

Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan

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Chief Commissioner
Greater Sydney Commission

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By email: [Redacted]

Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan

I take this opportunity to commend the GSC on its work to develop its first Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan. The Plan does not disappoint in providing a definitive vision to guide the next stage of Greater Sydney's growth encompassing not only quantitative but also qualitative aspects.

The vision of a Greater Sydney metropolis built upon the three "unique in identity" yet complementary cities is a defining moment in the history of our great city on a scale equivalent to, if not surpassing, the development of the Cumberland Plan in 1951. In terms of identifying optimum land use strategies, specific areas to accommodate population and jobs growth, and the requirement for critical supporting infrastructure it delivers the necessary guidance for both public and private sector interests to more effectively contribute to making Sydney a truly global city. This is especially the case for Greater Western Sydney an area that takes in the Western Parkland City and the Central River City.

I also acknowledge the GSC's efforts to engage with local government and the benefits of doing so are evident throughout its analysis, strategies, and recommendations. Long may this be the case!

Nonetheless while the draft GSR Plan makes a fair attempt at addressing infrastructure needs aligned to growth outcomes, there is clearly an opportunity to give this aspect more consideration in the Final GSR Plan, this may include;

- The nature of and the associated challenges of delivering "enabling" infrastructure versus "social" infrastructure could be explicitly defined and treated as separate issues.
- The policy framework and the sheer impact of traffic congestion on the development of Greater Sydney merits greater attention in the GSR Plan.
- The omission of Blacktown, in terms of its current status and potential to contribute to Greater Western Sydney in the future, as more than just a strategic centre is puzzling.
- The unrealised opportunity to increase the number of railway stations on the existing western rail line from Blacktown to Penrith and creating new liveable communities

Among many excellent outcomes of the draft GSR Plan, we particularly like;

- Recognition of waste as an essential service - of equal importance to water and energy. While the importance of waste is clear to councils who manage it day to day, waste is very rarely acknowledged as a critical service in a state planning documents.
- A stronger focus on place and place management is also evident in the document, reflecting a local government - style approach to development. This includes looking at the interrelationship between projects from various portfolios and using community feedback to guide future action plans.
- The draft Plan outlines a number of potential rail links for Western Sydney including several connecting our region with Western Sydney Airport and the Central City.
- The plan acknowledges urban heat as a key stressor for Sydney, and Western Sydney in particular. In line with WSROC's Turn Down the Heat initiative, the Plan recommends preserving and increasing urban green cover and water management in our cities.
- The proposed Growth Infrastructure Compact is a sensible approach to the challenge of multi-entirety co-ordination and delivery of enabling infrastructure, especially if it includes the private sector.

In reviewing Future Transport 2056 it is somewhat surprising that that plan misses the opportunity to take more guidance from the draft GSR Plan to more definitively prioritise transport initiatives in the region. The time scales quoted in Future Transport 2056 appear out-of-step of projected growth in Greater Western Sydney, it is impossible to refer to transport as region-shaping in the timescales quoted in that document.

WSROC will take the opportunity to provide a more formal response to the details of the draft GSR Plan and look forward in working with the Commissioners.

Please congratulate all of the Commissioners and the professional staff of the Commission for an excellent draft document and in particular I wish to acknowledge the contributions of Geoff Roberts, Rod Simpson and Heather Nesbit working with WSROC on a number of regional initiatives co-incident with the development of the draft GSR Plan.

Yours sincerely,



Charles Casuscelli RFD
CEO