

**Submission
No 25**

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

Organisation: The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils

Date Received: 30 March 2024

Partially
Confidential

Ms Lynda Voltz MLA
Committee Chair
Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport and Infrastructure
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Ms Voltz,

Re: Inquiry into critical transport infrastructure supporting the Western Sydney International (WSI) Airport and Western Sydney Aerotropolis

The Parks, Sydney's Parkland Councils welcome the opportunity to provide this submission to the Legislative Assembly Committee on the inquiry into critical transport infrastructure supporting the Western Sydney International Airport and Western Sydney Aerotropolis.

Key points for consideration

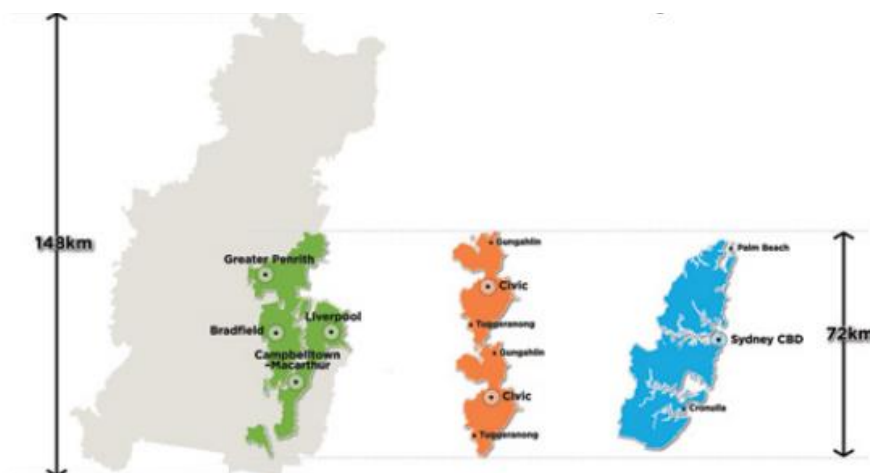
- ❖ The WSI Airport and Aerotropolis will only reach their forecast potential and become the catalysts for economic prosperity envisioned if they are connected through appropriate transport options to the rest of the Western Parkland City.
- ❖ Decisions regarding the prioritisation of critical transport infrastructure should be made based on a logical, evidence-based, forward-facing strategy (NOT existing demand) and should consider the connectivity needs of the entire Western Parkland City;
- ❖ The Western Parkland City already has significant latent demand, but public transport infrastructure and services must improve before our residents will choose to use them;
- ❖ Demand will grow exponentially with the opening of the airport in 2026;
- ❖ We must facilitate a mode shift from car dependency to public transport now before the airport opens to minimise the worsening health and economic impacts of congestion and sedentary travel habits on our communities;
- ❖ We have outlined various tactics that can be employed to improve the access, safety, frequency, reliability and comfort of public transport and hence increase its appeal;
- ❖ For all these reasons, as set out in detail below, the public transport network in the Western Parkland City **MUST** be a priority.

Background

The Parks represents the eight Councils that make up the Western Parkland City, namely: Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Liverpool, Penrith and Wollondilly. This geographic grouping was first outlined in the Metropolis of Three Cities paper published by the Greater Sydney Commission¹ and formed the basis for the alliance of Councils that then signed the Western Sydney City Deal in March 2018 with the NSW State and Commonwealth governments.

It should be noted that this submission represents the views and needs of the Western Parkland City, which is distinct to the traditional view of Western Sydney that includes geographic locations such as Parramatta, Bankstown and Olympic Park among others. As will be outlined below, it is our view that much of Western Sydney, what has now become known as the Central River City, has in recent years received considerably more attention and consequently funding than our City. Hence, we would like to assert our case for a more strategic focus on the needs of our City as opposed to the wider 'Western Sydney' region, particularly with regards to connectivity issues with the airport and aerotropolis.

The Western Parkland City is a geographically diverse region of over 8,000 hectares with a vibrant multicultural population of over 1.1 million people. We would argue that our sustained success is not only a priority for New South Wales but nationally as while we bore 15% of Sydney's population growth in the decade to 2011, we are set to absorb 34% of the growth in the decade to 2041.² The urban development front of the Parkland City is stretched across a 72 kilometre corridor, the only such greenfield area in Australia, and already supports globally competitive industries of national significance.



The NSW State Government's Blueprint³ for our region suggested that we might require 15-30% of the NSW infrastructure spend over the next 15 years to keep pace with this growth, a figure equalling roughly \$60-\$120 billion, however even this may not be sufficient.

Since 2011, NSW's investment program, co-funded by the Commonwealth, has heavily prioritised 'city-shaping' and major place-making investments in Sydney City and to a lesser degree, Parramatta. Research commissioned by The Parks to benchmark our region against

¹ [A Metropolis of Three Cities | Greater Cities Commission](#)

² Sydney's Parkland Councils Future Horizons Benchmarking Report, December 2022, Sea and Star Advisory

³ [Western-Parkland-City-Blueprint.pdf \(wpca.sydney\)](#)

these other major centres⁴ showed such investment commitments for the City of Sydney and Eastern Harbour City totalled more than \$100 billion over the last decade, while the City of Parramatta and Central River City received more than \$60 billion in investment commitments. The Western Parkland City, on the other hand, only received about \$20 billion, less than one fifth that of Sydney City. With our existing centres bearing significant investment backlogs, our vast geography requiring an increased scale of investment, particularly when it comes to transport connectivity, and our issues set to intensify as our population grows, we deserve more and better.

The Parks' Councils wish to make a collective submission to the Inquiry, whilst acknowledging individual submissions may also be made by Councils identifying specific issues affecting their local government area. This submission is advocating for the Committee to consider:

a) An analysis of options for transport infrastructure

There can be no denying the fact that transport connectivity is one of the major issues affecting communities in the Western Parkland City. Currently reasonable public transport options are very limited and our residents often find it nearly impossible to access local centres without transitioning through stations to the east first or relying on a car. For example, there are no trains that connect Campbelltown directly to Camden, or Liverpool to Picton and none that connect our key metropolitan centres of Penrith, Liverpool and Campbelltown to the airport or aerotropolis.

It is of significant concern to our leaders that we are approaching the opening of the new airport and yet lack the ability to access it. The conviction that the Western Parkland City desperately needed a North-South rail line that would connect the key centres with the airport and with each other provided the necessary impetus for the eight Mayors of our City to agree to a Western Sydney City Deal.⁵ This North South Rail Link would become the spine of the Western Parkland City playing an essential role of giving our communities better, faster and easier access to the airport and aerotropolis thereby allowing them access to the jobs, business opportunities, education and leisure activities that were promised to come. Accordingly, a metro or rail line from Macarthur to Schofields, including a South West rail link extension, formed the first, and in our eyes, most important commitment of the City Deal. The second was for the delivery of rapid bus services from the metropolitan centres of Penrith, Liverpool and Campbelltown to the Western Sydney International Airport prior to its opening in 2026, to support activation of enterprise lands, jobs growth and connected communities. In addition, an East-West rail link through Fairfield that would link the three cities of Sydney as well as a rapid bus from Parramatta via Prairiewood and Bonnyrigg is essential in the short term. It should be noted that the implementation of the rapid bus system was meant to be an interim measure to establish early patronage ahead of the metro lines being constructed.

Without these transport connections, most residents in Liverpool, Fairfield and the south-west growth area will be unable to access the plethora of jobs offered by the 24/7 airport as they will be too far from the St Marys line.⁶ Despite this, the corridors for the rail lines have not been preserved, there has been no serious consideration of how to implement dedicated

⁴ Sydney's Parkland Councils Future Horizons Benchmarking Report, December 2022, Sea and Star Advisory

⁵ [Western Sydney City Deal - Western Parkland City Authority \(wpcasidney\)](https://www.wpcasidney.com.au/wpcasidney-city-deal)

⁶ Workers left waiting for bus links to new Sydney airport, Matt O'Sullivan, The Sydney Morning Herald, August 22, 2023.

bus lanes and there has been no announcement regarding the funding of either the metro lines or rapid bus. While we acknowledge the difficulties of connecting such a vast region, we must do better. If we do not plan for and build the connections to both the airport and aerotropolis now, we risk not maximising the enormous potential for catalytic economic growth and prosperity both represent. So what is required?

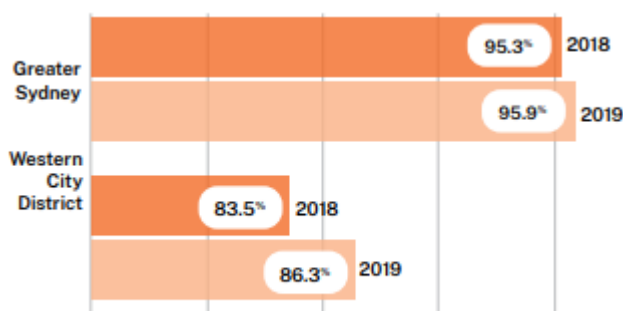
The Western Parkland City has borne the burden of population growth for Greater Sydney for some time, taking 15% of statewide population growth for New South Wales in the decade until 2011. This is only set to increase with forecasts predicting one third of all population growth of new residents to Sydney to be in our City by 2040.⁷

As the Department of Planning and Environment population projections and Common Planning Assumptions projections outline, unprecedented growth in the region is expected over the next 20 years between 2021 and 2041⁸ in the following areas, with the population projections for 2041 in:

- Camden LGA – 197,735 (and additional 89,827 people)
- Campbelltown LGA – 229,301 (an additional 54,640 people)
- Fairfield LGA – 247, 803 (an additional 37,000 people)
- Liverpool LGA – 232,303 (an additional 80,350 people)
- Penrith LGA – 270,477 (an additional 54,402 people)
- Wollondilly LGA – 90,356 (an additional 36,317 people)

At the same time, our communities are best characterised by their long term contributions to NSW’s economic and social fabric, with 82% of residents considered long term as they called NSW home 5 years’ previously.⁹

As this shows, the Western Parkland City is one of the fastest growing regions in the State, driven largely by greenfield developments and urban intensification. This population growth will place additional demand on the current public transport needs and services in the area. Nevertheless, it has been argued that the business case for increased investment in public transport within the Western Parkland City does not necessarily ‘add up’ particularly when it comes to the Metro line. A study by Infrastructure Australia (IA) argued that “demand for the rail line would be significantly lower than its planned capacity in the initial years of operation, with passengers using less than 40% of the seated capacity in peak periods in 2026.”¹⁰ Consequently, it was not supported by IA as a Priority Infrastructure Project.



Percentage of dwellings located within 30 minutes of a metropolitan centre or strategic centre by public transport.¹¹

⁷ Sydney’s Parkland Councils Future Horizons Benchmarking Report, December 2022, Sea and Star Advisory

⁸ <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/populations>

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Infrastructure Australia, Sydney Metro- Western Sydney Airport, Project business case evaluation

¹¹ Western Parkland City Blueprint, WPCA, October 2022, p22

There is no doubt that use of public transport in the Western Parkland City is low. This reflects limitations of the assets and services as identified below but also the limited degree of integration between transport, land use and lifestyles.¹²

It is important to note not only that our City is forecast to grow substantially over the next two decades but we have a unique demographic profile with higher numbers of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, seniors, socio-economically disadvantaged and First Nations peoples than other parts of Sydney. We also have high numbers of shift workers and as noted above, young people with no ability to gain a license and/or access to a car.

The key issue being faced is the sheer scale of development. With growth areas scattered across a development front of 72 kms within an area of 8000 square hectares, there are huge geographic distances to cover. This creates an unprecedented challenge. Consequently, many of our new growth areas for housing such as Wilton, Appin, Menangle Park, Greater Macarthur and Oran Park have been developed in locations with no or extremely limited public transport access and with little prior thought given to how it may be subsequently provided. There is now an overwhelming gap in the provision of infrastructure and services that will take decades to fill. In the meantime, given the long distances these residential precincts are located from strategic centres and employment opportunities, our residents are forced to rely on travel by private vehicle.

It might seem that the simplest solution is to focus on providing the necessary road infrastructure to facilitate these car trips but our communities' enforced overreliance on cars as the primary mode of transport is leading to a significant number of economic, social and health issues as is examined in *section e*.

As a result, a fundamental shift is required - all levels of government need to work together to develop a better system of land use planning to ensure zoning and land release policies are aligned with public transport development plans. We cannot continue to develop growth areas geographically distant from strategic centres and services and amenities essential for liveability. Such behaviour can only lead to a significant barrier to improving public transport, which is that the lack of planning upfront results in no preservation of corridors, and a subsequent proliferation of housing contiguous to or even over future rail corridors. This creates discontent and opposition by residents when corridors are then announced and in some cases, leads to considerable pressure to put such rail lines underground; this is not only cost prohibitive but significantly complicates and lengthens the time it takes to construct the rail lines.

Let's examine each option for transport connectivity and the barriers and opportunities:

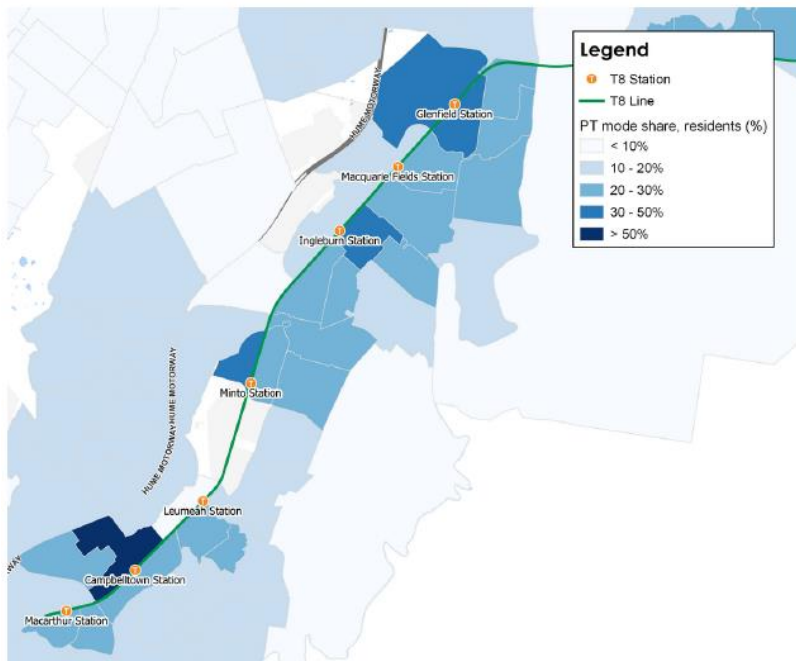
Rail and bus networks

Fundamentally we have too few rail lines within the Western Parkland City, resulting in a situation in which there are too few stations with the ones that exist not easily accessible from the housing estates in which our people reside. For example, examination of the extent of public transport usage in the immediate station catchments on the T5 and T8 lines in south west Sydney (as below) reflect that other than in the Campbelltown station catchment,

¹² Sydney's Parkland Councils Future Horizons Benchmarking Report, Transport Update April 2023, Sea and Star Advisory

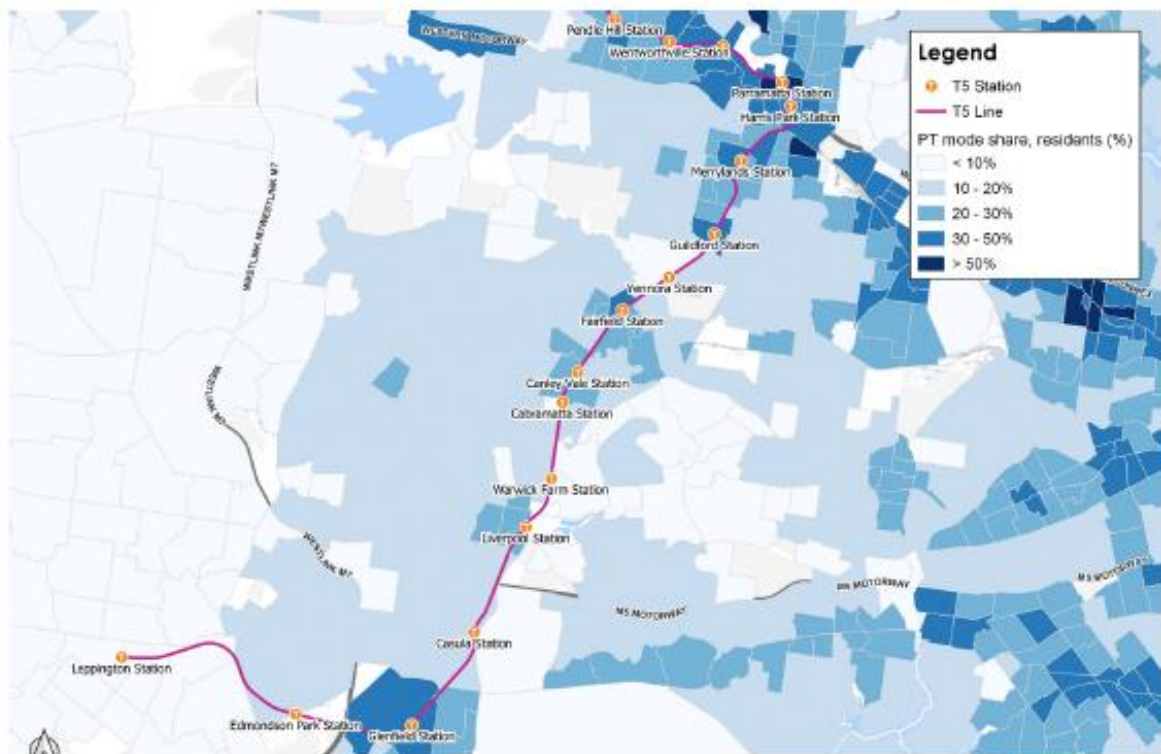
public transport did not support most commuter trips. Most catchments saw 30% or less of residents utilising public transport.

Public Transport Mode Share, T8 Line Station Catchments



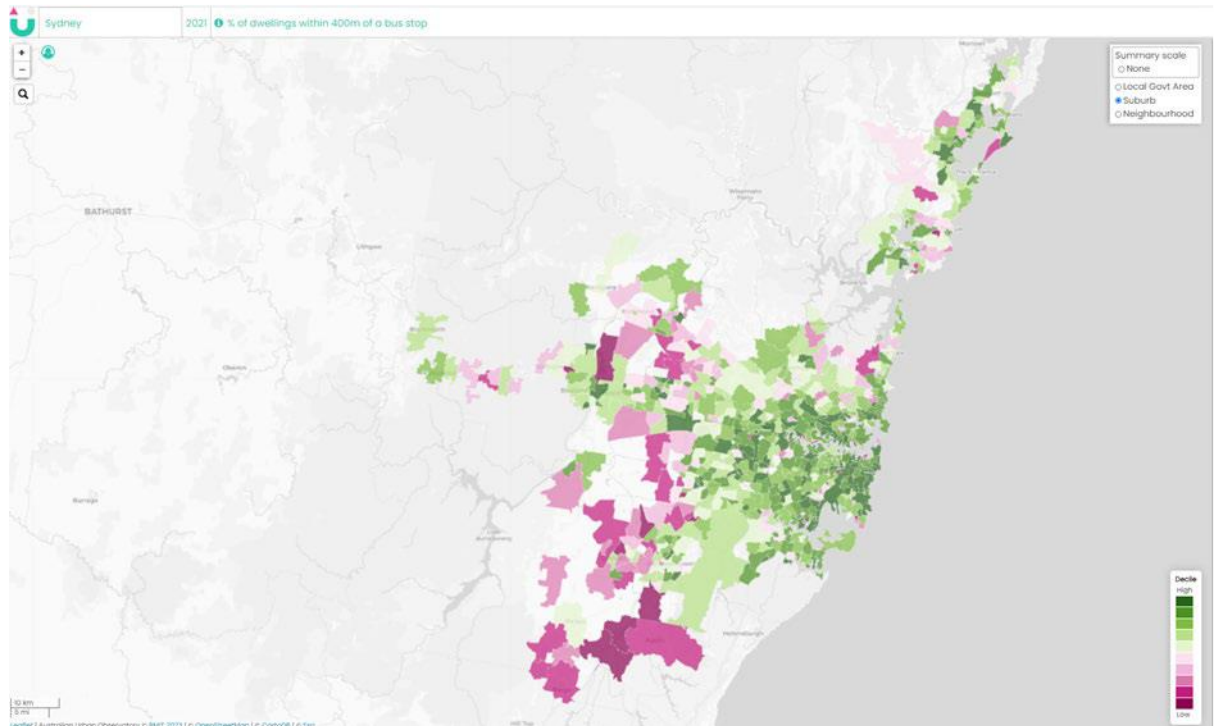
Source: Sea & Star Advisory analysis of 2016 Census data

Public Transport Mode Share, T5 Line Station Catchments



Source: Sea & Star Advisory analysis of 2016 Census data

The situation is just as dire when it comes to bus stops with the distances in most areas just too great. In the map below, we can see how few of our dwellings comparatively are within 400m of a bus stop.¹³

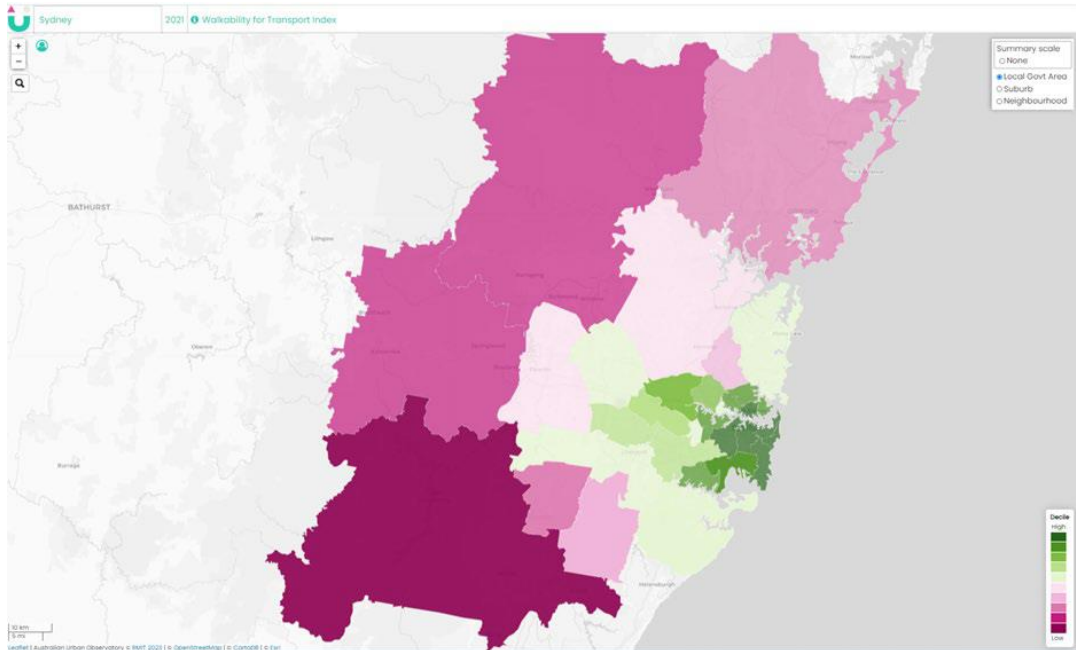


Additionally, with the current limited place and rail node integration, it is impossible for Western Parkland City residents to access and enjoy our local centres without difficulty, or dependence on motor vehicle transportation.

It should be noted that the only strategic centre within the Western Parkland City at this stage that will have direct public transport connections to the airport and aerotropolis when the airport opens will be St Marys. Neither Campbelltown nor Liverpool will have a direct connection and Fairfield and its key centres as well as Oran Park will also have no access to public transport to the airport. While Penrith is relatively close to St Marys, the 7km distance between them means that it will not be easy to walk to access the St Marys line. In fact, another key limiting factor in our region is the poor walkability for public transport. Outside of the key strategic centres, the majority of residents live in low-density suburbs far from the strategic centres and employment hubs they access on a daily basis. The map below demonstrates the disparity in walkability between LGAs in the Western Parkland City and those in the Central River and Eastern Harbour Cities.¹⁴

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ The Australian Urban Observatory, www.auo.org.au



This is the lived experience of our residents and visitors.

“Transport in the Macarthur area can be a challenge. Public transport is limited in terms of coverage and the number of services and we only have one train station in the north of Camden LGA.”¹⁵

“If we need to take public transport such as a train into the city, our closest station is 20 minutes away which makes it such a process and usually results in us just driving.”¹⁶

“I have found bus connections unreliable in the past. Trains are usually OK but they don’t connect with bus services very well. The train pulls into Campbelltown station as the bus pulls out. I will take a cab to and from the station rather than wait for a bus that may not come or be on time.”¹⁷

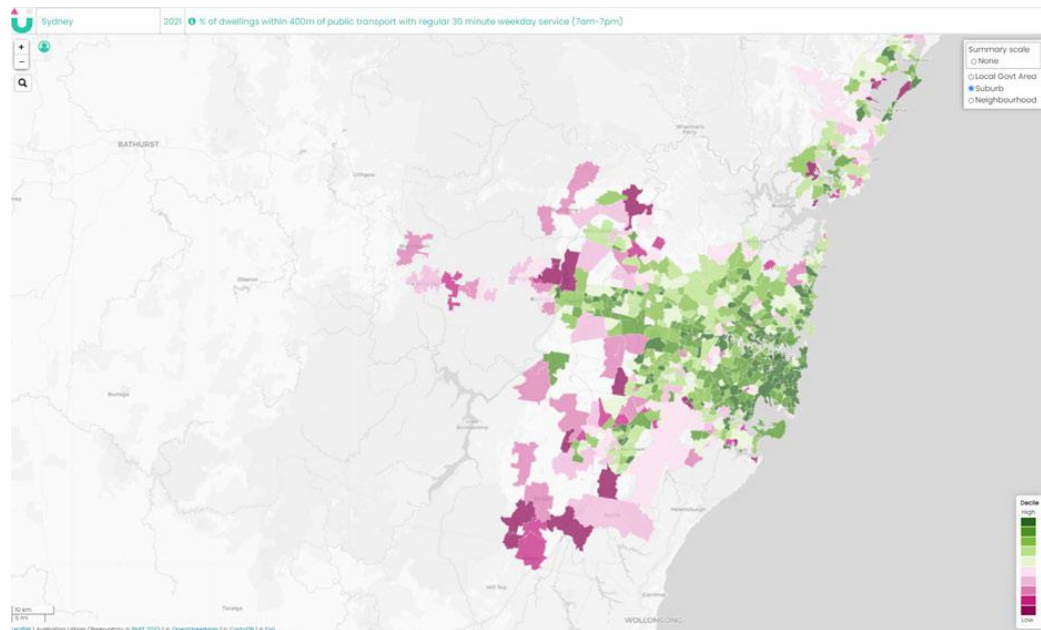
It is not just the distances involved but also the services themselves. Even with good access, transport services do not run frequently or follow such long and circuitous routes, often with long wait times in between due to inadequate timetabling that they lose all feasibility for commuters as viable transport options. The map below highlights the low percentage of dwellings within 400m of public transport **that runs regularly** every 30 minutes on weekdays (7am-7pm).¹⁸

¹⁵ ██████████ Camden South resident

¹⁶ ██████████ resident of Elderslie

¹⁷ ██████████ resident of Bradbury

¹⁸ The Australian Urban Observatory, www.auo.org.au



As this makes evidently clear, we need to improve the number of train lines and bus routes, the number of stations and stops, the interconnections between the two and overall, the reliability, safety and comfort of the transport options themselves, the stops and stations and the routes to and from (the first and last mile). If we want to reduce car dependency, we **must** provide a viable alternative. And this consists of offering our residents reasonable access to frequent, on time and appropriately integrated public transport options.

It is likely that increasing the number of buses and bus routes appears to be the best immediate solution in that they offer the quickest, easiest and cheapest way to shift journeys made by car to public transport. Buses in their simplest form can be deployed faster at a lower cost and offer greater flexibility to respond to the changing travel needs of passengers. Indeed the deployment of on-demand buses could provide stops according to customer need, that could respond to current transport accessibility issues in taking workers from St Marys and Penrith, Liverpool, Campbelltown and other key centres to employment such as construction jobs at the Airport and Aerotropolis, as well as between rail stations and industrial employment lands.

However, while these solutions may seem obvious, the issues we face are not easily remedied, even with the will to do so. A perfect example of this is provided by the work done to date on fulfilling the Rapid Bus Commitment made under the City Deal. The original commitment was for rapid bus services to run from Liverpool, Penrith and Campbelltown to the airport as an interim measure to establish early patronage before metro lines could be built. However, this project has hit obstacle after obstacle. The overwhelming need to cover a higher percentage of the population led to the suggestion to include further stops, creating even more circuitous routes and hence longer travel times. The road infrastructure in place is insufficient in that there are no dedicated bus lanes and only the possibility of creating signal priority options at some traffic lights on the route. This, however, does not overcome the congestion on the roads, which continues to worsen, and will only get worse with the predicted greater population density, as the evidence as set out below makes clear. Lastly, there initially appeared to be no planning for where the buses could deposit passengers at the airport leading to a proposal that they be dropped off at the aerotropolis to take the train

to the airport. The end result – a far from ‘rapid’ bus and possibly a service that will then remain largely underutilised.

In considering the current government fiscal policy challenges there is greater need for local government to be provided with future funding certainty that is adequate to construct the enabling on-street transit infrastructure (including on-road infrastructure bus priority lanes; bus stop design; real time technology; and first mile / last mile infrastructure) that facilitates the provision of suitable bus services in line with growth. Future government funding needs to be sufficient to ensure enabling infrastructure, such as bus stops, vehicles and services planning can be upgraded to be safe and fully accessible for people with disability, and people of all ages. Buses can suffer a capacity factor that can result in ‘bus bunching’ and city centres becoming completely jammed with very slow buses.¹⁹ This is particularly true if there are not dedicated bus lanes or priority traffic signals, as is the case currently in the Western Parkland City. This is the reason why many cities globally have switched from buses to rail. It is imperative to note the relative capacities of modes, as set out below:²⁰

Mode	Carrying capacity (people per hour)
Freeway lane	2,500
Bus lane	5,000 to 7,000
Light rail	10,000 to 20,000
Heavy rail line	50,000

To that end, further clarity is required to understand the \$302.7 million reserved for a Western Sydney Rapid Bus network to connect the communities of Penrith, Liverpool, Campbelltown to the future Western Sydney International Airport as set out in the September 2023 budget announcement²¹.

It is also important to note that eligibility for concession fares remains a major barrier to people experiencing poverty and disadvantage to accessing the public transport network and so we must also ensure we make public transport within the Western Parkland City affordable.²² We would encourage the adoption of the recent recommendations of the IPART Opal Fares 2020-2024 *Ensuring Affordability Report*²³; namely:

- Providing discount fares to NSW residents that hold a current Commonwealth Health Care card;
- Trialling a program whereby community service organisations and charities can purchase discounted public transport passes to be provided at no cost to vulnerable people (a trial is being undertaken in Victoria and could provide some informative insights);
- Considering expanding free travel for passengers with a permanent physical disability or cognitive condition that prevents them from using the Opal ticketing system.

¹⁹ Transit Oriented Development: An Australian Overview, Peter Newman, Curtin University

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ https://www.budget.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-09/2023-24_01_NSW-Budget_Jo-Haylen_Supporting-our-growing-communities-with-a-safe-reliable-and-sustainable-transport-system-at-heart-of-2023-24-NSW-Budget.pdf

²² NSW Council of Social Services of NSW submission to IPART Issues Paper (NCOSS submission), p.8

²³ https://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/information-paper-final-report-opal-fares-2020-2024-ensuring-affordability-february-2020_0.pdf

London's Transport Strategy provides a good case study for how it can be done.²⁴ They set a target for 80% of all trips in London to be made on foot, by cycle or utilising public transport by 2041 and then set about applying a Healthy Streets Approach in identifying key actions and building strong relationships with Government Boroughs, transport operators, business and other stakeholders in order to identify how to pay for such projects.

They focused on the transformation of their bus fleet into zero emission buses and on providing an inclusive customer experience where the patrons felt safe and secure and the buses connected them quickly and efficiently with the places they want to go. By the early 2000s, they had improved the reliability of bus journeys and expanded the network and increased bus journeys by 69%.

Some of their key actions:

- Gross cost contracts for new private operators;
- Introduced a congestion charge within London city limits;
- Introduced a flat fare structure;
- Announced free fares for under 16s and under 18s school kids;
- Made buses fully cashless;
- Introduced a Hopper fare enabling customers to take unlimited journeys within one hour of 'tapping on';
- Introduced a 'Freedom Pass' allowing older and disabled Londoners free travel;
- Launched the TfL Go app, which utilises the iBus automatic vehicle location system so as to provides real time information on bus arrival times;
- Upgraded and improved bus stops/shelters (and stations) with better lighting and seating and ensured they remained maintained;
- Negotiated with the London Police to introduce dedicated police force for the bus network;
- Improved Bus Driver Training by utilising virtual reality headsets and a training program (Destination Zero) focused on safe speeds, safe streets, safe vehicles and safe behaviours;
- Introduced a new Bus Safety Standard and a Fatigue Risk Management System;
- Introduced and ran Project Guardian (in schools) and Report It to Stop It Campaigns designed to educate on, identify and hence prevent sexual harassment;
- Established a Women's Safety Program;
- Trialled measures such as restricting access to certain streets to buses, cycles and pedestrians for part of the day to allow them to navigate freely, or introducing bus lanes to allow buses to the front of a junction or bypass a pinch point;
- They changed 400 traffic signals so they prioritise buses and review the timings of 20% of their 6000 traffic signals every year to ensure buses receive adequate priority
- Negotiated with developers to cover the cost of providing infrastructure capital costs
- Incentivised bus operators to identify additional scheduling efficiencies and improving services.

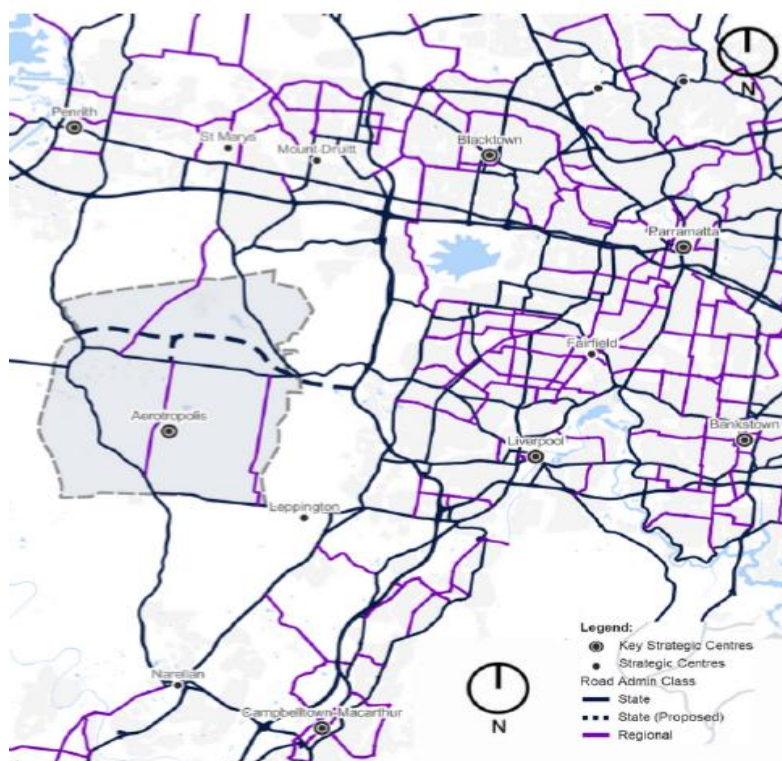
As this wonderful example shows, it will take the concerted effort of not only the three levels of government working together but other key stakeholders to ameliorate the existing state of public transport in the Western Parkland City and provide the public transport options so desperately needed.

²⁴ [The Mayor's Transport Strategy - Transport for London \(tfl.gov.uk\)](https://www.tfl.gov.uk)

Road Infrastructure

Given the above situation and with the communities of the Western Parkland City currently much too far away from a bus stop or train station to make them accessible, most of our residents are left with no choice but to be dependent on transport by car.

It has been easier in the short term in Australia to focus on roads and this has been partly due to the perception that roads are quicker, easier and cheaper to build, but also that major road projects have been more easily adapted to a public-private partnership investment model. However, it is important to note in this context that the Western Parkland City has not benefitted at the same level of investment in road infrastructure as the other two 'Cities' with our road arteries relatively underdeveloped.²⁵



Furthermore, although a metro station is planned for the aerotropolis, it is currently unclear how this will be connected to the surrounding road network, including roads such as Fifteenth Avenue, Bringelly Road and The Northern Road, and what the impacts will be.

Consideration of how the increased freight movements will be managed is also lacking. For example, construction of a southern link freight road from Mamre Road Intermodal to Smithfield/Wetherhill Park over the top of the M7 to link to an extension of Victoria Street is essential to provide the necessary road freight access to deal with the increase in demand. If such measures are not considered and delivered, our local roads will become choked with freight trucks travelling to and from the airport and aerotropolis.

²⁵ Sydney's Parkland Councils Future Horizons Benchmarking Report, Transport Update April 2023, Sea and Star Advisory

Pathways/cycle paths/first and last mile connections

In addition, the availability of public transport options is not enough in itself. As the TfNSW's 2023 White Paper into On Street Transit quite rightly outlines, "there is a challenging gap in their first and last mile journey,"²⁶ and this is particularly true given the breadth of development and the spread of housing across the Western Parkland City.

Public transport users require the supporting infrastructure that will get them to the station or bus stop, such as cycle ways, footpaths or ideally on-demand bus services- the first and/or last mile. There is a missed opportunity through delivery of new transport infrastructure projects, such as the Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport line, to integrate with an accompanying commitment to bus services, or cycling and pedestrian links throughout the Western Parkland City. Where commuters often rely on a car for part of their trip, the ancillary facilities needed include commuter car parks, park and ride, kiss-n-ride, or taxi stands. There also needs to be provision of a high level of comfort and safety for users through shelters offering weather protection, adequate lighting at night, and separation from main roads.

Several Parkland Councils have committed to developing vibrant night-time economies in their larger centres driven by businesses that offer dining or entertainment activities after sunset. Safe and convenient public transport options are critical to this task. Aside from dining or entertainment activities, the Western Sydney International Airport is set to be a 24-hour facility. Access to public transport services can be difficult to non-existent at night or outside peak periods. Consideration needs to be made for the safe and reliable provision of public transport services outside of standard business hours.

b) Funding of transport infrastructure

Even the most basic research quickly makes clear that it is impossible to expect passenger fares to cover operating costs fully. However, as we examine throughout this submission, there are many other benefits provided by public transport including less congestion and pollution, greater conservation of fuel and the environment, fewer automobile fatalities and greater individual activity, all leading to greater health benefits. It also encourages compact development, increases property values (near transit stops), extends the available labour pool for businesses and can provide greater mobility and freedom to our seniors and disabled residents, ensuring they enjoy a more independent life.²⁷

So how then can we fund such projects? The last few years have been testing for nations around the globe and we are cognisant of the challenges faced by the Commonwealth and NSW State Government in dealing with the bushfires, floods and COVID. We understand the fiscally constrained environment both levels of government in Australia are facing and agree that the time is right now to consider innovative funding models. The Western Sydney City Deal actually has as one of its commitments, P7, a focus on innovative planning to meet infrastructure needs (with a focus on transport and water), but though much work has been done, it has proven difficult for an effective model to be developed.

There is definitely scope for innovative thinking, new approaches and greater collaboration between the three levels of government to tackle this challenge and there are possibly examples in other countries from which we could learn. The European Commission, for

²⁶ Directions for On-Street Transit White Paper, October 2023, p20

²⁷ Why and How to fund Public Transportation, Arizona PIRG Education Fund, March 2009, p4

example, manages the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), an EU mechanism that groups EU financing for three sets of trans-European infrastructures, namely energy, transport and digital into one fund. The European Commission just announced in June this year that it was injecting 6 billion euros into 107 transport infrastructure projects to support projects that deliver more efficient, greener and smarter network of railways, inland waterways and maritime routes, including major cross-border rail connections.²⁸ By enabling synergies between the transport, energy and digital sectors, the CEF is able to leverage funding from both the public and private sectors, while increasing legal certainty.

As was noted earlier, the government in Australia did identify an effective way to deliver major road projects, which continues to be successful to this day. By using toll roads and providing government guarantees, state governments were able to not only secure roads but gained substantial cash grants from the private consortiums for the right to build them.²⁹ In Sydney, this has resulted in over \$10 billion worth of toll roads being built since the 1990s. However, unlike the funding of roads, to date there has been no similar funding mechanism developed for rail and it remains the sole responsibility of the State and/or Commonwealth Government to fund. Proposals to build fast, heavy rail using tollway financing have been put forward such as for the Western Sydney Fast Rail, as well as the consideration for the effective leveraging of land development opportunities to implement light rail options, however these have not been approved by state governments in Australia.³⁰

The fact is that while drivers do bear the costs of the roads they use in this way, it is actually only 75% of the actual costs they generate through congestion, pollution, accidents and noise (even after including petrol tax, registration tax, sales tax and other fees).³¹ It would hence seem tempting and fair to increase the taxes and fees on those people driving the roads to cover not only the costs of the road infrastructure but the costs of additional transport infrastructure. However, this would ensure that the residents of the Western Parkland City would be unfairly burdened for the poor decisions made regarding infrastructure investment by previous governments.

The Australian Automobile Association's transport affordability index suggests that typical annual vehicle costs are about \$25,600 per year, with fuel composing about 20% of those costs and tolls a further 19%.³² Inevitably, higher car costs are being borne by those households that have more than one car and who have to travel further distances, particularly on toll roads. With WPC households having an average of 1.8 cars, compared to 0.7 for Sydney, making roughly 65% more car trips than residents of Sydney city and travelling for 13 kms on average (against 9.5kms for Sydney city), our households must outlay \$57,800 annually. This is approximately three times as much as Sydney residents' typical annual costs, which are around \$18,750.

At the same time, Western Parkland City households' living standards are lower, and have risen more slowly than the rest of Sydney.³³ While real living standards did increase for

²⁸ EU invests 6.2 billion Euros in sustainable, safe and efficient transport infrastructure, Press Release, 22 June 2023, European Commission, Brussels

²⁹ Transit-oriented Development: An Australian Overview, Peter Newman, Curtin University

³⁰ Hass Klau C (2004) Bus or Light Rail: Making the Right Choice, (2nd Ed) Environmental and Transport Planning, Brighton, UK.

³¹ Why and How to fund Public Transportation, Arizona PIRG Education Fund, March 2009, p4

³² Sydney's Parkland Councils Future Horizons Benchmarking Report, Transport Update April 2023, Sea and Star Advisory

³³ Sydney's Parkland Councils Future Horizons Benchmarking Report, December 2022, Sea and Star Advisory

residents of the Parkland City with a 69% growth in weekly household income on 2006 levels, these gains were still substantially lower than in other areas, with growth in Sydney City's weekly household income of 84% on 2006 levels and that of Parramatta an incredible 97%. In addition, once the increase in household income less change in housing costs and adjusted for inflation over time (real purchasing power) is calculated, it can be clearly seen that the increases in income for the Western Parkland City households has been far more modest at \$11,000 (or a 24% increase). This is in comparison to Sydney at \$17,500 (+34%) and Parramatta at \$20,000 (+ 44%).

In addition, Western Parkland City households are relatively disadvantaged with some communities having extreme concentrations of relative disadvantage in a way that other parts of Sydney do not have. For example, St Marys/North St Marys are in the bottom 5-10 percent of most disadvantaged suburbs, Fairfield is in the bottom 5%, Miller, Cartwright, Busby and Sadleir are in the bottom 2-3 per cent, and Airs and Claymore near Campbelltown in the bottom 1 per cent.³⁴

This highlights the lack of equity in NSW as it shows that the more socio-economically challenged populations are moving out to car dependent areas where they can afford housing but are forced to spend far more on transport with some families spending up to 40% of their income on transport.³⁵ With ongoing car costs such as fuel and tolls showing no signs of becoming more affordable, there is an opportunity to convince people of the benefits of utilising public transport, but only if it is as available, frequent and convenient as it is in the Eastern Harbour City. This also points to an obstacle in utilising the level of increasing road tolls as a way to discourage behaviour and encourage the take-up of public transport. Such a measure would instead be seen as further proof of the inequity with wealthier residents able to absorb the cost and continue to drive and those already struggling forced to spend even more of their already over-extended income on vehicle costs.

So how can we fund transport infrastructure? This requires serious consideration as quick and easy strategies such as increasing fares or road tolls are not equitable (as we outlined above) and additionally, may well work to reduce the attraction of and hence use of public transport. As a recent investigation into funding options for public transportation made clear, any funding option needs to be examined against the following key criteria³⁶:

- ❖ Potential revenue
- ❖ Predictability and stability
- ❖ Equity
- ❖ Travel impacts
- ❖ Strategic development objectives
- ❖ Public acceptability
- ❖ Ease of implementation

While there are numerous taxes and fees that can be applied, many of which are already in place in New South Wales, we would like to draw the attention of the inquiry to the following options:

³⁴ <https://profile.id.com/western-parkland/seifa-disadvantage-small-area>

³⁵ Transit-Oriented Development: An Australian Overview, Peter Newman, Curtin University

³⁶ Local Funding Options for Public Transportation, Todd Litman, Victorian Transport Policy Unit, pp10-11

- 1) Weight/km truck fee³⁷: Germany uses GPS to levy fees on trucks using the motorway system and the US charges trucks that exceed 26,000 pounds a fee according to their weight and the distance travelled.
- 2) Tolling technologies employed to maximise environmental benefits³⁸: For example, the technology can provide incentives that work to alleviate congestion such as charging drivers different amounts for using the road at different times.
- 3) Development of premium lanes³⁹: Some locations do charge a larger toll for the utilisation of premium lanes but this can lead to only higher income drivers enjoying the luxury of avoiding congestion. Instead we could allow High Occupancy Vehicles (HOVs) to utilise certain lanes for free with single drivers only able to use if they pay a premium.
- 4) Environmental Construction Fees⁴⁰: California requires developers to use energy efficient and traffic reduction techniques and pay into a pool for pollution control as a way to offset the impact of their construction on emissions and congestion. If they make design changes that reduce their impact on air quality, their fees are reduced. Similarly, fees are reduced for residential developments that are higher density, energy efficient, are located near jobs/retail and intentionally plan for bikes etc.
- 5) Parking tax⁴¹: With only a minor portion of parking activity (around 5-10%) actually priced, this a surcharge on parking transactions (when motorists are paying directly for parking). This can also be combined with the next option.
- 6) Discounted bulk transit passes⁴²: Programs that encourage employers to purchase reduced rate transit passes for their employees in bulk or even universities for their student populations. This encourages these people to utilise public transport options while also generating funds and can increase the attractiveness of transit-oriented developments.
- 7) Parking levy⁴³: This is a property tax on non-residential parking spaces so will be borne predominantly by commercial property owners. It could hence result in increased parking pricing, higher retail prices and/or a reduction in wages but also impact positively in encouraging property owners to price parking, thereby discouraging private vehicle use. It should be noted this tactic is used in Melbourne, Perth and Sydney.
- 8) Expanded public parking pricing⁴⁴: This sees currently unpriced publicly owned parking facilities becoming priced. Until there is a significant increase in the availability, access and comfort of public transport options in the Western Parkland City, this strategy would potentially impact unfairly on our residents.
- 9) Rental car tax: An additional fee included in the renting of a car within the Western Parkland City.
- 10) Income tax⁴⁵: This would be an additional tax on income dedicated to public transportation. For example, Indianapolis imposed an income tax of up to 0.25% per \$100 of income to fund their Transit Plan, while the City of Cincinnati levies a 2% per annum tax on municipal taxable income to finance municipal operations including public transit services.

³⁷ Why and How to fund Public Transportation, Arizona PIRG Education Fund, March 2009, p12

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ Why and How to fund Public Transportation, Arizona PIRG Education Fund, March 2009, p12

⁴¹ Local Funding Options for Public Transportation, Todd Litman, Victorian Transport Policy Unit, p24

⁴² Ibid, p14

⁴³ Ibid, p25

⁴⁴ Ibid, p26

⁴⁵ Ibid, p17

There can be no doubt that transit-oriented development, with communities designed around public transport hubs such as stations, make sense. If we could provide the private sector with the surety around land development opportunities, rail would be automatically integrated with land use, the investment in the rail would be optimised for all parties and consequently financing locked in.

It is incredibly important for the Government's bottom line to get this right as data on global cities suggests that "the more a city has committed itself to public transport infrastructure, the less the city spend overall on transport; and the more a city has built itself around car dependence, the more of the city's wealth is wasted on just getting around."⁴⁶

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

The biggest issue facing the Western Parkland City with regards to employment, and this is one that has been a longstanding problem, is that employment totals lag behind population totals and the gap continues to widen over time. As residential land is released in the north west and south west, this has driven greenfield development but these have not been accompanied by a parallel strategy to plan for jobs. In absolute numbers, the gap in the number of jobs and number of employed residents grew from almost 80,000 in 2000 to 155,000 in 2016.⁴⁷ While there was a surge of construction jobs in 2018, the overall deficit remained. This failure to plan for and generate sufficient jobs for our residents is particularly true for knowledge intensive jobs such as those in the information, media and communications, finance and insurance, or professional scientific and technical services industries, leaving our residents with those requisite skills no option but to drive for many hours every day to the east for employment. In fact, data shows that 309,500 workers or 29% of the resident workers leave Western Sydney daily to access jobs⁴⁸.

It should also be noted that as the experience of the COVID lockdowns made starkly apparent, where many in our region were vilified for being 'super spreaders', the majority of the workforce in the Western Parkland City do not have the luxury of taking a break from the long commutes by working from home. Our people tend to be in essential industries that require them to work onsite such as construction, freight and logistics, transport, warehousing, health services and so on. They hence cannot sidestep the need for transport to work.

Transport for NSW projections for 2036 forecast that the rate of jobs growth will be higher than at any time this century and yet this will still leave Western Sydney with a jobs deficit of 156,789 jobs and a total daily worker outflow of 426,225.⁴⁹ However, if their projections are incorrect and in fact the job intensity ratio resembles the average annual rate experienced so far this century, the 2036 deficit is estimated to be 324,808 jobs with a daily worker outflow from the region of 562,320 commuters.⁵⁰ Should our transport options not have improved by

⁴⁶ Sustainability and Cities: Overcoming Automobile Dependence, Newman PWG and Kenworthy JR, Washington DC, 1999lc v

⁴⁷ Where are the Jobs? Part 2 The geography of Western Sydney's jobs deficit, Phillip O'Neill, The Centre for Western Sydney, 2020, p13

⁴⁸ Ibid, p 20

⁴⁹ Where are the Jobs? Part 3 Western Sydney workers in 2036, Phillip O'Neill, The Centre for Western Sydney, 2020, p11

⁵⁰ Ibid

then leaving the majority of these workers forced to travel by car, the resultant congestion, emissions and environmental impact would be devastating.

The government has tried to grapple with this issue of a jobs deficit in Western Sydney and the two largest contributions to this was the commitment to build an airport in Western Sydney and also for jobs to be generated through the construction of a manufacturing centre, agribusiness precinct and a modern city, Bradfield, in an aerotropolis next to the airport as outlined in the Western Sydney City Deal. However, with very little of the jobs growth predicted to occur within our existing regional centres, being able to get our people to the jobs in the airport and aerotropolis is of paramount importance and yet there is currently only one rail line being built (from St Marys) to provide direct access and we continue to fight for a rapid bus network. The ridiculous reality is that even now with the construction of the airport and aerotropolis, there are a significant number of jobs being offered, but it is impossible for the young people who lack a license and/or motor vehicle who chronically need those jobs to get to and from the job site.

This sustained pattern of economic expansion led by Sydney City, and population, dwelling and labour force increases concentrated further West, brings Sydney's transport networks and the essential need to provide the connectivity to link the two into sharp focus.

d) Integration with existing transport infrastructure

Gaps in service provision for lower density areas⁵¹ in the Western Parkland City can be addressed by:

- Integrating existing services through better timetable coordination;
- Having fare structures that do not penalise customers for using more than one mode of transport or breaking their journeys;
- Having staff in stations and at bus interchanges at night until the last service so people feel safe using public transport for shifts or at nights.

At the same time, to ensure that our industrial and commercial hubs such as Smithfield-Wetherill Park, Moorebank, Ingleburn, Minto and St Marys remain highly operational and efficient at moving goods in and out, we need a full rail freight capacity study. Each of the eight Councils has been experiencing issues with freight impacting on roads, and these can be expected to increase exponentially as the planned freight and logistics centre and agribusiness precinct etc. open along with the airport. In Wollondilly's case, there is no dedicated freight corridor with a separate track for freight trains, creating capacity constraints and impacting on passenger services through scheduling conflicts. The freight network across the Western Parkland City and how it interconnects to the Central River and Eastern Harbour Cities as well as NSW's regional areas needs to be considered as a network, particularly in terms of servicing both airports and key freight routes.

Effectively what has been fundamentally lacking is an integrated transport plan for the whole region. As a priority, we need an integrated, well-maintained transport system that encompasses various transport nodes (freight, passenger and active) at the state, regional and sub-regional level and covers the full area of the eight Councils.

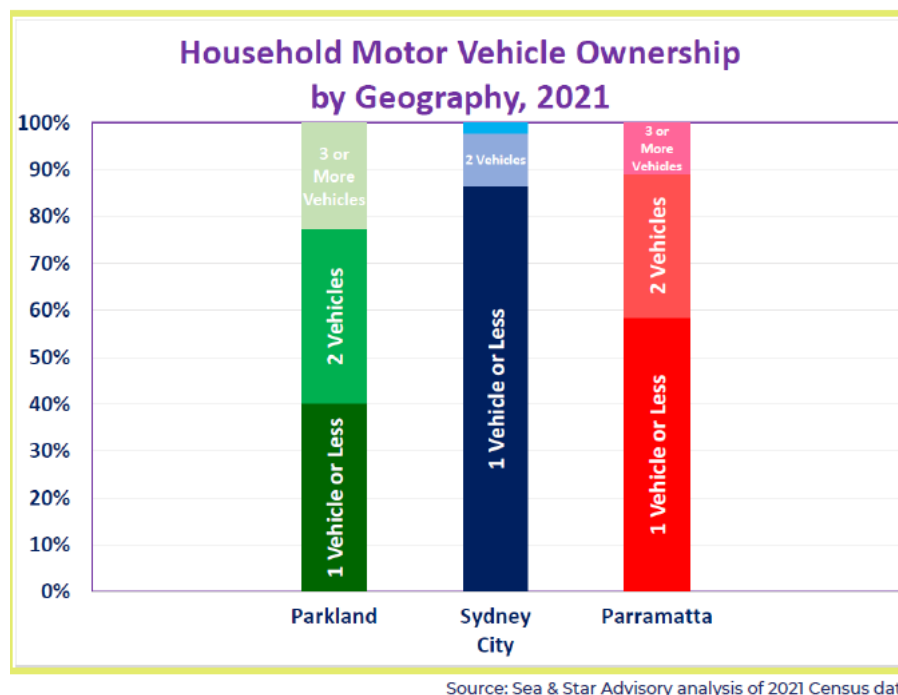
⁵¹ Stanley J.K, Hensher D.A., Stanley J.R 2022 Place-based disadvantage, social exclusion and the value of mobility, Transportation Research Part A: Policy & Practice , Vol 160 June 2022 pp 11-133
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tra.2022.04.005>

e) Reducing road usage around the new airport and surrounding regions;

In order to reduce road usage around the new airport and surrounding regions, the first step is to address our communities' dependence on cars.

In addition, many of the rezoning applications in the Western Parkland City have been approved when there is no appropriate transport infrastructure in place, such as Wilton, Appin, and Austral. In fact, Wollondilly has no electric trains at all with only a diesel service and this has capacity constraints as noted above. This is a major issue. Our people have had no option to date but to rely predominantly on transportation by internal combustion engine (ICE) motor vehicle.

This can be clearly evidenced by the fact that while only slightly more than 10% of Sydney City households have two vehicles or more, this is true for the majority of WPC households.⁵²



It is currently forecast that Stage 1 of the Western Sydney International Airport will deliver approximately 10 million passengers in its initial years of operation, ramping up to around 80 million per year once a second runway and other facilities are built.⁵³ Fast and efficient rail links will play a crucial role in ensuring the success of this airport, not only to allow workers to access their jobs, but to allow our residents to use this airport for travel and tourists to access and enjoy the various sights and experiences unique to the Western Parkland City while limiting road congestion and emissions. It will be the key to unlocking the economic potential of the airport and to rebalancing Greater Sydney.

If we do not have better public transport systems in place within the Western Parkland City by then, we will miss out on the economic and social benefits of the airport, which may find itself under-utilised. A North South Rail Link would connect our metropolitan clusters and

⁵² Sydney's Parkland Councils Future Horizons Benchmarking Report, Transport Update April 2023, Sea and Star Advisory

⁵³ [AnewairportforWesternSydney.pdf \(westernsydneyairport.gov.au\)](https://www.westernsydneyairport.gov.au/AnewairportforWesternSydney.pdf)

create the connections we so desperately need, linking the Greater Penrith to Eastern Creek Growth Investigation Area, the Western Economic Corridor, St Marys, Liverpool and Campbelltown-Macarthur regions to the airport and beyond.

We firmly believe that if a safe, well-connected and convenient public transport system is provided, our people would slowly transition to increasingly using it, particularly our new residents. This would ensure that we could overcome car dependence and achieve our vision for a well-connected, 30-minute City that offers a range of active and public transport options. It should also be noted that a Federal Government report in Sustainable Cities found that while the perceived costs of car use are around 6c/pass-km, the real costs are closer to 60c/pass-km whereas public transport is perceived to cost 11-20c/pass-km while its real costs are 20-30c/pass-km.⁵⁴

As the Western Sydney Health Alliance continues to showcase, our residents' health and circumstances are shaped by the distribution of money, power, and resources at global, national and local levels. Where people are born, grow, live, work and age impacts upon their health.⁵⁵ Social determinants of health are mostly responsible for health inequities – the unfair and avoidable differences in health status seen within and between communities. Common social determinants of health include employment status, level of education achieved, working life conditions, housing, social inclusion, non-discrimination, access to health services and **access to public transport**.

Key issues impacting upon the availability and accessibility to public transport services in Western Sydney relate to these social determinants of health. The Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) measures transport accessibility and PTAL scores each area based on proximity and frequency of public transport services. The McKell Institute highlighted the unequal access to public transport in Western Sydney and of the 33 Sydney LGAs, the top three with the best access to public transport are all in the East and the North districts.⁵⁶ These differences are significant. While the median PTAL score is 15, the lower third of LGAs have a score of between two (Wollondilly) and ten (Liverpool). The top tertile ranges from 18 (Canada Bay) to 52 (City of Sydney).⁵⁷

Review of the official statistics collected by Transport for NSW as part of its Household Travel Survey reveal a marked disparity in the travel behaviours of WPC households against those of the rest of Greater Sydney.⁵⁸ While the jobs deficit in the West leading to high numbers of residents being forced to commute long distances to work has long been understood, WPC residents actually face longer travel times for all kinds of trip purposes. Shopping trips are 4.5 times longer than those in Sydney City, childcare and education trips are 93% longer than Parramatta and 3 times longer than for Sydney residents and recreation and social trips are up to 4 times longer than for Sydney residents. In short, our communities have too few amenities close to home, forcing them to travel longer distances.

In the Western Parkland City in 2022/23 on an average weekday, total vehicle driver trips are 2,175,000. In comparison, on a daily basis 215,000 trips are made by public transport

⁵⁴ House of Representatives (2005) Sustainable Cities, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

⁵⁵ https://www.who.int/health-topics/social-determinants-of-health#tab=tab_1

⁵⁶ https://mckellinstitute.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/McKell_Super-Funding-Infrastructure.pdf

⁵⁷ <https://opendata.transport.nsw.gov.au/dataset/ptal-public-transportaccessibility-level>

⁵⁸ Sydney's Parkland Councils Future Horizons Benchmarking Report, Transport Update April 2023, Sea and Star Advisory

and 433,000 are walking only.⁵⁹ Western Parkland residents undertake 6,000,000 daily car trips that are less than 5km.

Such limited public transport options lead to:

- Social exclusion and time-poor lifestyles
- Environmental impacts
- Economic inefficiency
- Reduced public health

Better access to current public transport networks, improved bus routing that link residential areas directly to main urban precincts, an increased workforce capacity and more bus and rail services are needed in Western Sydney. This is critical to address the current need and demand that will come from the impending population growth.

This dependence on the motor vehicle has led to fewer people adopting an active transport approach, with only 10% of residents making trips by walking in comparison to 18% for Greater Sydney.⁶⁰

*Driving is the only realistic option to get around Campbelltown. Cycling, walking and buses are all options I'd love and have used frequently when living in other cities. My health was much better when I didn't have to rely on a car to get around.*⁶¹

Public transport patronage brings good health benefits both at the individual and community levels as the use of public transport usually involves some walking to and from transit stops such as train stations or bus stops. Good access to public transport is associated with walking sufficiently each week to meet physical activity guidelines. Public transport use can add eight to 33 minutes of physical activity per day.⁶²

We know from conservative research analyses that improving accessibility to public transport will improve population health by facilitating physical activity and lead to healthcare cost savings compared with business-as-usual.⁶³ Multi-directional, high-frequency improvements to public transport networks can generate significantly greater health and economic gains in relation to physical activity, body weight, health-adjusted life years gained and healthcare cost-savings.

As has been amply evidenced by the Western Sydney Health Alliance, public transport is also not just about people on seats, it's about which people can get on the seats, and how much their life can be changed through improved mobility and inclusion. Social exclusion creates costs for both the excluded person and also for the wider community, with those who are socially excluded commonly having a higher risk of being unemployed, in poorer mental

⁵⁹ <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/data-by-six-cities>

⁶⁰ Sydney's Parkland Councils Future Horizons Benchmarking Report, Transport Update April 2023, Sea and Star Advisory

⁶¹ ██████████ resident of Campbelltown

⁶² Rissel. Et al 2012, Key health benefits associated with public transport: a rapid review. An Evidence Check Review brokered by the Sax Institute for the NSW Ministry of Health.

⁶³ Brown et al, 2019, Better transport accessibility, better health: a health economic impact assessment study for Melbourne, Australia, International Journal of behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity 16:89

and physical health, being less socially connected, and for some more likely to engage in crime and/or substance abuse.⁶⁴

This is a real issue in the Western Parkland City. In 2021, 87,294 (7.6%) people who spoke a language other than English at home reported difficulty speaking English, and 74,176 people (or 6.4% of the population) in Western Parkland Councils reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability. This is higher than the NSW percentage. One of the largest changes in family/household types in Western Parkland Councils between 2016 and 2021 were Lone person households (+14,147). In the 2021 Census, there were 71,151 (18.4%) lone person households in the Western Parkland City. Social connection between people is important for mental health and contributes to an improved quality of life and lack of public transport opportunities can potentially exacerbate social isolation. In fact, research has shown that local bus services would only need to carry eight or nine passengers an hour for societal benefits to outweigh the financial cost of running the bus.⁶⁵ Improving public transport access in the Western Parkland City can have a societal benefit through better health and wellbeing, increased employment and reduced crime, and these financial benefits should be included in cost-benefit-analysis.

The Commonwealth Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research (BITRE) remains a leading authority on relationships between growth in vehicle usage, arterial road networks, road network investment and congestion costs. While COVID interrupted the steady profile of growth in Sydney's avoidable congestion, the re-established trend of growth in population, vehicle kilometres travelled and traffic has restored the rising profile of avoidable congestion costs.⁶⁶ These costs will disproportionately be borne by households and businesses who:

- Are more car reliant;
- Have longer distances to travel;
- Live and work in areas where the arterial road network is more sparse and incomplete in its coverage;
- Live in areas with higher rates of increase in population growth and vehicle usage;
- Enjoy limited place integration around public transport hubs.

On a per person basis, the BITRE figures suggest Sydneysiders will bear roughly twice as much avoidable congestion costs in 2030 than they endured in 2010. With accelerating population growth, higher rates of car ownership, longer trips and a relatively immature and underdeveloped road network, Western Parkland City residents will bear this increase disproportionately. Without significant investment, population growth will mean that our City's rate of growth in congestion will likely outpace the rise in Sydney's congestion by a significant margin.

It should also be noted that despite road networks in the newly built new release areas being built according to the Indicative Layout Plan (ILP) with an approximate 9m carriage way width, significant congestion is still being experienced due to the impact of on-street parking caused by the high number of vehicles per household.

⁶⁴ Baumeister et al, 2005, Social Exclusion Impairs Self-Regulation, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 88, 4, p589-604

⁶⁵ Stanley et al, 2022, Place-based disadvantage, social exclusion and the value of mobility, *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, 160: 101-113

⁶⁶ Sydney's Parkland Councils Future Horizons Benchmarking Report, Transport Update April 2023, Sea and Star Advisory

Our residents are facing some very real issues that have inevitably lead to significant health impacts

	NSW (Average)	Blue Mountains	Camden	Campbelltown	Fairfield	Hawkesbury	Liverpool	Penrith	Wollondilly
Arthritis	8.4	8.4	6.6	8.6	7.1	9.1	6.1	7.9	9.4
Mental Health	8.0	8.0	7.2	7.7	4.9	9.3	5.2	8.9	8.2
Asthma	7.8	7.8	7.8	8.5	5.1	8.5	6.3	9.1	8.7
Diabetes	4.8	4.0	4.1	6.7	6.8	4.8	5.6	5.5	4.4
Heart Disease	3.9	3.9	2.9	3.7	3.6	4.0	3.0	3.6	3.9

Prevalence of top 5 chronic conditions in Western Parkland City Councils in comparison to NSW.⁶⁷

The traffic congestion is leading to increased stress from long periods spent sitting sedentary in cars on congested roads. The resultant higher emissions is leading to worsening air quality, affecting respiratory and cardiovascular health and this lifestyle is leading to obesity and a far higher rate of serious health problems impacting mental health and life satisfaction.

We need a Western Parkland City Transport Plan for improved access across the region and beyond, including better public transport, better road connections, less congestion, high quality digital access (to allow for remote working options), and walkable neighbourhoods to break the dependence on the motor vehicle.

It is important also to remember that a significant global problem is looming with regards to car dependence and that is the issue of oil vulnerability. Already the soaring costs of petrol are cutting deep into the pockets of the average Australian and as petrol becomes scarcer, it is American and Australian cities that will be most vulnerable. Moving to road infrastructure that allows for greater deployment of electric vehicles is inevitable but constructing extensive electric rail systems with transit-oriented development built around stations provides the best solution, and hence should be prioritised.

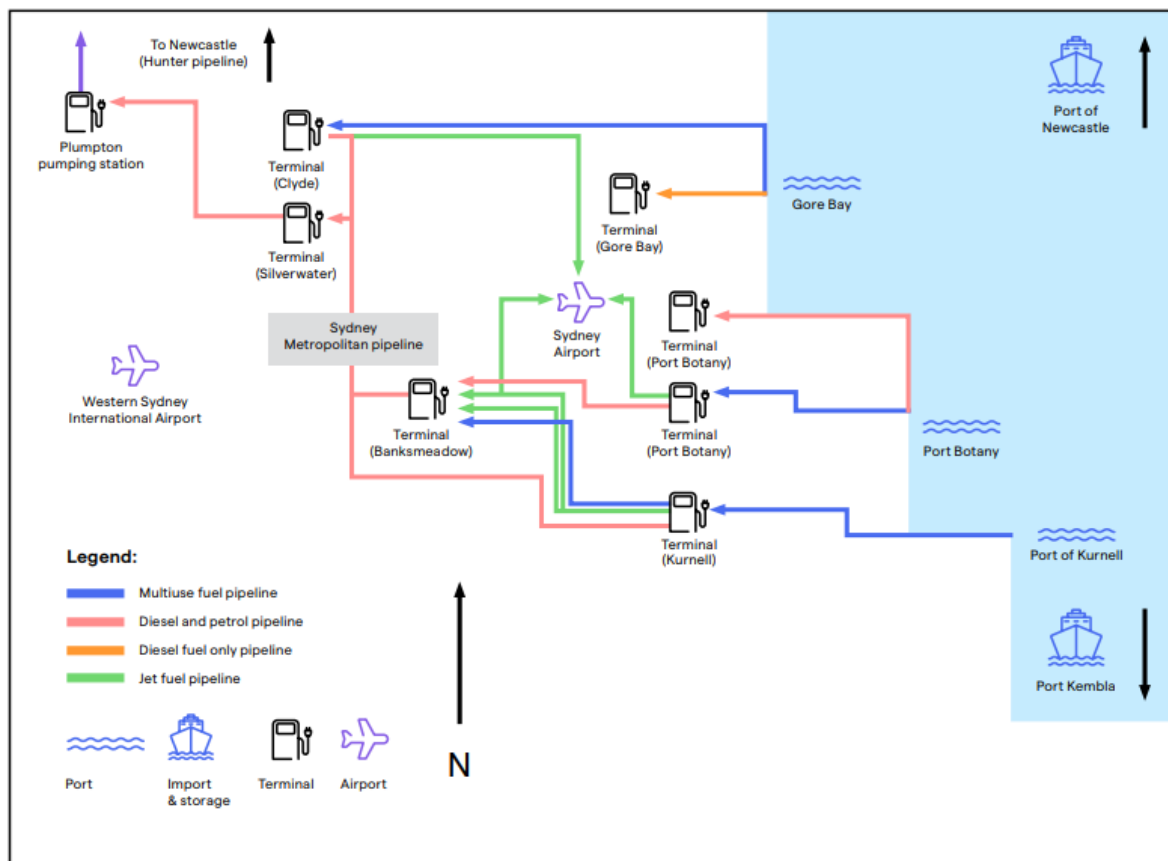
Lack of a fuel pipeline to the airport.

As Figure 4 from the report⁶⁸ shows below, there is currently no fuel pipeline to supply aviation fuel to the Western Sydney Airport, unlike Sydney Airport nor is there a plan to build one. Instead, the plan is for fuel to be trucked in from either the Clyde or Banksmeadow fuel terminals. While this report does recommend government authorities undertake corridor preservation now so that future proposed fuel pipelines will be able to be built, it also repeatedly points to the fact that building a fuel pipeline to the airport is not the responsibility of the airport but rather Transport for NSW.

⁶⁷ Western Sydney Health Alliance, Workforce Planning Statement endorsed by the Steering Committee, September 2023

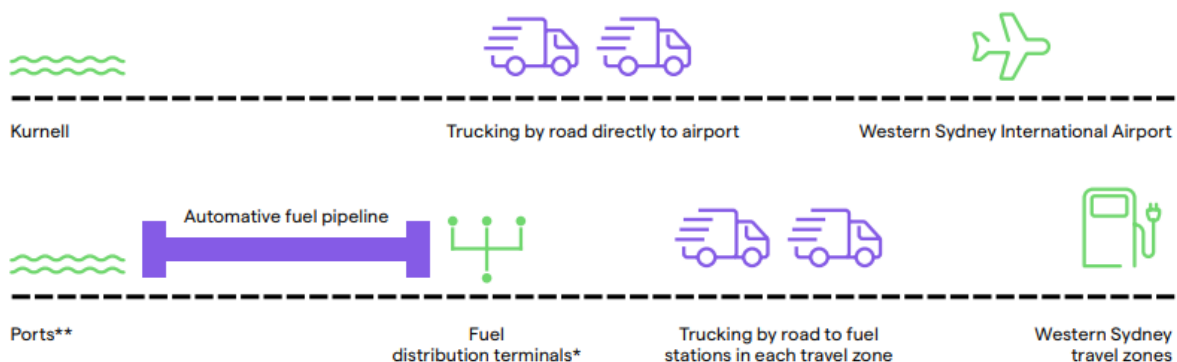
⁶⁸ Review of Aviation Fuel Supply Options, Western Sydney International Airport, May 2023, p18

Figure 4: Sydney's existing fuel supply chains



What this demonstrates is that all fuel distribution to the Western Parkland City is occurring via road-based supply chains relying on trucks from either ports Kurnell, Botany and Gore Bay or fuel storage and distribution hubs in Parramatta/Clyde, Silverwater and Banksmeadow (as per Figure 5).⁶⁹ This means that until a pipeline is either built by the government or by private industry (when it becomes commercially viable to do so) to the Western Sydney International Airport, fuel will need to be trucked in to fill both the tanks at the airport and the fuel farm near the north-west boundary of the airport.

Figure 5: Road-based supply chain (without a pipeline)

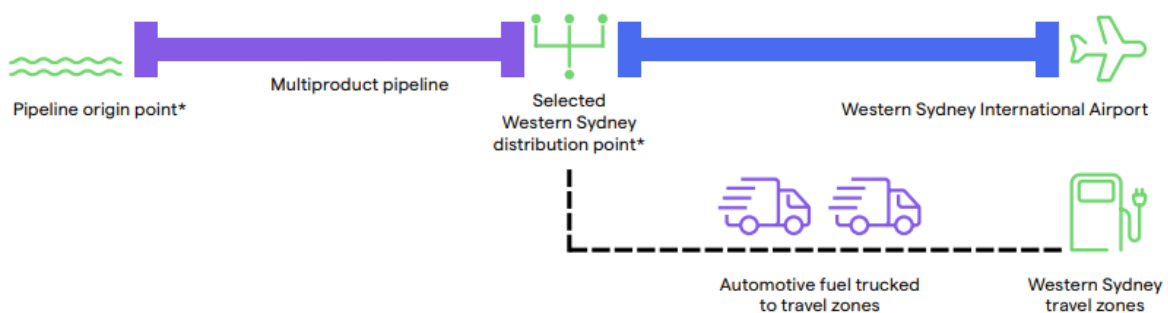


⁶⁹ Review of Aviation Fuel Supply Options, Western Sydney International Airport, May 2023, p19

The report estimates that to get the necessary fuel to the airport, by 2030 approximately 43 B double fuel tanker trucks will be required **per day** and this number will increase in line with the growth in airline traffic. It should be noted that as fuel trucks cannot travel through road tunnels, these trucks will be forced to avoid any sections of the motorway involving tunnels. The resulting increase in tanker truck volumes on the roads in the Western Parkland City are going to increase substantially the risks to other drivers, the congestion, noise, air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and wear and tear on our roads.

Unfortunately, according to a 2017 report on aviation supply corridor options put together by Deloitte, building a pipeline will only become commercially viable in 2034, when the aviation demand is predicted to be at least 2.5ML per day or 908ML annually.⁷⁰ However another option may be to investigate a multi-product pipeline, as is set out in Figure 6 below.⁷¹ The airport's own report suggest that such a pipeline would be economically viable much earlier.

Figure 6: Future fuel supply chain (with a pipeline)



Or indeed, the governments, either State or Federal, could provide an incentive for a pipeline investor. With a Transport for NSW 2022 study itself estimating that we can reduce carbon emissions by up to 145,000 tonnes every year simply by removing 50 trucks per day from the Sydney Road Network,⁷² it seems that building a pipeline seems a fairly obvious action to take.

The only other options that perhaps is worth exploring is the establishment of a waste to energy plant next door to the airport (perhaps within the aerotropolis) to manufacture sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) from waste products such as is accomplished in the US and elsewhere.⁷³

f) Any other related matters

Better utilisation of technology solutions.

As has been clearly identified above, if we want to reduce car dependency, we **must** provide a viable alternative. Therefore, having reasonable access to frequent, on time and appropriately integrated public transport options plays an absolutely essential role in the uptake of public transport. To increase perceptions of the positive benefits of public

⁷⁰ [Fuel Supply Corridor Options Report Feb2018.pdf \(westernsydneyairport.gov.au\)](#), p17

⁷¹ Review of Aviation Fuel Supply Options, Western Sydney International Airport, May 2023, p19

⁷² Western Sydney Strategic Fuel Pipeline Study (NSW Government, KPMG, 2022)

⁷³ [From Waste to Wingtip - Sustainable Aviation Fuel | Department of Energy](#)

transport, technology-enabled solutions can improve reliability, access, comfort (sense of safety), reduce inequity, minimise environmental impacts and ensure we are resource efficient, by:

1) Providing more efficient and reliable services.

Through the use of data analytics from data collected through ticketing systems, we can understand which are the busiest times/days/routes and so ensure that services are scheduled at times that offer the maximum convenience and along routes where the highest demand lies. This ensures that public transport use is maximised and becomes more environmentally friendly. This also allows for dynamic pricing approaches, lifting demand and/or increasing the viability of accessing the services for our socio-economically disadvantaged residents. In addition, monitoring of the movement of public transport can deliver better connections between multiple modes of transport, reducing wait times and improving customer satisfaction. The increase in shared mobility options such as bikes and electric scooters can also contribute by making access to and from stations and bus stops physically possible without a car, acting as 'first mile' or 'last mile' connections to a user's destination. Lastly, technology can and has allowed for the use of cashless pay options, significantly increasing the convenience for the average user, as well as allowing for savings on personnel costs.

2) Delivering peace of mind to customers.

The use of GPS tracking technology and open data to allow customers to see exactly where a train/bus is and how much longer it will take to reach a station/stop, or even how crowded they are, can better manage expectations, prevent long and frustrating wait times and give customers peace of mind. This allows for the planning to achieve better connectivity between transport modes both publicly and privately operated, by enabling users to access information and make mode and connection choices that meet their needs. Trip planning apps are also important as they give users the confidence to know they can utilise public transport and get to an important event on time. Lastly, timely and accurate information about parking opportunities at or near to stations (an unavoidable need for the majority of Western Parkland City residents who do seek to travel by train) can be provided through smart kerb/smart parking apps.

3) Contributing to a safe environment on the trains and buses as well as stops and stations.

Statistics from the 2023 NSW Safer Cities Survey conducted in July this year found that 59% of women feel unsafe most or all of the time in public, compared to 32% of men. Approximately three quarters (74%) said that if they felt safer, they would walk more often and 67% said they would use public transport more often.⁷⁴ The use of crowd monitoring software with AI to identify risks (such as people carrying weapons or leaving unattended baggage on platforms) can be added to our existing surveillance systems, providing enhanced security to stations and bus stops. Security systems linked to smartphone apps are already in the market that are designed to alert authorities immediately to notify them of a customer's GPS location in the event of an incident and these could be adopted. They could also be linked to sensors that are designed to react to loud noises to floodlight a specific area and improve the safety of station platforms or bus stops late at night.

⁷⁴ Safer Cities Survey Report: Perceptions of safety in public spaces and transport hubs across NSW, Transport for NSW, July 2023. p8

4) Ensuring costs are reasonable.

By allowing for time-sensitive pricing policies through online ticketing options, services can be provided in off peak times that may be more accessible for some of the more socio-economically challenged demographic groups within the Western Parkland City. It would also be good for some sort of concession fare system (as Seniors already enjoy) to be implemented for the people experiencing severe economic distress, particularly given the current costs of living crisis Australia is experiencing, as noted earlier.

It should be noted that a significant barrier to the successful, population-wide implementation of the above measures exists in our City and that is the issue of digital inequity. This must be also factored in to any policy consideration. Our research⁷⁵ has shown that not all Western Parkland City residents have access to the latest smart phones, many have data limitations due to a far higher percentage of people choosing pre-paid plans, many people are not native English speakers and our City as a whole has more blackspots and areas with 'spotty' and inadequate internet access. These issues will need to be addressed, should we wish to realise fully the benefits of such data and technology.

Another barrier may be a lack of user trust in new technology, as well as concerns that enhanced technology solutions may displace low-skilled workers.⁷⁶

It is also worth noting that the 2023 'State of the Arts in Western Sydney' report from the Centre of Western Sydney⁷⁷ looked at how limited provision of public transport impacts negatively on cultural attendance and participation of residents in arts and cultural activities. It found that disparities in attendance and participation rates are shaped by the limited transport connectivity between western Sydney residents and cultural institutions concentrated in eastern Sydney. When travelling to cultural institutions in a private vehicle, the report found that the combined costs of tolls, fuel and parking could reach up to \$105 per day for residents travelling from Oran Park to Sydney Theatre Company in Dawes Point. Should a resident in Oran Park opt for the more affordable public transport option, this would cost \$16.80 on weekdays or \$8.40 on weekends but takes a staggering 4 hrs to travel to and from the Sydney Theatre Company.

It is essential not only that improved connectivity between the airport/aerotropolis and the various precincts within the Western Parkland City is provided, but also between the Western Parkland City and other parts of Sydney, to allow our people to access more jobs easily and a greater range of amenities than can be yet found within our city. Our people deserve better public transport with frequent services, particularly at night, that are safe, as well as better road connections, and safe and connected footpaths and cycle-ways that meet the needs of our significantly growing community.

Please feel free to contact our Executive Director Joanna Kubota on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] or Ben Taylor, Chair of our General Managers'

⁷⁵ The Australian Digital Inclusion Index Report for the Western Parkland City, Centre for Sustainable Impact, Swinburne University, August 2023

⁷⁶ Using data and technology to integrate mobility modes in low income cities, Dana Yanocha, Jacob Mason and Jonas Hagen, November 2020

⁷⁷ Itaoui, R., Merrillees, D., Gerace, G. (2023) State of the Arts in Western Sydney, Parramatta, Centre for Western Sydney <https://doi.org/10.26183/tvye-5r23>

Group on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] should you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,



Dr George Greiss
Chair, The Parks' Mayoral Forum,
Mayor, Campbelltown City Council