

# Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan

Submission\_id: 31575

Date of Lodgment: 15 Dec 2017

Origin of Submission: Online

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Submission content: With regard to the overall Greater Sydney Region plan, on the face of it, it seems logical to expand Sydney in the West instead of crowding out existing liveable suburbs in the East with endless soulless high rise apartments - we have enough space in Australia that we do not need to cram ourselves into small areas as they are forced to in Singapore and Hong Kong. High rise in Eastern and Central Sydney is just pure speculation for profit. It is ruining the character and amenity of existing suburbs, not to mention the environment of Greater Sydney. Government policy should be examined: do we really need to import 200,000 people a year into Australia and accommodate them in major cities? If we do need massive immigration to support a flagging economy, couldn't these migrants (or existing Sydney residents) be incentivised to live in smaller regional cities? Such a solution would ease the population pressure on Sydney, slow the rampant real estate speculation, and build regional economies. My major worry is that placing an extra 2 million people in Western Sydney is a huge mistake; and putting the 2nd international airport in Western Sydney is a huge mistake, for many reasons, which are: • IT'S HOT OUT THERE!! • People without aircon will die of heat stress, or the hospitals will be overrun with people suffering from heat stress; • Those with air-con will use a huge

amount of power to keep themselves and their homes cool - at the moment and for a few years to come this will be from fossil fuel sources - most likely coal. That will add enormously to the carbon pollution problem; and imagine the huge amount of carbon emissions from cooling an entire airport in 40°C+ heat for weeks on end in the summer, together with all the surrounding businesses. One way to mitigate this would be to mandate solar panels on all new buildings, but as far as I know there is no intention of this becoming government policy.

- Rainfall is sparse in Western Sydney now, and always has been. It is difficult to maintain vegetation and cooling street tree canopy there without supplementary water.
- With climate change, rainfall will be less in Western Sydney, and it will become an unliveable desert, without a lot more water storage to keep gardens and street trees from dying.
- A lot more water will be needed for an extra 2 million people - for construction, for sewerage, for drinking, for washing clothes and cars. Hence the push to build Warragamba Dam much higher, destroying pristine forest in the World Heritage Blue Mountains National Park.
- Western Sydney notoriously suffers from pollution accumulations and temperature inversions in winter which trap pollution at ground level. Hospitals will be overwhelmed with those suffering breathing difficulties and asthma attacks. People will die from pollution as well as from heat.
- It is madness to put an extra 2 million people and a major airport and all the attendant businesses in such an already polluted area – it will make it thousands of times worse. Imagine the pollution caused from huge jets taking off every few minutes, 24 hours a day. And all those extra trucks on the road emitting diesel fumes simply to service the airport – bringing in supplies, freight, baggage. And then there are the emissions from the cars of the extra 2 million people who have no choice but to drive everywhere due to the lack of public transport. A total nightmare.
- The strain on the natural environment from the extra 2 million people will break it. Streams will dry up, fields will turn to dust (more airborne pollution), trees will die. Farmlands will be lost because the land is worth more as residential land than farmland. We will have no locally-

grown produce, it will all have to be trucked in from elsewhere – more pollution. It's an environmental disaster waiting to happen. • The noise of jet aircraft taking off and landing 24 hours a day everyday will disturb the peace of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, a great shame, and so unnecessary. If we need an extra international airport, it should be placed elsewhere, and connected by high speed train. It's a no-brainer. If Sydney really does have to grow, perhaps it should grow in a different way: instead of putting an airport and urban sprawl in the West, put the airport outside the Sydney basin, and perhaps build a few high rise hubs around existing railway stations as the answer – but of course the plan is to have these AS WELL AS the sprawl in the West. I suggest they should be INSTEAD of sprawl in the West. A whole suburb could be designated as a high rise new town; but only after an extensive search among the residents who will have to agree on this – say Kingsgrove for example – a post WWII suburb with houses built in fibro on fairly large blocks – no heritage value, lots of space. Each resident could be offered a couple of million for their homes and a new apartment of their choice. The whole suburb is bulldozed. Widely spaced quality high rise apartments are built in green surroundings, with green walls. The high rises should be fully sustainable, with recycled grey and black water, solar panels for electric, etc. It can be done, and has been done in the city of Sydney at Central Park. People could then walk, cycle or get a frequent mini shuttle bus to the train and/or shops. That's my vision of a "30 minute city". Or perhaps this could be the model for out West – surely it's a better model than allowing developers to rip up farm land and plonk down thousands of "cookie cutter" houses cheek-by-jowl as they do now, with no services, shops, schools, or public transport. Such a model condemns people to go everywhere by car, and causes massive social isolation. This sort of planning is a disgrace – in fact it isn't planning, it is letting the developers rule. They build these soulless places then take the money and run. That's what I think of the dumping of 2 million extra people in Western Sydney with a major airport. It's too hot, too dry, too polluted, too isolating. It's a recipe for

disaster in fact. Unless of course, we rethink it properly. Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission. Yours sincerely, Claire Bettington