

**Submission  
No 136**

## **THE TRANSPORT NEEDS OF SYDNEY'S NORTH-WEST SECTOR**

**Organisation:** Lend Lease / GPT (Rouse Hill) Pty Ltd  
**Name:** Mr Stuart Mendel  
**Telephone:** 02 9851 2021  
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the new  
**Rouse Hill**

Lend Lease GPT (Rouse Hill) Pty Limited

ABN 49 106 393 917

Level 4, 30 The Bond,

30 Hickson Road,

Millers Point, NSW 2000

Australia

Telephone (02) 9236 6111

Facsimile (02) 9225 9466

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The Director  
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St  
Sydney NSW 2000  
Fax: (02) 9230 3416

Dear Sir

**Re: Legislative Council inquiry into the transport needs of Sydney's North West Sector**

The New Rouse Hill (TNRH) will comprise up to 1800 residential dwellings plus significant community and regional infrastructure and is currently being developed to fulfil a long term vision of the NSW Government. Together with the Rouse Hill Town Centre (RHTC), which opened in March 2008, this strategically important development has been facilitated by NSW Government who approximately 20 years ago acquired the land with the long term vision to provide a major regional centre for the northwestern region of Sydney.

The land is owned by Department of Planning and is being developed by Lend Lease and The GPT Group in partnership with Landcom.

As part of the planning for the development, the master planning made provision for a rail corridor along the Windsor Road frontage and for a future rail station at the front of the RHTC. A transport interchange has been provided which is intended to feed commuters to and from a future railway station via buses servicing the region. TNRH has been planned on the assumption that a rail service would be provided within a reasonable time to service the needs of the current and future residents of TNRH and the surrounding region. Planning and provision for the proposed railway was a tender requirement of the NSW Government to the developers.

Most successful regional centres in Australia have a strong rail focus, and TNRH's long-term viability will be supported by the proposed rail link.

The North West Growth Sector is one of the three key corridors for urban growth in the Sydney metropolitan region. TNRH and RHTC will be the focal point for this ongoing growth in north-western Sydney, providing a central location for retail, commercial and community facilities, and a key point of focus for public transport networks. The centre will also provide an important employment focus for the growing Rouse Hill development area, thereby reducing the need for long-distance commuting by providing more local jobs.

The area surrounding the TNRH site has been developing rapidly in recent years. In both Blacktown and Baulkham Hills local government areas, large new housing estates have been built. Recent new residential suburbs include Beaumont Hills, Kellyville, Stanhope Gardens, Second Ponds Creek and Rouse Hill. Approximately 5km to the southeast of the site, Norwest Business Park has been a focus for employment growth in recent years. In addition, a network of local retail centres has been provided. This growth complements the established areas of the two local government areas, large parts of which have themselves developed in the last two decades. Blacktown, and in particular, Castle Hill have experienced strong growth in employment and retail facilities as the catchment areas have significantly increased their populations.

As has already been noted, significant further growth has already been planned for the North

West Sector. A number of new release areas are at various stages of the planning process, and in the longer term, further release areas are expected to be added to the NSW Government's Metropolitan Development Program. In total, approximately 50,000 additional residential lots are expected to be developed over the next 25 to 30 years in this corridor. The major areas for longer-term investigation for urban development potential in the catchment area are likely to include Box Hill, Riverstone East, Alex Avenue and Vineyard. These areas will complement releases such as Schofield's Aerodrome, Castlebrook, Balmoral Road and Second Ponds Creek. These high levels of growth are clearly likely to have significant implications for the transport systems in the area.

The proposed North West Rail Link (NWRL) will provide a trunk rail service into the rapidly developing Rouse Hill development area by linking the TNRH, the Balmoral Road release area, Norwest Business Park and Castle Hill to both the Parramatta Rail Link and the Main North Line at Epping.

The performance of a city's transport networks is also a key contributor to sustainability outcomes because the environmental implications of an inefficient and imbalanced transport system are generally significant. It is therefore essential that transport systems strive to be as sustainable as possible, by providing a range of alternatives to single-person car use. The masterplan for the TNRH embodies the following principles in this regard:

- Maximising the benefits arising from the proposed development of the Parramatta – Rouse Hill Transitway and the NWRL;
- Effectively integrating the transport interchange into the development of the town centre; and
- Prioritising for pedestrians and cyclists at the town centre site.

We believe that a rail connection to the northwest is critical and will provide a more efficient public transport system and a reduced dependence on cars for the residents and visitors to the northwest sector of Sydney.

The station at Rouse Hill will be an important station on the proposed rail line acting as a transport node allowing the integration of various public transport modes including rail, buses and taxis that will serve the growing region. We particularly note that the integration of commuter parking has not been planned in TNRH development and will be actively discouraged within the RHTC and adequate allowance should be made for this elsewhere. Furthermore, car parking numbers have been purposely constrained at the town centre, in an effort to promote the use of public transport generally.

The proposed NWRL will complement the trunk public transport role of the Parramatta – Rouse Hill Transitway by providing direct access to Castle Hill, Macquarie Park, the Lower North Shore, North Sydney and the Sydney CBD.

While primarily providing access for residents of the north-west to jobs and facilities located in these areas, the rail link will also play an important role in making the town centre more attractive as an employment location in its own right. This will facilitate increased levels of commercial development in the longer term, effectively bringing the centre closer to a wide range of locations served by the City Rail network.

All centres in Sydney, which achieve comparatively high levels of public transport use, do so through an effective combination of radial and trunk bus access and rail services. The NWRL will provide TNRH with the opportunity to achieve high levels of public transport use in the medium to long term.

If the proposed NWRL is not constructed, it is clear that both TNRH and RHTC will be less

accessible by public transport, particularly for long distance commuting trips both from the area and to the centre. The ability to achieve the mode split targets will also be reduced. We believe it is critical to provide high quality public transport as the region is developed to ensure that good transport habits are encouraged. If the NWRL is not delivered, or delivered late then the developed communities will have already established dependant travel habits that will be much harder or impossible to change. The existing vehicle transport system, principally Windsor Road and the M2, is already to choking point in peak hours.

Yours Faithfully,

Stuart Mendel  
**Project Director**  
**The New Rouse Hill**

\*A joint Venture between Lend Lease and The GPT Group in partnership with Landcom and the Department of Planning.