

THE TRANSPORT NEEDS OF SYDNEY'S NORTH-WEST SECTOR

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Date received: 21/10/2008



New South Wales Government

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20 October 2008

The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No.4
Legislative Council, Parliament House
Macquarie Street,
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Ms Duffy

I write in response to the request for a submission to the Legislative Council General Purpose Standing Committee No.4 Inquiry into the transport needs of the North – West Sector.

Please find attached the NSW Government submission.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, Mr Tom Forrest of the Coordinator General's Office can be contacted on 9228 3107 or (email) tom.forrest@dpc.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Duncan'.

**Peter Duncan
Deputy Director-General**



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Department of Premier and Cabinet
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**Legislative Council General Purpose Standing Committee No.4
Inquiry into the transport needs of the North – West Sector
NSW Government Submission**

1. Introduction

Planning for the future growth and development of Sydney and the regional centres is a central policy focus of the NSW Government. Over recent years the Government has undertaken a detailed analysis of future land use development and the requirements for investment in the supporting transport and other infrastructure. The objective is to develop growth targets necessary to support development of Sydney and the regional centres that are supported by a well integrated transport and infrastructure systems across the greater metropolitan region and NSW regional areas.

The plans, targets and strategies for growth are outlined in the Metropolitan (Metro) Strategy's "City of Cities" Plan (Dec. 2005), the Urban Transport Statement (Nov, 2006), the State Infrastructure Strategy 2008-2018 (June 2008), and Sydney Link: The Future of Sydney's Transport (March, 2008). The Government's submission to the Terms of Reference for the Legislative Council's Standing Committee No.4 Inquiry into the transport needs of the North – West Sector draws from these substantial public documents.

An important segment of the macro-level policy and planning framework for the growth of the Sydney metropolitan region is transport planning for urban growth in Sydney's North-West Sector. In preparing this submission, the Government has proceeded from the assumption that the North-West Sector refers to the North West subregion as defined in the Metro Strategy's "City of Cities" Plan (Dec. 2005).

At this subregional level, the key planning document is the draft North West Subregional Strategy (Nov, 2007). This document brings together all of the elements of the macro-level policies and includes a detailed chapter on transport plans and linkages, including planned capital works and service enhancements. It is anticipated that this Subregional Strategy will be finalised in 2009.

The draft subregional plan should be read in conjunction with the Structure and Precinct Plans for the North West Growth Centre (2006 and ongoing) and the North West Metro / Sydney Link announcement (March, 2008). This submission outlines the urban land use development and consequential transport infrastructure investment task for the North –West Sector.

2. Land use planning for the North-West Sector

(a) North West Subregion

The Metro Strategy is the NSW Government's plan for managing Sydney's growth and change to 2031. It sets targets for new housing and employment, and principles for location of housing and employment.

The Metro Strategy divided Sydney into 10 subregions and set housing and employment capacity targets for each subregion. The North West Subregion is the Local Government Areas of Baulkham Hills, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury and Penrith.

The North West Growth Centre, a subset of the North-West Sector is mostly within the Blacktown LGA but part of the Growth Centre is also within Baulkham Hills and Hawkesbury LGAs.

The Metropolitan Strategy set a target of 640,000 new dwellings to 2031. Of these, 30-40% of new housing are to be in greenfield areas and 60-70% of new housing to 2031 to be in the existing urban area. The State Plan clarified the target as 445,000 new dwellings in existing areas and the remainder (195,000) in greenfield locations.

The Metro Strategy set a target for the North West Subregion of 140,000 new dwellings by 2031, with 60,000 new dwellings in existing urban areas, 60,000 dwellings in the North West Growth Centre and 20,000 dwellings in other greenfield areas. In 2004, the North West Subregion had 251,000 dwellings.

The Metro Strategy is implemented at the local level through Subregional Strategies. The draft North West Subregional Strategy was released in December 2007, and was on public exhibition until March 2008.

The draft North West Subregional Strategy:

- provides a detailed framework to link local and state planning and guide private sector and government investment;
- provides a framework for councils to ensure capacity for 140,000 new dwellings by 2031 and 130,000 new jobs by 2031;
- identifies places for future growth such as the Strategic Centres of Penrith, Norwest, Blacktown, Castle Hill and Rouse Hill;
- requires that the majority of new housing is located in Strategic and local centres; and
- provides a detailed guide for councils in the preparation of their Principal Local Environmental Plans.

The Subregional Strategy breaks down the subregional housing target to targets for each LGA.

The North West Subregional Strategy sets an employment capacity target of 130,000 new jobs (2001-2031). This is a 55% increase from 237,000 jobs in 2001.

Table 1 North West Subregion housing and employment targets

LGA	Dwelling target 2004-2031	Employment capacity target 2001-2031
Baulkham Hills	21,500	47,000
Blacktown	21,500	45,000
Blue Mountains	7,000	7,000
Hawkesbury	5,000	3,000
Penrith	25,000	28,000
Total excluding NW GC	80,000	
North West Growth Centre	60,000	
Total North West Subregion	140,000	130,000

Source: Draft North West Subregional Strategy (DoP 2007)

(b) North West Growth Centre

The North West Growth Centre is planned to accommodate approximately 70,000 new homes in the next 30+ years, supported by local and regional infrastructure and significant land for employment. The Growth Centre covers parts of the Blacktown, Baulkham Hills and Hawkesbury Local Government Area (LGAs) and is divided into 16 precinct areas. The following seven precincts have been identified as part of the first release program for urban development:

- **North Kellyville Precinct** is expected to yield around 4,700 dwellings.
- **Riverstone Precinct** is expected to accommodate around 8,500 dwellings supported by the Riverstone Town Centre. Smaller neighbourhood centres will provide local retail and community services.
- **Alex Avenue Precinct** is expected to provide for around 7,000 homes, supported by a Town Centre close to the Richmond Railway Line. Smaller neighbourhood centres will provide local retail and community services.
- **Riverstone West Precinct** is identified on the North West Structure Plan as mainly suitable for industrial/employment land development.
- **Area 20** is expected to yield around 1,500 homes.
- **Colebee** has been rezoned and construction of the first housing lots is underway. The Precinct will accommodate 1100 new homes.
- **Marsden Park Industrial Precinct** is identified on the North West Structure Plan as industrial/employment lands. The precinct covers an area of approximately 400 hectares.

The draft Precinct Plan for North Kellyville has been placed on exhibition. Riverstone, Alex Avenue and Riverstone West draft Precinct Plans are expected to be placed on exhibition during 2008 and Area 20 should follow in 2009.

Planning for the precincts identifies town centres, employment land, parks, roads, housing, schools and services that will support the new communities. The dwelling target for each precinct will be delivered using a range of dwelling densities ranging from high densities (up to 66 dwellings per hectare) to low density (12.5-20 dwellings per hectare).

(c) Jobs Closer to Home

In the North West subregion in 2006, 51% of the population lived within 30 minutes by public transport of a Strategic Centre in 2006, compared to the Sydney average of 75%. This reflects the size of the subregion and low density dispersed development. The development of Rouse Hill as a Major Centre from 2007 and the completion of the North West Transitway in 2007, combined with the implementation of Strategic Bus Corridors represents a significant Government investment in addressing this issue.

3. North-West Sector transport infrastructure task and capability

The urban development targets of the North-West Sector pose the transport challenge for the Government. Between 1991 and 2004, travel (trips per capita) has

increased at the same rate as population growth at 1.6%, which is above the Sydney average growth rate (1.4%).

The residents of the North West, who make almost 2.8 million trips on an average weekday, travel more for work and work related business than the residents of other Sydney subregions (25% of the trips). The average distance travelled per person per day is 44 km (using all modes of transport) and the average Vehicle Kilometres Travelled (in cars) per person per day is 27 km. This is higher than the Sydney averages 36 km (total distance – all modes) and 20 km (Vehicle kms per day).

Commuting trip distance of 21 km is also higher than the Sydney average (16km). A large proportion (54 %) of the school children in the North West travel to school by private vehicle.

With the current travel flows from the North West towards eastern Sydney, the east-west roads and rail face capacity constraints in peak periods resulting in congestion, delays and crowding. Increased development around the Castle Hill and Norwest Centres will place further pressure on the road network, including Showground and Windsor Roads, even when the planned rail link is completed to the Hills and Rouse Hill Centres.

The utilisation of busses and bus priority lanes along the M2, Epping Road and the Gore Hill Expressway has significantly increased the efficiency of this transport corridor. However, there remains pressure on the M4 and M2 Motorways and other arterial roads during peak periods.

The level of self-containment, i.e. the proportion of the work force living in the subregion who work within the subregion¹, and demand management measures will become increasingly important in determining demand for travel.

4. Enhancing the North-West Sector transport infrastructure capability

(a) Infrastructure Enhancements being Delivered

The NSW Government has been implementing plans to improve public transport services for Sydney's North West including an expansion of bus, rail and interchange facilities across the region. Some of the planned major infrastructure developments in the region have been already completed, including the \$105 million Parramatta Transport Interchange and the \$524 million North West Transitway. The North West Transitway has delivered fast direct services for the surrounding 110,000 households between the north west (Rouse Hill) and the centres of Blacktown, Westmead and Parramatta. It features better integrated bus routes and additional services resulting in reduced travel times. Since its completion in 2007, patronage has been increasing. Recently completed road upgrades include Windsor Road and Old Windsor Road/Norwest Boulevard.

¹ The North West Subregion Strategy noted that The North West Subregion has 12% of Sydney's jobs and 18% of the workforce (i.e. workers). Over three quarters (78%) of the over 200,000 jobs in the North West Subregion are taken by residents of the North West Subregion, and just under half (49 %) of the workforce living in the North West Subregion works within the subregion.

For the North West sector, NSW Transport agencies are working with the Growth Centres Commission to ensure transport and land use planning are fully integrated so that a high degree of accessibility in these new communities is achieved. Ongoing infrastructure improvements - some of which will be funded in the initial four-year infrastructure package - that will benefit the North West include Richmond Road upgrade – RTA and Quakers Hill to Vineyard Duplication – TIDC.

(b) NSW Government Integrated Transport Strategy

(i) Policy, Plans, Priorities, Targets

The *State Plan* contains the following transport related priorities and targets:

- Priority S6 Increasing share of peak hour journeys on a safe and reliable public transport system
- Priority E7 Improve the efficiency of the road network.

Priorities E5, S7, S3 also relate to travel (the need to travel and the way of travel).

The *Urban Transport Statement* and *State Infrastructure Strategy – 2008-18* outline the planned infrastructure upgrade projects to which the Government is committed.

(ii) Planned Infrastructure Upgrades

The *Urban Transport Statement* outlines the Government's response to Sydney's travel and transport challenges. It reinforces the transport proposals identified in Sydney's *Metro Strategy* and *State Infrastructure Strategy*, accelerates the timeframes for some of these and adds new initiatives.

Transport infrastructure projects relevant to the North-West Sector are at various stages of development. While some are at the planning or commencement stage others are nearing completion. The drivers and timing of these transport infrastructure projects are being reviewed by the Government as part of its mini budget process.

Those major North-West Sector transport infrastructure projects are listed below:

- **Duplication of Richmond line** (a major project within the Rail Clearways Program) resulting in increased capacity, frequency, reliability and safety.
 - Quakers Hill-Riverstone
 - Riverstone – Vineyard including upgrade of Vineyard Station & Interchange
 - Riverstone Rail Overpass
- **Carlingford Line Passing Loop**, part of the Government's Rail Clearways Program
- **Epping to Chatswood Rail Line**: will provide a limited benefit to passengers from and to the North-West sector; to be completed in early 2009.
- **Upgrade of Victoria Rd**:
 - Duplication of Iron Cove Bridge
 - Introduction of bus priority & tidal flow
- **Road upgrades**: Schofields Road, Riverstone Rail Overpass

- **Introduction of Bus Priority across the network of Strategic Bus Corridors** – part of the ongoing Bus Planning reform: bus priority on SBC no 3, 4 and 42
- **Major “pinch point” improvements across Sydney Road network** – better road network management; use of technology to improve bus operations: Old Windsor Rd; Windsor Road, Northmead; Old Toongabbie to Baulkham Hills; Richmond Rd/St Mary’s Rd.
- **Expansion of Commuter Carparks**
 - Wentworthville – expansion by approx 160 spaces
 - Blacktown
 - Seven Hills – expansion by 300 spaces
 - Potential sites at Schofields/ Quakers Hill
- **Easy access** – Seven Hills; station upgrades at Vineyard, Riverstone and Schofields
- **Metro Rail**
 - A rapid mass transport service for Sydney’s North-West Sector.
- **Commission studies & transport modelling for connection of M2 to F3**

5. Funding transport infrastructure for the North-West Sector

Integrated transport infrastructure for the North-West Sector is funded through a range of means. They include through the Government’s capital works funding outlays and partnerships with the private sector at the regional level, developer (Section 94) contributions at the local level outside the growth centres and through operation of the special infrastructure contribution within the growth centres.

The Government’s 10 year forward capital works funding projections are outlined in the State Infrastructure Strategy (2008). The forward 10 year period will be the largest capital expenditure in the State’s history with a projected expenditure of about \$140 billion. The strategy shows the funding requirement needed to finance the infrastructure goals. Although funding will principally come from the State’s annual budgets and prudent borrowings it provides essential guidance to partnerships for private sector investment in infrastructure. Transport infrastructure capital works by NSW transport agencies for the North-West Sector figure prominently, particularly the North West Metro.

At the local level within the North-West Sector but outside the Growth Centre, greenfield land release areas have development agreements for (Section 94) contributions to deliver regional transport infrastructure. They include:

- **Pitt Town:** Contribution plans are either in place (or are being implemented) which will include funding for local road upgrades and other transport measures.
- **Balmoral Road:** Contributions for land acquisition for North West Rail Link.
- **Glenmore Park Stage 2:** Contribution for infrastructure including road works and public transport.
- **ADI St Marys:** Contributions for various local and regional roads, and intersection improvements including Forrester and Mamre Roads, Great Western Highway and other transport improvement works such as St Marys and Mt Druitt bus priority works, and public transport promotions and initial bus service subsidy.

The Government will pursue agreements for other proposed greenfield sites progressively for funding Regional Transport Infrastructure, in consultation with other Government agencies such as RTA and MoT.

(a) North West Growth Centre

The North West Growth Centre will eventually accommodate approximately 70,000 new homes on around 10,000 hectares. The NSW Government has identified a range of initiatives to ensure appropriate transport is provided for residents. Developers will contribute to funding 75% of the costs of the initiatives identified in the Growth Centres Commission Special Infrastructure Commission Practice Note via a Special Infrastructure Contribution and the NSW Government will fund the remainder.

The key transport initiatives and approximate contribution towards the funding of such infrastructure identified in the Special Infrastructure Contributions schedule for the NW Growth Centres Area over the next 35 years include:

- approximately \$100 million to contribute to funding improvements to heavy rail services including the duplication of the rail line between Schofields and Riverstone and a new railway station between Quakers Hill and Schofields
- more than \$110 million to contribute to funding new bus depots and interchanges as well as a subsidy for bus operators in the northwest
- more than \$800 million to contribute to funding the construction of new regional roads and upgrade existing roads to ensure that vehicular traffic flows smoothly.

All of the above transport measures will be progressively delivered on time to meet the needs of residents in the North West Growth Centre.

(b) Special Infrastructure Contribution

The operation of the Special Infrastructure Contribution within the North West Growth Centre is outlined in the *Growth Centres Commission Special Infrastructure Contribution Practice Note*, December 2006, which is under review.

Sections 94ED to 94EM of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* (the Act), enable the collection of a Special Infrastructure Contribution as a contribution towards the funding of regional infrastructure in the North West and South West Growth Centres. Under Section 94EE of the Act the Minister for Planning has declared that a Special Infrastructure Contribution will be applied to development within the North West and South West Growth Centres.

The Special Infrastructure Contribution are determined by the Minister for Planning.

These contributions will be kept under review as outlined in the Practice Note, and may be amended in accordance with any determinations made by the Minister under Section 94EE(1) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979.

The Growth Centres Commission has prepared schedules of its proposed regional infrastructure requirements and has determined the maximum amount of credit (attributable cost) that could be made available should that infrastructure be

undertaken under a Works-in-Kind arrangement. These schedules are in Section Two of the Practice Note.

The schedules list the transport requirements for major roads, heavy rail and bus services in the North West sector.

The Schedules in Section 2 of the Practice Note will be reviewed every 4 years.

In October 2007, the Premier announced a review of State infrastructure contributions. These contributions will now fund 75 per cent of the roads, rail, bus services, open space, planning and delivery costs and *land required* for social infrastructure - including land for emergency services and justice, education and health facilities - as detailed in the Special Infrastructure Contribution Practice Note.

These changes are expected to bring the cost of State infrastructure contributions down from \$33,000 per average lot to \$23,000 per average lot.

The construction of these facilities will be funded by an additional \$2 billion of Government funding on top of the existing commitment to fund 25 per cent of the Growth Centres infrastructure - in line with the Government's commitment to deliver infrastructure as new communities emerge.