

Understanding Household's Residential Location Choice in Colombo Pettah's Peri-urban Settlements and the Implications for Sustainable Urban Growth

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Arthy Yogalingam^{1(*)}

*Department of Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, University of Moratuwa,
Sri Lanka*

(*) E.mail: arthy156@gmail.com

This study was conducted against the backdrop of the rapid physical expansion of Pettah, Colombo and the concomitant growth of peri-urban settlements of mainly residential land use around the city's main built-up area. Adopting the case study approach and selecting Newham Square and Ginthupity as study areas, it sought to understand the factors that inform households' decisions to live in Colombo Pettah's peri-urban settlements. Based on households' likelihood of change of residence in the future and their stated residential location preferences, the implications for sustainable urban growth were examined. Also, this research was conducted through observations, photographic surveys, questionnaires and interviews with those who live in the selected case study areas. The study found that family relations, relatively low land price, and house rents, as well as work-place proximity, were the most significant reasons underpinning households' choice of the urban periphery. In view of the aggregate cost-reducing advantages associated with the urban periphery therefore, the study concludes that rapid expansion of the city into peripheral areas due mainly to residential development will continue to occur. Therefore, suggests that urban development policies that aim at securing livable conditions and promoting mixed-use development in the dominantly commercial central areas of the city will be crucial to managing growth and averting unsustainable urban expansion

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