

Dissecting and tracking socio-spatial disadvantage in urban Australia

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Background/context

1

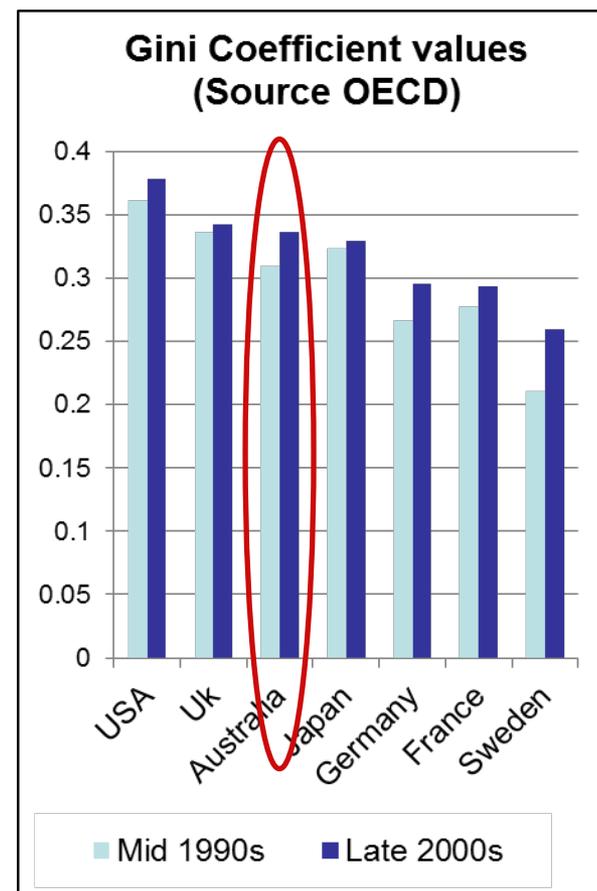
- Paper draws on analysis of spatially concentrated disadvantage in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane
- Place-based disadvantage recognised as priority in social inclusion agenda
- Key underpinning research hypotheses:
 - a) Disadvantaged places have diverse social and housing market structures, and
 - b) Appropriate policy responses vary accordingly
- Builds on Australian ‘geography of poverty’ tradition going back to 1970s
- Presentation focuses on outputs from stats analysis—framing structure for primary fieldwork



Background/context

2

- Australia's income distribution less skewed than UK/US—but rising inequality post-90s
- De-industrialisation limited compared with many other OECD countries
- Little post-industrial heritage of blighted localities or regions
- Ongoing migration-fuelled population growth—approx 2% p.a.
- Highly urbanised—Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane = 50% of national population
- 96% of housing privately owned



Research questions and presentation structure

1. What is the (people-based) geography of disadvantage across the three cities?
2. How can we understand and capture heterogeneity of disadvantaged areas?
3. How is the geography of disadvantage changing over time and what are the policy implications?

Step 1

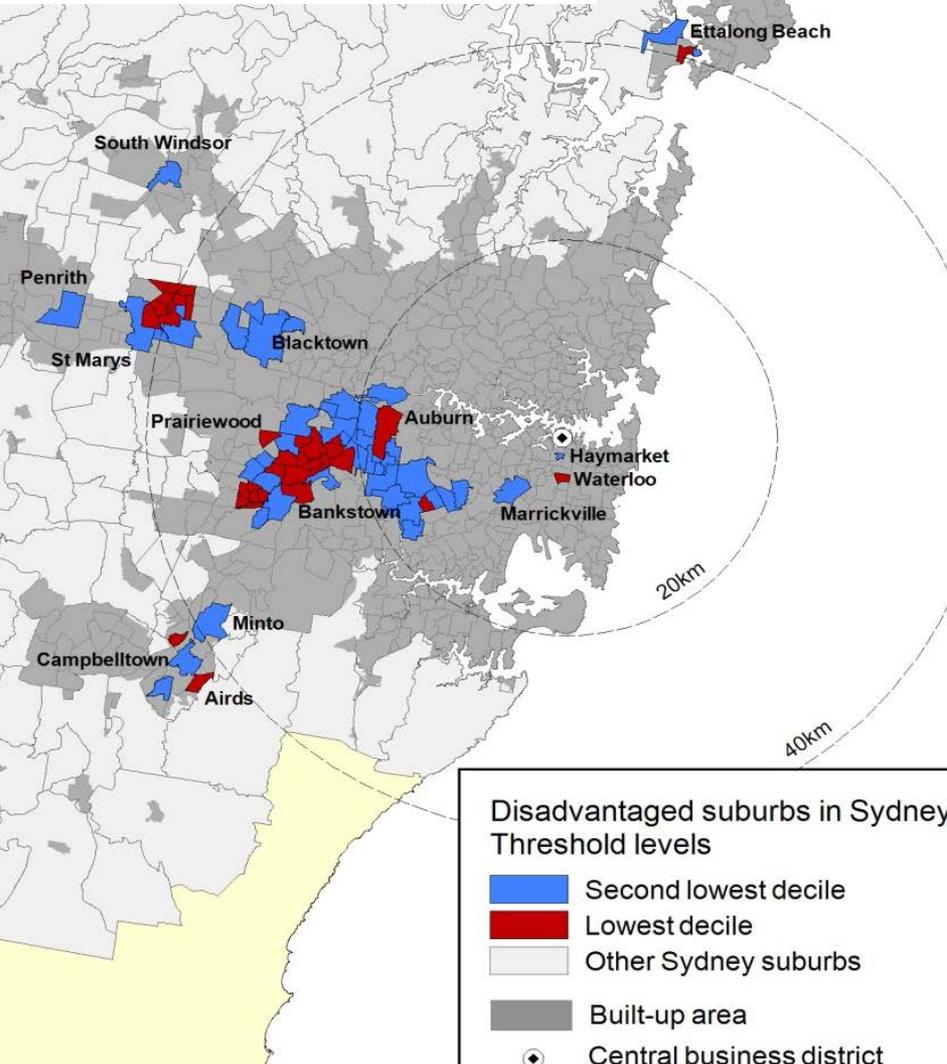
Pinpointing disadvantaged places

- Population-based concept of disadvantage adopted
- Reference made to ABS census-based index of deprivation—Socio-Economic Indicator for Areas (SEIFA)
- Analysis based on CDs (avg popn: 600) and suburbs (avg popn: 6,000)
- ‘Disadvantaged area’ threshold: lowest SEIFA quintile, nationally
- Variant analysis used SEIFA lowest decile threshold

Key outputs of analysis Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane	
Disadvantaged suburbs	177
	10%
Population in disadv suburbs as % of total city population	16
% of disadv CDs in disadvantaged suburbs	72

Disadvantaged suburbs in Sydney, 2006

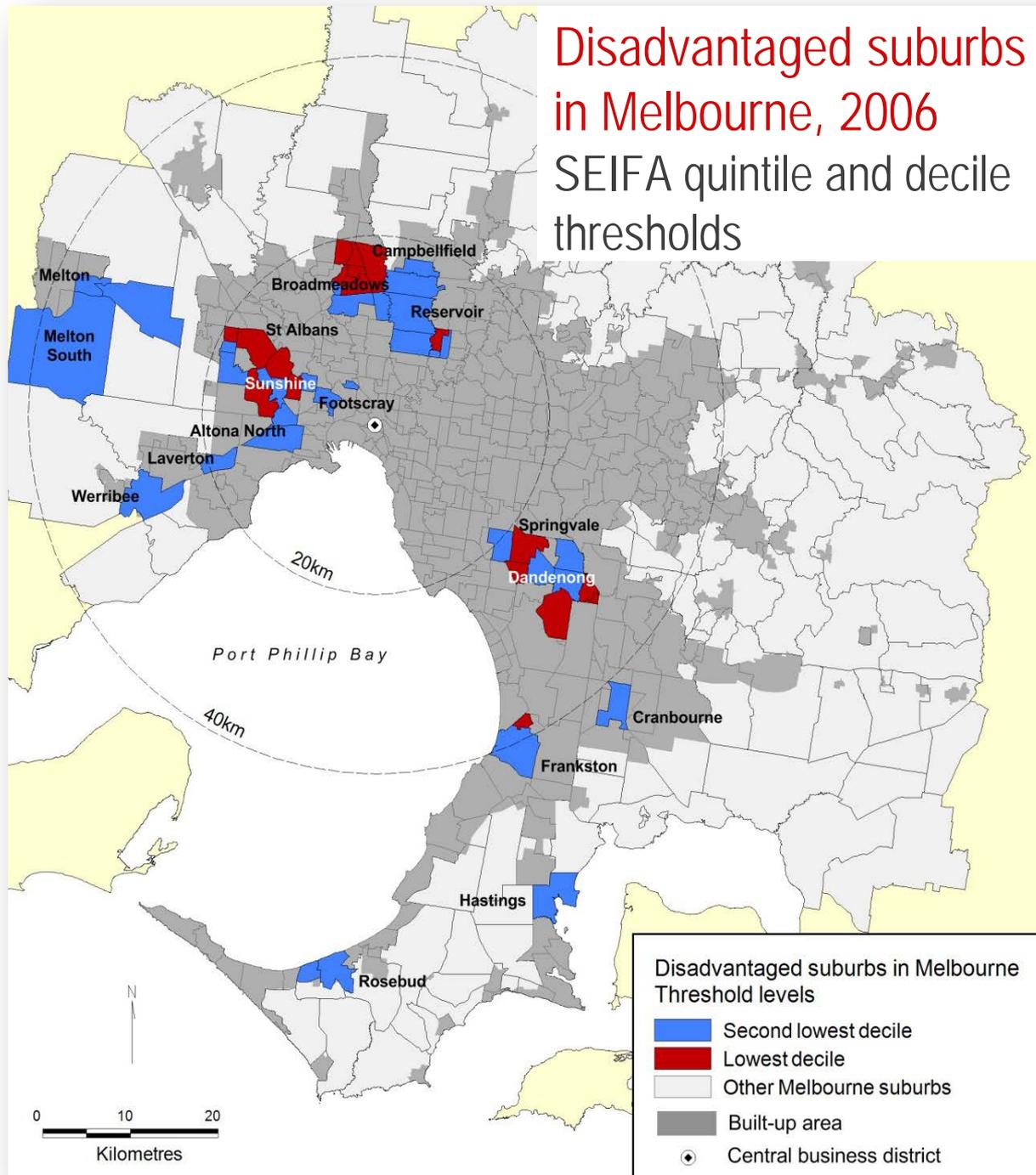
SEIFA quintile and decile thresholds

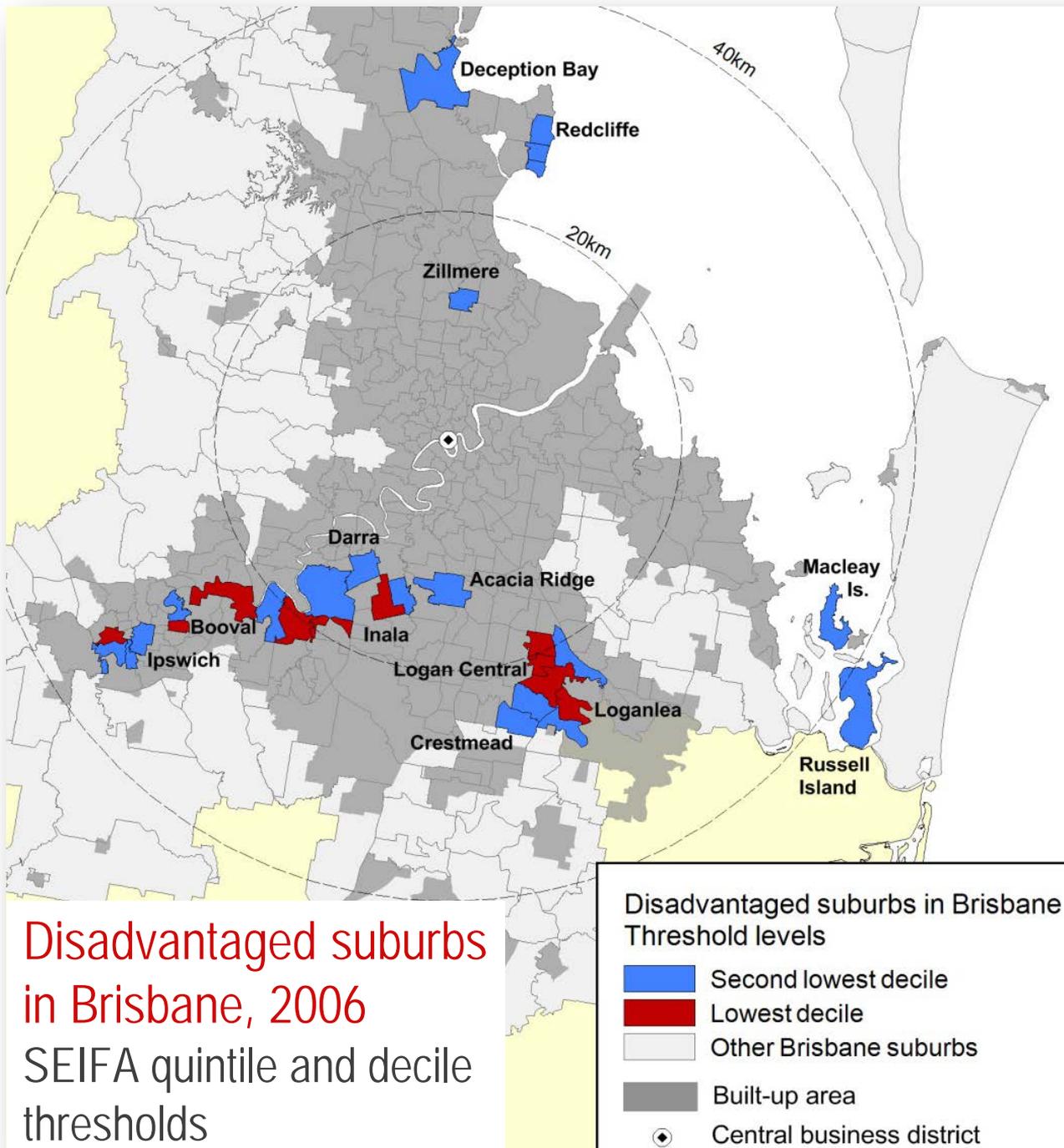


- In all three cities, disadvantaged suburbs clustered in middle and outer urban locations
- In Sydney, agglomerations to W, SW and far NE of metro area
- Red areas show lowest decile disadvantaged suburbs
- Geography of disadvantage radically reshaped since 1980s
- Key role of inner area gentrification
- Rental housing disproportionate, but public housing only 13%; home ownership: 54%

Disadvantaged suburbs in Melbourne, 2006

SEIFA quintile and decile
thresholds





**Disadvantaged suburbs
 in Brisbane, 2006**

SEIFA quintile and decile
 thresholds

Typical low-income housing forms in Sydney



Step 2

Classifying disadvantaged places

- Suburb-level census data analysis of:
 - Residential mobility
 - Demographic profile
 - Area socio-economic trajectory
- Cluster analysis identifies common permutations in indicator scores
- Four distinct disadvantaged area categories emerged

Dimension	Indicator(s)
A Residential mobility	% of hhlds moved in last 5 years
	% of hhlds moved from overseas in last 5 years
B Lifecycle stage/demographic profile	% over 65s not in labour force
	% young people
	% single parent families
	% couples with dependent children
	% lone person households
C Socio-economic status change over time	2001–11 % pt change - unemployment rate
	2001–11 % pt change - early school leavers
	2001–11 % pt change - 15–24 NEETs
	2001–11 % pt change - low income hhlds
	2001–11 % pt change - low skilled workers

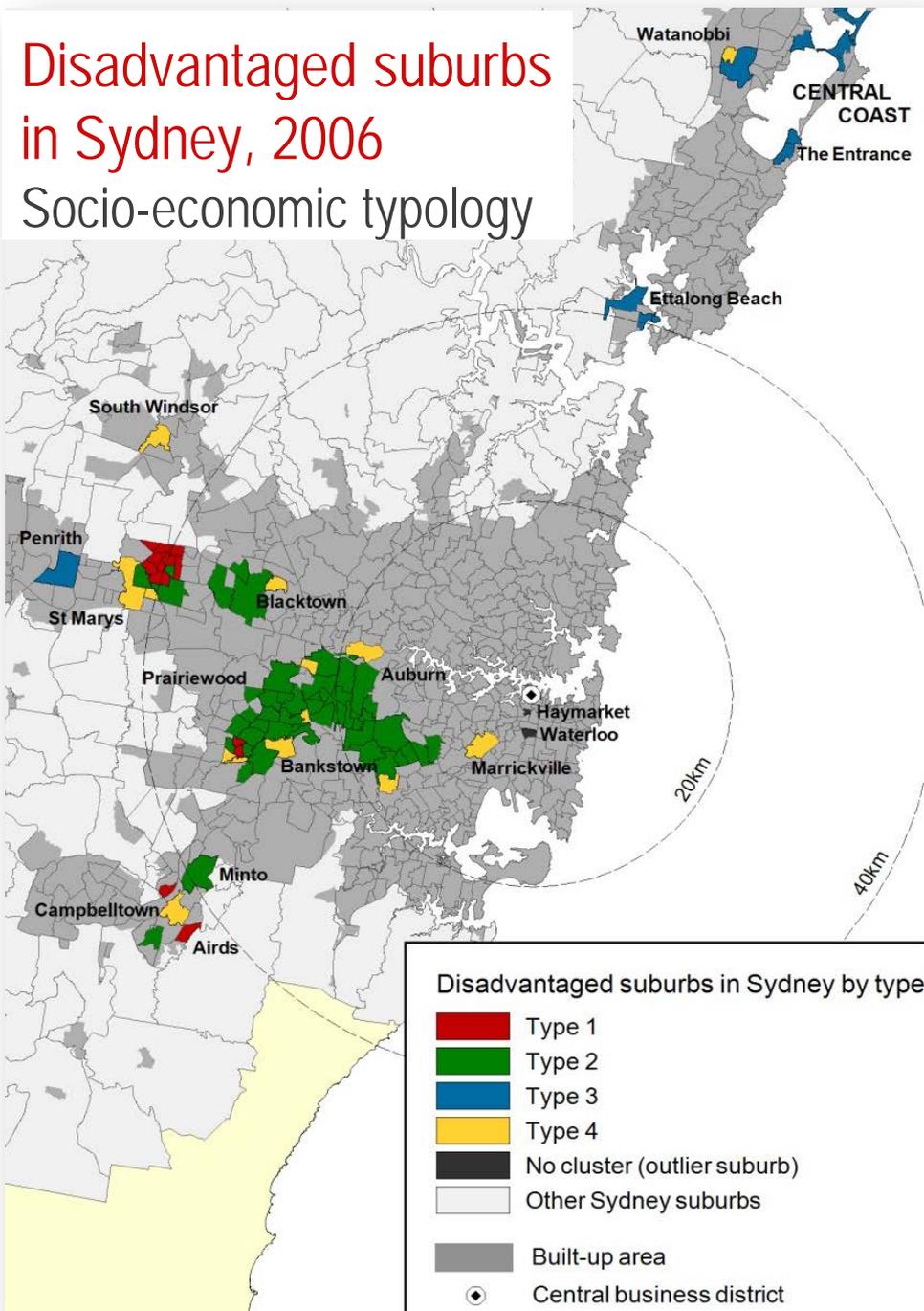
Typology results

Summary

	Distinguishing socio-economic characteristics	Housing market designation
Type 1	High on young people & single parent households	‘Isolate suburbs’ High social rental; median sales prices and rents far below city-wide norms
Type 2	High on overseas movers	‘Lower price suburbs’ Relatively affordable house prices and distinct low rent market
Type 3	High on residential mobility, (domestic movers), high on older people	‘Marginal suburbs’ Remote from mainstream markets; high concentration of low sales prices & rents
Type 4	High on overseas movers, high on reduced unemployment & incidence of low status jobs	‘Dynamic improver suburbs’ Sales prices and rents moving rapidly towards city-wide norms

Disadvantaged suburbs in Sydney, 2006

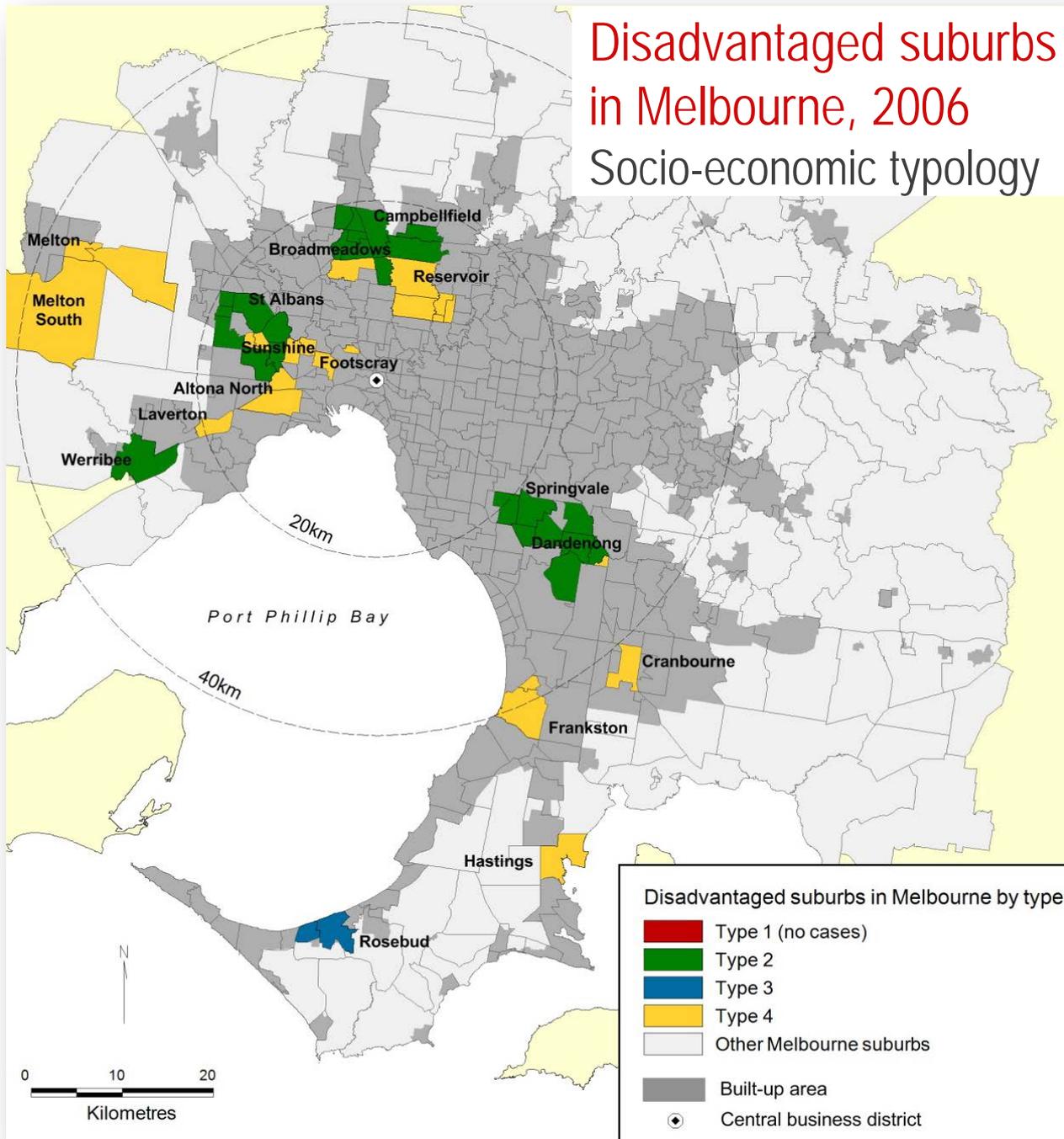
Socio-economic typology



- Disadvantaged area types highly spatially grouped and/or spatially distinctive
- Type 1 area distribution influenced by public housing geography
- Type 3 areas v peripheral
- Types 2 and 4 distinguished by accessibility
- Observations also hold true for patterns in Melb and Brisbane

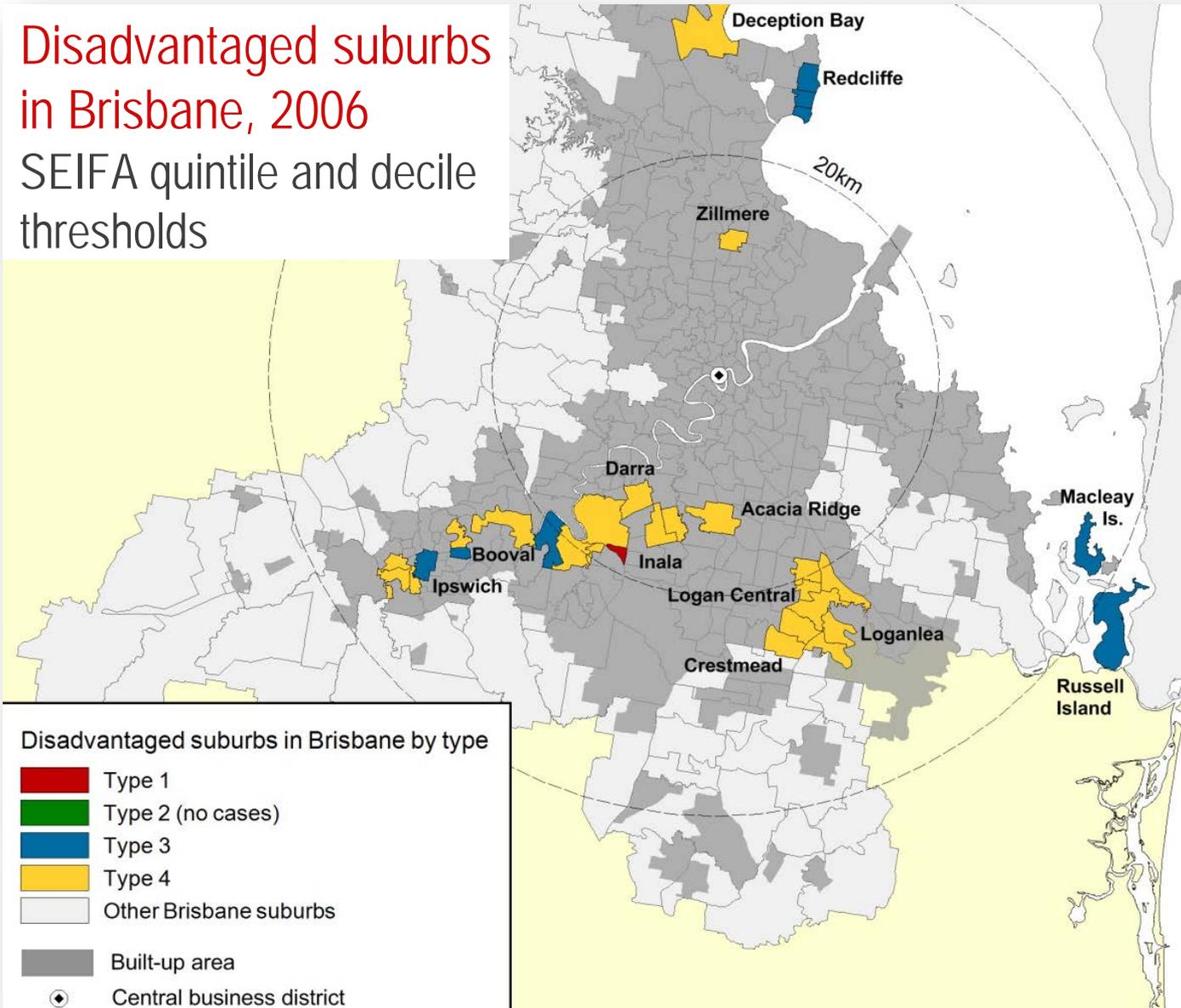
Disadvantaged suburbs in Melbourne, 2006

Socio-economic typology



Disadvantaged suburbs in Brisbane, 2006

SEIFA quintile and decile thresholds



Change over time 2006–11

- SEIFA rankings 2006 and 2011 compared to analyse change over time
- Socio-spatial segregation continuing to intensify as shown by:
 - Rising % of disadv small areas in disadv suburbs
 - Faster increase in ‘most disadv’ suburbs

Measures of change, 2006–11	
% of suburbs disadv 2006	10
% of suburbs disadv 2011	11
Absolute change 2006-2011	+1
% of disadv CDs in disadv suburbs 2006	72
% of disadv SA1s* in disadv suburbs 2011	74
Absolute change 2006–11	+2
% chg in no of disadv suburbs—quintile threshold	+6
% chg in no of disadv suburbs—decline threshold	+22

The spatial anatomy of change over time

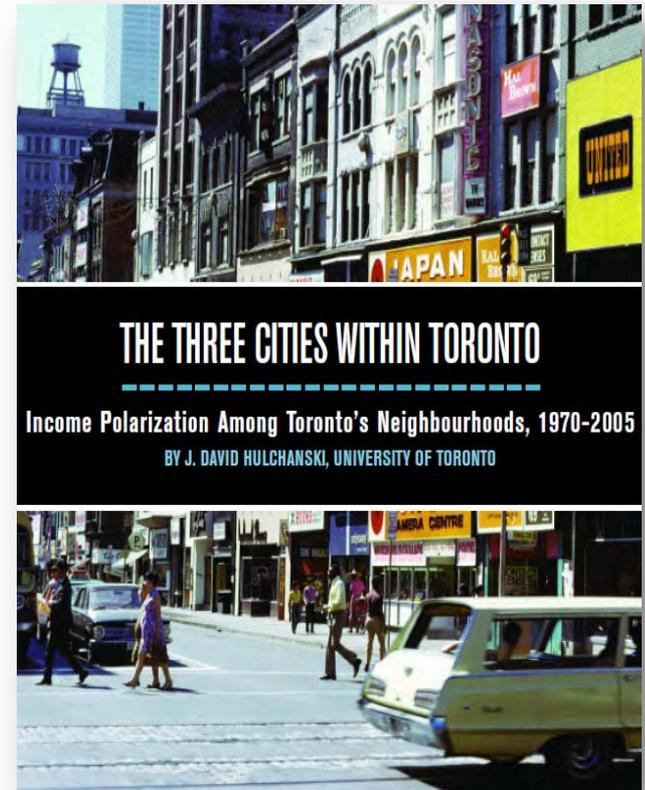
- *Net change* in no of disadvantaged suburbs reflects dynamic process—not just minor addition to existing disadvantaged cohort
- ‘Becoming disadvantaged’ areas include disproportionate no of suburbs akin to ‘isolate’ and ‘marginal’ areas—local housing market conditions implicated as underlying driver of evolving social geography
- Suburbs akin to Type 4 (‘dynamic improver’) areas overrepresented within ‘ceasing to be disadvantaged’ cohort

Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane

	All disadv suburbs 2006	All disadv suburbs 2011	Ceased to be disadv 2011	Became disadv 2011
Avg distance from CBD (km)	28.7	30.2	23.1	35.6

International contextualisation

- Post-2000 suburbanisation of disadvantage a general trend in US cities:
 - poor population ↑53% 2000–10 in suburbs of 100 largest US metro areas: cities ↑23% (Berube & Kneebone 2011)
- Disproportionate rise in suburban poverty in Canada post-1970—‘The Three Cities of Toronto’ (Hulchanski 2011)
- UK—similar dynamics moderated by more extensive social housing but (esp in London) catalysed by post-2010 welfare reforms
- Inner city (high value) social housing disposal debated

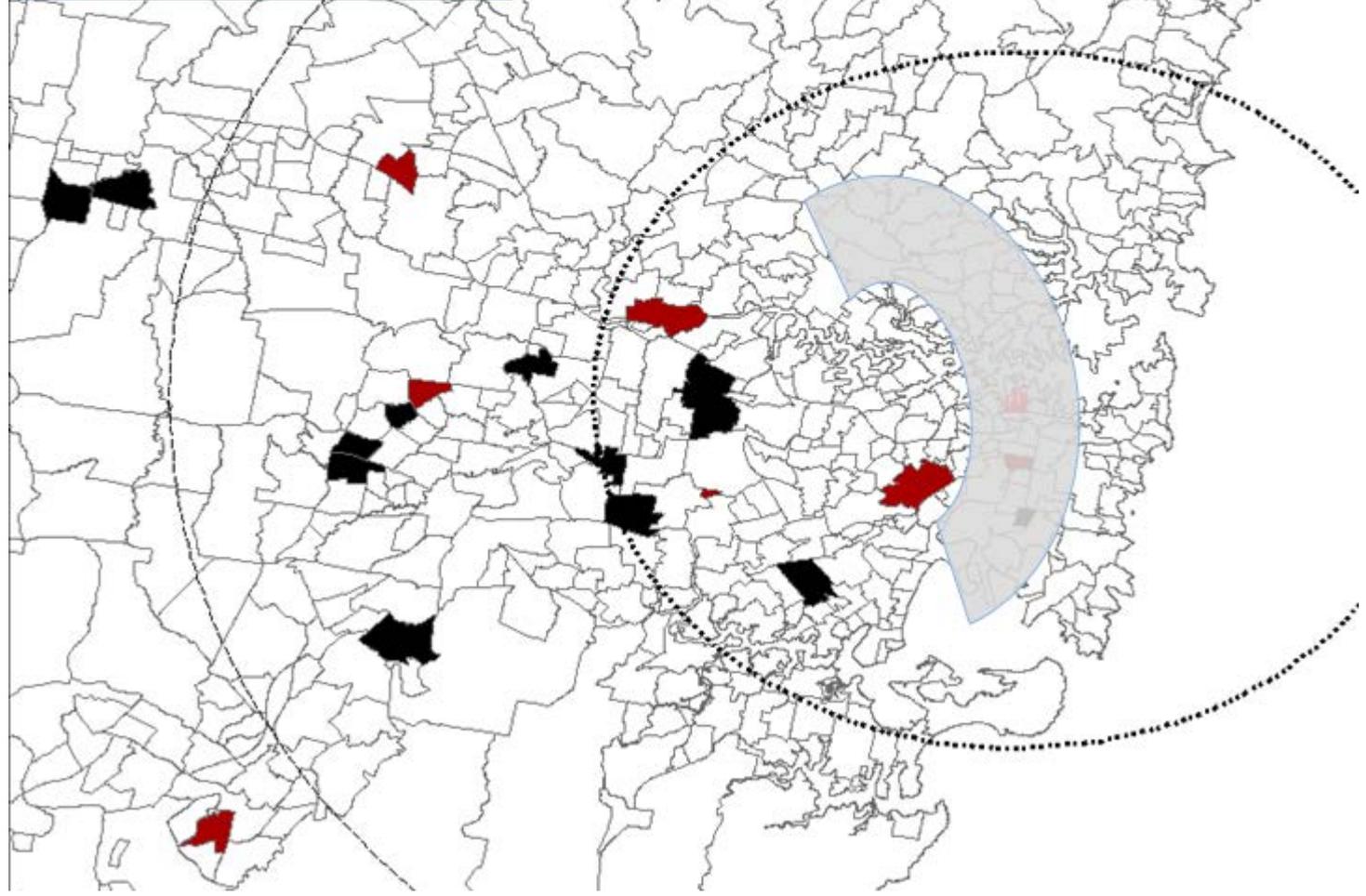
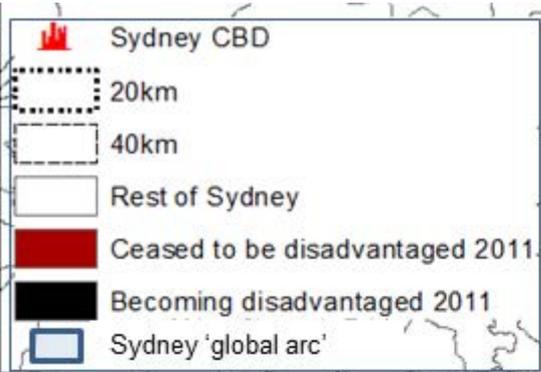


Suburbanisation of disadvantage: does it matter?

- Less mobile populations increasingly in less accessible places—potentially remote from jobs and services
- General suburbanisation of employment in US means reduced access to services possibly more problematic
- In Australia's mono-centric cities CBDs and inner areas continue to dominate 'knowledge economy' job growth [next slide]
- Sydney: jobs growth in 'global arc' 2.1% pa but disadv population increasingly dispersed to Western Sydney—job growth 0.5% pa Without assertive employment planning policy, Australia's major cities face policy choice:
 - Protect and promote inner area affordable housing (e.g. via assertive inclusionary zoning) or
 - Large-scale transport investment to facilitate greater commuting flows

Disadvantaged suburbs in Sydney

Change over time 2006-11



Summary

- Distinct types of disadvantaged places can be identified—likely to differ in extent to which ‘a policy problem’
- Strong connections between local housing market conditions and area socio-economic profiles/trajectories
- Disadvantage becoming more polarised and more suburbanised
- Especially problematic in mono-centric cities where that very mono-centrism is a driving force of the process itself

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