

**Submission
No 14**

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

Organisation: Camden Council

Date Received: 28 March 2024



Reference Number: 24/138002

28 March 2024

Ms. Lynda Voltz MP
Committee Chair
NSW Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport and Infrastructure
Parliament House of NSW
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Ms. Voltz,

I am writing to you regarding the NSW Legislative Assembly Committee inquiry into critical transport infrastructure supporting the Western Sydney International Airport and Western Sydney Aerotropolis. Please find attached for your consideration, a copy of Council's submission in response to the Committee inquiry terms of reference.

Please note that the attached submission, while prepared by Council officers, is not formally endorsed via a resolution of Council. Due to the timing for release of the Committee's inquiry terms of reference, and Council's set meeting schedule for 2024, it was not possible to report the attached submission to Council prior to the Committee's due date of 31 March 2024.

The scope of the Committee's inquiry is significant for the Western Parkland City, including the Camden local government area, as public transport infrastructure has a key role to play in shaping its future as a sustainable and liveable City. We would welcome the opportunity to speak to Council's submission at the convening of a committee hearing if this would be of assistance.

Should you require any further information regarding Council's submission, please do not hesitate to contact myself on [REDACTED] or Council's Director Planning and Environment, Nicole Magurren on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Andrew Carfield
GENERAL MANAGER

Submission – NSW Legislative Inquiry: Transport Infrastructure for WSI and the Western Sydney Aerotropolis

March 2024

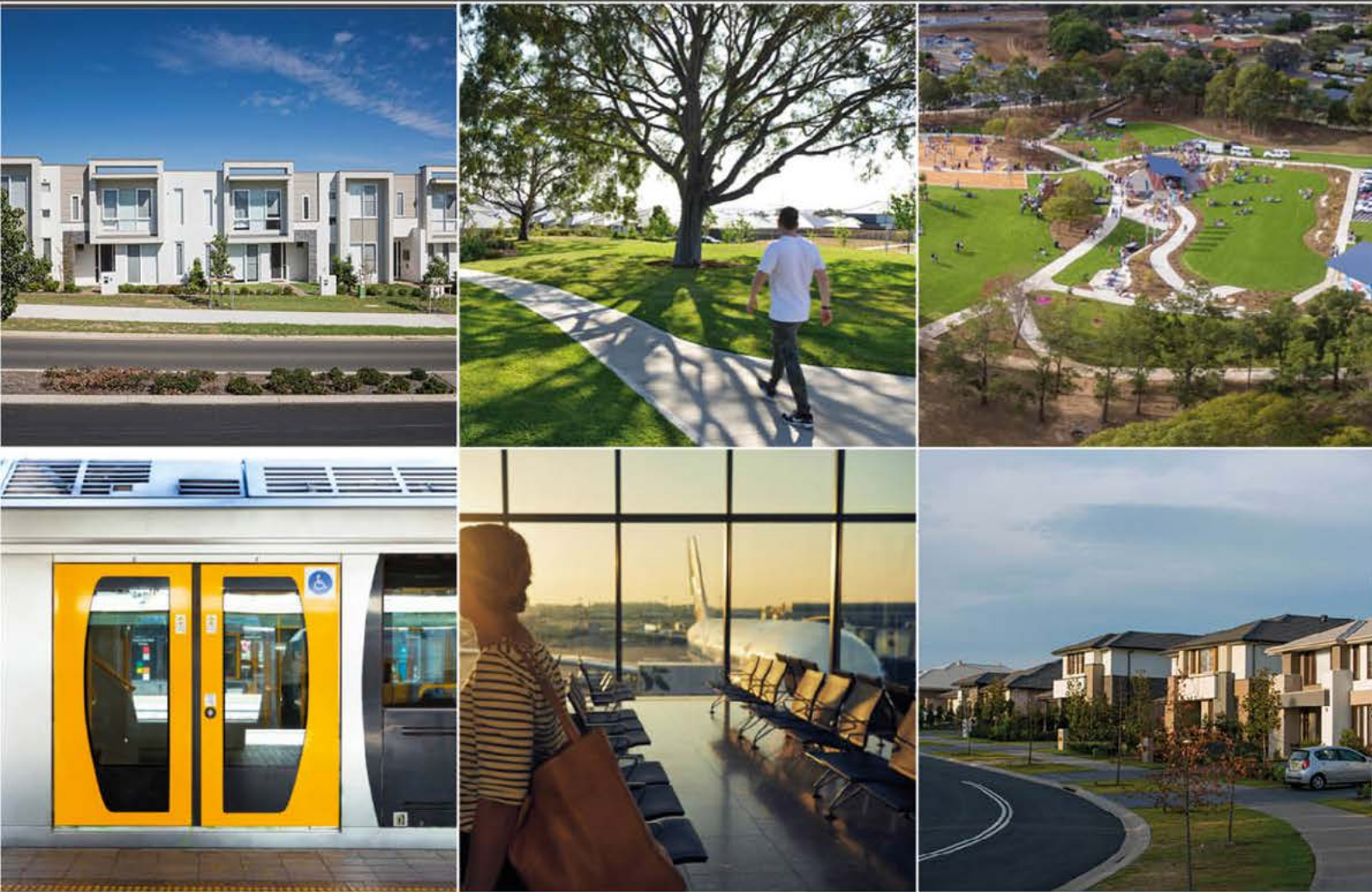


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Executive Summary

The Western Parkland City is currently experiencing rapid growth and transformation towards a global City, all while grappling with the challenges of planning for basic public transport infrastructure which is essential to realise this vision. With the rapidly growing Camden LGA, it is vital that local, district and regional transport infrastructure is planned and delivered to ensure connections within the Camden LGA and the Western Parkland City (including the Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport (WSI) and Aerotropolis), and to establish strategic connections across the Greater Sydney Region and beyond. This connectivity is key to making South West Sydney an attractive, liveable and sustainable place to work and live.

Integrated transport involves the linkage of all modes to connect residents within the Western Parkland City and the emerging South West, ranging from public transport via rail and bus, sustainable travel options such as walking and cycling, as well as private modes of transport including motor vehicles. The Camden LGA is currently poorly connected by public transport, with the timing for delivery of key public transport projects such as the North South Rail Line, South West Rail Link Extension and Western Sydney Rapid Bus network, yet to be fully funded by the NSW (and Australian) Government.

In planning for a more integrated transport network, it is important that the timing for delivery of new public transport infrastructure is committed as a matter of urgency, to inform future infrastructure and housing investment, and enable efficient and integrated land use and transport planning (e.g. to reflect the planning for appropriate locations for higher density residential development).

Camden Council makes the following submission in response to the NSW Legislative Council inquiry into the need for transport infrastructure supporting WSI and Western Sydney Aerotropolis. Council's key recommendations to the inquiry are noted as follows:

Recommended that the NSW Government:

- Commit funding, and proceed to deliver the following critical transport infrastructure projects within the Western Sydney City Deal:
 - North South Rail Line (to Oran Park, Narellan and Campbelltown/Macarthur);
 - South West Rail Link Extension Project, connecting Bradfield to Leppington;
 - Western Sydney Rapid Bus Project (as an interim measure)
- Conduct modelling to analyse the impact of constructing the rail links before development takes place, to understand the impact of achieving increased dwelling yields;
- Conduct modelling to analyse positioning of rail stations on the future Metro network, and evaluate the optimal spacing of stations to achieve the best dwelling yields and the best patronage outcomes for the rail lines;

- Review the NSW infrastructure funding legislative framework, to consider funding mechanisms that directly correlate between capital investment in public transport, and financial gain derived from adjacent development;
- Commit to the urgent preparation of a comprehensive 'Transport Structure Plan for the Western Parkland City', and to deliver the public transport services needed to support sustainable growth in South West Sydney;
- Set 'mode-shift' targets for the South West and Western Parkland City region, with a funded public transport infrastructure program to attain those targets;
- In addition to a comprehensive 'Transport Structure Plan for the Western Parkland City', prepare the 'South West Sydney - Transport Structure Plan', to reflect an integrated strategy in articulating how the transport network will function, how and when it will be delivered and funded, between WSI, the Western Sydney Aerotropolis, South West Growth Area and surrounding region;
- Ensure that on opening of WSI in 2026, that the Western Sydney Rapid Bus service is a 'rapid service' (i.e. not a local bus service) in establishing early mass transit travel patterns in South West Sydney;
- On reserving any corridor options for the expansion of transport corridors to/from WSI and the Aerotropolis via statutory planning controls, proceed to implement a timely land acquisition strategy, and clarify permissible interim uses, with a view to circumventing any adverse planning outcome on any impacted landowner. Clarification and direction are also required regarding any future approach to development applications;
- As part of the further investigation into an extension of the South West Rail Link and delivery of the North South Rail Line to Oran Park and Narellan, that Transport for NSW work collaboratively with the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, and Council, in determining options for a staged approach to rail line construction concurrent with precinct release in the South West Growth Area; and
- Engage with directly impacted landowners in exploring opportunities available in limiting the potential of property severance resulting from transport corridor alignment.

Terms of Reference

a) an analysis of options for transport infrastructure.

The NSW Government is projecting that South West Sydney will have grown by 250,000 people, by the year 2041. Camden Council's experience with previous and current planning in the South West Growth Area in the Camden LGA strongly indicates growth through increased density will be significantly over the 250,000 additional residents forecast.

Other parts of the Greater Sydney Region have a significant accessibility advantage over the South West Sydney Area. For example Oran Park, a relatively new suburb in the Camden LGA, is disadvantaged in terms of accessibility, in contrast to areas like Rouse Hill in the North West Growth Area, which has better public transport access e.g. via Sydney Metro transit, to the Sydney CBD, Macquarie Park, Chatswood and North Sydney.

Despite the Australian and NSW Government committing to delivery of mass transit options in the Camden LGA via the Western Sydney City Deal i.e. Metro Rail, currently there is \$0 confirmed for funding to deliver any major public transport projects i.e. rail, in this part of South West Sydney. This is despite the NSW Government's 'Blueprint' for the Western Parkland City identifying the need to prioritise a rail/metro connection between Bradfield City Centre and Leppington by 2031.

C2 Priority	Complete investigations to prioritise a rail / metro connection between Bradfield City Centre and Leppington / Glenfield, linking Bradfield City Centre to Glenfield and Liverpool by 2031	
	<p>Summary: Subject to business case outcomes, deliver a metro connection from Bradfield City Centre to Leppington by 2031. This will provide an integrated north-south connection between St Marys to Leppington and provide access to jobs in the Aerotropolis for the communities of South West Sydney.</p>	<p>Delivery Horizon: Immediate: TfNSW complete the investigations and business case for a metro connection between Bradfield City Centre and Leppington.</p>

Source: NSW Government's 'Western Parkland City Blueprint' (page 37)

In contrast, significant transport infrastructure in the Eastern Harbour City is being funded for public transport, including;

- West Metro \$25B
- City and South-West Metro \$20B
- Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link \$14B
- SE Light Rail \$3.3B

To highlight the inadequacy of connectivity between public transport hubs and commercial hubs in South West Sydney, the following travel times from various origins using public transport to the Sydney - City Circle (Wynyard) illustrate the transport disadvantage that residents in the Camden LGA experience.

Oran Park to City 1 hr 45 mins

Compared to:

Randwick to City 27 mins

Gosford to City	1 hr 30 mins
Penrith to City	58 mins
Rouse Hill to City	55 mins

Even localised trips using public transport operate at a poor level of service. The travel times from Oran Park to the following nearby centres further illustrates the public transport disadvantage that Camden LGA residents experience:

Oran Park to Parramatta	1 hr 25 mins
Oran Park to Liverpool	54 mins
Oran Park to Campbelltown	28 mins

The NSW Government is proposing to leverage the construction of new Metro rail to catalyse increased residential densities around stations, via initiatives such as the 'Transport Oriented Development SEPP'. However, this initiative applies to only one station located in the Western Parkland City (St Marys).

Current NSW Government planning indicates Metro rail construction to South West Sydney will take place after 2041, leaving Camden LGA residents without access to meaningful public transport for the next 20 years. It is recommended that the impact of constructing the rail links before development occurs is modelled by Transport for NSW, to understand the impact of achieving increased dwelling yields. The recent experience of Edmondson Park on the South West Rail Line has shown how building stations early has generated a significant uplift in dwelling yields within a 2 km radius of a station, than might otherwise have occurred without construction of the rail line. It is noted that there is a significant uplift in dwelling yields in the vicinity of rail stations on the North West Metro and in the vicinity of the Inner West Light Rail line.

It is also recommended that modelling should consider the distance between proposed stations and evaluate the optimal spacing of stations to achieve the best dwelling yields and the best patronage outcomes for the rail lines.

Recommended that the NSW Government:

- Commit funding, and proceed to deliver the following projects in compliance with the Western Sydney City Deal:
 - South West Rail Link Extension Project, connecting Bradfield to Leppington;
 - North South Rail Line (to Oran Park, Narellan and Campbelltown/Macarthur);
 - Western Sydney Rapid Bus Project;
- Conduct modelling to analyse the impact of constructing the rail links before development takes place, to understand the impact of achieving increased dwelling yields;
- Conduct modelling to analyse positioning of rail stations on the future Metro network and evaluate the optimal spacing of stations to achieve the best dwelling yields and the best patronage outcomes for the rail lines.

b) funding of transport infrastructure.

It is acknowledged that the issue of funding new rail services in South West Sydney will be complex, and requires a considerable degree of courage/commitment from all stakeholders in achieving its delivery. Notwithstanding, Council proffers the view that a combination of the following funding options would present as the most equitable and achievable financial outcome in delivering essential rail infrastructure;

- Option 1: Government funding;
- Option 2: Value sharing (capture); and
- Option 3: User pays.

With regard to '*Option 1: Government funding*', this would include contributions by both the Australian and NSW Governments', with the Western Sydney City Deal representing the governance arrangements in meeting this infrastructure commitment, as is reflected in the existing 'Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport Stage 1 (St Marys to Aerotropolis)' project funding arrangements.

In reference to Options 2 & 3, while value sharing (capture) and user pays remains an ongoing point of contention for major infrastructure investment, the option of public/private partnerships is a salient point as it relates to the delivery of rail infrastructure. However, as has proven with 'Public/Private Partnerships' (PPP) in delivering a majority of the tolled road network in Sydney over recent years, such arrangements remain particularly contentious in their conception, delivery and operation.

As an example of similar issues pertaining to the delivery of rail infrastructure, ongoing rail access to Sydney Kingsford-Smith Airport funded via such an arrangement has demonstrated in part the limitation of its effectiveness i.e. the significant additional rail fare cost to access the airport station via rail, compared to adjacent parts of the same rail network, has demonstrated that price point does influence passenger behaviour. A repeat of this situation at WSI would impede growth of a sustainable transport network in South West Sydney, meaning many of the aspirational economic, social, environmental etc. goals may not be fully realised.

It is a long-established acknowledgement in the development industry that major capital investment in infrastructure (such as rail lines and station precincts) will catalyse a significant increase in the value of land in adjacent areas e.g. via increased densities, improved FSR, higher levels of commercial activity and economic benefits. This correlation demonstrates an enhanced capacity to pay by landowners/developers that are direct beneficiaries of this infrastructure investment. For the future funding of transport infrastructure in South West Sydney to be sustainable, the option of 'value sharing' (capture) has a considerable role to play in the equitable contribution of infrastructure investment.

Recommended that the NSW Government:

- Review the NSW infrastructure funding legislative framework, to consider funding mechanisms that directly correlate between capital investment in public transport, and financial gain derived from adjacent development.

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

Public transport is integral in supporting the engine room of the Western Parkland City's economy e.g. employment movements, stimulating housing and business investment, in facilitating connectivity as a key element of the Western Parkland City's future success. The certainty of early provision of supporting transport infrastructure (e.g. Metro Rail, Western Sydney Rapid Bus, Freight Networks etc.), as well as a comprehensive mid-tier arterial road network is needed to facilitate this connectivity and consequent growth of the Western Parkland City economy.

The key to achieving successful places in South West Sydney is to provide liveable communities for people that will move to areas such as the Camden LGA in the future. Public transport can influence as a 'place maker', with the capacity to shape an urban environment. As new suburbs are developed in the Camden LGA (e.g. Leppington, Rossmore, Marylands, Oran Park etc.), it is important that an integrated approach to transport and land-use planning occurs. This will ensure areas such as future rail station precincts activate the urban landscape, and achieve corresponding/optimal density ratios, rather than inhibit development.

Access to employment for Camden LGA residents

The NSW Government's vision of 30-minute cities and 15-minute walkable neighbourhoods is acknowledged, and areas such as the Camden LGA are primed for shaping new communities in that vision. However, over the next 15 years the shape and structure of the Camden LGA and South West Sydney will have been realised and locked in. The location of where South West Sydney residents live and learn, and the jobs they perform, will have become determined in that timeframe.

If our residents in the Camden LGA do not have reasonable job choices, leisure options or education opportunities within manageable travel distances from their homes, they will be fated to intergenerational disadvantage in commuting long distances, at great expense, to limited financial benefit. Prosperity cannot be guaranteed under circumstances where people have poor access to employment. Economic efficiency and productivity depend heavily on mobility, on having access to resources and workers, and being able to get products to market. Meeting these challenges requires holistic, sustainable transport infrastructure investment in South West Sydney, with a priority focus on mass transit options such as Metro Rail and the Western Sydney Rapid Bus network.

To meet the challenge in the changing nature of public transport needs in South West Sydney, a comprehensive 'Transport Structure Plan for the Western Parkland City' is urgently required. The NSW Government's *Western Parkland City Blueprint* took some

steps in seeking to address the issue of managing growth resulting from shifting demographics, new suburbs, planned infrastructure and increased density – however it lacks integration with other NSW Government strategies, of how and when these issues will be addressed when it comes to the provision of public transport services.

In order for the Western Parkland City to successfully achieve its potential, it requires the Australian Government, and the NSW Government to follow through in funding and delivering major public transport infrastructure commitments under the Western Sydney City Deal i.e. Metro Rail line from Bradfield/Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport to Oran Park, Narellan and Campbelltown/Macarthur, South West Rail Link Extension (Leppington to Bradfield) and the Western Sydney Rapid Bus network.

Recommended that the NSW Government:

- Commit to the urgent preparation of a comprehensive 'Transport Structure Plan for the Western Parkland City', and to deliver the public transport services needed to support sustainable growth in South West Sydney.

d) Integration with existing transport infrastructure.

There is an express need to actively provide and promote the use of sustainable transport modes in South West Sydney, to reduce dependence on private motor vehicles. Early delivery of strategic transport infrastructure would promote financially sustainable outcomes for government in meeting transport needs in South West Sydney.

For example, early construction of the North South Rail Line between Bradfield/Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport, Oran Park, Narellan and Campbelltown/Macarthur will facilitate a sustainable transport connection between where South West Sydney residents work and live, promoting success through integrated public transport network synergies; while at the same time enabling scope for value sharing as part of a comprehensive funding solution. Financial sustainability of the future public transport system is also contingent on equitable funding mechanisms (i.e. where the cost is shared beyond just those residing in South West Sydney), particularly when it comes to capital investment for new infrastructure. This funding model reflects the historical legacy where residents in Western Sydney have funded the provision of public transport infrastructure provided in Eastern Sydney as well as other parts of NSW and Australia.

The extension and provision of an integrated transport network throughout the Western Parkland City (and the Greater Sydney Region) presents an excellent opportunity to capitalise on growing the proportion of travel by sustainable modes.

Based on the Household Travel Survey data, travel within the Camden LGA is currently dominated by the use of private cars, with 85% of trips being undertaken in a vehicle either as a driver (56%) or passenger (29%). The high percentage of travel by vehicle is considered largely due to limited public transport coverage, adverse topography, large distances between origins and destinations in the Camden LGA and a considerable proportion of residents working outside of South West Sydney.

As demonstrated in the figure below, residents in the Camden LGA travel by vehicle more than the Sydney average and use less environmentally friendly forms of transport (i.e. train, bus and walking), when compared to the Greater Sydney average.

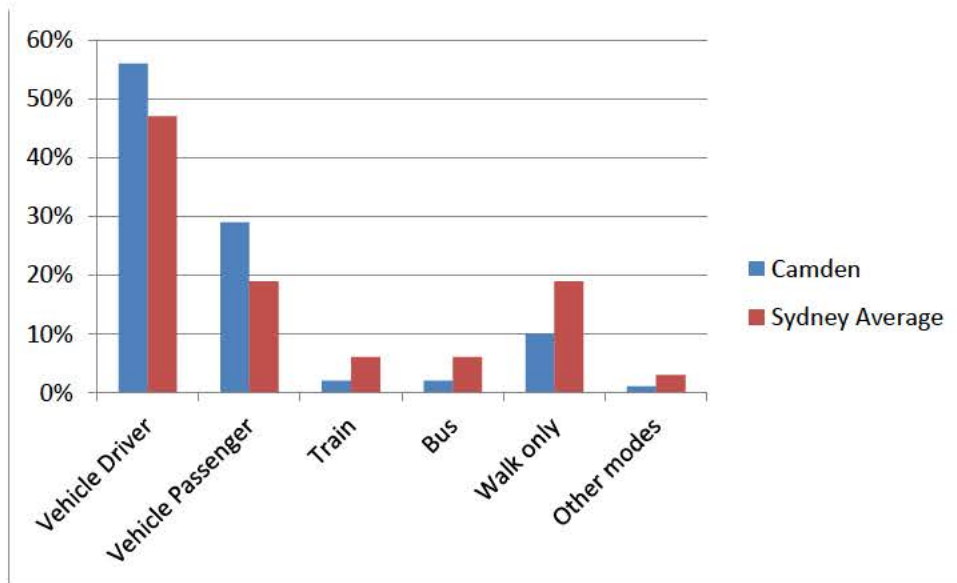
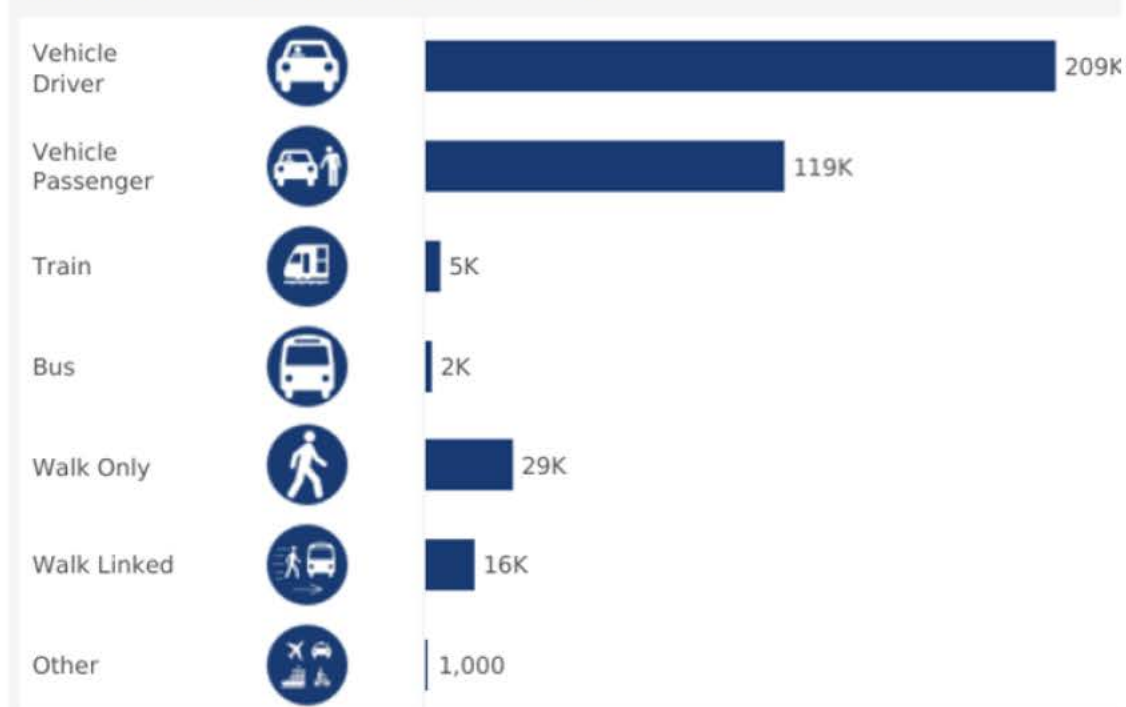


Figure: Mode of transport in Camden LGA compared with Sydney average

Source: Household Travel Survey

Total Trips taken by Mode in 2019/20 for LGA Camden



Source: Household Travel Survey

These statistics highlight the scope for potential to grow the proportion of travel by sustainable modes (e.g. rail) in South West Sydney, particularly in the Camden LGA. Such outcomes would support improvement in the energy efficiency of the transport sector, with

opportunity to incrementally remove vehicles from the road network, which is already under significant stress despite recent and ongoing capacity improvements.

Recommended that the NSW Government:

- Set 'mode-shift' targets for the South West and Western Parkland City region, with a funded public transport infrastructure program to attain those targets.

e) reducing road usage around the new airport and surrounding regions.

WSI – Road Infrastructure

Reducing road usage around the new airport and surrounding regions requires an integrated, contingent transport planning strategy that quantifies all impacts of the Western Sydney Aerotropolis and WSI on the local road network (including all east/west and north/south connections) which is justified by a robust cost-benefit analysis and traffic modelling data.

Notwithstanding this point, it is acknowledged that while reducing road usage could be an objective, a functional road network is still required in servicing the local areas in proximity to WSI and surrounding regions. To facilitate the successful delivery of integrated transport infrastructure in the Western Parkland City, a well-connected, well-designed and free-flowing road network supported by appropriate infrastructure is needed to provide effective movement of people and goods within the local area and broader region. Without an integrated transport strategy, a future WSI at full development (stage 2) would create extensive congestion on the local road network in the Camden LGA, given heavy freight and commuters travelling to/from the airport site via local roads. While the Australian Government's 'Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan' in support of WSI is acknowledged, the potential adverse impacts on the local road network still needs to be thoroughly quantified by TfNSW.

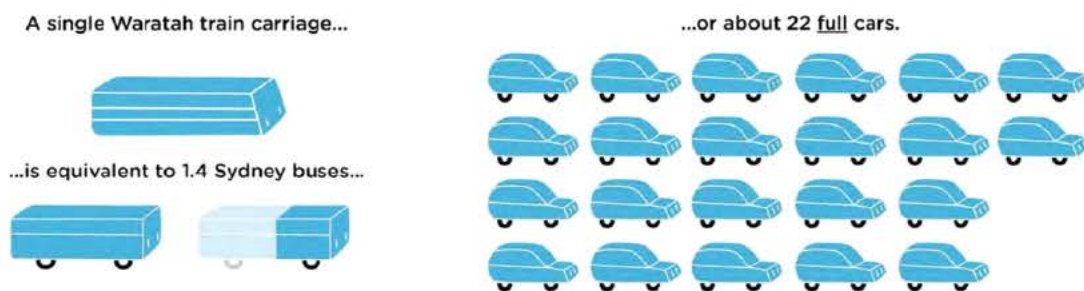
For example, as part of the broader transport planning for the Western Parkland City, there is a need for the preparation of the 'South West Sydney – Transport Structure Plan', in the context of the Western Sydney Aerotropolis, North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension. Similarly, an integrated review of other sustainable transport modes (bus network, pedestrian, and cycling networks) is also required, along with any capacity for the promotion of interim uses on the broader transport network where corridor protection has occurred, such as the provision of rapid bus services.

Regarding corridor preservation for future road and transport infrastructure, as evidenced in previous NSW Government led projects (e.g. South West Rail Link), the sterilisation of land once transport corridor options are defined highlights the need to determine a clear timetable for acquisition, beyond the statutory planning protections. This will provide greater certainty around the approach to development applications involving significant capital investment, and a degree of certainty for residents and landowners. Implications for the sterilisation of land resulting from corridor preservation will be significant for certain landowners.

WSI – Transport Infrastructure

The NSW Government’s *‘Future Transport Strategy’* notes transport as a ‘place maker’ in its description of liveable communities, transforming public domain, activating centres and unlocking new activity. With the projected population growth for South West Sydney, both Australian and NSW government investment in transport infrastructure (e.g. North South Rail Line etc.) will influence core planning objectives, including affordable housing, connectivity, liveability, resilience and sustainability. While the Western Sydney City Deal pledges funding for the North South Rail Line, to date there is no funding commitment for construction of the full extent of the rail line through to Oran Park, Narellan and Campbelltown-Macarthur.

As part of the NSW Government’s vision of a system to support the growing Greater Sydney economy, and in reducing the number of private vehicles using the road network around WSI and the surrounding areas, public transport must play a pivotal role in alleviating urban congestion. An early commitment to constructing the full extent of the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension will alleviate congestion and improve travel times and quality of life for residents in support of economic growth in South West Sydney.



Early establishment/operation of the Western Sydney Rapid Bus corridor through the South West Growth Area is likely to exert influence over commuter behaviour to/from WSI and the Aerotropolis; a behaviour that, once heavy rail is constructed through to Oran Park, Narellan and Campbelltown-Macarthur, should translate to high-levels of patronage on this strategic transit corridor from the outset. However, there is a clear risk to this outcome in the event that on opening of WSI in 2026, there is no operating ‘rapid’ bus service (i.e. if there is only a low-speed, long travel time, localised bus service to/from WSI and the Aerotropolis). This would represent an opportunity lost in establishing mass transit travel pattern behaviours, as commuters will default back to private vehicle use due to convenience, generating increased congestion around the new airport and surrounding regions.

Recommended that the NSW Government:

- In addition to a comprehensive ‘Transport Structure Plan for the Western Parkland City’, prepare the ‘South West Sydney - Transport Structure Plan’, to reflect an integrated strategy in articulating how the transport network will function, how and when it will be delivered and funded, between WSI, the Western Sydney Aerotropolis, South West Growth Area and surrounding region.

- Ensure that on opening of WSI in 2026, that the Western Sydney Rapid Bus service is a 'rapid service' (i.e. not a local bus service) in establishing early mass transit travel patterns in South West Sydney.

f) any other related matters.

Early Preservation of Rail Corridors

With the defining of new rail corridors connecting to/from WSI and the Aerotropolis for an expanded Sydney Metro network, comes the potential for interim sterilisation of land once corridor alignment options are identified. This occurrence highlights the need to determine a clear timetable for land acquisition for these rail corridors, beyond the statutory planning protections, in providing greater certainty around existing use rights and any approach to development applications involving significant capital investment.

In proceeding with the identification of any rail corridor option alignments, and the preservation of a corridor via statutory planning controls, the need for a clear and timely program for land acquisition is important. As previously noted in this submission, the implications for the sterilisation of land resulting from corridor preservation will be significant for some landowners. For example, through previous experience the NSW Government would be aware that landowners were impacted by the South West Rail Link Extension corridor alignment, and subsequently faced degrees of uncertainty regarding interim use of their land, securing finance etc. as a result. Coupled with other associated issues, such as a potential change in how the subject land is valued (thus having an impact on its rating value), may create a potentially adverse circumstance for certain landowners.

Preservation of a corridor via statutory planning controls should also ensure provision of a clear statement as to permissible interim use of affected land. This will provide landowners, particularly in existing rural areas, with a degree of certainty as to the ways their land can be used until such time as it is acquired by the NSW Government. In addition, clarification is also required on the approach to be taken toward development applications, particularly those which involve major investment, prior to finalisation of the recommended corridor.

Staged Release of Development Precincts

Investigation into a staged release of development precincts concurrently with staged construction of parts of the Sydney Metro corridors, merit consideration. For example, an option of releasing a new precinct in the South West Growth Area to correspond with staged construction of the rail line, may promote an orderly release of land for development supported by infrastructure. An approach of one rail station constructed for every one precinct released may warrant further investigation.

Planning for Future Transport Corridors

A key concern in the planning for future transport corridors, particularly in areas with fragmented land ownership, is the potential for severance of properties. For example, in the previous corridor planning by the NSW Government for the South West Rail Link in the Camden LGA, several properties were severed through the middle, resulting in residual

parcels severely constrained with limited potential use. In circumstances such as these, alternate options to consider include the corridor alignment located either to the front or rear of property boundaries, to facilitate a usable residual portion on the impacted land. A further example is the consideration of the use of public land, where practicable, to minimise adverse impacts on individual landowners.

Recommended that the NSW Government:

- On reserving any corridor options for the expansion of transport corridors to/from WSI and the Aerotropolis via statutory planning controls, proceed to implement a timely land acquisition strategy, and clarify permissible interim uses, with a view to circumventing any adverse planning outcome on any impacted landowner. Clarification and direction are also required regarding any future approach to development applications.
- As part of the further investigation into an extension of the South West Rail Link and delivery of the North South Rail Line to Oran Park and Narellan, that Transport for NSW work collaboratively with the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, and Council, in determining options for a staged approach to rail line construction concurrent with precinct release in the South West Growth Area.
- Engage with directly impacted landowners in exploring opportunities available in limiting the potential of property severance resulting from transport corridor alignment.