



NSW Government response

Inquiry into Current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney

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Recommendation 1

That the Government ensure culturally and linguistically inclusive measures are in place across public transport services in Western Sydney.

NSW Government response

Supported in principle

NSW Government agencies are required under the *Multicultural Act 2000*¹ to develop Multicultural action plans that outline actions to improve inclusivity and accessibility of services and programs for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

The current Transport for NSW (Transport) Multicultural Plan 2021-2023² is due for renewal. In developing the new Plan, consideration is being given to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse communities across NSW, including Western Sydney, to better understand what measures may be required to improve access to transport services and programs.

¹ <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-2000-077>

² <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/news-and-events/reports-and-publications/transport-for-nsw-multicultural-plan-2021-2023>

Recommendation 2

That the Government's cost-benefit analyses of public transport projects comprehensively include social, economic and health outcomes in its assessment.

NSW Government response

Supported

NSW Government agencies are required to comply to TPG23-08 NSW Government Guide to Cost-Benefit Analysis³ (CBA).

Treasury describes CBA as:

“CBA is an evidence-based, systematic and comprehensive economic analysis that aims to measure the full impacts of government decisions on New South Wales, including economic, social, environmental and cultural impacts.”

NSW Submission of Business Cases (TPG22-04)⁴ outlines the mandatory requirements for the submission of business cases based on an Estimated Total Cost (ETC) greater than \$10 million. As part of this, agencies must include a CBA as a mandatory part of the business case.

Transport fully accepts and seeks to comply with the position that an economic appraisal is required as part of a business case to support funding proposals, in line with NSW Government policy. The CBA aims to measure the full impacts - economic, social and environmental - of a decision to the NSW community, including individuals, firms and the government.

Transport includes a range of detailed advice on how to undertake a CBA for a transport project. Transport provides guidance on a range of economic and social impacts including health related to active and physical activity. Transport's economic guidance and monetary/parameter value estimates are informed by work currently going on with the NSW Ministry of Health.

³ <https://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au/documents/tpg23-08-nsw-government-guide-cost-benefit-analysis> (page 7)

⁴ <https://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au/documents/tpg22-04-submission-business-cases>

Recommendation 3

That the Government commit to and deliver two further stations west of Sydney Olympic Park on the Metro West line in locations that present further housing and economic revitalisation opportunities.

NSW Government response

Noted

The Sydney Metro West line will double rail capacity between Greater Parramatta and the Sydney CBD, link new communities to rail services and support employment growth and housing supply, transforming Sydney for generations to come.

On 7 December 2023, the NSW Government announced Sydney Metro would prepare scoping studies for up to two potential station locations west of Sydney Olympic Park⁵. This decision is consistent with the Independent Sydney Metro Review⁶ and supports the NSW Government's priorities to lift housing supply⁷. The scoping studies work is ongoing.

The NSW Government is considering an unsolicited proposal from the Australian Turf Club (ATC) to redevelop its Rosehill Gardens Racecourse into a mixed-use precinct including up to 25,000 dwellings and a new Sydney Metro West station⁸.

The potential inclusion of up to two metro stations will be subject to the NSW Government's future consideration of Sydney Metro's finalised scoping studies and the Australian Turf Club proposal that is being considered under the NSW Government's separate Unsolicited Proposal process⁹.

⁵ <https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/metro-west-to-supercharge-housing-supply>

⁶ <https://www.sydneymetro.info/article/sydney-metro-review>

⁷ <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/housing/housing-supply>

⁸ <https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/proposal-to-relocate-rosehill-racecourse>

⁹ <https://www.nsw.gov.au/nsw-government/unsolicited-proposals>

Recommendation 4

That the Government:

- immediately assess the feasibility of additional stations on the confirmed section of the Metro Western Sydney Airport line so that any planning and development commence by the time of the Airport's opening in 2026
- ensure planning and development of future extensions to the line include adequate number of, and distance between, stations.

NSW Government response

Noted

Sydney Metro - Western Sydney Airport¹⁰ will become the transport spine for Greater Western Sydney, connecting communities and travellers with the Western Sydney International Airport and the growing region with a fast, safe and reliable metro service.

Potential station locations for the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport line were investigated since 2018 and included more than twenty station locations assessed against the city-shaping, productivity, customer, transport and value-for-money objectives of the project.

A long list of station location options for the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport project were assessed against their ability to meet project objectives based on connection points to the T1 Western Line; intermediate stations between the T1 Western Line and the Western Sydney International airport; and essential stations identified at the Western Sydney International airport and Aerotropolis. The process of shortlisting the station location options considered key drivers such as an efficient alignment, natural, environmental and land use constraints (including flooding, aircraft noise restrictions, Defence lands and the Outer Sydney Orbital¹¹) and land use uplift opportunities¹².

This project development process informed the Government announcement on 13 September 2020¹³ of the six station locations: St Marys, Orchard Hills, Luddenham, the Western Sydney Aerotropolis (Bradfield) and two stations at the Western Sydney International Airport. The Government has no plans to add new stations to the confirmed WSA Metro route.

Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport received planning approval in 2021¹⁴ and is currently in delivery. The current project does not include provision for additional interim stations.

Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport is the first stage that will deliver rail access to Western Sydney International, interchange with the existing Sydney Trains network and provision for connection with future Metro lines. Potential extensions at both ends of the current alignment have been future-proofed through the provision of stub-tunnels at St Marys and Aerotropolis Stations.

Business cases are being developed on future extensions to the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport Line to the north from St Marys to Tallawong via Schofields and Marsden Park

¹⁰ <https://www.sydneymetro.info/westernsydneyairportline>

¹¹ <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/corridors/oso> and <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/corridors/oso2>

¹² <https://majorprojects.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/prweb/PRRestService/mp/01/getContent?AttachRef=SSI-10051%2120201019T004447.771%20GMT>

¹³ <https://www.sydneymetro.info/article/station-locations-confirmed-western-sydneys-new-metro>

¹⁴ <https://www.sydneymetro.info/western-sydney-airport-line/environment-planning#:~:text=On%2015%20September%202021%20the,the%20SM%20%E2%80%93%20WSA%20Rail%20Development.>

and to the south from Bradfield towards Campbelltown/Macarthur. A connection between Bradfield and Leppington/Glenfield is also under review.

These investigations will explore alignment and station location options for a future government investment decision, with the final proposed alignment designed to deliver the best possible outcome for the transport network, housing uplift, and the local community.

Recommendation 5

That the Government complete, as a matter of urgency, business cases for the extensions of the Metro Western Sydney Airport line, including investigation of the possible alternate extension of the T2 heavy rail line from Leppington to Western Sydney Airport via Oran Park with a commitment to completing the north-south rail link and connection to Leppington by 2032.

NSW Government response

Noted

The NSW Government has committed to completing business cases for potential future extensions of the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport line to the north from St Marys and south from Bradfield¹⁵.

The Australian and NSW Governments have jointly committed \$100 million to complete business cases for a rail connection between Bradfield and Campbelltown/Macarthur, and for a connection between Bradfield and Leppington/Glenfield.

When complete, the business cases will inform NSW Government consideration of investment priorities for the transport network.

Recommendation 6

That the Government urgently investigate extending stage 2 of the Parramatta Light Rail Project so that the line no longer terminates at the Carter Street precinct but continues from there to terminate at Lidcombe railway station.

NSW Government response

Not supported

¹⁵ <https://www.sydneymetro.info/planning-future-extensions>

As described in section 5.3.2¹⁶ of the Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and sections 6.4.3¹⁷ and 8.4.1¹⁸ of the Response to Submissions, four potential corridors beyond Sydney Olympic Park were considered during project development.

A shortened corridor (terminating at the Carter Street Precinct) was identified as the preferred corridor option to maximise the benefits of the project by connecting Sydney Olympic Park and the Carter Street precinct, and providing a transport connection to this growing residential population. The Lidcombe corridor required significant property acquisition south of the M4 Western Motorway. There will be opportunity to improve bus connections between Lidcombe, the Carter Street precinct and Sydney Olympic Park in line with the planned opening of Sydney Metro West. This corridor also enhanced the catchment of the Sydney Metro West station at Sydney Olympic Park, and had community support, as described in the Carter Street Precinct Development Framework (by the then Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2020a)¹⁹.

The preferred alignment allows connections with existing public transport services at and near Sydney Olympic Park. The stop at Olympic Boulevard would also be located close to the new Sydney Metro West station at Sydney Olympic Park.

There will be opportunity to improve bus connections between Lidcombe, the Carter Street Precinct and Sydney Olympic Park in line with the planned opening of Sydney Metro West.

The design of Light Rail, including the Carter Street terminus, enables future extensions of light rail services. Future extensions may be considered in line with NSW Government integrated transport and land use planning and would be subject to Government investment decision analysis and processes.

Recommendation 7

That the Government expedite and broaden the scope of the planning and delivery of 24-hour public transport services to encompass the Sydney region (Western Parkland City, Central River City and Eastern Parkland City).

NSW Government response

Noted

24-hour public transport services currently operate across the Sydney region, including Nightride services²⁰ replacing most rail services as well as several bus routes serving areas away from the rail network, predominantly in the Eastern Parkland City.

¹⁶ <https://majorprojects.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/prweb/PRRestService/mp/01/getContent?AttachRef=SSI-10035%2120221104T043405.332%20GMT> (page 11)

¹⁷ <https://majorprojects.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/prweb/PRRestService/mp/01/getContent?AttachRef=EXH-50335709%2120231004T050812.898%20GMT> (pages 42-43)

¹⁸ <https://majorprojects.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/prweb/PRRestService/mp/01/getContent?AttachRef=EXH-50335709%2120231004T050812.430%20GMT> (pages 41-46)

¹⁹ <https://www.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/sites/council/files/2022-10/Carter-Street-Precinct-Development-Framework-2020.pdf>

²⁰ <https://transportnsw.info/travel-info/using-public-transport/late-night-services>

Consideration to expanding the provision of 24-hour public transport on key corridors and serving key precincts will be considered as part of normal service planning processes. Work currently underway on a Medium-Term Bus Plan²¹ will include identification of future 24-hour bus services to extend the coverage of public transport across the Sydney region, and identify the investment required to deliver this service uplift for future consideration by Government.

Any new 24-hour public transport offerings identified as part of service planning activities would need to be considered against available resources and new funding would be required.

Recommendation 8

That the Government take urgent action to ensure that, at the least, bus services at a frequency of 30 minutes or less are available in:

- new development areas in Western Sydney prior to residents moving in or, in cases where they have already moved in, as soon as possible from now
- other more established areas of Western Sydney where bus services do not yet meet this target.

NSW Government response

Supported in principle

Public transport services Western Sydney require further attention. The Government is actively planning bus service improvements through the provision of \$327 million over four years towards improving bus service needs in Western Sydney. New bus services will be established in the North-West, while other planned services will connect key centres such as Liverpool, Penrith and Campbelltown to Western Sydney Airport and Bradfield City.

The Government will shortly release the Bus Industry Taskforce's final report, which proposes a range of measures to improve bus services, including in Western Sydney.

Transport is currently developing a Medium-term Bus Plan, which will set out a pathway to updating bus service planning guidelines including a minimum 30-minute service across the day for most local routes. It will also include a prioritised plan for improving existing and introducing new services that meet this guideline alongside other key network enhancements, and identify the investment required to deliver this service uplift for future consideration by Government.

²¹ <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2024/240222%20-%20Haylen%20-%20NSW%20Government%20releases%20Bus%20Taskforce%20Second%20Report.pdf>

Recommendation 9

That the Government consider:

- allocating initial funding in the next budget to fund 2,000 bus shelters across Greater Sydney, with a particular focus on Western Sydney and bus stops located near schools, hospitals, and aged care facilities
- providing ongoing dedicated funding to local councils for upgrades and maintenance of bus stop infrastructure.

NSW Government response

Noted

The NSW Government notes the Committee's recommendation and understands the need for bus shelters and associated works in greater Western Sydney. The NSW Government is focusing its efforts on improving and increasing bus services in the region. It is the responsibility of local government to site and erect shelters.

The NSW Government will work collaboratively with local government to ensure the siting of shelters meets community needs.

Recommendation 10

That the Government prioritise the delivery of a rapid bus network and commit to funding the requisite infrastructure across Western Sydney.

NSW Government response

Noted

The NSW Government has allocated \$327.1 million over four years to 2027-28 (NSW and Australian Government funded) as part of the 2024-25 State Budget to deliver new bus services to connect key activity centres including Liverpool, Penrith and Campbelltown to the Airport and Bradfield City.

The new bus services will be operating before the Western Sydney International Airport opens in 2026. The new services will be a first step towards a Western Sydney Bus network with additional services expected to be introduced as demand develops following the Airport opening.

To ensure they are operating as soon as possible, the new services will make use of existing infrastructure including existing dedicated bus lanes on the newly upgraded The Northern Road. New bus interchanges and a bus layover will also be built around the future Bradfield City Centre and the Airport, which will allow passengers to easily transfer between airport, bus and Metro services.

The new bus services will:

- support the immediate transport needs of emerging communities, new businesses in Western Sydney and construction sites at the Airport and Bradfield City Centre
- provide a reliable travel choice and access to local community services such as education, retail and health precincts
- establish sustainable travel behaviours for residents living and working in Western Sydney.

The new services will include Zero Emissions Buses (ZEBs)²². ZEBs will provide quieter, smoother and more comfortable journeys for passengers, and support the NSW Government's goal of net zero emissions by 2050. Existing depots will be upgraded to cater for the ZEBs.

In addition to the funded routes, which form the initial bus services on the Western Sydney Rapid Bus alignments, Transport strategic planning identifies other connections in Western Sydney which could become future rapid bus routes. The Medium-term Bus Plan currently in development will identify which of these rapid routes are priorities for development and implementation over the next decade.

Recommendation 11

That the Government conduct a detailed review of F3 Parramatta River line's operations, including an assessment of the feasibility and potential impacts of increasing the frequency, speed and stopping patterns of the service.

NSW Government response

Noted

F3 Parramatta River services have been increased twice in 2024 (January and July), increasing service frequency during weekday shoulder peak and during weekends from 30 minutes to 20 minutes. Any future review of ferry services would need to take into account current and future travel patterns and fleet availability.

²² <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/current-projects/zero-emission-buses>

Recommendation 12

That the Government commit to funding a program that builds and upgrades footpaths in Western Sydney that have been identified by local councils as limiting walkability, safety and connectivity to transport, services and jobs.

NSW Government response

Noted

Councils play a vital role in delivering infrastructure for their local communities including active transport. Some of the infrastructure councils provide function at a district or regional scale and may not be fully funded through their local contribution plans. In recognition of this, as part of the Housing and Productivity Contribution introduced in 2023, the NSW Government has committed up to \$1 billion over 10 years from the fund which will be made available to councils as a grants program to support funding of infrastructure aligned with the purpose of the Housing and Productivity Contribution²³. Funding requests can be made from 2025.

The Housing and Productivity Contribution is paid by developers to help deliver infrastructure that supports new homes and jobs. The grant allocation to councils from this fund will be for projects that align with the purpose of the Housing and Productivity Fund and are likely to be district and regional level infrastructure projects. It is unlikely that footpath upgrades would be considered as this is local infrastructure.

Transport recognises that footpaths provide critical connections to/from public transport stops and key destinations and therefore Transport currently funds local councils for walking infrastructure through grant programs like the Get NSW Active Program. This annual program funds walking and cycling infrastructure by local councils across New South Wales. It is a rolling program under which \$60 million has been allocated for the 2024-25 financial year, including \$10 million for active travel to school projects²⁴. The program is available to all councils in NSW to enable improved local walking and cycling infrastructure to be designed and constructed.

As part of the program, funding is made available for both the strategy, planning, design of walking and cycling projects, as well as their delivery.

To ensure that walking and cycling projects are being delivered to communities across NSW, the 2024-25 program established a funding share that was proportional to the population in Regional and Outer Metropolitan parts of NSW (40 per cent), Western Parkland City (15 per cent), and Central River City and Eastern Harbour City.

²³ <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-08/housing-and-productivity-contribution-implementation-guideline.pdf>

²⁴ <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/programs/get-nsw-active#:~:text=FY2024%2F25%20program&text=Of%20the%20%2460%20million%20funding,for%20broader%20active%20transport%20projects.>

Recommendation 13

That the Government commit to funding Sydney's Strategic Cycleway Corridors in Western Sydney to deliver the network by 2030.

NSW Government response

Support in principle

In Western Parkland City and Central River City 58 strategic cycleway corridors have been identified, making up more than 635 kilometres through key centres and major points of interest. Network maps indicating the corridors for both cities were released in February 2023 and were published on Transport's Strategic cycleway corridors for Greater Sydney website²⁵. The development and delivery of missing links is subject to allocation of funding.

As work progresses with refining routes along the corridors, a clearer cost estimation will be established to determine delivery requirements, noting that funding for missing links may be addressed through a mix of sources including different programs and opportunities.

In addition to this, Transport's Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects policy²⁶ requires that every project funded by Transport must include provision for walking and cycling within the core scope of the project. Transport will pursue and secure funding to progress the design and subsequent construction of the strategic cycleway network through various sources including major projects where they align with Strategic Cycleway Corridors.

Recommendation 14

That the Government prioritise the development of public transport infrastructure and services in tandem with road projects to ensure more sustainable, liveable communities and to better prepare for future population growth and to meet its net zero targets.

NSW Government response

Support in principle

As part of the introduction of the Housing and Productivity Contribution, a new governance framework is being put in place which expands the Urban Development Program²⁷ (UDPs) to establish Infrastructure Opportunities Plans. These plans establish infrastructure priorities over the next 0-20 years, much of which will include public transport and roads. The plans will help to coordinate transport infrastructure with strategic planning and development. The NSW Government has appointed Infrastructure NSW (iNSW) Coordinator General to provide overall coordination of delivery of the staging and sequencing plan for priority infrastructure projects.

²⁵ <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/operations/walking-and-bike-riding/strategic-cycleway-corridors>

²⁶ <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2021/providing-for-walking-and-cycling-in-transport-projects-policy.pdf>

²⁷ <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/insights-and-demography/urban-development-program>

The Housing and Productivity Contribution is paid by developers to help deliver infrastructure that supports new homes and jobs. It is a contribution toward infrastructure provision and will not always fully fund infrastructure projects.

Funds will be spent across a range of infrastructure types (such as schools, regional open space and transport projects) based on priority and funding availability, complementary to infrastructure agency budgets.

Transport's Future Transport Strategy aims to make public transport people's first choice, and to ensure public transport is available on day one. This includes exploring reforms to policies leading to public transport networks being in place at the time of settlement of new areas of housing and/or jobs and prioritising regular timetabled bus services in preference to site-specific shuttle bus services.

Transport is working with DPHI and other relevant agencies to plan future transport networks (including the Aerotropolis, South West Growth Area, Greater Macarthur Growth Area and Wilton Growth Area) for public transport, walking and cycling, local access, as well as for freight and through-traffic. Transport and DPHI work with Councils to enable surrounding land use and development patterns that support the community's access and amenity needs as people move in, and into the future.

Transport works with Councils and developers on collaborative planning to co-deliver transport infrastructure, and undertake early planning of bus services, to encourage sustainable travel modes as early as possible.

Work is underway to provide new public transport services to the Western Sydney Airport Precinct. This includes a new 23-kilometre Sydney Metro rail service stopping at six new stations between St Marys and Bradfield, including two stations within the airport site. In addition, a new bus services will connect local population centres including Campbelltown, Penrith and Liverpool as well as Leppington and Mount Druitt to the Airport Precinct, it means early operations at the Airport will be supported by an integrated transport network that will be ready to serve passengers and workers before the Airport opens in late 2026.

These new services will include Zero Emissions Buses (ZEBs). ZEBs will provide quieter, smoother and more comfortable journeys for passengers, and support the NSW Government's goal of net zero emissions by 2050²⁸. Existing depots will be upgraded to cater for the ZEBs.

To ensure new local bus services are running as soon as possible, they will mostly make use of existing infrastructure. However, there will be new transport interchanges at Bradfield and the Airport to make it easy for users to change modes. Additional bus services are planned to meet growing demand in the years following Airport opening, leading to a Western Sydney rapid bus network. These future services will include on-street bus priority measures, resulting in faster journeys.

²⁸ <https://www.climatechange.environment.nsw.gov.au/about-adaptsw/nsw-government-action-climate-change#:~:text=The%20Net%20Zero%20Plan%20Stage,net%20zero%20emissions%20by%202050.>

Recommendation 15

That the Government commit to mode share targets within integrated land use and transport planning considerations for Western Sydney, to encourage greater uptake of public transport.

NSW Government response

Support in principle

Transport and councils have set mode share targets for specific precincts as a mechanism to guide investment needs and shape travel behaviour. Mode share targets have been included in integrated land use and transport planning considerations for Western City – examples include Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) documents (such as Aerotropolis Plans and Draft Bankstown Transport Statement) and many Council documents (like Local Strategic Planning Statements, Canterbury Bankstown Council's Bankstown Complete Streets Plan²⁹). Sometimes the targets are limited to journey to work targets.

Mode share targets create a clear, measurable and timely target to work towards and align with government overarching strategies for Net Zero including Transport's Transport Sustainability Plan includes targets to achieve CO2 emissions reductions³⁰ and the Towards Net Zero Emissions Freight Policy³¹.

The Aerotropolis Precinct Plan (March 2022)³² includes targets for mode share for active transport, public transport and private vehicle use. The targets for sustainable transport (active plus public transport) aspire to higher targets as the precinct becomes more developed from 2026 to 2056. The targets respond to the different urban forms planned for different precincts in the Aerotropolis, with higher targets in more urbanised areas such as Bradfield and lower targets in areas like the agribusiness precinct. These aspirational targets reflect the higher levels of public transport connectivity planned for Bradfield compared to many of the more industrial precincts.

More widely, it can be difficult to set meaningful mode share targets for larger regions due to the diversity of characteristics (land use, transport network, travel patterns) that are present. Furthermore, it is sometimes difficult to measure performance of mode share targets due to more limited availability of data, such as for mode share for non-work trip purposes. In these circumstances an alternative approach is to review the direction of travel behaviour trends, such as increasing public transport patronage, as evidence of improving transport network performance.

Transport also has a longer-term ambition to stabilise traffic levels in Greater Sydney, as outlined in Future Transport Strategy³³. This recognises that as Greater Sydney's population grows, traffic will continue to increase. Increased traffic will slow our networks, undermine productivity, dominate our streets and public spaces, and reduce our quality of life. By planning and investing to stabilise traffic levels, we can accommodate population growth, and support sustainability goals without sacrificing quality of life.

Transport will take a balanced, place-based approach to managing our transport networks and land use planning. Transport will set targets for traffic levels and mode share that reflects the

²⁹ <https://www.cbcity.nsw.gov.au/development/planning-for-the-city/bankstown-complete-streets-project>

³⁰ <https://caportal.com.au/tfnsw/sustainability/our-plan>

³¹ <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/operations/freight-hub/towards-net-zero-emissions-freight-policy>

³² https://shared-drupal-s3fs.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/master-test/fapub_pdf/Western+Sydney+Aerotropolis+Precinct+Plan+-+March+2022+-+FINAL_HD+and+accessible.pdf

³³ <https://www.future.transport.nsw.gov.au/>

unique circumstances of different parts of Greater Sydney. Targets will be more ambitious in areas with good public transport access. In greenfield growth areas, total vehicle traffic will inevitably increase although good planning can ensure that public transport, walking and cycling are as convenient as possible and reduce the length of unavoidable car trips. In the medium-term, stabilising traffic can inform infrastructure prioritisation so that Transport focus on projects that encourage more productive and sustainable modes of transport such as public transport, walking and cycling.

Recommendation 16

That the Government prioritise the immediate public transport needs of existing and approved, but not yet built, areas of Western Sydney's outer fringes prior to approving more housing development in those precincts.

NSW Government response

Support in principle

As part of the introduction of the Housing and Productivity Contribution, a new governance framework is being put in place which expands the Urban Development Program (UDPs) to establish Infrastructure Opportunities Plans. These plans establish infrastructure priorities over the next 0-20 years, much of which will include public transport and roads. The NSW Government has appointed Infrastructure NSW (iNSW) Coordinator-General to provide overall coordination of delivery of the staging and sequencing plan for priority infrastructure projects. The plans will help to coordinate transport infrastructure with strategic planning and development.

The Housing and Productivity Contribution is paid by developers to help deliver infrastructure that supports new homes and jobs. It is a contribution toward infrastructure provision and will not always fully infrastructure projects.

Funds will be spent across a range of infrastructure types (such as schools, regional open space and transport projects) based on priority and funding availability, complementary to infrastructure agency budgets.

Transport supports this recommendation in principle, noting that investment decisions on priorities are subject to usual government processes.

Transport supports Government working together with Councils and industry to better coordinate the staging and funding of critical infrastructure and services, with the aim of an orderly and sustainable development pattern that better serves the community and businesses overall. As part of this work, Transport will continue to work closely with DPHI and Councils in planning for new transport networks and services in the outer fringes of Western Sydney. This includes the growth areas and infill areas of Campbelltown, Camden, Wollondilly, Liverpool, and Penrith Local Government Areas, so that existing and new residents have access to public transport and all the opportunities this accessibility opens up. This will include engaging with the development industry to sequence development patterns in line with available infrastructure and services capacity delivery.

Transport has been working with Councils to plan integrated transport networks, which includes combinations of rail, metro, rapid bus, frequent and local bus, new and upgraded

roads, and cycleways, for the Aerotropolis, Greater Macarthur Growth Area³⁴, Wilton Growth Area³⁵, and the South West Growth Area³⁶. Opportunities identified in both this Inquiry and the Bus Industry Taskforce Reports will be coordinated to prioritise staged funding and delivery of key identified public transport needs, including:

- a. Improving existing bus services – make services more direct to where people need to go; services to come more often and run during weekends and in off-peak/shift times.
- b. New bus services – so new areas have public transport as people move in; and as workplaces, schools, and parklands open.
- c. More drivers and depots – providing local employment opportunities.

The need for quality public transport in underserved areas, particularly recent and planned new suburbs and growth areas, including many areas across Western Sydney, is one of the priority objectives of Transport’s Statewide Medium-term Bus Plan which, is currently in development.

The Statewide Medium-term Bus Plan will define priority bus initiatives over the next decade and the infrastructure and fleet requirements to support them. All initiatives in the Plan will require Government investment decision-making and funding.

Recommendation 17

That the Government provide local councils with a legislated role in the planning and delivery of Transport-Oriented Development precincts in their local government area.

NSW Government response

Noted

Councils are an important part of the NSW planning system – particularly land use planning and development approval. Councils have an existing legislated role in planning law and those roles will continue to apply in the Transport Oriented Development (TOD) State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) precincts³⁷. Details on this legislated role is as follows.

Generally, *the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*³⁸ (EP&A Act) sets up a framework for the planning system as follows:

1. How rules affecting development are made – or commonly known as strategic planning; and

³⁴ <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plans-for-your-area/priority-growth-areas-and-precincts/greater-macarthur-growth-area>

³⁵ <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plans-for-your-area/priority-growth-areas-and-precincts/wilton>

³⁶ <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plans-for-your-area/priority-growth-areas-and-precincts/south-west-growth-area>

³⁷ <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/housing/transport-oriented-development-program/transport-oriented-development>

³⁸ <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/environmental-planning-and-assessment-act-1979>

2. How development assessment is assessed against those rules.

For part 1, Council has an existing legislated role (generally under Part 3 of the EP&A Act) to generate Environmental Planning Instruments³⁹ (EPIs), which introduce controls and requirements for specific issues and places in a local government area. There are two types of EPIs:

1. State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) deal with issues that are of importance to the whole State. These are developed by DPHI and made by the Governor on recommendation of the Minister for Planning. The TOD SEPP is a key example of this type of EPI.
2. Local Environmental Plans⁴⁰ (LEPs) – Each council is responsible for developing their own LEP which does three main things:
 - a. Zones land to specify what development is permissible without consent, permissible only with consent or prohibited in the zone.
Your site is most likely zoned as ‘residential’ or ‘rural’ which means that new houses, alterations and additions, and possibly dual occupancies and secondary dwellings, are allowed to be built.
 - b. Identifies special matters for consideration.
There may be specific environmental issues e.g. flooding, bushfire, acid sulfate soils and environmentally sensitive land that may affect your site. Such issues should be addressed in any DA and may limit the extent or location of the development on the site.
 - c. Identifies the principal development standards.
The principal development standards control the size and form of development. While they vary by council area, some common and relevant standards for you are:
 - i. Maximum building height.
 - ii. Maximum Floor Space Ratio (FSR).

For part 2, Council is the predominant planning or consenting authority for the assessment of development applications across NSW. Councils are responsible for assessing local and regionally significant development. Councils are typically the consenting authority for local development, while councils assess and provide recommendations on a regionally significant development application to a planning panel for determination. This legislated role is given effect under Part 4 of the EP&A Act.

There are also compliance certificates. This legislated role is outlined in Part 6 of the EP&A Act.

The final important legislated role councils have is to develop, manage and implement infrastructure contributions plans for their local areas to pay for infrastructure like footpaths, active transport infrastructure, public space, parks and greenspace, community facilities and other local public infrastructure. Part 7 explains Council’s legislated role to create contributions plans (under sections 7.11 or 7.12) to pay for the important local infrastructure to complement changes in development in their area.

With regards to the TOD precincts, all these legislated roles in the planning system will remain in place. Council:

³⁹ <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/publications/environmental-planning-instruments>

⁴⁰ <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/local-environmental-plans>

- under Part 3 of the EP&A Act, will continue to plan for these precincts with greater density and place-based planning through updates to its LEP
- under Part 4 of the EP&A Act, will continue to assess and determine (where appropriate) development applications for proposed developments and housing in the TOD areas
- under Part 6 of the EP&A Act, will continue to issue construction, occupation and other certificates
- under Part 7 of the EP&A Act, will continue to develop, manage and implement infrastructure contributions plans to pay for and deliver important local public infrastructure.

Recommendation 18

That the Government conduct a comprehensive review of the existing contributions framework that aims to identify and implement innovative funding strategies, including value capture when land is rezoned, that can support the accelerated delivery of public transport infrastructure in Western Sydney.

NSW Government response

Noted

The NSW Government has recently implemented comprehensive reforms to the state contributions framework. These reforms were the result of a review by the Productivity Commissioner which was published in 2020. The new Housing and Productivity Contribution came into effect on 1 October 2023 as a broad funding mechanism for state infrastructure funding that applies to new residential, industrial and commercial development across Lower Hunter, Central Coast, Greater Sydney and the Illawarra-Shoalhaven. The contribution is one of the most significant changes made to contributions in NSW for decades and is expected to generate \$700 million per year to deliver schools, roads and transport, hospitals and open space.

In addition to the Housing and Productivity Contribution, a Transport Project Component has also been introduced. The component is an additional contribution for new development on land near significant transport infrastructure investment that increases development potential. There is currently one Transport Project Component in the Pyrmont Peninsula Metro Station.

The NSW Government will consider further application of the Transport Project Component, including opportunities to accelerated delivery of public transport infrastructure in Western Sydney, as they arise.

The matters recommended by the Productivity Commissioner in relation to contributions collected by councils for local infrastructure are proceeding as improvements to the current system only. No legislative change is currently proposed to facilitate value capture.

Recommendation 19

That the Government undertake a review of relevant legislation and regulations to take into consideration the growing popularity of micro-mobility services and allow for their safe and widespread integration into the public transport network in Western Sydney and more broadly, across New South Wales.

NSW Government response

Support in principle

The NSW Active Transport Strategy recognises the potential for e-micromobility to be a safe, sustainable and accessible transport option for the people of NSW. The NSW Government is pursuing an evidence-based approach to policy for micromobility. The NSW Government recognises the potential for e-bikes and e-scooters to reduce dependence on private motor vehicles, as well as provide an enjoyable and efficient way for individuals and families to get around. The Government also recognises the need to ensure safety for all road users, while being able to accommodate innovative and cost-effective alternative modes of travel.

This includes coordinated action to address risks and issues including battery safety, safe use, device standards, infrastructure and parking and insurances and liability. Policy is being informed by research and data and a trial of shared e-scooters operated by local councils and enabled by Transport for NSW.

The policy response is being supported by education and engagement activities and delivery of related infrastructure. The work is being coordinated through an E-micromobility Interagency Group, chaired by Transport for NSW.

The outcomes of the trials and the broader NSW context, as well as consideration of research and policy in other jurisdictions, are informing the development of a Transport proposal for the safe integration of privately owned e-scooters into the NSW transport network. This includes review of any required legislative amendments.

Transport is also engaging with stakeholders about the regulation of sharing schemes for e-micromobility. In December 2023, Transport hosted a round table with industry, Councils and other stakeholders to discuss sharing schemes for e-micromobility. The roundtable was held in response to requests from a number of stakeholders (including councils, operators, and peak bodies) to investigate further NSW Government policy regarding sharing schemes. At the roundtable Transport committed to developing a paper on future policy settings for sharing schemes in NSW.

Recommendation 20

That the Government take into consideration emerging transport technologies – such as automated vehicles – as well as any associated workforce planning, safety considerations and community attitudes in the design and planning of public transport infrastructure.

NSW Government response

Supported

Transport's work with the Austroad 'Design principles for roads and infrastructure for future mobility solutions' project⁴¹ is an example of how emerging transport technologies are considered in design and planning of public transport infrastructure.

Transport is supporting large infrastructure programs to consider future decarbonisation and automation opportunities that can be planned for today. Transport is also focused on implementing the Connected and Automated Vehicle's Readiness Strategy⁴² (the Strategy), to ensure NSW is ready for the technology and best placed to leverage the benefits of an emerging industry.

As part of the Strategy, Transport is supporting the development of new national laws that enable automated vehicles to be deployed and operated safely on the road, investigating commercial models, service models, and identifying a program to understand and support the skills and workforce requirements of the emerging industry.

The Strategy also defines six priority areas to build Connected and Automated Vehicles readiness in NSW, to ensure the technology is safe and ready for customers and the economy. These priority areas set out a combination of trials (including freight and in a regional context), policy and regulatory settings, investigation of infrastructure, building a local ecosystem to support the step change required in Transport, the workforce, the education sector, and the industry.

To support NSW becoming ready for Connected and Automated Vehicles, NSW will also need to review NSW passenger transport policy frameworks, address emerging Connected and Automated Vehicles policy issues and ensure NSW agency systems and functions are fit-for-purpose to support the deployment of Connected and Automated Vehicles.

Transport is planning an on-road Connected and Automated Vehicle Bus Trial⁴³, which will be the first trial of connected and autonomous systems on-board a full-sized, passenger-carrying, zero-emissions bus in NSW. The objectives of the Automated Bus Technology Trial are to:

- Establish feasibility and timeframes for scaled rollout of Connected and Automated Vehicle bus technology through a market process
- Deliver a trial of the identified technology capable of integration onto an identified portion of the NSW bus network
- Enable industry to develop partnerships and alliances that will provide an end-to-end solution. The project adopted a Request for Expression of Interest procurement process, released in August 2022. This closed on 30 October 2022 and was followed by a targeted Request for Proposal which closed in December 2022.

Transport is finalising the procurement for this trial and is expected to begin development phases by mid-2024.

⁴¹ <https://austroads.com.au/projects>

⁴² <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/data-and-research/future-mobility/CAV-readiness-strategy>

⁴³ <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/data-and-research/future-mobility/on-road-cav-bus-trial#:~:text=The%20On%2Droad%20Connected%20and,the%20TfNSW%20CAV%20Readiness%20Program.>