

**Submission**

**No 32**

## **INQUIRY INTO THE UTILISATION OF RAIL CORRIDORS**

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Our Reference: F2011/03455  
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The Chair  
Committee on Transport and Infrastructure  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Submission to the inquiry into the utilisation of rail corridors**

At its meeting on 27 February 2012, Council resolved to adopt a submission to the inquiry into the utilisation of rail corridors and forward the submission to the Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport and Infrastructure for their consideration.

Please find enclosed Council's submission.

If you have any queries please contact Joel Carson, Project Officer - Land Use Planning on 9806 5144.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Concato  
**A/Manager Land Use Planning**

## **SUBMISSION TO THE INQUIRY INTO THE UTILISATION OF RAIL CORRIDORS PARRAMATTA CITY COUNCIL**

Rail corridors need to be identified and reserved with a view to a long term commitment to transport infrastructure. This needs to anticipate and integrate with future jobs and residential density. Rail corridors set out in this fashion to a 20-50 year forward plan would support the NSW Government's Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036 and provide the certainty required by private industry to drive investment and economic growth.

### **1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Employment growth and density in Parramatta is essential to the orderly development of Sydney to improve public transport use and to build on existing infrastructure and job density.

#### Development of centres

- Employment growth should be concentrated in established centres in proximity to transport systems. Rail corridors provide local and regional links to employment areas and are considered critical for economic development. Parramatta's strategic employment lands identified in Council's Economic Development Strategy 2011-2016 are the Parramatta CBD, Westmead, Rydalmere and Camellia.
- The Parramatta CBD contains the 4<sup>th</sup> busiest railway station on the CityRail network. In a hub like Parramatta it will be important to provide for future growth and integration of multiple modes including pedestrian traffic, heavy rail, buses, light rail and the East Coast Fast Rail. For a city, the rail corridor provides a clear sense of entry and arrival.
- The rail corridor provides public transport access to jobs at Westmead, a world class bio-medical and bio-technology cluster. Facilities at Westmead are set to expand, and Council in the future will rezone lands in the centre to encourage the intensification of commercial and residential development.
- The rail corridor is one key infrastructure driving the revitalisation of Rydalmere as it will provide improved access to the University of Western Sydney campus for western Sydney residents and the new employees envisioned in the proposed business park. Rydalmere Railway Station provides a number of opportunities and constraints in respect to development. Various factors would influence future development, including planning for the proposed Parramatta-Epping Rail Link, the proposed Rydalmere precinct revitalisation, the expansion of the University of Western Sydney, and opportunities for the redevelopment of Council-owned sites in the precinct such as a sites at Brodie Street and the Mary Parade depot.
- The rail corridor within industrial lands such as at Camellia/Rosehill provides an important opportunity for economic development. Development and redevelopment of industrial lands for employment must look to best adapt existing rail infrastructure so as to maximise the future transport and land use opportunities that would come with increased jobs density. Disposal should be a last resort in such circumstances as the freight corridor in this area is an invaluable resource.
- The precinct around Granville Railway Station offers development opportunities on adjoining lands, particularly on Council-owned lands, being an interchange carpark site on the south side, and the property at 40 Cowper Street on the north side.
- Council has considerable land ownership in the vicinity of Guilford Railway Station adjoining the Guilford retail precinct northeast of the station. The future redevelopment of these lands would provide opportunities for the delivery of railway station infrastructure and local access and connections.

### **2. PLANNING**

#### Urban renewal

- Lands around railway stations should be zoned in relation to the level of service provided by the station so as to maximise the rail infrastructure and service investment. For example, lands around city/town centre stations should be zoned commercial, whilst lands around more suburban stations should be zoned to provide for increased residential density around a local centre. It is critical to identify railway stations that form part of the city centre, or those that serve predominantly residential areas.

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- Established areas must be redeveloped in order to achieve housing growth targets as set out in the NSW Government's Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036. Council's draft Residential Development Strategy (RDS) seeks to concentrate new residential development in areas that can best support population growth. These areas are typically located close to public transport, shops, and community facilities, being in feeder suburbs that support the Parramatta CBD. Lands adjacent to rail corridors, particularly to railway stations, provide excellent opportunities for development to meet the intentions of the RDS as well as the NSW Government's Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036.
  - Challenges however exist in facilitating urban renewal around railway stations, such as the fragmentation of land and strata title blocks.

#### Mixed use

- Mixed use developments consist of a mix of residential, commercial and other uses. The viability of the commercial component of mixed use developments is enhanced if such developments are located within close proximity to transport, such as railway stations. Rail corridors provide the transport infrastructure and services necessary to allow for suitable access to commercial premises, thereby enhancing the ability for businesses to attract customers and being structured economically.
- Affordable housing often forms a component of mixed use developments. Locating affordable housing close to transport provides for a good social outcome, as the transport systems available in the corridors provide for the requirements of residents. Locating affordable housing close to transport systems such as those in rail corridors should therefore be a priority for land use planning.

#### Policy

- It is critical to properly coordinate land use policy and planning for precincts around railway stations that are covered by multiple local government areas. Different local councils may have differing policies as to how to address land use planning around stations.
- Infrastructure plans need to be integrated into the planning system and supported with funding. The system should enshrine a new whole-of-government approach to the provision and planning of transport infrastructure which is a fundamental component to the acceptability of increased densities in both residential and commercial development.

### **3. TRANSPORT**

#### Infrastructure

- Lands adjacent to rail corridors provide opportunities for utilisation and intensification of public transport infrastructure, thereby improving the availability of public transport services and encouraging public transport use. Frequency of services needs to be considered.
- Cycling network routes could be located parallel to existing rail lines, known as "rail trails". This would provide for a cost-effective method to expanding the cycling network in the Sydney metropolitan area. It is critical that in the vicinity of railway stations cycling routes are segregated from rail passenger activity so as to minimise conflicts between cyclists and rail users over the use of space.
- Bicycle parking must be located within close proximity to railway station entrances. The use of secure bicycle lockers should be pursued.
- The layout of the road network in the precinct surrounding railway stations must be designed to accommodate road space and kerb space for buses, taxis, kiss & ride, and bicycle parking. It is critical that a coordinated approach to addressing this issue is undertaken, as there is currently a range of different road layouts applied to railway stations in metropolitan Sydney, with local councils individually deciding how to address this issue.
- The location of commuter carparks must be carefully considered. It is preferred that commuter carparking is placed on the outskirts of centres and that key sites within centres are better utilised for residential or commercial uses rather than for carparking. Carparks within centres contribute to traffic congestion and are a wasteful use of valuable, developable land.

- The rate of parking provision in developments surrounding railway stations should be based on a consideration of the service of public transport at the railway station, including bus services. Developments within the catchment of a railway station with a good level of service should have a reduced parking rate.
- The precinct surrounding railway stations should be designed to maximise access to stations from surrounding local areas. The assessment of new developments within station precincts must consider the provision of good access to station facilities.
- It would be beneficial to consider opportunities for the reuse of existing redundant railway station buildings on platforms and in concourse areas for various uses including business uses, particularly to serve passengers.

#### Proposed rail corridors

- New rail corridor infrastructure must be fully integrated with surrounding land uses so as to achieve a good planning outcome.
- It is critical that the locations of proposed metropolitan rail corridors such as the Parramatta-Epping Rail Link be preserved, including the surface and sub-surface areas required for the integration of new rail lines with the planned Civic Place development at Parramatta, and the interfaces with Parramatta Railway Station.
- Many of these points should apply to light rail corridors.

#### **4. AIRSPACE & UNDERGROUND DEVELOPMENT**

- Development of airspace and underground areas within rail corridors provides opportunities for the provision of commercial uses to complement transport operations.
- Above and below ground developments can potentially provide connectivity across the rail corridor.