

Report to the Minister for Planning

No 5: for the period ending 30 June 2017

Lucy Turnbull
Chief Commissioner

Sarah Hill
Chief Executive Officer

Introduction

The enthusiasm that people have for Greater Sydney is highlighted by the fact that tens of thousands of Sydneysiders have engaged with the Commission and participated in the development of strategic plans for our city. In our first 18 months we've engaged with:

- more than 10,000 people face to face;
- 300 community groups;
- every Council in Greater Sydney on multiple occasions;
- 48 Social and Environmental peak groups on multiple occasions;
- 31 industry groups including quarterly roundtables;
- 7 peak youth groups and 400 school students; and
- 2,000 people through an online survey.

The Commission's draft District Plans and Three Cities Vision, *Towards our Greater Sydney 2056*, have been viewed 38,000 times on our website and we received over 2,300 formal submissions. We have listened to what's important to Sydneysiders and our draft strategic plans are being further developed to reflect these things:

- retaining local character and the many elements people love about Greater Sydney, at the same time ensuring that we prepare for projected population growth and the infrastructure needed to support it;
- the need for a variety of housing types and price points, emphasising housing affordability and affordable rental housing;
- green spaces, great places, more trees, biodiversity and energy efficiency;
- the need for better coordination between land use and transport; and
- capitalising on new technology and enhancing economic assets.

In June, the Commission was recognised with an Excellence in Public Policy Award at the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue *Out There* Summit. The award cited the Commission's 'one government' approach to planning and an "unwavering commitment to engage with key stakeholders and the community". The judges noted that the Commission had set a new benchmark for collaboration and planning, and that the prioritisation of Greater Parramatta and the Olympic Peninsula and the Badgerys Creek aerotropolis has been "ground-breaking".

We are confident that the vision people are helping to create for Greater Sydney will lead to a more productive, liveable and sustainable city – and a place that has been planned first and foremost for its people.

A new Greater Sydney Region Plan

In the first half of this year the Commission reviewed the current Greater Sydney Region Plan, *A Plan for Growing Sydney*, and the Minister for Planning asked us to develop a new strategic plan – this will be a Plan built on a vision for a metropolis of three cities where the people of Greater Sydney live within 30 minutes of their jobs, education and health facilities, the services they need and open spaces; a Plan that respects and enhances Greater Sydney in its landscape, the character of our local neighbourhoods and, at the same time, plans for our growing population for generations to come.

This will be the first Greater Sydney Region Plan prepared by an independent Government agency. It is being developed in close collaboration with Transport for NSW and Infrastructure NSW, to ensure that land use, transport and infrastructure planning is aligned and working towards the same vision for Greater Sydney.

The Commission aims to present the new draft Greater Sydney Region Plan to Government in late 2017 and to release it on formal public exhibition soon after.

Revised draft District Plans

As already reported, over 2,300 submissions were received by the Commission earlier in 2017. Submissions indicated that:

- People want an integrated strategy for Greater Sydney that brings together land use planning with transport and infrastructure provision;
- The community, investors and local councils want better information and certainty about the locations and means to support the delivery of new homes, infrastructure, green spaces, services and jobs;
- There is a greater likelihood of increasing the number of highly skilled jobs and innovation if we plan to grow job opportunities close to universities and training providers;
- People want their city to look great, they expect new buildings to be examples of thoughtful, high quality urban design;
- People are passionate about trees, especially to help shade and cool our city. They also want to preserve the local biodiversity and protect and grow our green grid;
- Housing supply and affordability need to be carefully considered, especially as the city continues to grow;
- We must be smarter about the way we use our resources and make sure we prioritise sustainability; and
- Being close to services, public transport and a diverse range of job opportunities is vital for the liveability of Greater Sydney.

The top five issues raised in relation to draft District Plans:

1. Vision and priorities for the District – generally supportive; some suggestions for improvement/refinement;
2. Metropolitan rural areas – supportive of protecting the existing boundary for the metropolitan rural area; 664 submissions received in relation to a single issue – protection of the rural area at South Dural;
3. Housing density – concerns about increased housing density (particularly in the Central District) and what this means for supporting infrastructure such as schools and transport; local support for more residential zoned land in the West District (particularly in areas in proximity to Western Sydney Airport);
4. Transport planning – need for improved transport infrastructure including new rail lines, better road networks and improvements to existing services; and
5. Open space including recreation facilities and walking/cycling – support for the protection and expansion of existing open space areas, urban tree canopy and the addition of more active transport options such as safe cycling.

The top five issues raised in relation to *Towards our Greater Sydney 2056* were:

1. Vision and priorities – supportive of the ‘three cities concept’;
2. Housing density – supportive of additional housing density, but concerns about what this means for supporting infrastructure such as transport, education and open space;
3. Open space – supportive of the Green Grid and protection and expansion of open space; suggestions made for improvements to walking and cycling networks;
4. Housing diversity and affordability – supportive of the affordable rental housing targets with questions raised as to why they couldn’t be higher than 5-10% and applicable to moderate incomes, and how they would be implemented; and
5. Green Grid – in addition to general support, issues were raised in relation to the need to fund new open space and embellishment projects.

An *Interim Submissions and Engagement Report* analysing feedback received on the Commission’s Three Cities Vision, *Towards our Greater Sydney 2056* and the draft District Plans has been made available on the Commission’s website. Revised draft District Plans taking account of stakeholder feedback are being prepared and are likely to be re-exhibited in late 2017.

Collaboration Areas

The draft District Plans identified Collaboration Areas as places where a significant productivity, liveability or sustainability outcome can be better achieved when all levels of Government and in some cases the private sector or landowners collaborate on an agreed outcome. Collaboration Areas have the potential to become centres of economic productivity based on their ability to provide and support knowledge-intensive jobs with a focus on health and education, housing diversity in a mixed-use precinct, and attractive destinations for locals and visitors.

Collaboration Areas will generally include preparation of a Place Strategy and Infrastructure Plan, depending on the type of issues being considered.

The Commission is already working with key stakeholders, relevant councils and State agencies to identify planning and infrastructure opportunities in the four Collaboration Areas at Liverpool, Penrith, Camperdown-Ultimo and Randwick.

Local Green Grid priorities funded through the Metropolitan Greenspace Program

In 2016 the Commission developed green space priorities with councils and this year the Minister has allocated a record \$4 million in green space grants to Greater Sydney and Central Coast councils to work towards realising these initiatives. 19 projects have been funded to enhance parks, waterways and public spaces. A list of funded projects is available on the Commission's website.

Parramatta Road Urban Amenity Improvement Program

In late 2016 the Commission assumed responsibility for implementation of the Urban Amenity Improvement Program for the Parramatta Road Corridor. The Commission is working with six councils to deliver 32 projects that will produce 12 hectares of open space and urban plazas, three new playing fields and new walking and cycling facilities in Granville, Auburn, Homebush, Burwood-Concord, Kings Bay, Leichhardt, Taverners Hill and Camperdown. Councils have submitted proposals in the first stage of a two-stage process. These are under review and will progress to design stage in the second half of the year.