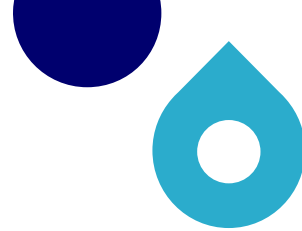


INQUIRY INTO DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRANSPORT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Organisation: Sydney Water
Date Received: 28 March 2024



28 March 2024

Ms Sue Higginson MLC
Chair
Inquiry into the Development of the Transport Oriented Development Program

Sydney Water submission

Dear Ms Higginson

Sydney Water proudly provides safe, high-quality drinking water as well as maintaining wastewater for about 5.3 million customers through our network of more than 48,000km of pipes every day across Greater Sydney. We are committed to healthy, world-class waterways that support thriving, liveable and sustainable cities. Our network and treatment capacity have continued to meet the demands as Greater Sydney has grown, and as we prepare for future growth, we will continue to invest in infrastructure that is resilient to climate variability and responds to the priorities of Sydney's communities and our customers.

Sydney Water welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this Parliamentary Inquiry via this submission by outlining how our water and wastewater networks will support increased growth throughout Greater Sydney.

Sydney Water understands and appreciates that Greater Sydney is experiencing a generational housing crisis and that the Transport Oriented Development (TOD) program is a key NSW Government policy to deliver housing around 39 transport hubs. We're aware that Part 1 of the TOD program focusses on eight accelerated precincts to create infrastructure and capacity for 47,800 new homes over 15 years through the rezoning of land, and that Part 2 of the program focusses on precincts that have existing infrastructure located within 400 metres of 31 stations to create 138,000 new homes over 15 years through State Environment Planning Policy (SEPP) amendments. Several concerns have been raised via various channels questioning whether our infrastructure has the capacity to handle growth in specified precincts and whether we were consulted during the development of the TOD program.

Part 1 of the TOD program

The growth in the eight selected precincts (Bankstown, Bays West, Bella Vista, Crows Nest, Homebush, Hornsby, Kellyville and Macquarie Park) is broadly consistent with that which Sydney Water was already planning to service. For five of the precincts, Sydney Water has existing capacity to meet growth, or we are already delivering upgrades to facilitate the required dwellings within the Housing Accord period. For Bankstown and Homebush, we will need to accelerate delivery of investments already in development by 1-2 years to meet capacity requirements. Bays West was not included in the potential TODs for which Sydney Water was asked for servicing advice. Sydney Water has since had the opportunity to assess the planned growth for Bays West and has confirmed our key infrastructure has capacity.

Sydney Water Corporation ABN 49 776 225 038
1 Smith Street, Parramatta, NSW 2150 | PO Box 399, Parramatta, NSW 2124
Telephone 13 20 92 **Media (24/7)** 8849 5151 sydneywater.com.au



In addition, the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water was asked to independently review our planning for seven of the eight TOD Part 1 precincts. The review supported Sydney Water's ability to service these TODs. As noted, Bays West was not initially included in this review, however our subsequent assessment of this site will be included in the Infrastructure NSW review of growth planning.

Part 2 of the TOD program

Part 2 of the program covers 31 TOD precincts across Greater Sydney, Central Coast and Newcastle which will deliver increased growth through SEPP amendments. We have assessed the sites within our area of operations and expect to be able to accommodate the growth with no to minimal investment. The locations in the Central Coast and Newcastle are not applicable to Sydney Water as they do not form part of our area of operations.

Consultation

Sydney Water was the subject of several rounds of consultation with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure and provided advice on available capacity to service growth forecasts provided at the time of consultation for the shortlist of TOD locations within our area of operations. Sites that Sydney Water indicated would incur significant investment that was not feasible within the next five years were indicated. Sydney Water also advised on many other sites that would be suitable for additional growth from a water servicing perspective.

Other information

The age of water and wastewater infrastructure, which is generally consistent with when the areas in question were initially developed, is not a factor in determining capacity of water and wastewater systems. Our existing assets service customers in all locations of our area of operations. In cases where an asset is coming to the end of its life, its renewal is planned and accounted for. Furthermore, the number of breaks and bursts in our network is also not a factor in determining capacity of the water and wastewater system. Other issues such as tree density can cause breaks, and as such Sydney Water performs preventative maintenance to minimise these issues.

Sydney Water is confident that its infrastructure will capably service the growth forecast in the TOD precincts. We have worked with relevant Government Departments and will continue to maintain and upgrade our network to meet customer demands and expectations. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission and address potential misconceptions about Sydney Water's ability to service growth in the TOD precincts.

Yours sincerely,

Roch Cheroux
Managing Director, Sydney Water

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