

Department of Planning and Environment

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Westmead Place Strategy

Finalisation Report

September 2022





Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning and Environment acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and we show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

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Westmead Place Strategy

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More information

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Executive Summary

This report, along with the supporting documents, outlines amendments to the Westmead Place Strategy (Strategy) to align world-class innovation, education, and health in one precinct along with the opportunity to provide diverse housing and enhanced environmental, heritage and amenity outcomes, leveraging off significant infrastructure investment including the Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 and future Sydney Metro West.

The Greater Sydney Region Plan and Central City District Plan acknowledge the important role of the Westmead Precinct in growing and connecting Westmead and Parramatta North to the rest of Greater Parramatta and the Greater Parramatta and Olympic Peninsula (GPOP) as a key to supporting Parramatta's position as Sydney's second CBD.

The Strategy sets the vision for Westmead to become Australia's premier health and innovation district, and includes a structure plan demonstrating how land uses, public domain improvements, greater connections to Parramatta CBD and future development will deliver this vision. Areas south of the railway offer the opportunity for a walkable neighbourhood providing more housing choice and diversity.

The draft Strategy was exhibited between 14 December 2020 and 31 March 2021. A total of 399 submissions (including 13 repeated submissions) were received, including:

- 351 submissions from landowners and the community
- 27 submissions from developers and industry groups
- 8 submissions from Government agencies and utility providers, including Cumberland Council and City of Parramatta Council.

Following the public exhibition, the Department of Planning and Environment (the Department) undertook an extensive review of issues raised in submissions, which informed the finalisation of the Strategy. This report documents the consultation process, summarises the issues raised in submissions and reports on how those issues have been addressed to finalise the Strategy.

A discussion of the key issues can be found in the later sections of this report and a summary of submissions and the Department's response can be found at **Appendix A**.

The main changes to the Strategy in response to submissions include:

- Additional new maps presenting existing context, key place outcomes and land use and built form principles to articulate the vision of all the Sub-precincts.
- Amendments to text as suggested by submissions from Cumberland and City of Parramatta Councils.
- Reduction of the 'Opportunity for Housing Supply' designation in the Northmead Residential Sub-precinct 5.
- Removal of 'Activity Node' and 'Key Place Opportunity' designation at the intersection of Great Western Highway and Hawkesbury Road in Westmead South Sub-precinct 1.

- Inclusion of additional maps and text for the Parramatta North Sub-precinct 7. This includes highlighting the 2015 NSW Government rezoning proposal and consideration of the Conservation Management Plan for Parramatta North.
- Updated mapping and additional text to identify State heritage items under Direction 9 and Northmead Enterprise Sub-precinct.
- Amendments to the road network within the Health and Innovation Sub-precinct 2 to align with existing road network.
- Text and map amendments to identify Health and Innovation Sub-precincts 2, Westmead East Sub-precinct 3 and Parramatta North Sub-precinct 7 as part of the Westmead Health and Innovation District (WHID).
- Additional actions relating to Direction 10 and 12 in consultation with City of Parramatta Council to respond to issues raised in its submission about urban heat, local biodiversity protection and improving Parramatta River water quality.
- Removal of the 'Mixed use (retail, commercial and residential)' designation on land south of the PLR Stage 1 route in Cumberland West within Parramatta North Sub-precinct 7. The Department has proposed a new label 'Mixed use (university, enterprise, innovation, research with retail, commercial and residential)' to support the future vision of Cumberland West as a future university campus.
- Amendment to existing 'Mixed use (university and research focus)' designation to 'Mixed use (university, enterprise, innovation and research focus)' in Cumberland West within Parramatta North Sub-precinct 7 to support the importance of co-locating the university with industry to achieve innovation outputs.

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

The Greater Sydney Region Plan (Region Plan) and Central City District Plan (District Plan) acknowledge the important role of Westmead. Both plans seek to grow and connect Westmead and Parramatta North to Greater Parramatta and the broader Greater Parramatta and Olympic Peninsula (GPOP) economic corridor to support the transformation of Parramatta into Sydney's second CBD.

As a catalyst for innovation in the Central City, Westmead, including Parramatta North, presents a unique opportunity in the global context to provide health, medical and education outcomes alongside integrated major transport connections. This is supported with significant government and private investment alongside large Government landholdings.

The Department has prepared a Strategy for Westmead and Parramatta North in response to the Minister's announcement to a 'New Approach to Precincts'. The Strategy seeks to set the vision for Westmead Precinct, including Parramatta North and parts of Northmead over the next 20 years. The Strategy does not involve rezoning but will guide councils, State agencies and the private sector in land use planning and outlines steps to ensure investment and infrastructure is aligned to growth.

The Strategy aims to:

- drive new jobs in health, education and innovation;
- put people at the centre of future development, with a focus on pedestrian friendly streets and provision of community amenities;
- protect heritage buildings and find ways they can be repurposed for community uses, where appropriate;
- improve pedestrian and cycling paths between Westmead North and South, Parramatta Park and Parramatta CBD;
- promote housing density and diversity, such as student accommodation, key worker, social, and affordable housing where appropriate; and
- ensure population growth is accompanied by open space and social infrastructure.

The draft Strategy was exhibited between 14 December 2020 and 31 March 2021. A total of 399 submissions were received. Following exhibition, the draft Strategy was updated to respond to agency and public submissions.

The Strategy has been given statutory weight through a Ministerial s9.1 Direction under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act)*. The Direction will require any planning proposals for land within the identified area to have consideration for and demonstrate consistency with the overall vision, objectives, planning priorities and actions of the Strategy.

This finalisation report describes the consultation process, summarises the key issues raised in submissions and how these issues have been addressed in finalising the Strategy.

1.2 Background and Context

The precinct encompasses a total landmass of 432 hectares and is located 20 km from the Sydney CBD, 30 km from the Western Sydney Aerotropolis and adjoins Parramatta CBD – the metropolitan centre of Sydney’s Central City District. The precinct is split by the T1 North Shore and Western Train line, partly located in the City of Parramatta Local Government Area (LGA) and partly located in the Cumberland LGA.

In June 2017, the then Premier and then Minister for Planning announced Westmead as a Planned Precinct as part of a package to addressing housing affordability and providing jobs in Sydney. The Precinct was selected due to its strategic location and significance as a leading health and education precinct with the largest education and health facilities within the region, the network connections along major transport corridors, the planned state government-led investment in Parramatta Light Rail (PLR), Sydney Metro West (SMW) and upgrades to the Westmead Hospital precinct. The area was also recognised for its proximity to Parramatta CBD and important role within the success of GPOP.

The Department was leading precinct planning investigations for Westmead South. The Westmead Alliance, comprising of City of Parramatta Council and key stakeholders with interest north of the railway, had prepared a confidential draft master plan noting these investigations were being undertaken separately to the precinct planning process for Westmead South. Both projects were paused due to the need to resolve key pieces of work within the precinct:

- confirmation on the location of Sydney Metro West station in Westmead; and
- completion of a market sounding process to consider the future opportunities for NSW Government owned land within Parramatta North (west of the Parramatta River) and the Cumberland Hospital (east of the Parramatta River).

In November 2019, the then Minister for Planning announced a “New Approach to Precincts”. It was identified that a high-level strategic framework was required to be developed for all of Westmead and Parramatta North to coordinate growth, maximise the potential economic and social benefits from PLR Stage 1 and SMW, while protecting the area’s heritage, liveability and long-term sustainability.

In December 2020, a framework agreement between the NSW Government and the University of Sydney was announced to deliver a world class multi-disciplinary university campus within the Westmead Health and Innovation District.

1.3 Summary of the Westmead Place Strategy

The Westmead Place Strategy (the Strategy) sets the vision for Westmead and Parramatta North to be achieved by 2036. The Strategy guides the continual evolution of Westmead to 2036 as it becomes a world-class health and innovation district with exceptional place outcomes for workers and residents. By 2036, the vision is for Westmead to be Australia's premier health and innovation district – an ecosystem for new discoveries, economic growth, and global recognition with exceptional place outcomes for the Central River City, with enhanced heritage and environmental assets, activated places, connected communities and housing choice.

The vision is supported by five big moves that guide the planning framework, priorities and actions in the Plan:

1. Drive change in the innovation eco-system to accelerate delivery of Australia's premier health and innovation district;
2. Cherish and protect places of significance, conserve and revitalise heritage and cultural assets to create exceptional places;
3. Activate and connect our community with vibrant, diverse and well connected public spaces and places;
4. Deliver high quality and diverse housing for students, workers and professionals with optimal liveability outcomes; and
5. Capitalise on transport connectivity and reduce car dependency.

The Strategy includes a structure plan demonstrating how land uses, public domain improvements and future development will deliver the vision providing greater connections to Parramatta CBD. The final Structure Plan is provided at **Figure 1**.

Seven Sub-precincts (**Figure 2**) have been identified within Westmead in recognition of distinct character areas that exist. The Sub-precincts build on the potential role and function of the place to contribute towards the Vision. The vision for each of the Sub-precincts is summarised below:

- **Westmead South Sub-precinct 1** – A walkable residential neighbourhood, transformed by the Metro Station with increased connectivity, offering housing choice and diversity, with an urban village its heart
- **Health and Innovation Sub-precinct 2** – Westmead's engine room, defined by its world-class health, research, education and innovation facilities. This Sub-precinct is at the core of today's Westmead Health and Innovation District
- **Westmead East Sub-precinct 3** – Located in the Westmead Health and Innovation District, a bustling neighbourhood offering diversity, a thriving high street along Hawkesbury Road with connections to Parramatta.
- **Northmead Employment Sub-precinct 4** – An employment precinct that has the potential to capitalise on advance manufacturing and support health businesses. The precinct will take advantage of Toongabbie Creek to improve amenity and connections to the Health and Innovation Sub-precinct.
- **Northmead Residential Sub-precinct 5** – An amenity-led residential neighbourhood embracing its proximity to Toongabbie Creek.

- **Northmead Enterprise Sub-precinct 6** - A revitalised enterprise precinct providing commercial and urban services to the local community.
- **Parramatta North Sub-precinct 7** – A mixed use precinct set within a highly valued heritage and parkland setting. The precinct will attract new investment and renewal with facilities in innovation and tertiary education, vibrant public domain spaces, community and cultural uses and housing diversity. It will contribute to the growth of knowledge-intensive economic activity in the Westmead Health and Innovation District.

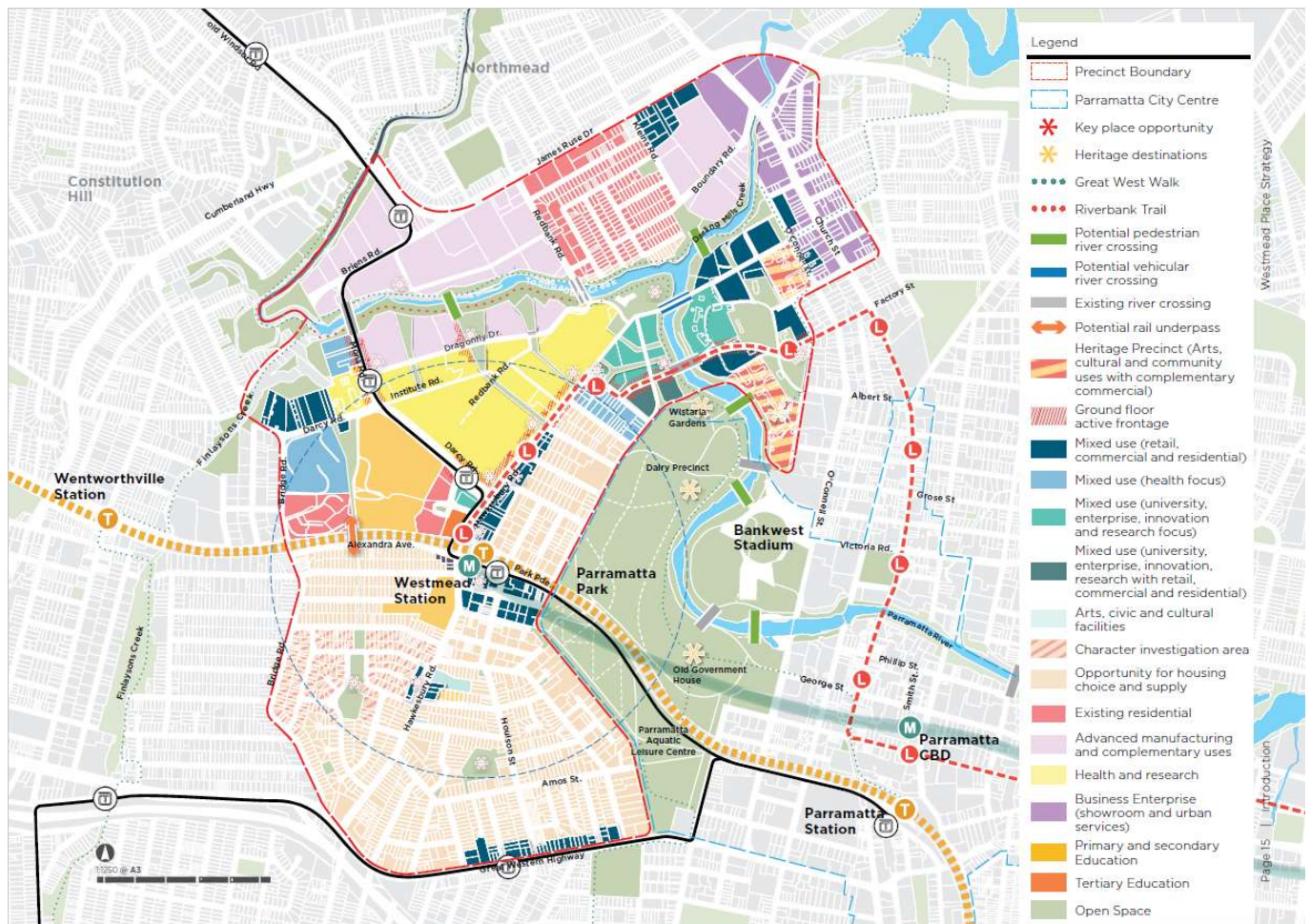


Figure 1 Westmead Structure Plan (Source: Westmead Place Strategy)

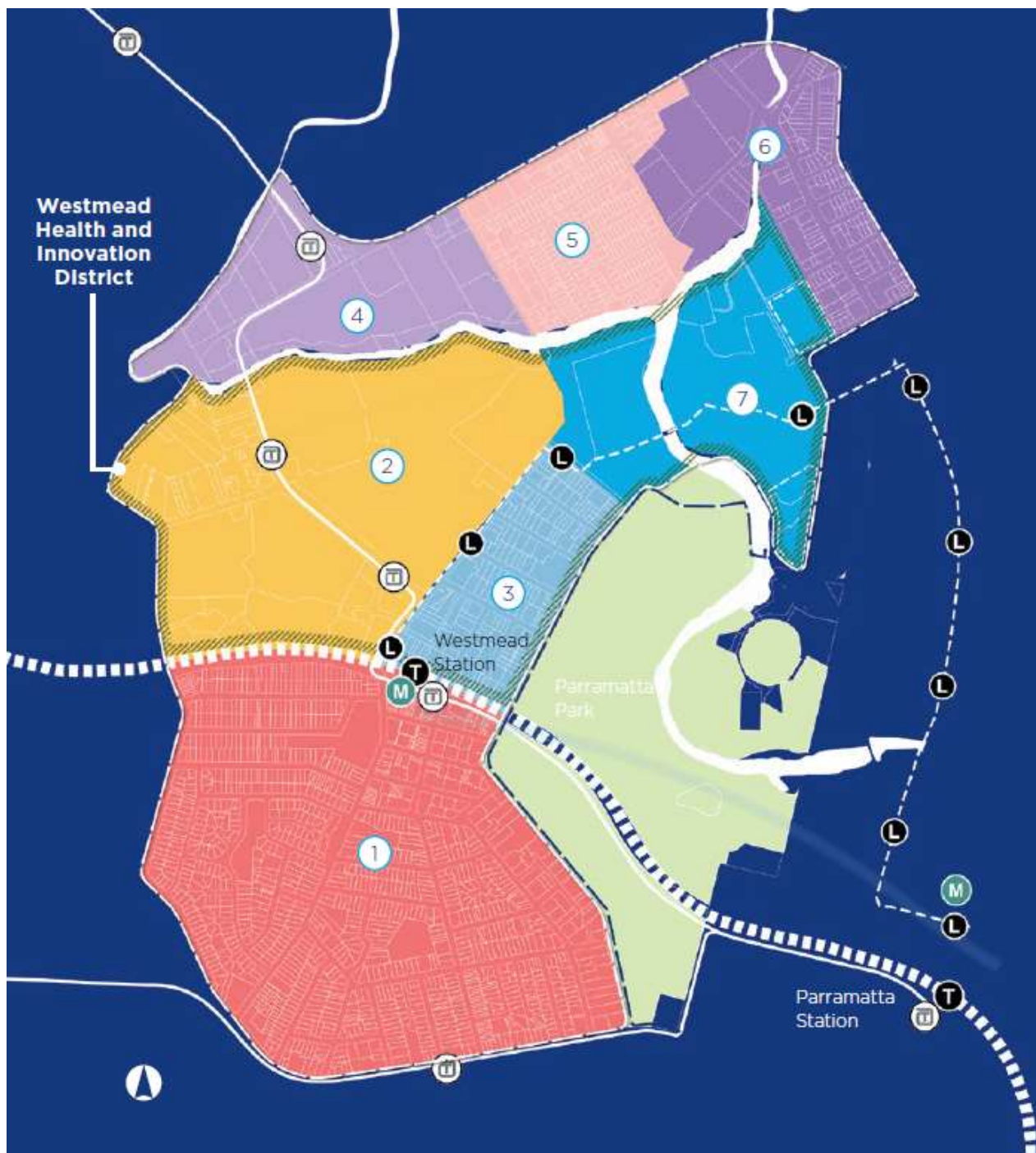


Figure 2 Summary Plan of Sub-precincts (Source: Westmead Place Strategy)

2. Exhibition Details

2.1 Exhibition and Submissions Period

The draft Westmead Place Strategy was exhibited between 14 December 2020 and 31 March 2021. A total of 399 submissions (including 14 duplications) were received in response to the exhibition. A summary of key issues and resolution of these issues is outlined in Section 4 of this report along with a more detailed summary at **Appendix A**.

2.2 Exhibited Materials

The following documentation was publicly exhibited as part of the draft Westmead Place Strategy:

- Draft Westmead Place Strategy; and
- Frequently Asked Questions.

The draft Westmead Place Strategy was available on the Department's website and the Planning Portal: <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Priority-Growth-Areas-and-Precincts/Westmead>

2.3 Public Notice

A media release announcing the start of exhibition was issued by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces on 14 December 2020.

Additionally, the following public notifications were made:

- 368 Electronic Direct Mail (EDM) sent at start of exhibition to Westmead webpage subscribers.
- 490 EDMs reminders were sent on 21 January 2021 to Westmead webpage subscribers.
- 535 EDMs were sent on 17 February 2021 to Westmead webpage subscribers advising of the exhibition period being extended until 31 March 2021.
- Social media advertising on Facebook and posts on Twitter and LinkedIn.

2.4 Notification to Landowners

The Department notified 6,458 landowners in writing at the start of the exhibition period. The letter provided details of the exhibition period and information sessions and invited submissions on the draft Strategy. 9,250 postcards were also distributed to residents within the precinct.

2.5 Notification to Key Stakeholders

The Department also advised key stakeholders of the exhibition, including Cumberland and City of Parramatta councils and State Government agencies, and industry groups. The letter provided details of the exhibition period and information sessions and invited submissions on the draft Strategy.

2.6 Community Engagement

Engagement activities were held virtually due to COVID 19 restrictions. These activities consisted of:

- An Adobe Connect webinar held on 9 February 2021, which involved a presentation followed by a Q&A session with the project team. This was attended by 56 people.
- One-on-one online briefings between community members and the project team, which could be booked through the Department's website. This one-on-one briefing provided community members an opportunity to ask further questions about the draft Strategy, clarify site-specific land use outcomes, and understand avenues to make a submission. The Department held 30 one-on-one briefings across the exhibition period.

These engagement activities were publicised via the letter to landowners as well as on the Westmead webpage.

3. Submissions Summary

3.1 Submissions received

The Department received 386 submissions in response to the exhibition of the draft Strategy. Copies of all non-confidential submissions received during the exhibition period are on the Department's website and **Table 1** provides a summary of submissions as grouped into major stakeholder groups. It is important to note that there were an additional 13 submissions that were submitted more than once.

Section 4 of this report outlines the key matters that arose out of submissions and outlines how these matters have been considered in the finalisation of the Strategy. All submissions received are summarised at Appendix A along with the Department's response.

Table 1. Summary of Submissions

Stakeholder Group	Number of Submissions
Landowners and Community	351
Government agencies and Utility providers (including councils)	8
Developers and Industry Groups (including others/organisations)	27
Total	386

Eight submissions were received from Government agencies and utility authorities, including:

- City of Parramatta Council,
- Cumberland Council,
- Greater Sydney Parklands,
- School Infrastructure NSW,
- Sydney Water,
- Health Infrastructure/ Ministry of Health,
- Property and Development NSW, and
- Heritage NSW.

The remaining 377 submissions were from landholders, community members, organisations and businesses from within the Precinct and local area. Post-exhibition, the Department undertook further engagement with both councils and State agencies to resolve key issues identified in submissions.

3.2 Issues raised in submissions

All submissions were reviewed by the Department and have been considered in the finalisation of the Strategy. The Department also consulted with both councils and State agencies to gain further clarification where required.

The key issues raised in the submissions include:

- **Future development**, where submissions raised concerns with the suitability and flexibility of land uses identified in the structure plan, impact on land value, perceived land acquisitions, clarity on built form and planning controls, concerns with housing growth, and promoting housing diversity.
- **Transport and traffic**, where submissions raised concerns relating to traffic management and congestion, pedestrian accessibility, overall connectivity in the precinct and more opportunities for cycling connections.
- **Infrastructure**, where submissions raised concerns on the delivery of necessary infrastructure to support the community, the need for new or upgraded schools, regional infrastructure contributions and the inclusion of the Paramatta Aquatic Centre within the Structure Plan.
- **Economic considerations**, where submissions supported job creation, commercial and retail opportunities, and outlined concerns around identifying the Parramatta North Sub-precinct as a location for jobs creation.
- **Heritage**, where submissions raised commentary in relation to Parramatta North Sub-precinct with concerns to restricting development and conservation of heritage in the Sub-precinct, consideration of a separate dedicated strategy for the Sub-precinct, opposition to the relocation of Willow Grove and consideration for Cumberland Hospital to be adaptively re-used as a botanic garden.
- **Green space and open space**, where submissions commented on the lack of open space in the precinct and reliance on Parramatta Park in providing open space.
- **Environmental concerns**, where submissions related to potential flooding and climate change impacts, urban tree canopy targets and inclusion of Net Zero Carbon emissions policies for 2050.
- **Other planning matters** include the consultation process, the contents of the draft Strategy, and governance and implementation.

The following sections of this report provide details of changes that have been made to the Strategy post-exhibition in response to submissions received, or where it is considered that further justification is required in the consideration of key issues. It is recognised that while all submissions have been taken into account, not all submissions have resulted in changes to the Strategy. This has been further discussed and justified in the summary of submissions provided at **Appendix A**.

4. Consideration of Key Issues

4.1 Future Development

The Westmead Place Strategy provides the framework to manage development within the Westmead and Parramatta North area to deliver sustainable growth to 2036. Submissions highlighted several sub-themes in relation to future development, including land use and zoning vision, built form and planning controls, housing and growth, and diversity.

4.1.1 Land Use and Zoning Vision

The City of Parramatta Council raised concerns around the permissibility of residential accommodation, and tourist and visitor accommodation on existing SP2 zoned land. Parramatta Council also raised concerns around the impacts of the proposed advanced manufacturing and complementary uses in the SP2 (Health Services Facility) zone on the future expansion of health services within the Health and Innovation Sub-precinct, and sought the removal of these uses in the final Strategy.

In addition, the following additional issues were raised in the residual submissions:

- Perception that the vision for future land uses identified in the Structure Plan would result in land acquisitions and loss of development rights.
- Perception that the vision for future land uses identified in the Structure Plan would adversely affect property values and increase Council rates.
- Several site-specific submissions requested the Department review the suitability of existing land use zonings or requested for specific land use zones. Some submissions also opposed rezoning in certain areas. Consider the precinct be incorporated as part of the Parramatta CBD boundary.

Department response:

The Strategy provides a framework to enable councils, State agencies, service providers and developers to plan for new land uses that will support the transformation of Westmead to a Health and Innovation District by 2036. It does not rezone land or alter height or floor space ratios applicable under the current local environmental plans. The suitability of land uses in specific zones will be reviewed under future planning processes. In response to requests for specific zoning or opposition to rezoning in certain areas of the Precinct, Council and other stakeholders will carry out detailed land use planning under the next phase of the Strategy to inform the zones proposed. Further studies will also be required to be undertaken to support rezonings and there will be opportunities to provide feedback on any future rezonings proposed. In addition, the Strategy does not result in land acquisitions, any land landowners being forced to sell or loss of development rights.

In response to submissions requesting for Westmead and Parramatta North to be incorporated into Parramatta CBD, the Department notes that planning for the Parramatta CBD predates the Strategy. As such, there are no changes proposed to the precinct boundary to be incorporated as part of the Parramatta CBD boundary.

In response to City of Parramatta Council's concerns, the Department notes that residential accommodation and tourist and visitor accommodation, if carried out within the boundaries of an existing health services facility are permitted with consent under the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure SEPP) 2021*. Health Infrastructure has requested that the site at 105 Bridge Road, Westmead be identified for residential uses in the Structure Plan, noting that there is a commercial requirement for private housing to fund key worker accommodation in accordance with Health Infrastructure Commercial Framework. The Strategy has been updated to identify that any residential accommodation can only be considered in conjunction with key worker accommodation, and this could be further explored as part of the next phase of the Strategy.

In addition, references to 'advanced manufacturing' and 'complementary uses' in the Structure Plan for Sub-precinct 2 have been retained to support the creation of the Health and Innovation District required to deliver the vision for the Westmead and Parramatta North Precinct. Further, these uses are consistent with *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure SEPP) 2021*, which permits high technology industries for industrial activities involving biological, pharmaceutical, medical or paramedical systems, goods or components within the boundaries of an existing health service facility, subject to consent.

4.1.2 Built form and Planning Controls

Many submissions highlighted a lack of clarity surrounding built form outcomes and recommended clear development outcomes in the form of land zoning, building height and floor space controls. Some submissions also raised concern about potential increases to building height and density. Furthermore, various submissions sought clarity on transition of building heights and planning controls for residential uses with concerns expressed in relation to the potential for overshadowing in Parramatta Park and Parramatta North Sub-precinct and whether the structure plan had any consideration to heritage.

In summary, the submissions had the following comments, concerns and suggestions:

- Support for high quality building design, however concern with references to tall slender building envelopes rather than short squat massing.
- Support for transition of built form and planning controls to protect sightlines along Hawkesbury Road and view corridors to heritage sites in the Westmead South sub-precinct.
- Several site-specific submissions requested the Department undertake a review of existing planning controls, including using heights and floor space ratio controls in the Parramatta CBD as a benchmark.
- Suggestion to include specific built form and planning controls in the Strategy to provide opportunities to increase street activation, public domain and improve amenity in the Precinct.

Department response:

The Strategy does not include specific built form and planning controls. It sets the vision for how jobs and dwellings might be delivered into the future and where this growth is appropriate. Councils will need to undertake further studies to inform appropriate built form and corresponding planning controls as part of detailed precinct planning.

In response to submissions, the Strategy has been updated to include further mapping and direction on land use and built form principles and key place outcomes for each Sub-precinct. The built form principles and key place outcomes are necessary to assist councils in determining appropriate built form controls as part of detailed precinct planning. Furthermore, councils may also consider incorporating design excellence provisions to ensure high quality architectural urban design is achieved.

The Strategy establishes a number of actions that need to be investigated in the precinct to define future built form, public domain and heritage controls for incorporation into the future Parramatta and Cumberland Local Environmental Plans, where appropriate. These actions include:

- D7.A5: Develop a public domain plan for Hawkesbury Road with a focus on: integrated smart city infrastructure, street trees, lighting, furniture, materials palette.
- D8.A3: Undertake urban design and supporting studies to understand the scale of future housing renewal, ensuring it respects solar access, views and vistas to open spaces and places of significance. Urban renewal must consider potential heritage significance and character.
- D9.A4: Prepare a built form strategy that considers visual impact to heritage view corridors, including Old Government House and Domain in Parramatta Park.

4.1.3 Housing and Growth

Some submissions suggested that increased density and population growth would, impact on the low residential character amenity and liveability of the area. Other submissions were concerned that the Structure Plan was limited in its housing choice designation being only 'existing residential' and 'opportunity for housing supply'. There were concerns that the 'opportunity for housing supply' designation for most of the Westmead South sub-precinct meant that there was no clarification on future residential zones (R2 Low Density Residential, R3 Medium Density Residential or R4 High Density Residential) or mechanisms to promote housing diversity.

Several submissions sought clarification around how the 'Character Investigation Area' in the Westmead South Sub-precinct was chosen. These submissions noted the local area did not present any character or heritage significance. Despite these comments, Cumberland Council provided support for the proposed designation recommending the area maintain its low-density character.

Submissions were generally supportive of the proposed 'opportunity for housing supply' in the Westmead South Sub-precinct. While other submissions were concerned with overdevelopment, future housing and growth would impact on the low-density character amenity of the Westmead South Sub-precinct.

In relation to the Northmead Residential Sub-precinct, residents were concerned with the 'opportunity to housing supply' designation in the Structure Plan, as many residents were not supportive of increased densities in their neighbourhood. These submissions also highlighted that the designation was inconsistent the City of Parramatta's Local Strategic Planning Statement. Despite these comments, there was also support for these areas indicating that the proposed 'opportunity to housing supply' would provide a catalyst to enhance amenity along Toongabbie Creek. Additional comments in relation to this Sub-precinct requested reconsideration of the 'existing residential' areas designation to allow opportunities for increased residential development.

Department Response:

The Strategy aims to deliver sustainable growth over the next 20 years, supported by infrastructure investment such as the PLR Stage 1 and the future Sydney Metro West station. One of the 'Big Moves' in the Strategy focuses on promoting amenity-led development by maximising access to waterways, open spaces, places of activity, creating a unique sense of place and contributing to a high-quality public domain in line with additional growth and density.

The Strategy highlights two residential designations being 'existing residential' and 'opportunity for housing supply' and does not provide specific residential zones as further studies are required, as part of the next phase of the Strategy. It is anticipated that projected dwelling and job numbers will be refined to determine land use zones through this design-led process.

In relation to the 'Character Investigation Area', the hatched area is located in Westmead South sub-precinct. Located west of Hawkesbury Road, this area comprises of low-density housing estate as part of the 1948 Housing Commission Estate Development, which were required to alleviate the post-World War II housing crisis. The Oakes Centre and housing estate was subject to an international design competition and was built as a planned centre to service the growing local community in the Westmead estate. The distinct character of this area in Westmead South Sub-precinct provides an opportunity to better understand any heritage significance, local character and potential future housing supply in the 'Character Investigation Area'. As part of the next phase of the Strategy, Cumberland Council will undertake further investigations into this area.

The Department has considered the submissions in relation to the Northmead Residential Sub-precinct. The exhibited draft Strategy identified a number of properties as 'Opportunity for housing supply' adjoining local open space and along the Toongabbie Creek corridor. These lots were identified as providing opportunity to provide amenity-led development and maximise access and active frontage to Toongabbie Creek. As such, this meant that the designation was inconsistent with the Parramatta Local Strategic Planning Statement and City of Parramatta Council's Local Housing Strategy.

Following feedback received during the exhibition period, the Strategy has been amended to reduce the amount of land identified as 'Opportunity for housing Supply' to only properties along Toongabbie Creek corridor (**Figure 3 and 4**). Additional text has been included in the Strategy, noting that future development of those sites would only be considered where place outcomes would enhance the amenity along Toongabbie Creek corridor are achieved, subject to feasibility and built form analysis. Detailed land use planning for Northmead Residential Sub-precinct would need to be undertaken in the next phase of the Strategy to determine appropriate planning provisions and density for the area.



Figure 3 Exhibited Draft Westmead Place Strategy



Figure 4 Final Westmead Place Strategy

4.1.4 Key worker accommodation, student accommodation, social and affordable housing

Submissions raised concerns that properties would be acquired by the NSW Government to deliver key worker accommodation, student accommodation, social and affordable housing. Submissions requested further clarification on the quantum, type of housing proposed within the Structure Plan and clear affordable housing targets. Submissions also suggested that further studies be prepared to identify mechanisms for delivering key worker, social and affordable housing and set out roles and responsibilities of each level of government, and their partners, to deliver on the identified housing needs.

Furthermore, submissions also requested greater flexibility of land uses in industrial and business zones with the inclusion of residential accommodation as a form of 'complementary use' such as short-term accommodation, student accommodation, built-to-rent housing, seniors living, affordable housing for key workers that have clear synergies with the core health and education institutions of Westmead.

Department Response:

The Strategy does not propose the acquisition of any land in the precinct. The Strategy does not identify the quantum, type of housing or affordable housing targets, and does not set out roles and responsibilities of each level of government, as further investigations are required to inform the actions including:

- D8.A1: Engage with Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) to identify housing intensification opportunities in Westmead South,

- D8A2: Undertake further studies for housing intensification and diversification within 800 metres of Westmead Station and in proximity to open space amenity, to provide options for student accommodation, key worker, social and affordable housing, and
- D8.A5: Consider incentive mechanisms for key worker, social and/or affordable housing, where feasible.

The Greater Sydney Region Plan indicates an affordable housing target of between 5-10%. City of Parramatta Council and Cumberland Councils have established policies where affordable housing may be delivered through planning agreements and be considered as part of the future planning processes.

In relation to residential accommodation uses as a form of ‘complementary use’ in industrial and business zones, the Place Strategy does not rezone or seek to permit additional uses in industrial and urban services land. This is in line with the principles for managing industrial and urban services land to maximise business and employment outcomes in the *Central City District Plan*.

4.2 Transport and Traffic

The Strategy provides a planning framework to evolve Westmead into a connected 30-minute city. One of the ‘Big Moves’ is to capitalise on transport connectivity and reduce car dependency where appropriate. Submissions highlighted a number of sub-themes including traffic and access, car parking, active transport infrastructure and public transport.

4.2.1 Traffic and access

Many submissions identified concern with the current traffic conditions within the Westmead Precinct and how increased development may negatively exacerbate these conditions. Further, submissions also identified concerns surrounding road access within, to and from the precinct and how this can be improved through the plan. Other traffic issues raised included increased danger to pedestrians, particularly children, request to fix damaged roads and suggestions that the traffic speed limit be reduced to 40km per hour in precinct.

In addition, the submissions raised the following comments:

- The draft Strategy lacks identification of how traffic and access can be improved between North and South Westmead.
- The draft Strategy needs to address both Hawkesbury Road and Good Street connections to Great Western Highway and provide heightened focus on Bridge Road, Burlington Street, Briens Road, Kleins Road and Windsor Road due to the significant congestion these roads experience.
- Suggests road widening to allow a number of lanes each way and remove bottlenecks with over/underpasses and addition to left and right turning lanes of sufficient length at every corner.
- Other suggestions include opening Redbank Road and Mons Road for public vehicular access to reduce travel time and direct access to the Westmead Hospital.

- City of Parramatta requested a comprehensive traffic and transport study be undertaken prior to finalisation of the Place Strategy to consider the cumulative impact of growth to understand current and future traffic flows. There was also concern that once the future study is completed that the infrastructure works list would largely fall on council to cost the works and be incorporated into a contribution plan.

Department Response:

The Department notes that the Strategy does not rezone land and aims to capitalise on transport connectivity through SMW and PLR Stage 1 to reduce car dependency. Transport for NSW (TfNSW) has prepared a Place-Based Transport Strategy for Westmead in response to feedback from the exhibition of the Place Strategy. The strategy identifies transport initiatives for investigation to support growth in Westmead. It considers measures that improve road safety, prioritises access across Westmead, including vehicle and emergency vehicle access, and balances urban amenity with mobility.

The Department acknowledges Council's request to undertake the integrated traffic and transport study prior to finalisation. The Department and TfNSW in collaboration with councils will prepare this study following finalisation. The Strategy sets an overarching vision for the Precinct. Further inputs including dwelling and job numbers in the form of development scenarios and feasibility needs to be further interrogated to prepare the study. The study will also progress the outcomes of the Transport Strategy, support the future rezoning of the area and future density. Through a vision and validate process, the key initiatives identified in the Transport Strategy will be assessed against their benefits to the traffic and transport network in the precinct.

To address council's concerns relating to costing of infrastructure, further investigations will confirm the feasibility, funding and staging for any required transport infrastructure upgrades as part of the integrated transport and traffic study.

4.2.2 Car parking

Numerous submissions identified the need for the Strategy to address how the supply of parking within Westmead can be improved. Submissions raised the following specific concerns, comments and recommendations:

- Parking within Westmead is expensive and hard to find, the Strategy needs to support the delivery of a greater amount of parking which has affordable options.
- The lack of parking available for industry and hospital workers is impacting on the ability of residents to park.
- The draft Strategy should be supported by a full detailed parking strategy.

Submissions also requested that the draft Strategy provide consideration for increased commuter parking, free short stay parking and residential parking in Westmead South, especially during the interim stages of development when transport connectivity has not yet been realised.

Department Response:

The Place Strategy does not establish car parking rates for the precinct or investigate travel demand management solutions relating to on-street car parking. Following the finalisation of the

Westmead Place Strategy, the Department and TfNSW in collaboration with Councils will prepare an integrated transport and traffic study to support any future rezoning of the area. Through the design led process, different development scenarios will be assessed against their benefits to the traffic and transport network in the precinct. This will include matters relating to car parking and commuter parking.

4.2.3 Active transport infrastructure

Submissions received welcomed the identification for improvements to cycling networks within the precinct. However, submissions noted that the draft Strategy lacked strong commitments for improvements of active transport infrastructure facilities such as safe walking and cycling paths, including connections within Westmead and broader active transport infrastructure networks and increased tree canopy to make these networks more attractive to use. Submissions also suggested footbridges from Parramatta Park to the Female Factory.

Department Response:

The Place Strategy seeks to capitalise on connectivity from PLR Stage 1 and SMW to reduce car dependency and make walking and cycling the mode of choice for short trips with the following actions:

- Action D2.A1 requires the preparation of a public domain plan with a focus on corridor widths, inclusive access, active frontages, wayfinding, pedestrian safety and amenity, passive surveillance amongst other things.
- Action D2.A2: Improve connections between North and South Westmead by enhancing existing and consider new rail crossings. Explore the function of these rail crossings for active transport to create one connected green grid.
- Action D2.A4 requires the development of a multi-modal interchange access plan to improve pedestrian movement and travel journey.
- Action D2.A5 requires the preparation of a place based integrated transport and traffic study to support future rezonings.
- Action D10.A5 identifies a need to provide new pedestrian crossings across Toongabbie Creek and Parramatta River to enhanced green links and connectivity throughout the precinct, including consideration to Greater Sydney Parklands 'Bridges of Parramatta Park Master Plan'.

In response to the request for a footbridge from Parramatta Park to the Female Factory and in addition to Action D10.A2 outlined above, it is noted the Structure Plan in the Strategy identifies a potential pedestrian river crossing from Parramatta Park to the heritage core in Sub-precinct 7 Parramatta North.

The Strategy seeks to create an active frontage along Hawkesbury Road to promote pedestrian activity, including to expand the tree canopy cover to improve the amenity of streets and open spaces. Regarding active transport infrastructure connections within Westmead and broader network, the Strategy includes a priority to create a connected public space green grid through the Heritage Spine from Parramatta Goal extending through the Parramatta North Heritage Core,

Parramatta Park, the Parramatta River corridor, Stadium precinct and then through to the Powerhouse Precinct in the Parramatta CBD and from Toongabbie Creek corridor through the Health Core and into Parramatta Park. Future ownership and embellishment of potential active transport infrastructure is subject to further investigations and funding mechanisms to be explored.

Action D2.A5 will consider existing and future walking and cycleways opportunities and may also identify any necessary upgrades to existing active transport infrastructure. Further investigations will confirm the feasibility, funding and staging for any required active transport infrastructure upgrades, as part of the integrated transport and transport study.

4.2.4 Public transport

Public transport within Westmead was not a major concern for submitters, with most submissions being in support of the draft Strategy or providing recommendations to improve the existing infrastructure. Submissions raised the following concerns, comments and recommendations:

- Suggests that a public transport link which connects Northmead Residential Sub-precinct to Westmead Station is provided.
- Requests that the light rail is extended to connect Westmead Station to the corner of Balmoral Road and Kleins Road in Northmead Residential Sub-precinct.
- Suggests that additional bus stops should be provided near retirement villages, shops, hospitals and major health facilities.
- Requests that the corridor options proposed for Metro Rail Corridor between Sydney's Second Airport be developed to go via Westmead rather than directly to Parramatta connecting to the Sydney Metro West currently proposed to terminate at Westmead.
- Suggests any future pedestrian links from the Westmead transport hub must either be underground and/or weather protected to link public transport to the Health and Innovation Sub-precinct.
- Requests that the extension of the light rail or the provision of a walkway along Hawkesbury Road into the Westmead South Sub-precinct.

Department Response:

A Planning Priority within the Strategy is to expand the public transport network to enable reliable, convenient and frequent services. Feedback and recommendations in relation to public transport from these submissions have been provided to TfNSW for their consideration.

To support the work proposed for inclusion in the integrated transport and traffic study under Action D2.A5, the Strategy includes the following short and medium-term priorities and actions to investigate and define potential infrastructure for public transport needs in Westmead:

- Action D1.A1 Explore opportunities to improve bus connections south to Merrylands and Prairiewood;
- Action D1.A2 Provide new river crossings to create enhanced connectivity throughout the precinct across Toongabbie Creek and Parramatta River;

- Action D1.A5 Investigate opportunity for a station at Westmead on new north-south mass transit/train links; and
- Action D2.A4 Develop a multi-modal interchange access plan to improve pedestrian movement and travel journey.

4.3 Infrastructure

The 'Big Moves' outlined in the Strategy seek to facilitate upgrades to and the delivery of new transport, community, social, green and digital infrastructure to support the transformation of Westmead to a health and innovation district. Submissions highlighted several sub-themes including the quantum of infrastructure required to support growth, associated delivery and funding arrangements, and the suitability of community, social and green infrastructure.

4.3.1 Quantum, delivery and funding

Many of the submissions received welcomed the directions and actions recommended to support the delivery of new infrastructure. However, several submissions raised concerns around the quantum, location and mechanisms required to ensure infrastructure aligns with growth. The submissions received identified the following comments, concerns and recommendations:

- Submissions were supportive of the Department's intention to prepare a State or Regional infrastructure contribution, and several submissions requested State and local infrastructure requirements are defined and costed, and funding sources identified in the Strategy.
- City of Parramatta Council and special interest groups suggested consideration of a City Deal model, or a similar governance structure, to capitalise on and co-ordinate Government spending on infrastructure across the Precinct.
- Peak industry bodies requested an economic feasibility assessment of State and local infrastructure contributions to ensure new levies will not undermine development feasibility.
- It was requested the final Strategy be supported by an infrastructure assessment, and employment and housing projections are provided to demonstrate infrastructure will align with growth.
- Peak industry bodies requested the use of a portion of the proposed GPOP State Infrastructure Contribution (SIC) to fund social and affordable housing.

Department Response:

To support the evolution of Westmead into a world class health and innovation district, the Strategy seeks to align growth with the delivery of new or enhanced infrastructure. Specifically, Directions 7 and 9 of the Strategy provide a framework to guide the delivery of health, education and other community infrastructure within the precinct to support community wellbeing and enhance the appeal and competitiveness of Westmead.

The Strategy includes the following short and medium-term priorities and actions to investigate and define potential infrastructure needs in Westmead:

- Action D3.A2 requires the investigation and development of innovative funding mechanisms for the delivery of smart city infrastructure.
- Action D7.A1 requires the preparation of an open space and social infrastructure assessment based on projected population growth and the identification of mechanisms for future funding.
- Action D7.A3 identifies a need to prepare a regional infrastructure contributions and funding mechanism to assist in the provision of infrastructure through development contributions for a growing Precinct.
- Action D8.A2 requires the preparation of further studies for housing intensification and diversification around Westmead station and in proximity of open space to provide options for student accommodation, key worker, social, and affordable housing.

The Contributions framework has been subject to reform which is ongoing. Consideration for a Regional Infrastructure Contribution is underway which would introduce a set contribution for development towards regional infrastructure. As this reform is not yet in place, interim solutions are being considered to ensure that the growth in Westmead is supported by the required infrastructure. This may include a future concurrence clause to ensure contributions towards designated State and regional infrastructure.

Regarding local infrastructure, both City of Parramatta and Cumberland Councils have local contributions plans that apply to Westmead and it is the responsibility of each council to update these accordingly to align with growth. It is noted that the City of Parramatta has recently updated its 'Outside of CBD Development Contributions Plan'. The Strategy identifies the need to further analysis to be undertaken to understand infrastructure needs of the future population and funding mechanisms, including open space provision. Both Councils also frequently negotiate planning agreements to provide for infrastructure as part of the planning proposal process and may choose this mechanism where appropriate.

The Department notes the opportunity for both councils to apply for infrastructure funding through the \$5 billion WestInvest Program. The program seeks to fund projects that enhance communities and create jobs in Western Sydney. It is designed to deliver transformational change across six focus areas including:

- Quality green and open spaces.
- Community infrastructure.
- High street activation.
- Local traffic programs.
- Arts and cultural facilities.
- School modernisation.

4.3.2 Community, social and digital infrastructure

Several submissions raised concerns around the existing pressure on health, education and community infrastructure, and requested the identification of land for new education infrastructure,

open space, and key community infrastructure such as libraries, or specific upgrades to existing infrastructure to support growth. The agency and public submissions also generally supported the actions to investigate primary and secondary school infrastructure needs, as well as opportunities for shared use and co-location of community facilities on government lands in the short to medium-term.

In addition, the submissions identified the following:

- Parramatta Council suggested minor amendments to the planning objectives, priorities and actions to reference Parramatta City Council's Greater Parramatta Smart Cities Plan, and ensure smart infrastructure is planned and integrated into the public domain plan for Hawkesbury Road.
- Parramatta Council requested new actions to ensure all smart infrastructure integrates seamlessly with existing or planned systems across the GPOP, and real-time monitoring of waste production, and water and energy use is implemented via smart infrastructure.
- Requested amendments to Direction 7 and its associated actions to include the need for childcare services.
- Supported the University of Sydney's proposal for a University Campus within North Parramatta.
- Suggested the need for all new infrastructure to be designed to incorporate universal access.
- Suggested the need for infrastructure to be designed to accommodate future shocks and stresses.
- Raised concerns about the relocation of the old Parramatta Pool.

Department Response:

The issues raised by Parramatta Council in relation to the incorporation of references to its Greater Parramatta Smart Cities Plan are noted and the Cities and Active Transport Division within Transport for NSW are progressing this action. In addition, Priority D3.P1 and Actions D7.A5 and D11.A2 have been updated to:

- Recommend the use of other smart infrastructure and technologies to improve the performance, productivity and the experience of Westmead (Priority D3.P1).
- Ensure a Public Domain Plan for Hawkesbury Road is developed with a focus on integrating smart infrastructure (D7.A5).
- Require the development of initiatives, including monitoring outcomes for water, waste and energy efficiencies that consider the reduction of carbon emissions to promote environmental sustainability and climate resilience for the liveability of Westmead's future generations (D11.A2).

In terms of the residual comments and suggestions, the Department:

- Notes the support for actions requiring future investigations around opportunities for primary and secondary school needs in Westmead South and Parramatta North (Action

D7.A2), and the shared use and co-location of community facilities on Council-and State-owned assets (Action D7.A4).

- Notes the Strategy seeks to deliver a range of social infrastructure and services that support community diversity and wellbeing to enhance the appeal and competitiveness of Westmead including the preparation an open space and social infrastructure needs assessment based on projected population growth and the identification of mechanisms for future funding (Action D7.A1).
- Has updated the Planning Priorities within Direction 7 to include references to childcare services.
- Has included Action D12.A1 to require the preparation of an Infrastructure Resilience Assessment and Study that provides recommendations to facilitate the implementation of the Resilient Sydney Strategy in Westmead.
- Notes the location of the Parramatta Aquatic and Leisure Centre was decided as part of a comprehensive master plan following community consultation.

4.4 Heritage

One of the ‘Big Moves’ of the draft Strategy is to cherish and protect places of significance, conserve and revitalise heritage and cultural assets to create exceptional places. Submissions highlighted significant concerns to the protection of heritage, particularly in Parramatta North Sub-precinct.

4.4.1 Parramatta North Sub-precinct

The majority of heritage related commentary in the submissions relate to the Parramatta North Sub-precinct, in particular the use of the former Cumberland Hospital, Female Factory and Wistaria Gardens. Submissions raised the following specific concerns, comments and recommendations:

- Objections on the deconstruction and relocation of Willow Grove from its present site to the Parramatta North Sub-precinct, including further clarification as to where it will be located.
- Concerns over the potential development, be that residential and commercial, adjoining the Heritage Core within the Parramatta North Sub-precinct as the land use and zoning vision did not provide built form controls or dwelling numbers. In particular, recommending no high-density development or demolition of heritage buildings within the Cumberland Hospital Precinct or beside Wistaria Gardens.
- It was suggested that the Parramatta North Sub-precinct be removed from the draft Strategy and be considered in a separate dedicated strategy, due to the complex and sensitive nature of the heritage conservation issues and careful consideration required for the future uses of the site.
- Requested Cumberland East and Cumberland West become a ‘botanic garden’ expanding Parramatta Park and managed by Greater Sydney Parklands (formerly Parramatta Park Trust).

- City of Parramatta Council and community submissions requested that the Parramatta Female Factory site be recognised as part of Parramatta Park and managed by Greater Sydney Parklands (formerly Parramatta Park Trust).
- Requested that the UNESCO listing of the Parramatta Female Factory and Institutions Precinct be finalised before any planning decisions are made for the Parramatta North Sub-precinct.
- Heritage NSW raised concerns about the mapping and identification of heritage items.
- Recommended that the Strategy recognise and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage and landscape.

Department Response:

The NSW Government has established the Willow Grove Community Reference Group to work in partnership with the community and stakeholder groups to ensure the successful relocation and reuse of Willow Grove house. It is noted that the site for relocation has not yet been determined. Should the preferred location for Willow Grove be in the Parramatta North Sub-precinct and outside the Heritage Core, a key planning priority in the Strategy seeks to ensure that the building siting is appropriate. The relocation of Willow Grove would be subject to further heritage considerations, detailed design and planning approvals. Any future built form within the Parramatta North Sub-precinct will be required to comply with the principles and guidelines contained in the Parramatta North Historic Sites Heritage Conservation Management Plan. In addition, further consultation with Heritage NSW and Federal Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment will be required in the future development stages.

The Strategy does not propose any demolition of heritage buildings, rezone land, consider heights or density outcomes. The Department notes that heritage protections are already embedded in the current planning legislation at the local, State and National level, however, it is noted that there are opportunities to strengthen the connectivity between Parramatta North and the surrounding land and this is identified as a Big Move in the Strategy. Given comments relating to heritage protection, Action D9.A4 has been updated to prepare a heritage impact assessment that considers built form, heritage protection and enhancement, visual impact to heritage view corridors including local, State and world heritage items. Planning Priority D9.P6 has been updated to ensure future development responds to heritage, and respects protected views and vistas to local, State and world heritage items.

Given the issues raised in the submissions in relation to Parramatta North Sub-precinct, the Strategy has been updated to confirm land that was rezoned by the NSW Government in 2015, which allowed the adaptive reuse of heritage items and mixed-use development in Cumberland East. The Department notes that a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) was prepared and endorsed by Heritage NSW in 2017, to guide the heritage conservation of the Heritage Core and wider Parramatta North historic sites and that any future development will need to consider the principles and guidelines contained in the CMP. This also includes any development beside Wisteria Gardens and Parramatta Park to provide an appropriate interface and adequate access. In addition, references to tall, slender building envelopes have been removed within the Parramatta North Sub-precinct and that any future development to consider the NSW Government Architect's Design Guide for Heritage.

Furthermore, the Cumberland East precinct is in the ownership of the NSW Government. The vision for Cumberland East designated in the Strategy is to become a future innovation and education precinct to support the future University campus in Cumberland West. This is acknowledged by the signed framework agreement between the NSW Government and University of Sydney in 2020, to deliver a multi-disciplinary university campus. As such, given the land in Cumberland East has been rezoned, this may result in future mixed-use development and is important to the achieving the vision of the future enterprise education precinct. The Department has updated the Strategy to identify significant heritage buildings in Cumberland East. Further principles have been included in the Strategy to note that any future built form is to respond to the adjacent heritage buildings.

The Department notes that any UNESCO listing of the Parramatta Female Factory and Institutions Precinct is a matter for Heritage NSW. The Strategy identifies the Parramatta Female Factory and Institutions Precinct as a designated future innovation, arts, cultural and community uses. Since the exhibition of the Strategy, the NSW Government has announced a \$53.8 million commitment to secure, restore and preserve culture, heritage and the future use of the Heritage Core in the form of a museum.

Following consultation with Heritage NSW, the exhibited Strategy incorrectly mapped the boundaries of the State heritage item 'Cumberland District Hospital Group' (SHR00820) under Direction 9. In addition, the exhibited Strategy did not highlight sites at 128-130 O'Connell Street and 124-124A O'Connell Street being part of the Parramatta Correctional Centre (SHR812). As such, Figure 27 in the Strategy has been updated to identify the State heritage listed item, including text for future development of those sites to comply with the principles and guidelines contained in the Parramatta North Historic Sites Heritage Conservation Management Plan.

The Department has updated the Strategy to include Action D9.A3 to prepare an Aboriginal cultural assessment to provide a comprehensive understanding of the broader Aboriginal cultural landscape of the precinct.

4.5 Green and Open Space Provision

Activating and connecting the Westmead community with vibrant, diverse and well-connected public spaces and places is one of the 'Big Moves' underpinning the Strategy. Directions 9 and 10 provide a framework for the delivery of new green and open spaces within the precinct, through identifying opportunities to connect great places of Westmead with green infrastructure for the enjoyment of the community. Many submitters raised concerns with the perceived lack of open space across the precinct and the reduction of green and open space in Cumberland East and North Parramatta. The submissions received made the following comments and recommendations regarding green and open space:

- The draft Strategy's priority for "opportunities for open space" appears to be aspirational and relies on identifying the enhancement and improvement of existing open spaces.
- There is a lack of green and open spaces in the precinct, particularly around Toongabbie Creek, the upper Parramatta River, and in Westmead South Sub-precinct.
- The draft Strategy needs to identify new open spaces across the precinct as a whole and not rely on one centralised area.

- The plan needs to consider and address the current gaps in open space across the whole Precinct.
- Concern was raised about the lack of planning and expansion of Parramatta Park, given the Strategy's heavy reliance on the area for provision of green and open space.
- Concern was raised that the potential open space in the Health and Innovation Sub-precinct is not usable for the broader community.
- Provided suggestions for the future open space in the Precinct.

Departments Response:

Activating and connecting the Westmead community with vibrant, diverse and well-connected public spaces and places is one of the 'Big Moves' underpinning the Strategy. Directions 7, 9 and 10 provide a framework for the delivery of new green and open spaces within the precinct to accommodate the projected population, through identifying opportunities to connect great places of Westmead with green infrastructure for the enjoyment of the community.

Specifically, Action D7.A1 requires preparation of an open space and social infrastructure needs assessment based on projected population growth, which will also identify mechanisms for future funding. Further, Actions D10.A1 and D10.A2 seek to develop an open space strategy and identify opportunities to improve existing parks, connect cultural spaces, historic sites and key places to deliver a range of diverse, new and/or enhanced open spaces and playgrounds to support social connections, with consideration to Government Architect NSW 'Draft Greener Places Design Guide.' To address comments relating to lack of planning and expansion of Parramatta Park, the Department has updated the Strategy to include a new Planning Priority D7.P5 to note the transfer of Wistaria Gardens to Parramatta Park Trust to provide more public open space for the growing community.

For the improvement of green spaces and streetscapes across the precinct Action D10.A6 is included, which aims to prepare a precinct-wide urban tree canopy and streetscape plan to increase tree canopy cover and improve the amenity of streets and open space areas.

The vision for the potential open space identified in the Structure Plan in the Health and Innovation Sub-precinct has been developed in consultation with Health Infrastructure and Ministry of Health. The Structure Plan also identifies potential river edge and open space activation along Toongabbie Creek, Milson Park, Parramatta River to improve the green grid connections within the precinct. The potential open spaces have been integrated within the hospital with passive and active uses along Dragonfly Drive and Redbank Road. Future ownership and embellishment of potential green infrastructure is subject to further investigations and funding mechanisms to be explored.

4.6 Environmental Concerns

Various submissions raised the following specific concerns, comments and recommendations regarding the environment and sustainability of the Strategy:

- Concern was raised that the draft Strategy gives little priority to the consideration of climate change.

- Concern was raised about the urban heat island effect from the proposed increase of urban development and loss of green space across the precinct. City of Parramatta Council suggested that the Strategy mitigate the heat island effect with additional landscaping, street planting and green walls.
- Clarity was sought on the Strategy's response to flooding issues and recommendations were made to map the flood constraints of the precinct.
- The draft Strategy should consider Westmead's contribution to the reduction of energy and emissions and to ensure a blueprint for sustainable energy use.
- The Net Zero Carbon emissions policies for 2050 adopted by the NSW Government should be incorporated into all relevant parts of the strategy.
- The NSW Government's 40% urban tree canopy targets should be incorporated into all relevant parts of the strategy.
- Request from the City of Parramatta for the Strategy to consider protecting native species, increasing biodiversity and improving Parramatta River water quality.

Department Response:

The Strategy aims to provide a framework for sustainability by expanding and interconnecting green infrastructure, encouraging best practice sustainability measures, and planning for resilience in response to climate change. Directions 11 and 12 provide a framework for encouraging best practice sustainability measures across all planning and design decisions and creating a precinct that is resilient and responsive to future climate conditions.

The Strategy does not propose any change to land use planning controls, however, overland flooding, risk assessment, capacity of existing stormwater drainage network and upgrade requirements to existing stormwater drainage system will be subject to further assessment and detailed planning as identified in Direction 10. Further, Action D12.A4 is to undertake precinct- wide planning for the various flood events and to be addressed through local planning.

Actions D11.A1 and D11.A2 seek to engage all levels of government and the private sector to identify a resource recovery and recycling strategy and develop a water, waste and energy plan which identifies precinct-wide opportunities to deliver a range of new and efficient infrastructure. It also considers monitoring waste production, water and energy use through smart infrastructure in real time, over time, to inform the effectiveness of the initiatives delivered. Planning Priority D10.P6 seeks to increase tree canopy cover to support sustainable and liveable neighbourhoods, mitigate urban heat island effects, and provide shade and high amenity. As detailed in Section 4.5 above, the Strategy includes Action D10.A6 for a precinct-wide urban tree canopy and streetscape plan to increase tree canopy cover and improve amenity of streets and open spaces with consideration to the 'Draft Greener Places Design Guide,' and Actions D10.A1 and D10.A2 aim to increase and improve green and open spaces across the precinct. Furthermore, in responding to comments relating to urban heat island effects, the Strategy has been amended to include Action D12.A2 to incorporating urban heat planning and design responses in development controls for both the public and private domain to maximise cooling, such as increased greening and shade, building design and water sensitive urban design.

The Department has included two new actions under Direction 10 in response to City of Parramatta comments to improving Parramatta River water quality and recognising and addressing local biodiversity protection. These actions are:

- Action D10.A3 Identify local biodiversity areas and opportunities for corridor enhancements, especially along the creek and river foreshores, and manage interface with other land uses through planning, policy and education.
- Action D10.A4 Increase the health of creeks and rivers via new development and improved infrastructure, including water sensitive urban design, stormwater harvesting and reuse and improvements to stormwater, sewer infrastructure and the quality of the riparian corridor.

4.7 Other Planning Matters

4.7.1 Draft Strategy Contents

Submissions highlighted the aspirational vision of the document and questioned the practicality of the document requiring further technical studies and actions to be completed, once adopted. There were also concerns that there were no background technical reports to inform the draft Strategy. City of Parramatta specifically raised concern that previous work prepared by the Westmead Alliance was not considered as part of the preparation of the Strategy.

Department Response:

The Department was previously leading investigations for Westmead South as part of the Planned Precinct Program. In November 2019, the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces announced, “A New Approach to Precincts”. It was identified that a high-level Westmead Place Strategy be developed for all of Westmead to maximise its potential economic and social benefits, while protecting the area’s heritage, liveability and long-term sustainability. The Westmead Place Strategy provides a shared vision for Westmead informed by a number of background studies and planning documents, including:

- Greater Sydney Region Plan – A Metropolis of Three Cities;
- Central City District Plan;
- City of Parramatta Local Strategic Planning Statement; and
- Cumberland Council Local Strategic Planning Statement.

After finalisation, this new planning framework will allow the Councils, developers and state agencies to further plan for new uses, such as business, retail and community facilities and provide opportunities to allow increased building heights and densities within the Precinct. Council and other stakeholders will carry out detailed land use planning and prepare studies to support rezonings under the next phase of the Strategy. This will provide a greater understanding of the future population and potential jobs expected within the precinct.

The Department notes that the Westmead Alliance Master Plan has not been endorsed by NSW Government or by Council.

The Department and TfNSW in collaboration with Councils will prepare an integrated transport and traffic study to progress the outcomes of the Transport Strategy, support the future rezoning of the area and future density. Through a vision and validate process, these key initiatives identified in the Transport Strategy will be assessed against their benefits to the traffic and transport network in the precinct. Further investigations will confirm the feasibility, funding and staging for any required transport infrastructure upgrades.

4.7.2 Consultation Process

Submissions raised concern with the public consultation process highlighting that it was not transparent, as the postcard had an image of Westmead Hospital and that Parramatta North was not mentioned. Other submissions suggested that the name of the document be updated as the initial messaging of the draft Strategy applies to Westmead but also included parts of Northmead and Parramatta North. Other commentary raised concerns that one Adobe Connect webinar for the community session was insufficient.

Department Response:

During the exhibition period the Department was made aware of these concerns from the community. As a response, the community information was updated, including updating the webpage and postcard to include reference to Parramatta North and Northmead. The Department's social media campaign was also updated to include people who live within 4km of Parramatta North and beyond the draft Place Strategy boundaries.

Whilst COVID-19 has restricted some community consultation methods, the Department increased the use of social media and technology to ensure all stakeholders are actively engaged in the process. This included:

- Letters to all landowners and information postcards delivered to all properties to which the draft Place Strategy applies,
- A virtual community session, and
- Online bookings for one on one information sessions with Department staff.

Planning staff were also available to be contacted during business hours for any enquiries. In addition, the Department extended the public exhibition period for an additional 4 weeks to allow all residents and stakeholders to make a submission until 31 March 2021.

The intent of exhibiting the draft Strategy was to provide a transparent and inclusive process to inform the community of potential future land uses changes in the precinct and to provide the public with an opportunity to comment. All submissions received have been considered and have informed the next phase of the Strategy. There will also be more opportunities for community consultation for any future planning proposal process.

4.7.3 Governance

In relation to governance, submissions raised the following comments:

- Recommended that a community advisory group be established to facilitate the collaborative approach envisaged by the Strategy. The community advisory group could include representation from non-government organisations that play a significant role in supporting communities, including community housing providers, and feed into the finalisation of the Strategy and consideration of future masterplans, rezoning proposals, and development applications.
- City of Parramatta Council suggested establishing a 'City Deal' governance structure, to help maximise impact of all levels of government investment in Westmead, including overseeing implementation, improve the physical nature of how the Precinct operates and connects to the surrounding area.

Department response:

The Department uses a range of engagement methods and communication channels to ensure the community is informed of the planning functions the Department carries out and the community can have their say on planning matters that affect them. These planning functions are:

- Planning framework matters, such as amendments to the planning legislation and the making of environmental planning instruments;
- Strategic planning matters such as creating or amending regional plans; and
- Assessment of projects that have State and regional significance.

The Department actively seeks community views and tailors engagement programs to capture harder-to-reach audience including the young, people living with disabilities, the elderly, those living in rural areas, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and culturally and linguistically diverse people. All feedback and submissions received are considered in decision-making and the Department commits to documenting and providing the community with reasons for those decision, including how community views have been considered. There will be further opportunities to provide feedback on any future planning processes as part of next phase of the Strategy.

In response to City of Parramatta Council comments, the Department notes that the 'City Deal' model is a Federal Government initiative, and the matter should be referred to the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications who are responsible authority to delivering the City Deal. Regarding maximising government investment, the Greater Cities Commission (GCC) has been tasked by the NSW Premier to lead a whole of government delivery response across the Westmead Health and Innovation District with an aim to accelerate jobs and innovation outcomes. The Strategy will support the work of the GCC to attract industry and coordinate the many Government programs underway.

4.7.4 Implementation of the Strategy

In relation to implementation, City of Parramatta raised the following:

- The introduction of a Ministerial Direction to prepare planning controls is premature and must await technical work, integrated traffic and transport study, and comprehensive funding agreements and commitments. A Ministerial Direction should be avoided as it will lead to site specific planning proposals. Council noted similar issues with Parramatta Road

Corridor Urban Transformation Strategy (PRCUTS) Ministerial Direction as its implementation mechanism, led to site-specific planning proposals where the traffic and transport study was yet to be completed.

- Concerns about the number of actions allocated to Council and the completion of studies to implement the Strategy. Council notes a key issue is the associated resourcing of the actions relating to the preparation of studies and requested clarity on what funding would be provided.

Department response:

As mentioned earlier in this report, the Strategy sets an overarching vision for the Westmead and Parramatta North area. A Ministerial Direction is necessary to give the Strategy statutory weight to ensure planning proposals are consistent with the overall vision, objectives, planning priorities, actions and sub-precinct place principles. The Ministerial Direction for Westmead and Parramatta North will also support the delivery of Government projects in the precinct.

The responsibility for actions in the Strategy has been further refined. The Department notes that funding requests for implementing specific actions could be considered, subject to availability and approvals. If councils have recently completed relevant studies that include Westmead and Parramatta North, it may wish to utilise these should they appropriately address the action to implement the Strategy.

5. Post Exhibition amendments to the Place Strategy

This section details the key changes to the Westmead Place Strategy following the revision of the draft Place Strategy. These amendments include:

- **Additional new maps presenting existing context, key place outcomes and land use and built form principles to articulate the vision of all the Sub-precincts** – Further information and clarity is provided on the vision of all Sub-precincts, as feedback highlighted confusion on the purpose of the Strategy.
- **Reduction of the ‘Opportunity for housing Supply’ designation in the Northmead Residential Sub-precinct 5** – Refer to Section 4.1.3 Housing and Growth of the report.
- **Removal of ‘Activity Node’ and ‘Key Place Opportunity’ designation at the intersection of Great Western Highway and Hawkesbury Road in Westmead South Sub-precinct 1** – The exhibited Strategy designated ‘Activity Node’ and ‘Key Place Opportunity’ at the intersection of Great Western Highway and Hawkesbury Road in Westmead South Sub-precinct 1. The Department notes that the site contains an existing residential flat building which was built in 2013 and unlikely to be redeveloped in the near future. In addition, ‘activity nodes’ and ‘key place opportunity’ are envisaged to be the heart of the community, providing services to meet the day to day needs of residents and workers. These places will have active ground floor uses and spaces for meeting and gathering. It is noted that the site is situated beside a major road corridor and therefore unlikely envisaged to be the heart of the community.
- **Additional maps and text have been included for the Parramatta North Sub-precinct 7. This includes highlighting the 2015 NSW Government rezoning proposal and consideration of the Conservation Management Plan for Parramatta North** – Refer to 4.4.1 Parramatta North Sub-precinct of the report.
- **Updated mapping and additional text to identify State heritage items under Direction 9 and Northmead Enterprise Sub-precinct** – Refer to 4.4.1 Parramatta North Sub-precinct of the report.
- **Amendments to the road network within the Health and Innovation Sub-precinct 2 to align with existing road network** – In consultation with Health Infrastructure and Greater Cities Commission, it was advised that the road network in the exhibited Strategy required further investigations. Following the finalisation of the Westmead Place Strategy, the Department and TfNSW in collaboration with Councils will prepare an integrated transport and traffic study to support the future rezoning of the area. Through the design led process, different development scenarios will be assessed against their benefits to the traffic and transport network in the precinct. This will include matters relating to the existing and future road network.
- **Text and map amendments to identify Health and Innovation Sub-precincts 2, Westmead East Sub-precinct 3 and Parramatta North Sub-precinct 7 as part of the WHID** – This has been

updated to provide further detail about the WHID following further engagement with the Greater Cities Commission.

- **Additional actions relating to Direction 10 and 12** - In consultation with City of Parramatta Council, additional actions have been included to address urban heat island effect, local biodiversity protection and improving Parramatta River water quality.
- **Removal of the 'Mixed use (retail, commercial and residential)' designation on land south of the PLR Stage 1 route in Cumberland West within Parramatta North Sub-precinct 7. The Department has proposed a new label 'Mixed use (university, enterprise, innovation, research with retail, commercial and residential)'** – In consultation with Property and Development NSW, it was advised that the interpretation of this area no longer supports the future vision of Cumberland West as a future university campus and therefore inconsistent with the framework agreement announcement in December 2020 between the NSW Government and the University of Sydney. As such, the Department has updated the Strategy to include a new label 'Mixed use (university, enterprise, innovation, research with retail, commercial and residential)' on land south of the PLR Stage 1 route to support the vision to deliver a world class multi-disciplinary university campus.
- **Amendment to existing 'Mixed use (university and research focus)' designation to 'Mixed use (university, enterprise, innovation and research focus) in Cumberland West within Parramatta North Sub-precinct 7** – The University of Sydney's submission noted that the Strategy was not clear in identifying the importance of co-locating the University with industry to achieve innovation outputs. In consultation with Property and Development NSW, the land use designation within Parramatta North Sub-precinct 7 has been updated to include to support the direction of a mixed use innovation and education precinct anchored by a university.

6. Consistency with other Instruments, Acts and Policies

This section outlines the strategic planning framework that has informed the Department's review of the Precinct's existing planning controls within the wider strategic context of Sydney and Greater Parramatta.

6.1 Greater Sydney Regional Plan and Central City District Plan

The Greater Sydney Region Plan (Region Plan) sets the planning framework for the five districts that make up the Greater Sydney Region. It establishes a 40-year vision to 2056 for Greater Sydney to be a metropolis of three cities, enabling most people in Greater Sydney to commute to the nearest city within 30 minutes.

The Region Plan acknowledges that Westmead 'super' Precinct will help boost the Central River City's economy as a key health and education precinct, while also improving accessibility to local services for young people, older people and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

The Region Plan recognises the GPOP corridor as a central hub which brings to together stakeholders in business, health, education, arts and heritage, and a vital part of the vision of a metropolis of three cities. The Westmead Precinct forms an integral part of the GPOP corridor and provides opportunities to capitalise on the substantial public and private investment in health, education, services and transport.

The District Plan provides a guide for implementing the Region Plan at a district level and acts as a bridge between regional and local planning. The District Plan establishes planning priorities and actions to guide planning in the Precinct.

The Strategy supports District Plan by setting the direction for land uses, connectivity and investment to transform Westmead into an innovation precinct with greater diversity of knowledge-intensive jobs, in line with the vision of the District Plan.

6.2 Future Transport Strategy 2056

Future Transport Strategy 2056 is an overarching strategy prepared by the NSW Government to achieve a 40-year vision for the NSW transport system. The Strategy outlines a vision, strategic directions and customer outcomes, with infrastructure and services plans underpinning the delivery of these directions across the state. The Strategy works with the Region and District Plans and aims to deliver integrated solutions to transport with access to jobs and services within 30 minutes. A focus is on the role of transport in delivering movement and place outcomes that support the character of the places and communities of the future.

The transport strategy reinforces the commitment to major infrastructure programs, with the delivery of a \$72.2 billion investment in transport projects, including SMW and PLR Stage 1, servicing the Parramatta and Westmead. The Strategy supports Future Transport Strategy 2056 by providing framework to capitalise on connectivity and opportunities created by new transport infrastructure (SMW and PLR) and major developments in the Westmead Health precinct.

6.3 Greater Parramatta and the Olympic Peninsula (GPOP) and Place-based Infrastructure Compact (PIC)

The GPOP area is a 6,000-hectare economic corridor located at the core of the Central City. The GPOP PIC seeks to better align growth with the provision of infrastructure and services. The PIC identifies Westmead as one of the 11 identified precincts ready to kickstart growth to increase jobs and productivity that is aligned with infrastructure delivery.

The Strategy is aligned to deliver on the vision and directions of the GPOP PIC by leveraging off the significant investment in infrastructure planned for Westmead such as the PLR Stage 1 and future SMW.

6.4 Parramatta Local Strategic Planning Statement 2036

The City of Parramatta Local Strategic Planning Statement City Plan 2036 (PLSPS) sets out a 20-year land use planning vision for Parramatta LGA. The PLSPS came into effect on 31 March 2020.

The PLSPS balances the need for housing and economic growth, while also protecting and enhancing housing diversity, heritage and local character. Westmead is strategically located to benefit from the role and growth of Parramatta as the next CBD. The Strategy is consistent with the priorities and actions of the LSPS which seek to build the economic focus and liveability of Sydney's second CBD:

- retaining and enhancing local urban service hubs;
- support the establishment of a major new tertiary education campus at Parramatta North Precinct to deliver additional jobs;
- the growth of Parramatta will require more educational facilities and the need to identify school sites is an action for the Council to undertake in consultation with School Infrastructure NSW; and
- collaborate with the State Government to prioritise the delivery of the SMW project and PLR Stage 1.

The Department notes that the designated 'Opportunity for housing supply' adjoining the Toongabbie Creek corridor in the Northmead Residential Sub-precinct 5 would be inconsistent with the PLSPS and Parramatta City Council's Local Housing Strategy. This area provides opportunity to consider amenity-led development and maximise access and active frontage to Toongabbie Creek. Following feedback received during the exhibition period the Strategy has been amended to reduce the amount of land identified as 'Opportunity for housing Supply'. Furthermore, future development

of those sites would only be considered where place outcomes would enhance the amenity along Toongabbie Creek corridor are achieved, subject to feasibility and built form analysis. Council and other stakeholders may carry out detailed land use planning for Northmead Residential Sub-precinct under the next phase of the Strategy to determine appropriate planning provisions and density for the area.

Given the above and noting that the Northmead Residential Sub-precinct 5 provides an opportunity to enhance the future amenity along Toongabbie Creek corridor, the Strategy is generally consistent with the PLSPS.

6.5 Cumberland 2030: Our Local Strategic Planning Statement

The Cumberland 2030 Local Strategic Planning Statement (CLSPS) was endorsed by the Greater Sydney Commission in March 2020. It identifies a strategic land use framework to guide a 20 year vision for the economic, social and environmental land use needs, and planning and delivery growth in the Cumberland LGA in line with the Greater Sydney Region Plan and the District Plan. Cumberland Council has indicated its commitment to the planning of Westmead South in its CLSPS.

The CLSPS recognises the significance of the medical and education precinct located north of the Council boundary which includes several hospitals, research facilities, specialist services, and university campuses, with further growth and increased services anticipated. It supports the vision for Westmead as a strategic precinct providing a specialised health and education role for Cumberland and the Greater Parramatta area. The CLSPS also identifies Westmead South as well placed to facilitate diverse housing opportunities and focusing on Hawkesbury Road as a high street to provide civic, commercial and a community heart. The CLSPS also considers the evolution of the Great Western Highway B6 Enterprise Corridor to support the needs and amenity for the growing population.

Therefore, the vision for Westmead South Sub-precinct in the Strategy is consistent with the CLSPS.

6.6 Greater Parramatta Interim Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plan

The Greater Parramatta Interim Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plan (LUIIP) is given statutory weight through a Ministerial section 9.1 Direction. The purpose of the LUIIP is to develop a land use framework to guide future redevelopment of the Greater Parramatta Growth Area (growth area) and identify and plan for infrastructure needed to unlock its potential. The growth area is divided into twelve precincts, with Westmead and Parramatta North forming two of these precincts.

The LUIIP identifies various initiatives for the precinct that have been incorporated as a part of the Strategy to make Westmead and Parramatta North a Health and Education Super Precinct, including:

- growth of Allied Medical Uses to deliver an innovation ecosystem, a diversity of employment uses and jobs, and development of new industries from world-leading research;
- capitalise on active transport links and connectivity within the Precinct and to Parramatta Park created by new public transport infrastructure such as SMW and PLR Stage 1; and
- embracing Parramatta North's rich heritage context for adaptive re-use of heritage buildings within the former Cumberland Hospital precinct, Parramatta Female Factory and Institutions Precinct.

The LUIIP acknowledges Westmead and Parramatta North aim to be the 'western most economic anchor' precinct of GPOP, attracting human talent, investment, and innovative activity. It is considered that the Strategy is consistent with the Interim LUIIP.