

**Submission
No 17**

**CRITICAL TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORTING THE WESTERN
SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AND WESTERN SYDNEY
AEROTROPOLIS**

Organisation: Penrith City Council

Date Received: 28 March 2024



Our reference: InfoStore
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28 March 2024

Lynda Voltz MP
Chair

Inquiry into Critical Transport Infrastructure supporting the Western Sydney International Airport and Western Sydney Aerotropolis

Sent via online portal:

Dear Chair

Inquiry into Critical Transport Infrastructure supporting the Western Sydney International Airport and Western Sydney Aerotropolis

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a formal submission in response to the Inquiry into Critical Transport Infrastructure supporting the Western Sydney International Airport and Western Sydney Aerotropolis.

Our submission was endorsed by Council at its Ordinary Meeting on 25 March 2024 and is attached for your consideration.

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact me at [REDACTED] or on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Carlie Ryan
City Strategy Manager

Attachments:

1. Submission Parliamentary Inquiry into critical transport infrastructure supporting the Western Sydney International Airport and Aerotropolis

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Submission

Parliamentary Inquiry into critical transport infrastructure supporting the Western Sydney International Airport and Aerotropolis

March 2024

Penrith City Council welcomes the NSW Government's Parliamentary Inquiry into critical transport infrastructure supporting the Western Sydney International Airport (WSIA) and Aerotropolis, and makes this submission in line with the Terms of Reference.

This submission complements the submission prepared by the alliance of Western Parkland City councils, known as The Parks, and reflects additional comments that relate to Penrith LGA.

Council also attaches a submission made to the recent inquiry into Current and Future Public Transport needs in Western Sydney, that should be read alongside this submission.

This submission requests the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure undertaking the Inquiry to consider the following:

- Council acknowledges the vital role that the WSIA and Aerotropolis will play in the land use, tourism, and economic development of the Region. Council supports the 24-hour WSIA on the basis of the opportunities that it presents for Penrith and provided that there is adequate investment in the infrastructure needed to activate the Airport and the Aerotropolis and connect them to Western Sydney, maximising amenity, efficiencies as well as mitigating impacts appropriately. Furthermore, this investment must occur in line with development to ensure access for residents and visitors, both within and beyond the Western Parkland City and Penrith, to opportunities created by the WSIA and in Aerotropolis.
- The importance of collaborative land use planning and long-term Government commitment, including budget allocation, to secure and deliver critical infrastructure projects. Upfront government commitment to critical transport infrastructure, including funding, is key. Timing of delivery is also key and must be aligned with development. The lag of transport planning around the WSIA and Aerotropolis is particularly concerning given the WSIA opening date in two years.
- The significance of regional transport planning and the need to ensure critical projects are properly funded and locked into Government budgets.
- The need to ensure the timely/upfront delivery of new infrastructure required to support development at WSIA and Aerotropolis.
- The importance of safe, reliable, convenient and frequent public transport services that enable residents to access job, health and education precincts.
- Early introduction of public transport infrastructure can influence a user's behaviour patterns in the longer term – leading to reduce car dependency. The Sydney Metro

project and Rapid Bus project are critical to enact any change of travel behaviour in Western Sydney.

- Despite the NSW Government's commitment of \$302 million to the Western Sydney Rapid Bus project, there is concern that this funding will not deliver a fully integrated public transport network by the opening of the Western Sydney International Airport in 2026. Rapid Bus networks are essential for shaping travel behaviours and fostering public transport usage in Western Sydney. The primary objective of the Rapid Bus network was to establish early patronage of a public transport network ahead of the opening of the Sydney Metro line. This objective will now be impossible to meet given that the WSIA and Sydney Metro are set for opening in two years and the Rapid Bus network is still being planned.
- The changing nature of transport needs across the region due to population increase, shifting demographics, increased density etc.
- The user experience and the importance of ensuring high amenity outcomes, including maintenance of existing roads.
- The disproportionate travel cost burden on Western Sydney residents on account of distances travelled, petrol, tolls and generally limited public transport options.
- The need for a rail and road freight capacity study to better understand how the movement of goods across our cities are impacting on the road network, and how to ameliorate these impacts.
- The importance of social considerations, including potential lost productivity from people who are not able to access jobs due to transport constraints, in the approach to determining feasibility of projects.
- The need for supporting infrastructure that improves the functionality of public transport for the user, such as commuter carparks, pedestrian paths, cycling facilities, and the like.
- The opportunity for technology-enabled solutions (e.g. bus tracking and on-demand services) to improve access, reduce inequity and minimise environmental impacts.

Connecting the Aerotropolis to Penrith:

- It is essential that Penrith LGA has critical infrastructure, services and amenities in place to meet current and future community needs. Central to these needs is road transport infrastructure that includes public and active transport infrastructure.
- Penrith is strategically located in one of Australia's fastest growing areas, with plenty of land to develop, and improving connectivity. We have 37% (1028 ha) of future employment lands in Greater Sydney. The Aerotropolis includes approximately 3,900 hectares of employment land within the Penrith LGA boundary. This provides competitive advantages to attract investment.
- Much needed new transport connections will deliver faster and more accessible connections for passengers, visitors, and businesses, unlocking further opportunities for the creation of new places and neighbourhoods to live, work and play. Providing a

range of transport options to and from the region is crucial to ensuring the benefits of the project are maximised.

- The movement of large vehicles for freight is an important consideration for industrial and commercial premises. The total volume of freight that is coming from or to Western Sydney is expected to increase from 18.5 million tonnes in 2014 to 41 million tonnes by 2041. There are two intermodal terminals to be located in Penrith. One in St Marys North and one is planned for the Mamre Road precinct. Both are planned to be connected to Port Botany by rail. While both intermodals are located in industrial precincts, planning road infrastructure upgrades for suitable and safe routes for distribution from these intermodals is equally important for last mile efficiencies as it is for maintaining local amenity. It is also important to note that the freight task is not solely made up of large vehicles and that catering to the last mile freight task is just as important.
- State arterial roads are the responsibility of the NSW Government, but Council's transport planning highlights where key connections to State arterial roads and upgrades are needed most. An example of this is the need for a planned upgrade for Luddenham Road. Luddenham Road is presently a local road, but taking the burden of construction traffic required to deliver region-shaping projects including the Aerotropolis, Sydney Metro – WSA, Mamre Road Industrial Precinct and Sydney Science Park, at a significant cost to ratepayers. Luddenham Road is a critical corridor identified by the State (DPHI and TfNSW) and will be expected to service significant development in this area over the next 10–20 years. The immediate upgrade of Luddenham Road is critical to ensure the road network surrounding the WSIA and Aerotropolis are efficient, however planning for this road is yet to commence. We seek clarity from the Government in relation to the timing of this critical project.
- Extension of the Sydney Metro line to Tallawong and Macarthur is integral for linking Western Sydney residents to employment and educational opportunities, fostering regional development.
- In addition to a range of infrastructure needs including those relating to active transport, Council's Advocacy Strategy and Advocacy Priorities List outline the following key projects that need to be delivered to support the growth associated with the Airport and Aerotropolis:
 - Delivering new Rapid Bus routes servicing the WSA is an immediate priority for Western Sydney communities (especially the workforce).
 - Werrington Arterial Stage 2.
 - Southern Link Road.
 - Mulgoa Road upgrade, including the reinstatement of the Federal Government's previous financial commitment.
 - Upgrade and reclassification of Luddenham Road should be an immediate priority for the Government given the burden it is taking from construction works in and around the WSIA and its future role to connect to the WSIA and region. Castlereagh Connection.

Response to Terms of Reference

a. An analysis of options for transport infrastructure

Integration of local, state, and federal projects is crucial to deliver holistic transport outcomes that support the WSIA and Aerotropolis. Collaborative land use planning and early delivery of enabling infrastructure is crucial for provision of services of the scale required for the projected growth in the Western Parkland City.

The extension of the Sydney Metro line to Tallawong and Macarthur is integral for linking Western Sydney residents to employment and educational opportunities, fostering regional development. The extensions are particularly significant for residents in socio-economically challenged suburbs, providing access to high-value jobs and educational hubs. Additionally, the link will establish a fast public transport connection for businesses to the WSIA, Aerotropolis and Sydney CBD.

While planning for the future Metro extension continues, there is a need for more immediate solutions. For example, the Western Sydney City Deal made a commitment to establish a Rapid Bus network connecting the centres of Penrith, Liverpool and Campbelltown with the Aerotropolis. The primary goal of this project was to establish this network ahead of the Sydney Metro project opening to establish early patronage along these routes.

Currently, limited public transport options in our growth areas contributes to high car usage, with nearly half of working residents commuting outside the area for work, mainly by private car. The unique demographic profile of the Western Parkland City, with diverse communities, seniors, and socio-economically disadvantaged individuals, further highlights the need to address low public transport usage in the region. Immediate improvements, focusing on increasing accessibility to the Metro line, bus routes, and stops, are necessary. Enhancements to public transport timetabling and improved integration of active and public transport infrastructure is also needed.

b. Funding of transport infrastructure

Upfront government commitment to critical transport infrastructure, including funding, is key. Timing of delivery is also key and must be aligned with development. The lag of transport planning around the WSIA and Aerotropolis is concerning given the WSIA opening date in two years.

Western Sydney's projected rapid population growth intensifies the demand for improved public transport. Securing sustained and sufficient funding, implementing a whole-of-government vision, and improving infrastructure coordination are imperative for the region's growth and development.

Current funding mechanisms, including developer contribution schemes, are insufficient to cover the cost of infrastructure required to support both growth in established and new release areas.

Shared investment is necessary to support the WSIA and Aerotropolis.

While acknowledging significant government investments that have occurred and are committed, the withdrawal of funds from projects such as Werrington Arterial Stage 2, M7/M12 Interchange, Mulgoa Road Upgrade, and commuter carparks hinders the region's integrated transport connections. Reinstating funding for these projects is essential to ensure the WSIA has good integrated transport connections from the outset and that residents are able to connect to employment, education and training opportunities that the Airport and Aerotropolis will create.

Despite the NSW Government's commitment of \$302 million to the Western Sydney Rapid Bus project, there is concern that this funding will not deliver a fully integrated public transport network by the opening of the Western Sydney International Airport in 2026.

Rapid Buses, offering flexibility and quicker deployment at a lower cost, are crucial for connecting the growth precincts to the WSIA and Aerotropolis. Additional funding commitments from the Federal and NSW Governments are required to ensure the timely delivery of Rapid Bus infrastructure and frequent services, essential for shaping travel behaviours and fostering public transport usage in Western Sydney.

c. The impacts of employment movements in Western and Southwestern suburbs of Sydney

Western Sydney is experiencing rapid population growth and increased freight volumes associated with its leading role in manufacturing and logistics, with projections indicating a rise from 18.5 million to 41 million tonnes by 2041. The increased heavy vehicle movements, particularly for freight and logistics, raise concerns about the impact on local roads, residential areas, and road safety. To unlock regional productivity, shared investment is crucial, ensuring better access for freight vehicles and connectivity with designated freight routes. The cost burden on local councils for maintaining roads used by heavy vehicles accessing designated freight routes requires attention.

Council continues to advocate to Government to commit to and fund priority projects, including the Castlereagh Connection, Werrington Arterial Stage 2, Southern Link Road, Mulgoa Road (Stages 2, 5A, and 5B), and the delivery of the Western Sydney Rapid Bus service. These projects are essential for ensuring the safe and efficient movement of freight throughout the Penrith LGA.

d. Integration with existing transport infrastructure

Council is committed to its ongoing advocacy for key infrastructure that will contribute towards an integrated transport network. The priority projects include:

- **Castlereagh Connection** – This project will provide an evacuation solution for Penrith that addresses the current flood and safety risks to communities living in the catchment and to facilitate responsible development.
- **Werrington Arterial Stage 2** – This project is the missing link of critical infrastructure between the M4 at St Marys, the Great Western Highway and the North-West Growth Area. It is needed to alleviate the 22,000 vehicles per day that travel from

the M4 at St Marys through to the North-West Growth Area. With neighbouring local roads upgraded to State arterial roads, this inadequate local road is creating a significant and dangerous bottleneck.

- **Southern Link Road** - The new 7.5km road corridor from Mamre Road, Kemps Creek to Wallgrove Road, Horsley Park. This new east-west connection runs parallel to Lenore Dr, on the southern side of the WaterNSW pipeline. It is proposed as 4 lanes divided road with provision to include 6 lanes in the future. The proposal includes multiple bridges over Reedy Creek, Ropes Creek and Walworth Road, Horsley Park.
- **Mulgoa-Castlereagh Road** - In addition to the reinstatement of Federal Government funding recently cut for Stages 2, 5A and 5B, we need a program that will see Mulgoa-Castlereagh Road widened to six lanes between Glenmore Parkway and Andrews Road. This will support better cross regional movement and support Penrith's City Centre as well as bus connectivity. The 6.5km stretch of Mulgoa-Castlereagh Road between Andrews Road and Glenmore Parkway is one of Penrith's busiest arterials with 15 sets of traffic lights, three roundabouts, six additional intersections and 24 bus stops.
- **Upgrade and Reclassification of Luddenham Road** - Luddenham Road is presently a local road, but taking the burden of construction traffic required to deliver region-shaping projects including the Aerotropolis, Sydney Metro - WSA, Mamre Road Industrial Precinct and Sydney Science Park, at a significant cost to ratepayers. Luddenham Road is a critical corridor identified by the State (DPHI and TfNSW) and will be expected to service significant development in this area over the next 10-20 years. The immediate upgrade of Luddenham Road is critical to ensure the road network surround the WSIA and Aerotropolis are efficient.
- **Western Sydney Rapid Bus** - This was identified as a core project under the Western Sydney City Deal, however progress towards delivery has stalled. The dedicated rapid bus route and associated infrastructure are critical to connecting the established and quickly growing Penrith City Centre to the Western Sydney Airport. Despite the NSW Government's commitment of \$302 million to the Western Sydney Rapid Bus project, there is concern that this funding will not deliver a fully integrated public transport network by the opening of the Western Sydney International Airport in 2026. Additional funding commitments from the Federal and NSW Governments are required to ensure the timely delivery of Rapid Bus infrastructure and frequent services, essential for shaping travel behaviours and fostering public transport usage in Western Sydney. The primary objective of the Rapid Bus network was to establish early patronage of a public transport network ahead of the opening of the Sydney Metro line. This objective will now be impossible to meet given that the WSIA and Sydney Metro are set for opening in two years and the Rapid Bus network is still being planned.
- **Active transport routes** - The implementation of cool and shady walking and cycling paths is a key priority for Council to help address the impacts of the urban heat island effect and higher rates of key health conditions such as obesity and diabetes experienced in Penrith City. The delivery of Councils priority routes and

integration with Transport for NSW Western Parkland City Strategic Cycleway Corridors is essential to the region.

This consolidated effort reflects the Council's strategic vision, aiming to address immediate transportation needs while fostering sustainable, healthier communities in Penrith City.

e. Reducing road usage around the new airport and surrounding regions

Improvements in public transport timetabling are required to enhance multimodal journeys and better integrate active and public transport infrastructure. Early introduction of public transport infrastructure can influence a user's behaviour patterns in the longer term – leading to reduce car dependency. The Sydney Metro project and Rapid Bus project are critical to enact any change of travel behaviour in Western Sydney. The primary objective of the Rapid Bus network was to establish early patronage of a public transport network ahead of the opening of the Sydney Metro line. This objective will now be impossible to meet given that the WSIA and Sydney Metro are set for opening in two years and the Rapid Bus network is still being planned.

Government planning and decision making around transport infrastructure must encourage sustainable transport choices – e.g. all major road projects should provide facilities for priority bus connections and active transport. Commuter parking at origin stations that provide direct connections to WSIA and employment precincts in Aerotropolis should also be considered.

Other attachment included with submission

[Submission 55](#), Penrith City Council, Inquiry into current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney, 18 September 2023.