and with more activity other services in and around the MLC should follow suit, with the dry cleaners, barbers and banks all staying open into the evening. Diversifying the economic activities happening in this one building can have a positive flow on for the whole Northern Gateway.

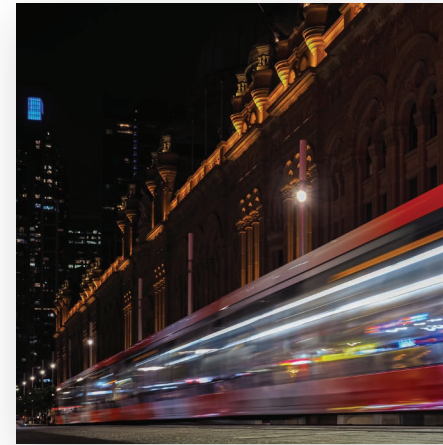
Better Public Transport

Embracing the staggered hybrid working day and having a more economically diverse CBD would significantly contribute to solving one of Sydney's wicked urban problems: transport and congestion.

Sydney's transport system is specifically designed to meet the surge of commuters in the morning and evening peak, when so many workers head to and from work into our town centres. Outside these peaks the service sits mostly idle. Despite significant investment from Government in new rail services, bridges, bike paths and tunnels, this system cannot meet the high demand of a city of over five million people working 9.00am -5.00pm.

Sydneysiders experience the longest and slowest commutes of any Australian city and we compare poorly with similarly sized cities internationally². Not because the transport system is poorly run or suffering from underinvestment, quite the contrary. It is inefficient because of its dependency on the traditional structure of our working day.

It need not be like this. If more workers adopted a staggered working day, we could spread the peak hour crush both earlier and later. We could use our



significant investments in transport more efficiently and effectively. We could offer citizens a better service, with roads less congested, trains less crowded and the whole system both faster and more reliable.

Running the transport system both longer and more efficiently would also diversify the economic structure of our town centres. Too many Sydneysiders do not access the city at night because there is no transport to get them home. A meal in the city or a theatre ticket can become prohibitively expensive when the cost of taxi or UBER are added at the end to get you home. Sydney is one of the few global cities where most of the 'eat streets' are located not its centre but in suburban neighbourhoods.

Finally, a flattening of the transport curve through staggered work hours would mean the transport system would be both safer and more financially viable. Having more people on a train in the early morning and later evening makes them feel more secure and safe. Likewise, reducing the length of time each day the system sits idle would significantly improve the underlying economics of mass transit.

²RMIT University <https://www.rmit.edu.au/news/all-news/2019/jul/increasing-commuting-times>

This is the time to take the lead on the inevitable challenge of the supply and demand. Workers and employers may hesitate or resist adopting the hybrid working week if the transport system cannot deliver them to work when they want to be there. Likewise, the system will struggle where services are diverted to earlier and later in the day if workers remain stuck in the 9.00am -5.00pm.

We need to encourage and embrace this change by combining the cultural shift to a staggered working day with some extra services in the early morning and later evening. As the pandemic has shown, we can be very flexible when we want to be, we need to be given the opportunity.



A Safer Night Time Experience

Interviews with the leading employers in both precincts during this research revealed a common problem with the perception of safety for their workers at night. The Sydney Health District highlighted that few workers felt safe accessing the King Street precinct late at night even though it was only a few hundred metres walk from the hospital. Workers had a strong preference to stay within the safety of the hospital and then quickly leave for home when their shift had finished.

Likewise, in the Northern Gateway employers cited having to regularly order in food for their employees because there was either no outlets open nearby or because workers did not feel safe leaving their building after dark. The proprietor of Café Sydney indicated that employees previously would hang around after work and socialise whereas now they go to fringe areas of the city or quickly leave for home knowing that the last train was the only affordable means of transport home.

This perception of a lack of safety becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy even though urban crime is at an all-time low. With few people moving around at night, the streets become deserted and uninviting making them feel unsafe. This can then be compounded as services and other economic activations close because there are few passing customers.

Sydney University once had a thriving night time based on venues such as Manning Bar and the Footbridge Theatre. These venues were crucibles for much of our city's talented musicians, comedians and artists and made the campus a destination for more than studying. However, in recent years the night time economy has struggled with students and their teachers feeling unsafe. The Footbridge Theatre has been closed for several years and Manning Bar is now closed most nights. Without the activation of these venues the campus feels even more deserted and unsafe.

This vicious cycle of closure and comfort can be reversed with targeted interventions and good urban design. Better lighting is a good start. As Sydney University is trialing, having certain sub-precincts well-lit and with more visible security can reduce the perception of a lack of safety, encouraging students to linger in the precinct after classes have finished.

Similarly, better urban design can help. Too many of the office towers in the Northern Gateway have a food court contained wholly within the sub stratum of the building.

They are all internally focused and when the food court closes mid-afternoon, they leave the surrounding streets empty and deserted. Encouraging new

buildings to provide food outlets which open onto and address the street, in the same way a traditional high street does, would be a valuable start. Cafes and restaurants might still close after the lunchtime rush, but some might be tempted to remain open to catch the passing evening commuters or even stay open at night to cater for the tourists in nearby hotels.

The redevelopment of the AMP building and surrounding block at Circular Quay will be known as Quay Quarter. This new complex will not have a food court per se, but rather a network of outlets linked by laneways which permeate the lower levels of the building. These will not only service the office workers by day, but also attract tourists and theatre goers from the nearby Opera House at night enlivening the whole precinct and providing much needed services for their night workers.

Having a more diverse economic structure across the CBD will also drive change. As the MLC Centre is looking to achieve with its bet on reopening the Theatre Royal, having a more people in a precinct after dark will make the place more vibrant and safer.



FIVE DELIVERING A MIXED-USE METROPOLIS

The economic consequences of the pandemic induced lock-down touch every section of society. The shuttering of so many businesses, the absence of international visitors and students, the loss of mobility impacted everyone to a greater or lesser extent. But perhaps the worst impact was experienced by businesses which operated in the CBD. With so many service sector workers working remotely, businesses which relied on their passing trade struggled. Cafes and food courts, couriers and cabbies found little demand for their services. With only the office worker as a customer many businesses went to the wall.

Even when much of the rest of the economy started to revive, the CBD has continued to languish. Many have found working from home more pleasurable and productive without the long commute and are enjoying their local neighbourhoods and centres, many of which actually boomed during the pandemic. Some workers remain hesitant to spend time on a train or bus. Some businesses are even questioning the merits of paying some of the highest office rents in world and are considering relocating to regional centres or moving to a virtual organizational structure. While much of our economy has displayed remarkable flexibility and resilience - 'pivoting' to new markets and adapting to changed circumstances, - the CBD continues to languish.

The pandemic has exposed some fundamental weaknesses in our CBD. The economic monocultures which dominate so many of the CBD's sub precincts and clusters lack resilience and diversity. When their industry cluster was sent home, they had no secondary market to target. The cafes in the food courts of the Northern Gateway could not pivot from being 8am to 3 pm operations to becoming late night restaurants because the office tower clusters which surround them don't have a big enough late-night economy or diversity of passing trade. They're stranded.

Decades of continuous economic growth has left our CBD with a sense of complacency. We can no longer rely on just sitting on the shores of the world's most beautiful harbour or at the centre of the nation's largest transport hub to attract workers and businesses. For the first time in a long time, Sydney faces competition, not just from Melbourne Singapore and Hong Kong, but from our own neighbourhood suburbs.

If the CBD is to return to its heyday as Australia's premier employment centre it needs to provide a more compelling offer to attract workers and companies back into its towers. It needs to ensure they can more easily access the place and at a time when they want to. It needs to ensure they are supported with services both day and night. And that the precincts they work in are safe, vibrant, and interesting.

Designing for both the day and the night: QUAY QUARTER SYDNEY

A good example of how the planning system can deliver both better urban design and a better nighttime economy is the Quay Quarter development in the heart of the CBD Northern Gateway.

The design and planning of Quay Quarter by AMP Capital is founded on ensuring and supporting diversity, creating a place where there is not an economic monoculture, rather a diverse new neighbourhood.

The redevelopment of two whole city blocks into a mixed use commercial, residential, and retail hub will mean it is home to both residents and workers and a new hub for the local community.

The two blocks are distinctly different. Quay Quarter Tower is catering for the blurring between business and leisure, attracting young, well-educated and highly mobile workforce by providing a rich and interesting tapestry of dining, entertainment and lifestyle amenity across an 18/7 timeframe.

The Quay Quarter Lanes block has a series of interconnecting laneways and heritage buildings that address the street with the explicit aim of delivering dining and lifestyle experiences at all times, from early morning to post-theatre suppers and a late-night bar.

The retail, food and entertainment offering will do more than just cater for the day time office worker. With expanded operating hours it will provide breakfast or an early workout or yoga session and the bars, restaurants and gyms will remain open into the evening for those working, or playing, late.

The inclusion of people living in the precinct will create a ready-made market for night time activity. By creating a place for both day time workers once they leave the office and offering quality amenity and services for night time workers, it will become a mainstay of a more vibrant and active night time economy.



KEY MOVES

When it comes to a 24-hour economy Sydney's CBD is under performing. Three quarters of the visitation and people movement, a key driver for economic activity, is generated during traditional office hours.

With buildings vacant, shops closed, streets empty, and services turned off, the remaining half of the 24 period generates very little economic value.

The consequences of this imbalance in activity is that assets like buildings are not being used to their fullest capacity while others such as transport are over used in small windows of time.

It also means that those who must or choose to work outside of traditional hours are faced with poorer access, amenity and opportunity.

The changes and challenges of the covid pandemic provide the opportunity for business and government to work together to deliver a 24-hour economy. A 24-hour economy that not only drives the hospitality and tourism sector but one that puts all jobs at the centre and provides equality of opportunity day and night.

- 1 Embrace the hybrid working day to encourage employees to stagger their time in the office with some starting earlier and others working later. This will create a diverse night worker economy and a better distribution of activity throughout the day and night, maximising the use of asset and infrastructure to ensure the CBD functions more productively and efficiently.
- 2 Support the hybrid working day by providing extended transport services earlier and later in the day. By encouraging earlier and later transport options, we can reduce the peak hour crush on our networks, enhance health and safety and better support those who work the night shift.
- 3 Developers, property owners and Governments should continue to work together to ensure that, in supporting greater intensification and agglomeration, we do not crowd out other activities and enterprises which make places more resilient, interesting, and vibrant.
- 4 Ensure our planning and approval process encourages more diverse activities and uses in new developments. The economic monocultures of the traditional office tower need to be replaced with developments which ensure an active street frontage and diversity of day and night time activities and services.
- 5 The CBD economy needs to end the complacency which has seen it suffer the worst of the economic downturn induced by the pandemic. It will need to work harder and offer more if it is to attract the best and brightest to work there. A return to business as usual won't work.

WITH THANKS

Great cities do not happen by chance - they require inspiration, aspiration and hard work.

Business Sydney would like to thank our research partners Urbis for their invaluable work, analysis and commitment to this Paper.

We would also like to thank those individuals and organisations that shared their insights and made contributions including:

- Gina Finocchiaro, Sydney Local Health District
- James Curnow, University of Sydney.
- Jan McKenzie, Café Sydney
- Matt Morris, City of Sydney
- Michael Wheatley, AMP Capital
- Nathan Deveson, Minter Ellison
- Pam Garrett, Sydney Local Health District
- Teresa Anderson, Sydney Local Health District

BUSINESS
SYDNEY

URBIS

NIGHT
WORKS