SUBMISSION - OBJECTION
Employment Zones Framework – Planning Reforms

To the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE)

June 2021
File No: 21/27373

1. **GENERAL COMMENTS**

   This submission outlines Fairfield City Council's response to the proposed planning reforms to the employment zones framework under the Standard Instrument Local Environmental Plan (LEP).

   The reforms proposed by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) are substantial and the general justification that the reforms will enable business and industry to respond to trends exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, are questioned. Council considers that there are several significant areas of concern regarding the proposed reforms.

   Of primary concern is the potential land use conflicts that will occur as a result of changes to the zone structure for smaller neighbourhood centres and the proposed mandating of uses in these centres that have potential to generate conflicts with surrounding residential uses.

   In addition, the current general and light industrial zones of the City are proposed to be merged into the one zone. There are major concerns regarding the impact that this will have on some residential areas of the City, which are directly adjoining existing light industrial zones that have been created to provide a buffer to higher intensity uses permitted in the general industrial areas of the City.

   Council does however support the proposed changes to some standard definitions and the introduction of new land use terms in response to changing retail and employment trends.

   The following outlines specific areas of concern that Council has identified, however given the amount of information that was publicly exhibited and the extent of changes proposed, Council requests that more time and consultation be given prior to gazetting any changes to the legislation.

2. **ISSUES RAISED**

   A. **The Need for Reform?** – The proposed new zone structure and land use permissibility structure will require Council to undertake significant work to implement the mandated changes. It is Council's opinion that the stated benefits of the proposed reforms are questionable and the potential negative consequences have not been properly thought through.

   One of the stated aims of the reforms is to support Council's long-term strategic planning objectives. The Positions Paper argues that a reduced number of zones will provide clearer delineation of the purpose of each zone and provide greater diversity of mandated permissible uses.

   Council does not agree with this assertion and considers that it is more likely that the opposite will occur as neighbourhood and local centres are merged. Removing Council's ability to determine land uses permissible in zones and effectively plan for local issues, will only hinder the implementation of local strategic planning objectives and increase land use conflicts.

   Similarly, the proposed merging of the current IN1 General Industrial and IN2 Light Industrial zones is considered an undesirable step. It creates the potential for a number of residential areas of the City being exposed to increased noise and lighting emissions associated with more intensive 24-hour industrial activities, as well as exposure to increased heavy vehicle movements.

This is a significant consideration for Fairfield City that has some of the largest industrial precincts in NSW.

Council has undertaken a review of both its business and industrial zones as part of the recent preparation of the Fairfield Local Strategic Planning Statement and is confident the existing zone structure and land use permissibility structure will support the future growth of business and industry whilst adapting to change and managing community expectations.

In addition, Council also commissioned a specialist economic consultant to prepare a report on key strategic directions/issues (including the impacts of COVID19, workforce skills, emerging industries, opportunities associated with the Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis) relevant to the economic wellbeing of the business and industrial areas of Fairfield City.

The report (Attached to this submission) did not flag any need for rationalisation of the Standard Instrument zones proposed by DPIE. Rather, it flags the need for more practical strategies and measures to support the functionality of existing infrastructure servicing industrial areas (such as the efficiency of the road network), State and local government programs to ensure adequate training and skills of the workforce. A comprehensive list of the recommendations is included under each chapter of the attached report.

The proposed new employment zone framework will not achieve anything that Council's existing controls do not already facilitate. Whilst it is acknowledged that there is a need to respond to innovation and a changing retail environment, this can be effectively implemented under the current zone structure and land use permissibility structure within Fairfield LEP 2013.

B. **Zone Names –** The new zone names under the proposed framework are potentially very confusing and have not been properly thought through. The use of "E" to represent Employment zones is to similar to the existing Environmental zones naming convention, which are, E1, E2 and E3.

The proposed MU Mixed Use zone is fundamentally a replacement of the existing B6 Enterprise Corridor zone. Using a "mixed use" overarching label is not an accurate reflection of the objectives and intended outcomes of this zone. It is suggested that a zone name such as Commercial Support would be more accurate as the land uses proposed and location of this zone is primarily a support/buffer adjoining main town centres.

C. **Zone Structure and Mandated Permissible Land Uses –** The proposed new zone structure under the draft SI LEP Amendment Order contains changes, which will have significant implications for Council's neighbourhood and local centres.

The proposed framework for business zones is a major deviation from the retail hierarchy adopted by Council under the Fairfield City Centres Study 2015 and will have significant impacts on Council's ability to plan for and respond to land use issues at a local level.

The proposed reforms will merge the B1 Neighbourhood Centre and B2 Local Centre zones into an E1 Local Centre zone. Uses mandated as permissible within this zone will include:

- amusement centres
- function centres
- service stations

- local distribution centres and
- vehicle repair stations

All the above land uses are currently prohibited in Council's neighbourhood centres due to the potential adverse impacts on surrounding residential amenity. The proposed new framework removes Council's ability to respond to local issues and plan effectively in the City of Fairfield. Council's discretion to modify land use tables to suit the local environment will be significantly reduced if the proposed framework and mandated uses are legislated.

Under the proposed zone framework it is likely that the centres of Fairfield Heights, Canley Heights, Canley Vale and Villawood would be elevated to the same zone status as the strategic centres of Fairfield, Bonnyrigg, Prairiewood and Cabramatta. The reason for this is that the zone objectives for the proposed E2 Commercial Centre more typically reflect the role and function of these existing local centres including:

- To provide a range of business, office, retail, community, entertainment and other land uses that meet the needs of the community;
- To encourage employment opportunities and business investment; and
- To promote vibrant and active street frontages, including during evenings and weekends.

Consequently, within the City there would potentially be 8 town centres with an E2 Commercial Centre zoning however the size, role and function of these 8 centres differs significantly.

There is currently a large area within the Fairfield Town Centre and a proposed area within the Cabramatta Town Centre where a B3 Commercial Core zoning applies thus prohibiting residential accommodation. Merging of business zones under the proposed SI Amendment Order would require Council to permit shop top housing and residential flat buildings in these two areas, which have strategically been zoned to prohibit these uses.

Alternatively, Council would need to prohibit residential accommodation in the E2 zone creating large areas of land where existing use rights or Schedule 1 – Additional Permitted Use provisions would need to be applied. Neither of these approaches is considered ideal or supported.

D. **New and Amended Land Use Definitions** – Council is generally supportive of the proposed amendments to land use definitions and the introduction of new terms under the SI LEP. They are considered to be necessary; responding to land use trends and social and economic development. The three new definitions *creative industry, data centre* and *domestic goods repair and reuse facility* can easily be retrofitted within Council's existing land use tables and zone structure.

Council is also supportive of the consolidation of several land use definitions in order to reduce complexity and promote clarity within the SI. However, more detail is required as to the zones that the Department are proposing to mandate these uses within.

E. **Resourcing and Timing** – It is noted that the Department are currently also proposing reforms relating to the Exempt and Complying Development Codes SEPP for which Council has already submitted a response for consideration. Council is concerned that these two closely related reform processes are running concurrently but separately.

Any changes to the Codes SEPP ahead of the broader employment zone reforms is considered premature and is creating complexity and confusion in the reform process. Changes to land use permissibility should not proceed ahead of the proposed employment zone reforms.

Council is also aware that the Department is in the process of developing an Employment Strategy Guideline to assist Council's in preparing and finalising Local Employment Zone Strategies required to be completed under the Greater Sydney Region Plan. The raft of changes proposed under the current two reform processes would appear to make the preparation of future Local Employment Zone Strategies superfluous and immaterial.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the Department is offering a list of ways to support Councils in the implementation of future changes, the question remains regarding the relevance and necessity of the proposed reforms. Council does not believe that the time, resources and cost involved in implementing the reforms will significantly improve the opportunities for growth in the business and industrial areas of the City of Fairfield.

It is in fact probable that the proposed changes will generate a zoning and land use framework that will facilitate proliferation of inappropriate land uses in smaller neighbourhood centres and in industrial areas that will affect the amenity of a number of residential areas of the City. Council will be left to respond to the inevitable land use conflicts resulting from the mandated changes.

3. <u>CONCLUSION</u>

The exhibited Position Paper, draft SI Amendment Order and supporting information related to proposed employment zone reforms generates significant implications for business and industrial zones within Fairfield City and a potential flow on of negative impacts in adjoining residential areas.

Council understands the importance of supporting and promoting investment and job-generating development within the City, particularly in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent changes in retailing and employment trends. However, Council must have the legislative framework and resources to ensure this can be balanced with the environmental and liveability objectives contained within its strategic plans including its Local Strategic Planning statement only recently endorsed by the Department.

The proposed changes to the employment zones framework along with anticipated changes to land use permissibility under the Codes SEPP, will greatly reduce Council's ability to manage and plan for the needs and expectations of its local community.

Furthermore, it is considered that the proposed new framework will not generate any more certainty, growth, employment and innovation opportunities than already exist under the current SI LEP zone structure. According to recent media reports, the economic growth within Australia and NSW currently, is the strongest in the developed world and job growth is actually exceeding pre-pandemic rates. For these reasons, Council does not support the proposed restructure to employment and business zones including the mandating of land uses beyond that currently contained within Fairfield LEP 2013.

Thank you for taking the time to consider Council's views on this matter and should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact █████████████████

ANDREW MOONEY
<u>**EXECUTIVE STRATEGIC LANDUSE PLANNER**</u>

Attachment: Fairfield Business & Employment Lands Economic Report 2020 (97 Pages)

BUSINESS & EMPLOYMENT LANDS ECONOMIC REPORT
FAIRFIELD CITY

FAIRFIELD CITY BUSINESS & EMPLOYMENT LANDS REPORT

Prepared for: Fairfield City Council
Date: October 2020

Norling Consulting Pty Ltd
Business & Property Economics

BUSINESS & EMPLOYMENT LANDS ECONOMIC REPORT
FAIRFIELD CITY

Prepared for:	Fairfield City Council
Date:	October 2020
Prepared by:	Jon Norling, Director
	Thu Klett, Senior Research Analyst

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1.1 Background

Fairfield City LGA is located in New South Wales, approximately 30 kms west of Sydney CBD and 10 kms southwest of Parramatta. The area is known for its rich culture, diverse demographic profile and significant industrial lands that provide not only for the local community, but also Greater Sydney.

Over the past few years, Fairfield City Council has developed, updated and made effective two significant documents, the Fairfield Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040 (LSPS) – Shaping a Diverse City and the Fairfield Economic Development Strategy (EDS). The LSPS sets out a 20-year vision for strategic land use planning directions in the City and gives effect to A Metropolis of Three Cities – the Greater Sydney Region and the Western City District Plan, based on local characteristics and opportunities, whilst the EDS to takes into consideration changes to policy and legislation in all tiers of government.

Based on the directives set out in the LSPS and EDS, Fairfield City Council is seeking advice on eight prominent issues namely, Impacts of COVID-19, Establishing a Night-Time Economy, Impacts of the Western Sydney Freight Line, Local Servicing Industries, Opportunities arising from the Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis, Viability of the Yennora/East Fairfield Industrial Areas, Service Centres for Wetherill Park and Implications of Western City Industrial Lands Data.

Norling Consulting is a specialised economic and market research consultancy for the property industry and has considerable experience in undertaking centre strategies and assessments of economic need and impacts within the retail, commercial office, industrial and childcare sectors across Queensland and New South Wales. Norling Consulting has undertaken a number of peer reviews and provided other strategic advice to Fairfield City Council over the past decade and is very familiar with the City and its surrounds. This has included several visits to the City over this period of time and inspections of many centres and some of its industrial areas.

1.2 Study Objectives and Methodology

The overall objective of this Report is to provide higher level strategic advice in relation to the eight key topics of Impacts of COVID-19; Night-Time Economy; Western Sydney Freight Line; Local Servicing Industries & Upskilling; Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis; Yennora/East Fairfield Industrial Areas; Wetherill Park Service Centres; and Western City Industrial Lands Data.

To achieve the objective, the following tasks were completed:

(a) Reviewed the Economic Development Strategy 2019 Update and Fairfield City 2040 a Land Use Vision, Shaping a Diverse City, Local Strategic Planning Statement;
(b) Reviewed relevant planning documents for the Western Sydney Employment Area;
(c) Reviewed the current and likely future impacts of COVID-19 on the City's economy and employment, particularly the manufacturing sector and local businesses;
(d) Reviewed literature and case studies of creating a Night-Time Economy (NTE), reviewed relevant features of Fairfield City and made recommendations as to how the City could implement a successful NTE strategy;

(e) Reviewed relevant documents on the development of new freight lines and details of what is proposed for the Western Sydney Freight Line in order to identify opportunities from the WSFL for Fairfield City and made recommendations as to how the City could best capitalise upon those opportunities;

(f) Specifically advised as to whether potential severance of industrial lands by at-grade rail may negatively impact upon economic activity within Wetherill Park/Smithfield;

(g) Reviewed more detailed employment data for Western Sydney and Fairfield City;

(h) Identified factors common to the creation of local service industries, especially those involving smart technology and make recommendations as to how Fairfield City may best encourage development of local service industries, including the ability to establish relevant clusters of local service industries;

(i) Researched successful upskilling programs and from a high-level perspective, recommended actions to improve any identified skills gap in the City;

(j) Reviewed plans for the Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis and associated transport links;

(k) Recommended relevant initiatives that the City should adopt in order for it to maximise its opportunities from the development of the nearby Aerotropolis;

(l) Reviewed employment data for Yennora and Fairfield East industrial areas and reviewed the current range of uses through the use of Google Street View and identified their roles in the City's economy;

(m) Considered how similar older industrial nodes have redeveloped over time and projected their future role for the City, together with a list of actions designed to capitalise upon any opportunities;

(n) Reviewed the workforce needs of the Wetherill Park industrial area, the current utility of the two service centres and made recommendations as to whether additional service centres and/or additional service centre lands are required in order to maximise the economic performance of the Wetherill Park industrial area, whilst minimising impacts upon other centres;

(o) Reviewed the SGS and Mecone/JLL Employment Lands Databases;

(p) Provideed high level strategic advice on additional trends Council should be aware of, together with any actions to advantage the City;

(q) Facilitated a videoconference between Norling Consulting and Council to discuss findings;

(r) Followed up on any issues identified from the videoconference; and

(s) Documented the above in a comprehensive report.

2 FAIRFIELD CITY LGA

This chapter outlines the role and function of the Fairfield City Local Government Area (LGA).

Fairfield City covers an area of 10,160 hectares and is situated approximately 30 kilometres west of Sydney CBD. It comprises 27 suburbs and is home to over 200,000 people from highly diverse cultural backgrounds, making Fairfield City a unique and inclusive LGA. Being centrally located and well connected via a strong road network, Fairfield City contributes significantly to the Greater Sydney's industrial sector and encompasses one of the largest industrial estates in Greater Sydney, Smithfield-Wetherill Park.

2.1 History

Fairfield City as it is known today has had an interesting history dating back to the early 1800s. Smithfield was first settled in 1836 and was initially envisioned to be the commercial centre. Unlike other areas, Smithfield had flat land, rich soil, easy access to Prospect Creek and lay on the main road between Parramatta and Liverpool. However, when the Sydney to Liverpool train line was built in 1856, Smithfield was not an intermediate stop on the route. Instead, a train station was built in Fairfield and that marked the beginning of the end for Smithfield as Fairfield quickly prospered from the rail connection and became the centre of commerce for the area.

Although Fairfield City today is known for its central location on major arterials, hence making it an attractive site for industry, Fairfield City initially grew because of its early rail network. Fairfield City initially suffered from all major roads bypassing the City due to its prominent creek systems making it difficult for early settlers to have the right resources and expertise to quickly construct adequate bridges. The rail network grew first, allowing residents from larger cities to move west for affordable housing and to escape overcrowding.

Several other centres that were located on the rail network prospered over time, such as Fairfield, Cabramatta and Villawood. There were a few exceptions, including Canley Vale, due to a lack of land for expansion, narrow roads and close proximity to more attractive sites such as Fairfield and Cabramatta.

However, the next growth impetus in Fairfield City came after World War II. Large concentrations of Housing Commission in Fairfield, Cabramatta, Canley Vale, Yennora and Villawood were constructed, drawing residents from the east and attracting people returning from the war. In the case of Villawood, housing commission properties continued to increase after the end of WWII with 1,500 homes and a small Centre of 21 shops in 1958, a further 2,000 in 1966 and new 4-storey units in 1980.

Modern industrial growth also began after WWII, with several factories being constructed in Yennora and Fairfield East. The first major factories included Coote & Jorgensen engineering in Yennora in 1949 and Power Cables Australia in Fairfield East in 1953. The central location, easy access to roads and rail as well as cheap vacant land made the Yennora and Fairfield East district highly attractive to manufacturing companies, including international businesses.

As land became scarce, businesses shifted to Lansvale in 1960 and Smithfield in 1965. Wetherill Park was not declared an Industrial Zone until 1971 and by the 1990s became one of the largest industrial estates in Greater Sydney, thanks to Fairfield City's initiative to invest in road infrastructure in the 1970s. By 1991, 73.5 kilometres of roads were upgraded to arterial status including The Horsley Drive, Elizabeth Drive, Wallgrove Road and Cowpasture Road. These upgrades, in conjunction with the establishment of the Cumberland Highway, which allowed heavy vehicles to bypass town centres when transporting north/south, led to Fairfield City becoming and continuing to be a significant contributor to Greater Sydney's industrial lands and production. The City's industrial areas therefore emerged reliant upon road transport.

Consequently, whereas the initial rail network and housing commission significantly contributed to the population growth and the establishment of commercial Centres in Fairfield City, it was the road network created in the 1970s, which paved the way to the growth of Fairfield City's industrial lands.

2.2 Demographics

Fairfield City has a large population of almost 212,000 (June 2019) and is a highly diverse and unique LGA. Table 2.1, below, provides a summary of the key demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Fairfield City, with comparisons drawn to Greater Sydney and New South Wales. These results have been derived from the 2016 Australian Bureau of Statistics Population and Household Census.

Table 2.1: Fairfield City Demographics

	Fairfield City	Greater Sydney	New South Wales
Age Distribution (%)			
0 - 4	6.1%	6.4%	6.2%
5 - 14	13.0%	12.2%	12.3%
15 - 19	7.1%	6.0%	6.0%
20 - 24	7.7%	7.1%	6.5%
25 - 34	13.6%	16.1%	14.3%
35 - 44	12.5%	14.4%	13.4%
45 - 54	13.6%	13.0%	13.1%
55 - 64	12.5%	10.9%	11.9%
65+	13.8%	13.9%	16.3%
Household Composition (%)			
Couple family no children	17.1%	23.8%	25.8%
Couple family with children	44.1%	37.4%	33.6%
Single parent family	18.6%	11.1%	11.4%
Other family	2.1%	1.4%	1.2%
Group Household	2.3%	4.7%	4.2%
Lone Persons	15.7%	21.6%	23.8%
Language Spoken at Home (%)			
English only	26.0%	62.0%	73.1%
European	9.1%	5.8%	4.8%
Chinese	8.9%	8.0%	5.7%
Vietnamese	21.3%	2.1%	1.5%
Other Asian	0.3%	2.1%	1.9%
Indian	1.2%	4.6%	3.4%
Arabic	8.2%	4.0%	2.9%
Other	25.0%	11.4%	6.7%
Highest Qualification Achieved (%)			
Post graduate qualification	2.3%	10.1%	8.2%
Bachelor degree	10.0%	21.2%	17.9%
Certificate/Advanced diploma	22.7%	27.0%	30.2%
Occupation of the Workforce (%)			
Managers/Professionals	22.2%	40.8%	37.8%
Technicians and Trades	15.4%	11.9%	12.9%
Community, personal services, admin and sales	34.6%	33.9%	34.0%
Machine operators, drivers and labourers	27.7%	13.4%	15.2%
Nature of Occupied Dwellings (%)			
Owned outright	33.3%	29.9%	33.2%
Mortgage committed	29.9%	34.2%	33.2%
Rented	36.2%	35.0%	32.7%
Other	0.7%	0.9%	0.9%
Structure of Occupied Dwellings (%)			
Separate house	72.4%	57.1%	66.8%
Semi-detached row/terrace/townhouse	13.0%	14.1%	12.3%
Flat/unit	13.8%	28.2%	20.1%
Other	0.8%	0.6%	0.9%
Number of Motor Vehicles per Dwelling (%)			
No vehicle	10.8%	11.4%	9.6%
1 vehicle	33.8%	38.4%	37.7%
2 vehicles	32.5%	33.9%	35.4%

The following provides a brief analysis of the key demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the Fairfield City LGA in comparison to Greater Sydney at the time of the 2016 Census.

(a) Fairfield City exhibited a relatively comparable age profile to that of Greater Sydney, with higher than average proportions of persons aged 5 to 24 years (10% greater) and persons aged 45 to 64 (9% greater), compared to Greater Sydney;

(b) Fairfield City exhibited significantly greater proportions of single parent families (68% greater) and couple families with children (18% greater);

(c) Fairfield City has an extremely strong level of ethnic diversity, with the proportion of households speaking only English at home comprising only 26%, compared with 62% for Greater Sydney. The major languages spoken at home include Vietnamese (21.3%), European (9.1%), Chinese (8.9%) and Arabic (8.2%). In terms of ancestry, the most popular countries of birth of respondents' parents comprised Europe (29%), Vietnam (21%), China (14%), Australia (10%) and Lebanon (3%);

(d) Fairfield City exhibited low levels of university educational attainment with only 12.3% achieving a Bachelor degree or higher compared to 31.3% in Greater Sydney. A very significant 65% of persons aged 15 years and over reported no post-school qualifications;

(e) Consequently, Fairfield City is characterised by having a significant blue collar workforce, comprising 43% of its total workforce (compared with 25% in Greater Sydney);

(f) Dwelling ownership within Fairfield City is relatively comparable to the Greater Sydney benchmark average, with a higher than average proportion of outright owner occupiers (33.3% compared with 29.9%) and a slightly higher proportion of renters (36.2% compared with 35.0%);

(g) Fairfield City was dominated by detached dwellings (72.4% of the total), with the proportion of semi-detached dwellings being 8% lower than in Greater Sydney and the proportion of flats and units being 51% lower than in Greater Sydney; and

(h) Fairfield City exhibited significantly lower than average annual household incomes (by 24%) in comparison to Greater Sydney ($79,400 compared with $104,200) at the time of the 2016 Census.

Overall, the population of Fairfield City is characterised by a mixed age profile with a high proportion of families, strong level of ethnic diversity, a low level of tertiary education attainment and a high level of blue collar workers. Furthermore, according to the Fairfield City Plan, 40% of refugee arrivals to NSW initially settle in Fairfield City, 20% of the population does not speak English well or at all and 25% of dwellings do not have internet connection. This profile presents many challenges and also opportunities that need to be considered when assessing the eight key topics outlined by Council.

2.3 Employment Profile

Fairfield City, as of the 2016 Census, has a much higher unemployment rate (10.5% vs 6.0%) and lower workforce participation rate (63.3% vs 79.2%) than Greater Sydney. When analysing the local workforce, Figure 2.2 below shows that there is a strong representation of blue-collar workers.

Figure 2.1: Occupation of Resident Workers, Fairfield LGA 2016 (usual residence)
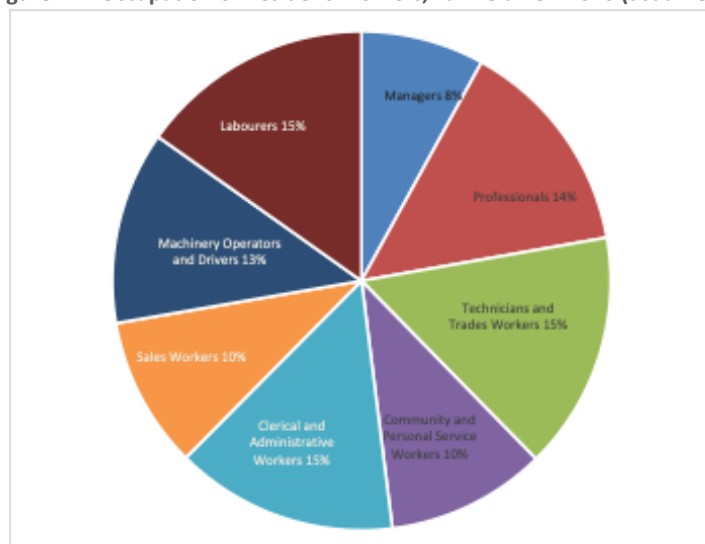
Source: 2016 ABS Population and Household Census, Norling Consulting

Analysis of the occupations held by Fairfield City residents reveal the most popular occupations included *technicians and trades* (15%), *labourers* (15%) and *clerical and administrative workers* (15%).

In comparison to the Greater Sydney average, there were significantly fewer *managers* and *professionals* combined (22.2% within Fairfield LGA and 40.8% within Greater Sydney) and a considerably greater proportion of *labourers* and *machinery operators and drivers* (27.7% and 13.4% for Greater Sydney).

Figure 2.3 below shows the prevalence of industries in Fairfield City based on resident workers and how they have changed over time.

Figure 2.2: Industries in Fairfield City over Time (Resident Workers)
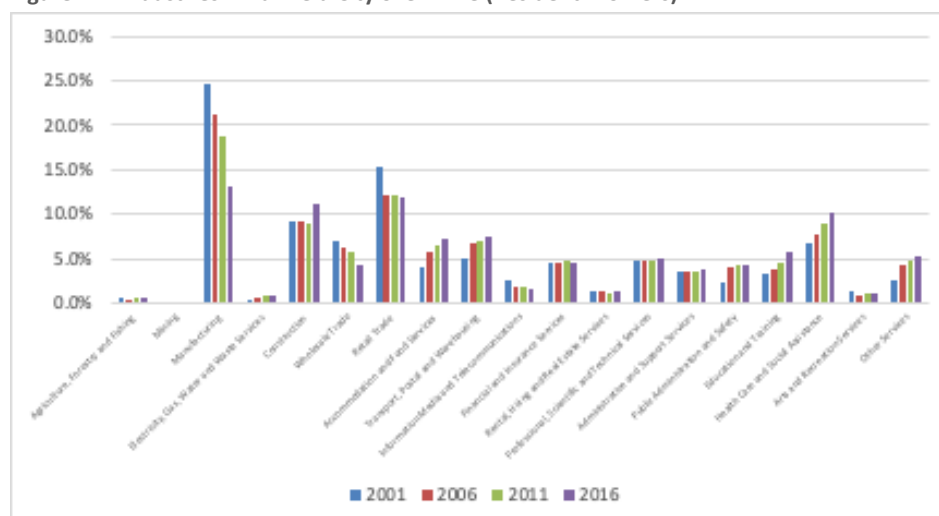
Source: 2001, 2006, 2011 & 2016 ABS Population and Household Censuses, Norling Consulting

Of the jobs held by the resident workers of Fairfield City, the most popular industry sectors were:

- Manufacturing (13.0%);
- Retail trade (12.0%);
- Construction (11.3%); and
- Health care and social assistance (10.2%).

Between 2001 and 2016, there was a significant loss of *manufacturing* workers (6,750, or by 44%). Over the same period there were also modest declines in job numbers within the *retail trade* (-1,640, -17%) and *wholesale trade* (-1,538, -36%) and minor declines in *information media and telecommunications* and *arts and recreation services*. All other industries increased in size.

The most significant increases occurred within the:

- Health care and social assistance (+2,537 jobs, or by a 61% increase);
- Accommodation and food services (+2,209 jobs, or by 88%);
- Other services (1,816 jobs, or by 109%);
- Construction (+1,738 jobs, or by 31%);
- Education and training (+1,655 jobs, or by 78%); and
- Public administration and safety (+1,282 jobs, or by 87%).

Overall, the employment profile of Fairfield City is characterised by a high proportion of technicians, labourers and administrative workers working in manufacturing, retail, construction, health care and social assistance. It is important to view this profile in conjunction with the demographic profile to assess the eight key topics outlined by Council.

3 IMPACTS OF COVID-19

This Chapter reviews what is currently known about COVID-19, discusses the uncertainty surrounding its future impacts, how it is affecting our economy and how it might impact the future economy and lifestyles of Fairfield City residents.

COVID-19 is the greatest global health and economic crisis affecting the world over the last century. The pandemic may only be in its early stages and there is much uncertainty surrounding how long it will last.

Due to this uncertainty and the changing nature of the pandemic, much that has been written in this chapter will become out of date very quickly.

3.1   Health

Coronaviruses are a group of ribonucleic acid (RNA) viruses that cause diseases in mammals and birds. Six species of coronaviruses (seven strains) have now been discovered as affecting humans, with the first discovered in the 1960s. In humans, these viruses primarily affect the respiratory system, with resulting illnesses ranging from mild to lethal. Four viruses are regarded as mild and are believed to be the cause of about 15% of common colds in humans.

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV) was the first of the lethal coronaviruses to affect humans. This virus was traced back to Horseshoe Bats in China and affected humans in the 2002-2004 period. SARS-CoV had a fatality rate of almost 10%, with a total of 8,100 persons infected, two-thirds of whom were in China. This species of virus is no longer in the human population due to isolation strategies and its low transmission rate (0.4). No vaccine was developed for this species.

Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) was the second of the lethal coronaviruses to affect humans, with outbreaks recorded in 2012, 2015 and 2018. This virus was also traced back to bats, although humans were typically infected directly from camels. MERS-CoV had a fatality rate of a very significant 34%, with a total of 2,500 persons infected, 40% of whom were in Saudi Arabia. This species of virus remains prevalent in the population of Saudi Arabian Dromedary Camels. However, human to human transmission has been considered to be very low (requiring very close contact with severely ill persons in healthcare or household settings). No vaccine was developed for this species.

COVID-19 is a new strain of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV-2) affecting humans. It was first discovered in the human population in Wuhan, China in December 2019. It is widely believed to have originated in bats, having a 96% similarity to a known coronavirus in bats. As of 31 August 2020, 25.5 million people have been infected globally, with a 4% fatality rate. This rate is understood to be an overestimate due to the suspected non-reporting of many cases in some countries. The death rate is much higher in the older populations and those with underlying health conditions.

COVID-19 spreads much more easily than other coronaviruses and influenza, with the transmission rate considered to be in the order of 2.5, compared to 1.0 for influenza.

Unfortunately, the number of daily new cases globally continues to rise, with the curve flattening during April 2020 and again in August 2020. However, some countries have been successful in suppressing the number of daily new cases.

The countries recording the largest number of cases are the United States of America, Brazil, India and Russia. Argentina and Spain also continue to record high numbers of cases.

Australia has recorded 26,000 cases as at 31 August 2020, with two distinct waves. The first wave occurred during late March and early April, where the majority of infections were returning travellers from overseas. A second wave has emerged during July and August in Victoria that is only now showing signs of abating. The death rate in Australia was 3.3% as at 31 August 2020.

Countries/states have adopted various strategies to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. Some have pursued elimination strategies (such as New Zealand and Queensland), some have pursued suppression strategies (such as New South Wales, Australia and the United Kingdom). Some countries have adopted a more relaxed strategy (such as Sweden).

Strategies typically involve isolation, which necessarily imposes restrictions on people's lifestyles and adversely affects the economy.

All countries appear to be relying upon achieving a herd immunity through the discovery and application of a vaccine. Much has been invested in vaccine research and there are recent press reports of promising signs in research undertaken to date. We can be more confident now that one or more vaccines will be found to be effective than a couple of months ago.

Whilst there is no guarantee that a successful vaccine will be found, if it is, there remain issues around how long it would take to manufacture sufficient doses to immunise the global population (estimated to be three years), which countries would receive the vaccine first, which sectors of the population would receive it first, how long a vaccine would last, what impact the anti-vaxxers may cause, etc. Latest news suggests that vaccines may become available to Australians during the early to middle parts of 2021.

At this stage, there is much uncertainty around the future of COVI-19 and how it may affect our lives in the future. It is likely that some social distancing measures will remain in place over the next two to four years, particularly with respect to international travel.

Even if the COVID-19 pandemic could be overcome through global vaccination, people's memory will be relatively long, such that there will always be a fear of the next coronavirus to strike the human race. Nations will be more prepared for the next virus than the current virus. For example, South Korea's experience with MERS allowed that country to be better prepared than most.

3.2   Economy

As mentioned above, strategies to control the spread of the virus have resulted in significant changes to our lifestyles and our economies.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) reports that the world suffered an economic downturn of -3% in March quarter 2020. It is also projecting a total decline of -5% during 2020, which would be the 4th worst result in 150 years. The IMF is projecting a recovery of 5.4% in 2021, which Norling Consulting considers to be optimistic.

This projected decline in the world economy this year is despite massive fiscal and monetary stimulus measures undertaken by major countries in the wake of this pandemic. Quantitative easing has been greater in reaction to this pandemic than it was in reaction to the Global Financial Crisis. These measures have all been designed to cushion the adverse economic impacts of COVID-19.

The United States of America recorded a fall in its economic output by -1.3% in the first quarter 2020 and by -9.5% in the second quarter, which is the largest single quarter fall on record for that country. That means that the USA's economy has shrunk by -10.6% in just six months. With unemployment stimulus measures set to expire and the number of cases continuing at its highest levels, there remain few signs of the USA's economy recovering any time soon.

The United Kingdom suffered a -22.2% decline in its economic output during the first two quarters of 2020, the largest fall of any G7 or other European country in that period. This is believed to be due to that country being slow to react to COVID-19.

New Zealand's economy shrunk by -1.6% in the first quarter 2020 and is projected to decline by a total of -7.5% for the whole of 2020.

In Australia, Gross Domestic Product shrunk by only -0.3% in first quarter 2020 and a further -7.0% in second quarter 2020, the largest single quarter decline on record. This decline was experienced despite very strong stimulatory measures by the federal government during this period. This is the first recession experienced by Australia in 29 years and its largest contraction since records began.

Federal government projections (undertaken before the latest Victorian second wave) were that the economy would shrink by -4.5% in calendar 2020 (inferring that growth was expected over the final two quarters of 2020) and increase by 3.0% in 2021. Again, Norling Consulting considers these projections to be optimistic.

In the June quarter of 2020, Australia experienced deflation. Whilst primarily influenced by the government policy of free childcare, deflation is a further concern for the economy.

Apart from the great uncertainty surrounding how long the pandemic will continue to affect the Australian psyche and economy, the following additional observations can be made:

(a) Society's unrelenting march towards globalisation is likely to be halted and reversed for a period. COVID-19 has emphasised the importance of countries having a greater control over their economic inputs;
(b) Monetary policy will become more ineffective as interest rates remain at all-time lows and public and private debt levels remain very high;
(c) Governments will borrow more to stimulate the economy, although this will be less of a problem for Australia as it will be for most other countries/states;
(d) Australia's relationship with our largest trading partner, China, has soured. This may place adverse pressure on some of our exports;
(e) COVID-19 has further eroded the leadership and competence of the USA as a global power, perhaps permanently;
(f) Productivity will be adversely impacted by working from home and other changes imposed due to isolation strategies, particularly as strategies are changed and there are different strategies for different parts of the country;
(g) People will want to save more in uncertain times;

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(h) The way in which we work has fundamentally changed. Some of those who work from home will want to continue to work from home, at least some of the time. The demand for office space will reduce. The utility of public transport will reduce. These trends will undermine the current planning theory of cities and urban areas;

(i) The volume of cash transactions has fallen and is likely to remain at low levels;

(j) Immigration levels will fall significantly for the next two to four years at least;

(k) Population growth will fall significantly (1.5% to 0.6-0.7% per annum) due to the lack of immigration;

(l) Housing construction will fall significantly;

(m) Housing renovations will increase as people spend more time at home and need to create home offices;

(n) Housing prices will fall;

(o) International tourism to Australia will be non-existent for some years;

(p) International students travelling to Australia for education will be almost non-existent for some time, perhaps years;

(q) Total hours worked in Australia will fall;

(r) The hardest hit sectors of the economy will be Accommodation and Food Services, Education and Arts and Recreation;

(s) Women and young persons will comprise a disproportionate share of those losing their jobs;

(t) Online retail sales have increased during 2020 from 6.5% to 11%. It is most unlikely to return to 6.5%;

(u) Deflation may continue in the future;

(v) There will be continued pressure on 'bricks and mortar' retailing;

(w) There will be a greater appetite for human-less delivery systems (eg drones);

(x) There will be an increasing emphasis upon distribution systems, picking up some of the lost retail activity;

(y) Whilst there may be some greater levels of interest in increasing our manufacturing capacity, that is expected to be short-lived due to the economic differentials that exist between Australia and many Asian countries; and

(z) Large-scale entertainment (cinemas, concerts, sporting events, festivals) are likely to be curtailed for some years.

3.3   Local Implications

Fairfield City has long been a beneficiary of immigration, with the City being referred to previously as an International Gateway. With immigration expected to be decimated over the next few years, the City's major source of new population growth will have been lost. This is likely to have negative implications for population growth in the City, housing construction and supporting commercial development.

The City's industrial sector is likely to have been relatively unaffected by COVID-19. Demand for the range of goods passing through this sector is likely to have continued, with most industrial businesses being able to apply safe working distances between staff.

The City has a lower proportion of workers involved in the office sector. Consequently, a lower proportion of its workers are likely to have been adversely affected by COVID-19 isolation restrictions.

More specific implications are considered to include:

(a) More people will work from home and public transport usage will reduce, although generally to a lesser significance than for many other parts of Sydney;

(b) Any demand that may have previously existed for office space development in the City will be reduced (other than as ancillary to other business activities);

(c) The City may receive proportionately more applications for home renovations;

(d) Demand for new retail development is likely to wane, with tenant interest evaporating and there being insufficient population growth; and

(e) Patronage at festivals, dining out, sporting events, cinemas and other group-based entertainment is likely to diminish significantly due to social distancing measures and temporarily changed behaviours. This will place pressure upon the City's steps to develop a night-time economy and otherwise provide culturally relevant social activities.

3.4   Proposed Strategies

Table 3.1: Proposed Strategies for Managing the Effects of COVID-19

GOAL: To ensure that the City is as prepared as it can be to manage the effects of COVID-19 on its ratepayers.				
Strategies	**Actions**	**Stakeholders**	**Timeframe**	**KPI/Outcome**
Accept that work from home will replace office building usage to some degree	• Ensure that LEP provides a greater range of alternative uses in places of office concentrations • Review the LEP to identify changes necessary to support work from home options, including appropriateness of Home Businesses, Home Industry, Home Occupation	• Local Government • Business Owners • Employees	**Short**	• Five-yearly Census data on where people work showing higher levels of employees working from home
Improve communication systems to support working from home options	• Ensure that NBN has been completed in the City • Support 5G in the City • Support free Wi-Fi is available in central locations	• Local Government • NBN • Telecommunication companies	**Short**	• Inspection of coverage maps to show higher levels of coverage across LGA
Support local event organisers to embrace social distancing measures for events	• Review event budgets • Review applicability of technology to achieve outcomes whilst maintaining social distancing measures	• Local Government • Event organisers	**Short**	• Stable levels of revenue from events
Support distribution operators in industrial zones	• Ensure industrial estates continue to be connected to air, sea, rail and road networks • Monitor drone technology, capability and usage in the City	• Local Government • Industrial businesses	**Short & Medium**	• Stable industrial vacancy levels
Develop & Implement COVID-19 Recovery Program	• Establish Economic Recovery Taskforce • Identify Financial relief opportunities. LGA level: Eg. Waive or defer rates, rents, fees, permits etc. Communicate to residents & business owners other financial assistance packages available from State & Federal Gov • Establish Support Network. Eg. 24/7 businesses support line, one on one mentoring, partner with community groups, educational institutions & other governmental bodies to widen support network	• Local Government • State Government • Federal Government • Local Businesses	**Short & Medium**	• Fewer business closures • Increased household spending

4 NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY (NTE)

This Chapter provides an overview of Night-Time Economies (NTE) and proposes a strategy to successful establish a NTE in Fairfield City.

4.1 Night Time Economy (NTE)

The Night Time Economy (NTE) is defined as economic activity that occurs between 6pm and 6am. Although there are various definitions for periods within this 12-hour block, for the purposes of this report, Evening is defined as 6pm to 10pm, Late Night is defined as 10pm to 2am and Twilight is defined from 2am to 6am. The selection of these periods is based on current Australian trading times with most supermarkets and department stores open until 10pm on most nights and bars and clubs generally open until 2am.

Through the Council of Capital City Lord Mayor's Local Government Safe Cities Network, Australia has been researching, monitoring and structuring the evolution of Australia's NTE since 2009. The latest report was released in 2019 and provides a snapshot of Australia's NTE in the 2018 financial year with particular focus on the 'Core' NTE. The NTE is often discussed in terms of core businesses such as restaurants, cafes, pubs, theatres, concerts and festivals, which fall under the sub sectors of Food, Drink and Entertainment. Beyond the core businesses are the 'Non-Core', which comprise of supporting businesses such as transportation, education (eg. night classes), gyms and retail. Examples are shown in Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1: Core vs Non-Core NTE Businesses

Source: NSW Treasury, Sydney 24-hour Economy Report 2020

In 2018, the core NTE was comprised of 108,601 establishments, representing 5% of the 2.3 million businesses registered in Australia. These businesses employed over 1.1 million people (9% of economy) and generated close to $134 billion in turnover (4% of economy). The turnover increased by 5.6% from 2017 and was well above the rate of inflation of 2.1%.

Australia's core NTE is categorised into three subsectors, namely Food, Drink and Entertainment. As shown in Figure 4.2 below, the largest subsector was Food, accounting for over 60% of the NTE in terms of number of businesses and employees and over 50% of the total turnover. Entertainment was the second largest subsector, accounting for roughly 30% of the NTE and Drink was the smallest, accounting for approximately 10% of the NTE. Both the Food and Entertainment subsectors have continued to grow since 2009, whilst the Drink subsector has continued to decline, reflecting the growing social trend of declining alcohol consumption. In Australia, the consumption of alcohol has fallen to its lowest levels since the 1960s with younger people aged 18 to 24 drinking less frequently than older people.

Figure 4.2: NTE Sub Sectors
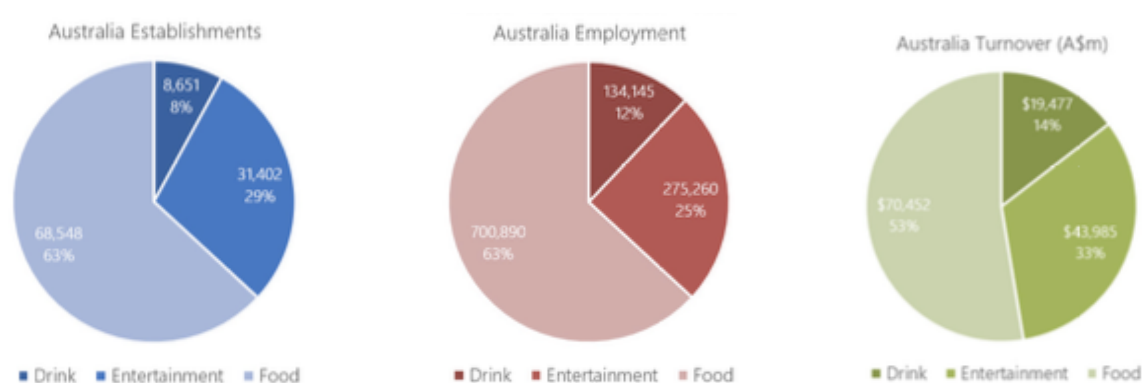
Source: Ingenium Research, Measuring the Australian Night-Time Economy 2018

In 2018, New South Wales continued to be the largest contributor to Australia's NTE, followed by Victoria and Queensland (34%, 28% and 18% respectively). The NTE of all six Australian States grew from 2017 to 2018 with Victoria having the largest growth rate of 6.9% in terms of turnover, 3.4% in terms of employment and 3.3% in terms of registered businesses. Victoria was followed by New South Wales (6.0% turnover, 2.5% employment, 2.5% businesses) and Queensland (4.7% turnover, 1.5% employment, 2.1% businesses).

In 2020 the NSW Treasury released the Sydney 24-hour Economy Strategy with a vision to transform Sydney into a 'Global City' that never sleeps such as New York City or Tokyo. NSW has invested in and proactively supported the growth of the NTE through various measures such as:

- Amendments under the Liquor Act within the Liquor Amendment (24-hour economy) Bill to enable a balance between safety and a vibrant economy;
- Approving more venues for extended trading, patron capacity and wider range of live entertainment;
- Introducing a new 'Pop Up License';
- Increased night-time public transport;
- Approvals for rideshare options; and
- Funds and Grants worth millions to stimulate the NTE and support musicians, artists and venues.

The Strategy builds on previous research and aims to provide a unified and holistic roadmap to realise Greater Sydney's potential as a 24-hour city. To aid the conception of the Strategy, community workshops and online surveys were conducted to gauge the community's perception of Sydney based on 1,500 respondents. The results included:

- Strong sense of pride and connectedness to Sydney in general, however a lower perception of Sydney's Night Life;
- A moderately strong desire to have a stronger NTE and a willingness to go out at night, but a lack of awareness of what Sydney has to offer; and
- A low to moderate desire to engage with government to shape the NTE, but unsure how to participate.

The Strategy has five Strategic Pillars: Integrated Planning and Place Making; Diversification of Night-Time Activities; Industry and Culture Development; Mobility and Improved Connections; and Changing the Narrative. These Pillars are outlined in Figure 4.3 below.

Figure 4.3: Sydney 24 Hour Economy Strategy – Strategic Pillars

Integrated Planning & Place-Making
Appoint a Coordinator General for Greater Sydney's 24-Hour Economy
Establish a 'Neon Grid' across Greater Sydney to create a single view of existing & potential 24-hour hubs
Initiate a city-wide night-time hub certification program
Establish 24-Hour Economy Acceleration Program for Councils
Streamline safety & inspection measures within night-time hubs
Expand community & industry-led safety programs
Develop & incentivise participation in precinct-based streetscape atmosphere & activations
Enable & support the use of under-utilised spaces & buildings to provide small-scale live performances, arts & culture events
Identify & preserve places of historic & cultural significance

Diversification of Night-Time Activities
Provide Councils with tools & resources to support better activity mix planning in their 24-hour Economy hubs
Support & encourage businesses to diversify
Extend opening hours across low impact retail businesses
Further streamline liquor licensing to support venues
Review live music & noise regulations to maintain opportunities for venues & musicians
Simplify requirements & improve affordability for creating pop-up activities
Simplify requirements for creating cultural events in public spaces
Extend & promote opening hours across major cultural institutions
Support globally significant events (homegrown & international)
Activate major sporting precincts with inclusive before and after activities

Industry & Cultural Development
Develop nuanced sub-sector playbooks
Establish ongoing business engagement forums
Ensure affordable spaces for creative industries
Embed the activation for 24-hour economy activity in the design of new NSW Government precincts
Retain & incubate talent in Sydney's night-time industries

Mobility & Improved Connectivity
Extend late-night transport choice & safety
Develop a mobility plan to make it easier to travel between 24-hour economy hubs
Implement enhanced parking options for night-time hubs
Ensure safe options for end-of-trip connections for workers & consumers of the NTE
Initiate an arts program to activate transport links

Changing the Narrative
Activate local marketing & promotion of night-time industries via the Neon Grid
Re-establish a unifying vision of Sydney as a vibrant global cultural destination
Re-align public perception of health, safety & wellbeing within night-time hubs
Develop distinct branding for key night-time hubs to communicate the unique value proposition of each
Make the Neon Grid a digital, centralised information platform for all of Greater Sydney's 24-hour hubs

Source: NSW Treasury, Sydney 24-Hour Economy Strategy, 2020

A central idea promoted by the Strategy is that of a Neon Grid. The Neon Grid, as suggested by Ethos Urban, a consultant for the Strategy, is shown in Figure 4.4 below. However, the nodes/hubs (cities) are not defined in the Sydney 24-Hour Economy Strategy. The Neon Grid concept is a framework to identify and represent Greater Sydney's interconnectedness and diverse 24-Hour economy. Establishing the grid allows stakeholders to map, benchmark and plan the growth of the 24-Hour economy in a holistic way, enhance mobility and connectivity between hubs and enables cohesive marketing and promotion of Greater Sydney's 24-Hour economy.

It is noted that Fairfield City centres do not currently feature in the Neon Grid.

Figure 4.4: Sydney's Neon Grid

Source: Ethos Urban, 2020

In terms of actioning the Strategy, a Consultative Committee is to be established, headed by the 24-Hour Economy Coordinator General responsible for implementing the Strategy and managing the programs.

4.2   Fairfield City Centres & Events

Fairfield City is a diverse and bustling multicultural destination during the day with strong town centres, each with its own unique offering. Figure 4.5 below outlines the City's Centres as defined by the Fairfield Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) 2040. Currently, there are four main town centres, namely Fairfield City Centre, Cabramatta, Prairiewood and Bonnyrigg. Fairfield City Centre is the largest centre providing a wide range of employment opportunities, services and cultural experiences for locals and visitors; Cabramatta is a South-East Asian inspired food and retail hub that attracts locals and visitors; Prairiewood provides modern retail and entertainment facilities serving primarily locals; and Bonnyrigg, which is described as a green space of cultural unity serving the local community. Cecil Park to the west is marked as a future Strategic Centre and has potential to complement the existing centres and serve both a local and visitor market. Fairfield City's centres have significant foot traffic during business hours and Cabramatta in particular draws large volumes of visitors. It should be noted that for the purposes of this report, 'locals' refer to residents within Fairfield City LGA and 'visitors' refer to people from outside the LGA.

Figure 4.5 Fairfield City Centres
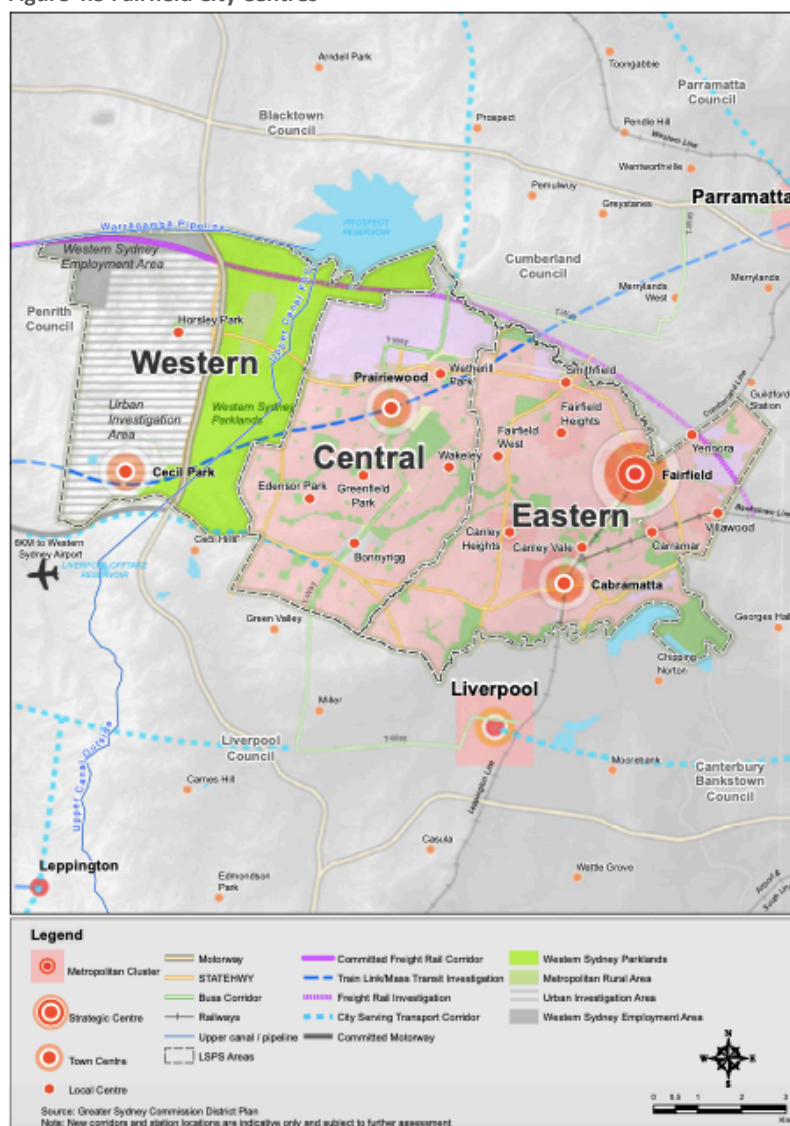
Source: Fairfield City LSPS 2040

In addition to the centres, Fairfield City also hosts a number of major festivals across the LGA including the Cabramatta Moon Festival, the Bring it On! Festival, the Culinary Carnival, the Cabramatta Moon Festival and Illuminate NYE. Before COVID-19 restrictions, Lunar New Year celebrations in Cabramatta attracted over 100,000 people annually and the Fairfield Showground hosted a further 26 or so smaller festivals or events per year, attracting over 100,000 people annually.

Although bustling and busy during the day, Fairfield City remains relatively subdued at night with only a small proportion of businesses open for night-time trading, such as the restaurant strip in Canley Heights and Canley Vale, which stays open to later hours seven days a week and isolated restaurants located at some other centres.

As such, Council is seeking higher level economic and strategic advice that will lead to Council policies and initiatives that support not only day to day economic activity in the main town centres but in the longer term, support development of the night-time economy of the City.

4.3   Situational Analysis

To gain a better understanding of the operating hours of the four town centres of Fairfield City Centre, Cabramatta, Prairiewood and Bonnyrigg, the trading hours of selected venues were analysed to provide a perspective of the extent to which the NTE exists within the City, with the results shown in Figure 4.6 below. It should be noted that the list is not comprehensive. The list excludes service stations and includes only places that contribute to the Fairfield City's NTE, which means they are open beyond 6pm. Centres do not correspond directly to government planning definitions, but rather proximity to town centres and whether the centre warrants consideration as an evening destination. Trading times were collected from Google. In cases where the venue/retailer is registered as open later only on some days, such as Thursday late-night shopping or weekends, these later times are shown in blue with the regular times shown in green.

The results indicate that the Evening portion of the NTE (6pm to 10pm) is well occupied and served by a variety of businesses in nearly all centres, with supermarkets, restaurants and pubs anchoring the Evening timeframe. By the Late-Night portion of the NTE (10pm to 2am), all retailers are closed with the exception of Coles in Prairiewood, which is open until 11pm and the Market Plaza in Fairfield West, which is open until midnight on Thursdays. During this Late-Night period, only restaurants, one cinema, one bowling alley and numerous pubs/hotels/taverns/bars are open. The only centres providing late-night food options are Fairfield Heights, Canley Vale and Prairiewood whilst the remaining centres only have pubs/hotels/taverns/bars open. By the Twilight portion of the NTE (2am to 6am) only the pubs/hotels/taverns/bars remain open.

It is interesting to note that in terms of entertainment suitable for all ages, there is only one cinema, one bowling alley and one games arcade in the whole of Fairfield City LGA that showed up on a Google Search. All these venues are located in Prairiewood. Another bowling alley, Seven Ten Split located in Fairfield, also exists but is listed as temporarily closed and thus, not included in the analysis. It is also surprising that three of the four main town centres do not have Late-Night food options whereas smaller centres such as Fairfield Heights and Canley Vale/Canley Heights do present these options.

Fairfield CBD seems to be the largest contributor to the NTE in terms of the number of venues open, with four hotels/taverns located in this district. Prairiewood seems to be the most family friendly, with the largest variety of businesses open during the NTE. Canley Vale/Canley Heights and Wetherill Park/Smithfield are the only centres that have stand-alone bars (not attached to a hotel/tavern) opened late.

Centre	Retail	Entertainment	Selected Restaurants	Hotels/Bars	Night Time Economy										
					Evening				Late Night				Twilight			
					6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am
Fairfield CBD	Neeta City SC															
	Woolworths (NC)															
	Big W (NC)															
	Kmart															
	Coles															
			Lao Village													
			Super Sharwarna													
			La Tratt													
			Green Peppercorn													
				Fairfield Hotel												
				Crescent Hotel												
				Cambridge Tavern												
				Fairfield RSL												
Fairfield Heights	Woolworths															
			Hummurubi Restaurant													
			Lai Sun Chinese													
			Al-Awael													
				The Brown Jug												
Cabramatta	Cabramatta Plaza															
	Woolworths															
			Tan Viet Noodle House													
			Vinh Phat Chinese													
			Pho Tau Bay													
			Poke Bros													
				Cabramatta Hotel												
				Stardust Hotel												
Canley Heights			Simple Asian Vegetarian													
			Bun Cha Hoa													
			Pho Hien													
			Sinh Phu													
				V Lounge												
				Canley Hotel												
Canley Vale			TK Something BBQ													
			Skara Rama 5													
			Dragon Bowl Seafood													
			Hai Au Lang Nuong													
				Bar 53												
				Richards on the Park												
Prairiewood	Stockland Wetherill Park SC															
	Bossley Park SC															
	Greenfield Park SC															
	Woolworths															
	Coles															
	Big W															
		Hoyts Cinemas															
		Timezone															
		Bowlerama															
			Rashys													
			Savanas													
				Greenfield Tavern												
Fairfield West	Market Plaza															
	Coles															
	ALDI															
			Four Seasons													
			Gigino													
Bonnyrigg	Bonnyrigg Plaza															
	Woolworths															
	Big W															
			Spring Sushi													
			Golden Rice Thai													
			Enzo's Cucina													
			Siracha Thai													
			Sellino's													
				Pritchard's Hotel												
Wetherill Park/Smithfield	Greenway Plaza															
	ALDI															
	Coles (S)															
			Rosetti's													
			My Kitchen Too													
			L'Olio La Gnoccheria													
			Black Bear BBQ													
			Candelori													
				Saigon Hustle												
				New Victoria Tavern												
				Smithfield Tavern												

Source: Norling Consulting, Various venue/facility websites, Fairfield City LSPS 2040

In addition to centres, events are a significant driver of Fairfield City's economy. Before COVID-19 restrictions, five major events were planned for 2020 including Lunar New Year, Bring It On! Festival, Culinary Carnival, Moon Festival and Illuminate NYE 2020. These events are outlined in Figure 4.7 below. Historically, the most popular events comprised the Luna New Year and Moon Festival celebrations with each event attracting approximately 100,000 visitors. In terms of the NTE, the majority of these Major Events contributed only to the Evening portion of the NTE, with the exception of Luna New Year, which also contributed to the Late-Night portion of the NTE.

Figure 4.7: Fairfield City Major Events

					Night Time Economy											
					Evening				Late Night				Twilight			
Event	Location	Description	When?	Trading Times	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am
Luna New Year	Cabramatta	Celebration of the Luna New Year, popular in South East Asia. Attracts over 100,000 people annually.	January or February	9am to Midnight	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓					
Bring it On! Festival	Fairfield Showground	Music, Sports and Arts Festival celebrating youth culture, talent, music & art, held in conjunction with Fairfield City Markets. Atrracts thousands annually	April	12pm to 7:30pm	▓	▓										
Culinary Carnival	Fairfield CBD	Celebration of Fairfield City's diverse food and entertainment culture	May	11am to 4pm												
Moon Festival	Cabramatta	Celebration of harvest and changing of seasons, popular in South East Asia. Attracts over 90,000 people annually	September	9am to 8pm	▓	▓	▓									
Illuminate NYE	Fairfield Showground	Celebration of traditional western New Year's Eve	December	6pm to 10pm	▓	▓	▓	▓								

Source: Norling Consulting, Fairfield City Council, Various event websites

In addition to the Major Events listed above, the Fairfield Showground had planned to host over 20 other festivals/events in 2020, as shown in Figure 4.8 below. Green bars represent regular trading times for the event and light blue bars represent possible trading times as a website for the event could not be found. These events would have attracted over 100,000 people to Fairfield City, contributing to the local economy. However, in terms of NTE, less than half these events (46%) would have contributed to the NTE. However, with the exception of the Vietnamese New Year, all would only have contributed to the Evening period.

Figure 4.8: Scheduled Events at Fairfield Showgrounds 2020

			Night Time Economy											
			Evening				Late Night				Twilight			
Event	Estimated Attendees	When?	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am
Vietnamese New Year	30,000+	February	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓							
Pro Street Sunday Car Show	TBC	March												
Assyrian New Year	10,000+	March	▓	▓	▓	▓								
Chaldean New Year	TBC	April												
Fairfield Easter Show	TBC	April												
American Bully Kennel Show	TBC	April												
Batnaya Chaldean	2,000+	April	░	░	░	░								
Parrot Breeders Exhibit	1,500+	May	░	░	░	░								
Chaldean Flag Day	3,000+	May	░	░	░	░								
Volkswagen Nationals	2,000+	May												
Volunteer Day	TBC	May												
Multicultural Eid Festival & Fair	20,000+	June	▓	▓	▓									
Yum Cha Festival of Small Bites	TBC	June												
Sydney District Wyandotte Club	TBC	June												
Food Festial	TBC	June	░	░										
Blacktown Swap Meet	TBC	July	▓											
Spring Clean Up	TBC	August												
Chemical Waste Collection Day	TBC	August												
Chilean Festival	8,000+	September	▓	▓	▓	▓								
Sydney Fiesta Kultura	15,000+	October	▓	▓	▓	▓								
American Bully Kennel Club	TBC	November												
Madonna Di Loretto	TBC	November	▓	▓	▓	▓								
Cancer Council Relay for Life	TBC	November												
Latin American Festival	TBC	November	▓	▓	▓	▓								

Source: Norling Consulting, Fairfield City Council, Fairfield Showground, Various event websites

4.4   Night-Time Economy (NTE) Research and Case Study

The Night-Time Economy has been a significant, global topic over the past few decades. Hundreds of research papers and studies have been conducted to better understand what constitutes a successful NTE and what are the salient contributing factors. *A Manifesto for Night-Time Economy* written in 2016 suggests that a successful NTE must:

- Attract every sector of the population, appealing to all ages, races and abilities;
- Cater for a wide variety of interests including eating, drinking, dancing, performing and so forth;
- Attract all income groups, providing options for all budgets;
- Be accessible by all modes of transport from private to public to biking or walking; and
- Be safe and amenable through clear signage, good lighting and appropriate security.

The *Manifesto* continues to outline a strategy to enable a successful a NTE, such as a strong vision for the NTE and a clear acknowledgement that a NTE is not simply the extension of trading hours, but involving the development of strong partnerships to facilitate multifaceted approaches encompassing all stakeholders and policies that encourage a strong NTE. The *Manifesto* emphasises the importance of catering to the people who will work in the NTE, the customers who will benefit from it and also the residents who have to live in and neighbouring the late-night precincts.

Other guides such as *A Guide to Managing Your Night-Time Economy*, published in 2018, emphasises the need for proper planning and tailoring the NTE to the local community, which may not be suitable for late-night trading or 24-hour economies, encouraging density as a crime deterrent as opposed to over-utilising law enforcement and supporting industries that naturally operate in the night such as the arts and changing the narrative and perception of night-time trading.

In terms of case studies, Parramatta serves a good example for Fairfield City as it is in close proximity and has previously faced similar challenges. In 2008, the University of Western Sydney presented the *City After Dark* paper, which outlined Paramatta's decade-long process to establish a NTE, which at that stage was still subdued with few venues opened past 8pm; constrained by poor design; a lack of a coherent, focused NTE strategy; segmentation of sites and activities; underutilised public space; and concerns for safety in terms of substance abuse, prostitution and homelessness. The paper identified opportunities to better integrate sporting events into the NTE, as well as developing the culture/arts sector to drive the NTE.

Today, Parramatta is destined to be Greater Sydney's second CBD and is working towards a 24-hour economy. Parramatta has a dedicated Parramatta Night City Framework 2020-2024, which was endorsed in February, 2020. Parramatta is a strong advocate for and is a member of the Night-Time Economy Councils' Committee (NTECC), which was established in 2016 and included Parramatta, Wollongong, Sydney, Newcastle, Waverly.   By 2019, the NTECC now also includes Liverpool, Canterbury-Bankstown, Lake Macquarie, Northern Beaches, Penrith and Inner West.

To support the NTE, Parramatta has developed innovative programs, such as Liquor Accords, which all businesses holding liquor licenses are strongly encouraged to be a financial member. Liquor Accords are partnerships among the licensed venues, community members and government that work together to develop practical solutions to address alcohol-related issues, anti-social behaviour and violence in local areas. From a policy perspective, Parramatta has amended its Planning Scheme by applying notations on planning certificates to outline the potential amenity impacts that should be reasonably expected when living in a vibrant and diverse commercial, mixed-use or special use centre.

The notations apply to nine zones, namely B1 Neighbourhood Centre, B2 Local Centre, B3 Commercial Core, B4 Mixed Use, B5 Business Development, B6 Enterprise Corridor, IN1 General Industrial, IN2 Light Industrial and IN3 Heavy Industrial. Furthermore, to allow the NTE to be flexible and grow organically, the Pop-Up Bar and Events licence was introduced in 2019, which enables entrepreneurs to quickly set up an establishment with relatively low costs and a new liquor license for pop-up bars and events, which allows businesses to 'pop-up' and operate for up to six weeks before either renewing the licence or applying for a more permanent solution.

4.5   Implications

Consistent with Council's observations, Fairfield City's NTE is relatively subdued with most centres and events closing at 10pm at the latest with the exception of pubs/taverns. However, research shows that a successful NTE is based on long-term planning to create a NTE that is related to, but not simply an extension of trading hours. As such, the centres hierarchy for the NTE may be vastly different to the day-time centres hierarchy to reflect infrastructure, community preferences, legislation and economic viability.

Following the concept of the Neon Grid presented by the state government and based on the current trading times of Fairfield City centres and events, the most promising areas for night-time nodes during the first stage of establishing a stronger NTE are Fairfield CBD, Prairiewood, Cabramatta and Canley Vale/Canley Heights, as shown in Figure 4.9 below. Blue nodes are likely to be local serving whiles the orange nodes have potential to be connected into the larger Neon Grid and attract visitors.

Figure 4.9: Proposed Fairfield City Neon Grid
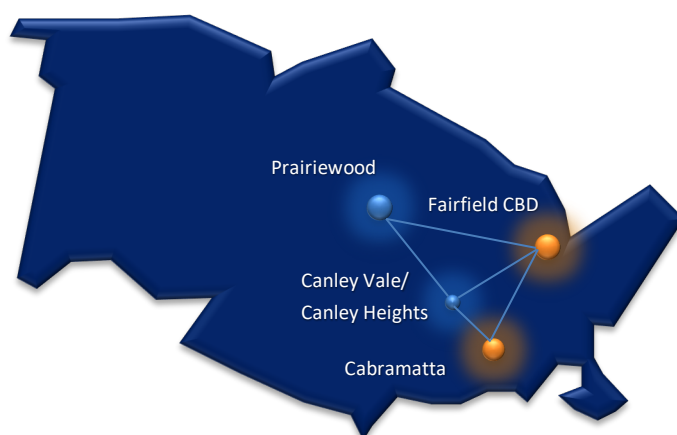
Prairiewood, namely the Stockland Wetherill Park Shopping Centre, has potential be an attractive location for local families in the evening with cinemas, a games arcade and family friendly restaurants in and around the Shopping Centre as well as a bowling alley in close proximity. The Fairfield Showgrounds, also considered as part of this node has great potential to boost the NTE through events as well as a regular 'Eat Street' venue. Eat Street Northshore in Brisbane (Hamilton), Queensland has proven itself as a popular street food night-market with live entertainment, drawing crowds of thousands on a weekly basis since opening in 2013. Although not currently operating due to COVID-19 restrictions, the nature of the event corresponds well with the cultural diversity of Fairfield City and has potential to also draw visitors. Another idea could be regular open air theatre events. Ensuring clear walkways with bright lighting between the Showgrounds and the Shopping Centre is likely to encourage cross promotion between events and support both venues.

Fairfield CBD has the largest concentration of hotels/taverns with function spaces and is already trading beyond the Evening period and into the Late-Night and Twilight periods. Although most likely not the case at the moment, with the right events, offerings, infrastructure and promotion, Fairfield CBD has the potential to draw visitors from other nearby LGAs, enabling more businesses to obtain the throughput required to be economically viable during the NTE. There is also opportunity to offer more family friendly night entertainment in Fairfield CBD to diversify the offerings. An easy entry point would be the Hotels offering family discounts on certain nights for dinner or events like Circus Night or a Children's Multicultural Evening.

Cabramatta is an interesting node. During the day, Cabramatta is bustling and also attracts visitors. However, on a regular basis, the NTE is almost non-existent with many restaurants closed by 8pm and the local shopping centre, Cabramatta Plaza, is closed by 6pm daily except for Thursday evening when it is open until 7pm. Despite this, the Lunar New Year and Moon Festivals draw crowds of approximately 100,000 each late into the night on an annual basis.

Perhaps crime and safety are concerns, with the NSW Bureau of Crime reporting that although rates are stable, Fairfield City has rates of homicide, robbery and drug offences that are higher than state levels; or perhaps the businesses find they have been unable to attract sufficient volumes of customers in the evening to be economically viable. Given the strong Asian influences on the centre, there is potential for businesses to also offer culturally aligned entertainment, such as karaoke bars and not just food to support the NTE, which would also attract visitors.

Canley Vale and Canley Heights is a strong food orientated, local serving night hub. The area has good access via public transport and private transport at night and restaurants are consistently open until 10pm with some restaurants and several bars open during the Late-Night period during the week and on weekends. Increasing entertainment options and potentially reviewing policies regarding liquor and entertainment may encourage more businesses to contribute to the NTE.

It is important for Council to develop a clear vision for what it wants to achieve for its NTE and more research will be required to determine the level of trading that will best serve Fairfield City, given the local community and demographic profile. Some points to consider:

- Is the long term goal for Council to provide a 24-hour economy? Is that appropriate given the demographic profile of the community?
- Is having consistent evening trade with late-night trade on the weekends more viable?
- What is preventing businesses from trading later?
- What is the community of perception of late-night trading? Are there safety concerns?
- What policies currently exist relating to night-trading?
- Does the current infrastructure support and encourage night trading?
- Is Fairfield City designed for night-time trading?
- Are Core as well as Non-Core NTE businesses equipped and ready for late night trading?
- Which centres offer the greatest potential to focus upon?

4.6   Proposed Strategy and Actions

A strong NTE requires a clear vision, strong planning and a committed person/group to champion the efforts. Table 4.1 below outlines proposed strategies and actions for establishing a stronger NTE in Fairfield City.

Table 4.1 Proposed Strategies and Actions for Establishing a Stronger NTE in Fairfield City

| GOAL: To develop a location appropriate night-time economy that is vibrant, safe and engaging				
Strategies	**Actions**	**Stakeholders**	**Timeframe**	**KPI/Outcome**
Create a Night-Time Committee	• Survey business to understand constraints to night-time trading • Identify order of night-time node emergence as night-time venues • Observe night-time behaviour to identify commonly used services, pedestrian paths & behaviours • Advocate for night-time trading	• Local Government • State Government • Businesses	**Short**	• Increased number of businesses trading at night
Create Partnerships	• If deemed appropriate by Council through further research, advocate for Fairfield City to be added to the State Neon Grid • Consider joining the Night-Time Economy Councils' Committee (NTECC)	• Local Government • State Government	**Short**	• Increased cross promotion of Fairfield City as a night-time destination by State campaigns or by other LGAs
Enable a multi-faceted approach to safety	• Identify level of concern for safety from perspectives of patrons, residents, workers, visitors, law enforcement officers • Identify appropriate level of police/guards needed • Identify appropriate physical design space measures (eg. lighting) • Identify events & services that appeal to a wide range of people (ie. Across ages, cultures)	• State Government • Local Government • Workers • Business Owners • Law Enforcement • Residents • Visitors	**Medium**	• Higher volumes of people • Lower levels of crime
Enable location appropriate night-time activities/services/facilities	• Identify a mixture of activities ranging from periodic events to everyday conveniences • Identify existing facilities appropriate for night-time economy considering transport options, lighting, noise control, surrounding zones • Identify intended patrons for each location (ie. Local/Visitors/Both)	• Local Government • State Government • Workers • Business Owners • Residents • Visitors	**Medium**	• Higher revenue for local businesses • Higher level of patrons
Ensure Non-Core Services & Businesses are supported	• Ensure public transport & on demand transport t is safe & operational between night time nodes • Identify possible future rail stations to support NTE. Eg. Fairfield Entertainment Precinct (Fairfield Showground)	• Local Government • State Government • Federal Government	**Medium**	• Lower levels of NT drink driving offences • Higher patronage of Non-Core Services at night

5 WESTERN SYDNEY FREIGHT LINE

This Chapter explores the impacts of the planned Western Sydney Freight Line and how Fairfield City may best benefit from the project.

5.1   Western Sydney Freight Line

In 2018, the NSW Government announced its intention to investigate a corridor for a new Western Sydney Freight Line (WSFL). The WSFL intends to link the Aerotropolis (to the City's west) with Port Botany (to the City's east) to support efficient movement of freight across Greater Sydney and reducing pressure on road freight networks. It is a significant infrastructure project that is designed to support the economic growth of the broader region.

The investigations into the corridor are being coordinated by Transport for NSW (TfNSW), who established a working party comprising representatives from various State agencies as well as relevant Councils affected by the potential route of the proposed corridor. It is intended for the Line to start at an Intermodal Terminal (IMT) within the Western Sydney Airport, connect with the existing Southern Sydney Freight Line (SSFL), possibly at Leightonfield, and end at Port Botany. A map of the proposed WSFL investigation corridor is shown in Figure 5.1 below.

Figure 5.1: Map of Proposed Western Sydney Freight Line Corridor
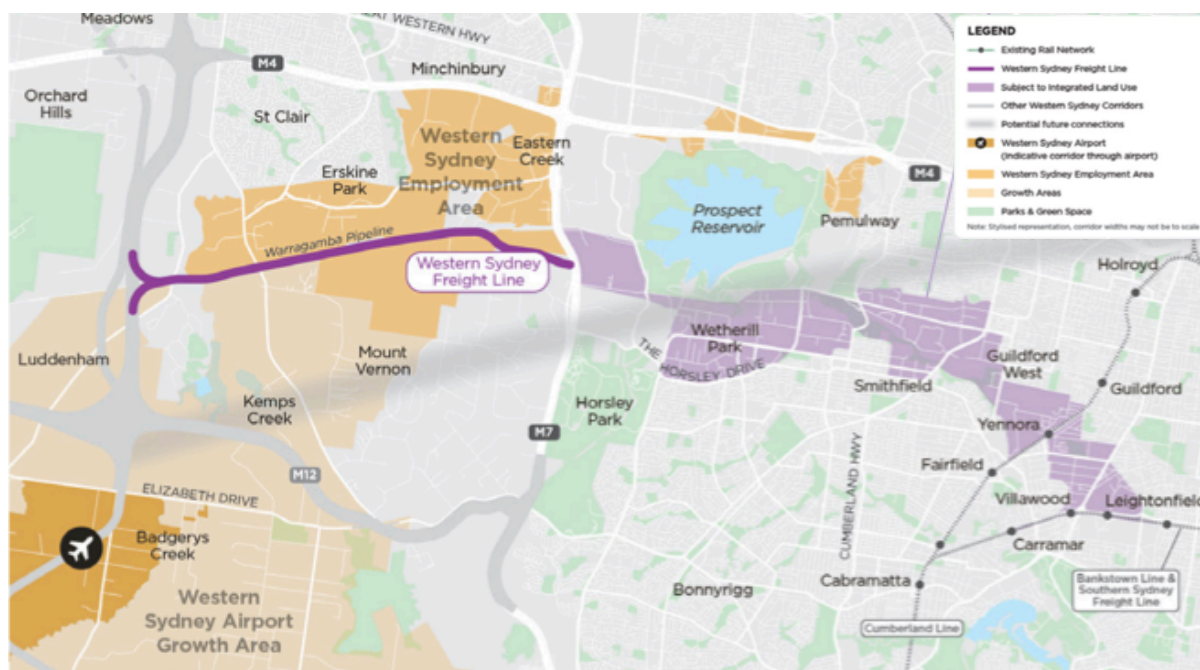
Source: Transport for NSW, 2018

5.2   Impacts on Fairfield City

As shown in the Fairfield LSPS 2040 Structure Plan below, the WSFL corridor extends along the northern portion of the Fairfield LGA, for a total distance of 16km from Horsley Park in the west to Yennora in the east. A more definitive corridor has already been identified for the corridor through parts of Horsley Park (west of Wallgrove Rd and the M7 Westlink) while other sections of the corridor east of Horsley Park are still being investigated.

The 'Freight Line Investigation' area shown on the Fairfield Structure Plan represents a preferred investigation area identified by Fairfield City and does not necessarily reflect the ultimate corridor to be determined by TfNSW. It is planned that the investigation area is to traverse along and/or through the City's industrial area. This may adversely impact upon existing industrial activities and/or may present opportunities for existing businesses to capitalise upon.
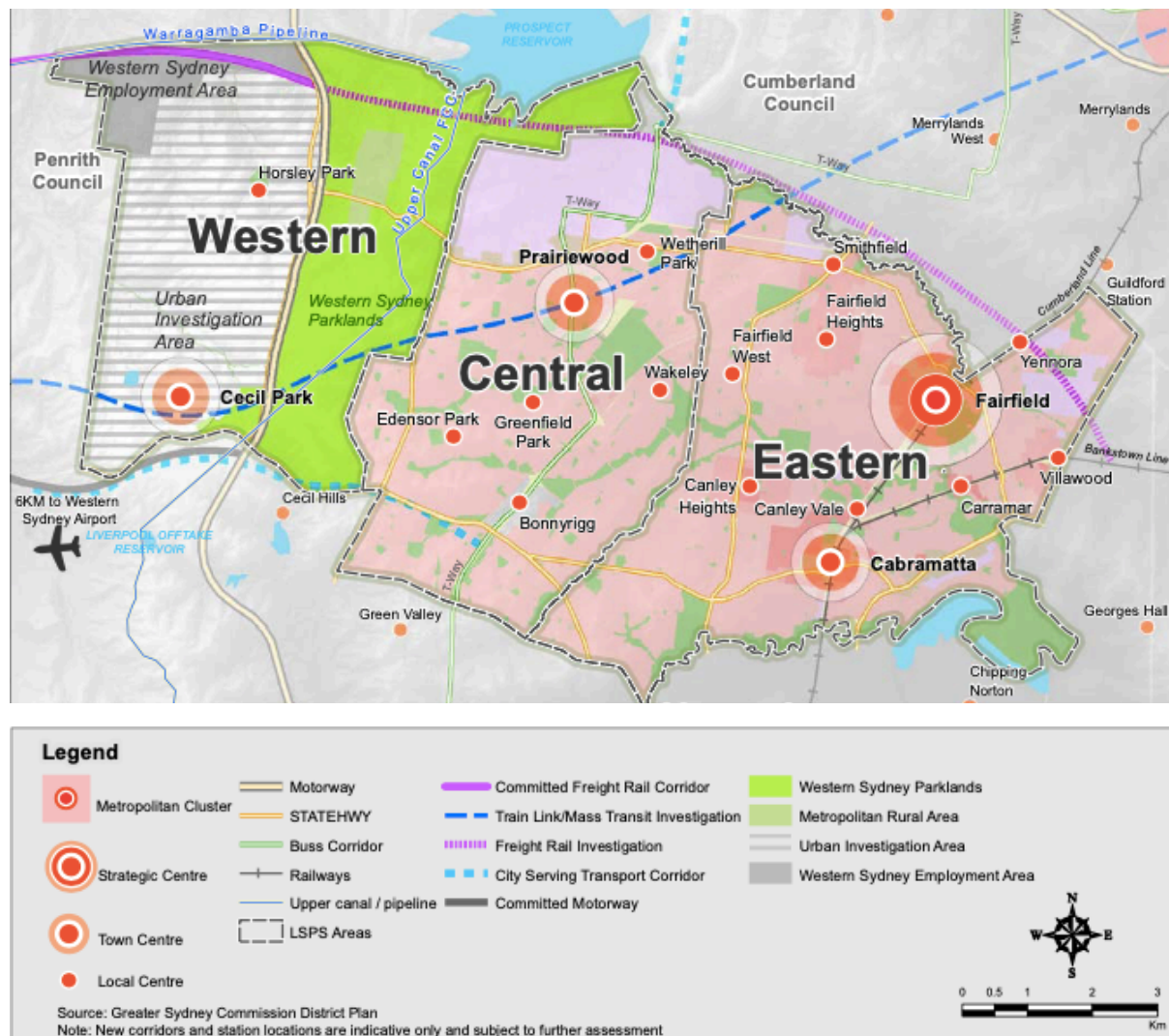
Source: Fairfield City Council LSPS, 2020

Council's preferred investigation area is underpinned by the following considerations:

- Avoid 'severance' of the existing industrial areas and supporting road network in Fairfield City. In this regard, TfNSW is also investigating the provision of a series of raised (i.e. freight line on stanchions) and below ground (tunnelled) options for the freight line in proximity to existing urban areas;
- Minimise impacts on existing businesses and potential loss of employment lands;
- Provide the opportunity for provision of a freight rail siding in the Wetherill Park for transfer of goods and materials from the Wetherill Park/Smithfield industrial estate onto the freight line; and
- Minimise impacts on existing residential precincts, open space corridors, flood liable land, creeks and areas supporting biodiversity.

The above criteria highlights the fact that the provision of the WSFL through Fairfield City generates both threats and opportunities for the City.

5.3   SWOT Analysis

Fairfield City's industrial areas contribute significantly to Greater Sydney's economy and have proven to be an attractive, strategic, central location for investors over time. However, with the planned establishment of the Aerotropolis, the introduction of several new, cheaper, more flexible 'greenfield' industrial estates to the west and construction of the WSFL, there is a real risk of Fairfield City becoming a less attractive option to future investors. It is therefore important to understand what strengths and weaknesses the industrial areas have and what opportunities and threats the WSFL presents to these sites. A SWOT Analysis summary is presented in Figure 5.2 below.

Figure 5.2: SWOT Analysis of Fairfield City's Industrial Areas

- **Established industrial businesses**
- **Strong road connectivity**
- **Diverse businesses**
- **Central, strategic location for Greater Sydney**

- **Fragmented business types**
- **Few Greenfield sites for expansion or new large businesses**
- **Limited capacity for expansion**
- **Relatively high rents due to low vacancies**
- **Poor road quality in older industrial areas**

STRENGTHS

WEAKNESSES

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS

- **Faster connection to Port Botany & Aerotropolis**
- **Access to new partners, suppliers, customers**

- **Loss of Industrial/ Employment land**
- **Severance & isolation of Industrial areas**
- **Impacts on residential precincts, open space corridors & environment**

Source: Fairfield City Council, Norling Consulting

5.4   Southern Sydney Freight Line (SSFL)

The Southern Sydney Freight Line (SSFL) was completed in 2013 and has since contributed significantly to the transportation of freight in Greater Sydney. The 32 km SSFL starts at Macarthur and ends in Sefton where it connects with the Metropolitan Goods Line (MGL) and continues to Port Botany. It has enabled a direct, dedicated freight corridor from Macarthur to Port Botany, a route that was previously congested due to passenger trains having preference. A map of the SSFL is shown in blue in Figure 5.3 below.

Figure 5.3: Existing & Proposed Freight Lines
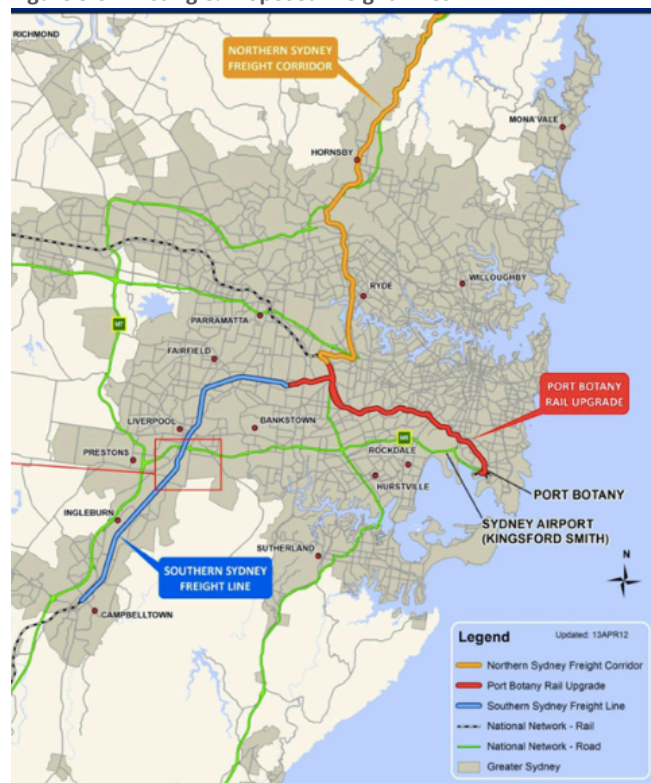
Source: Transport of NSW

The construction of the SSFL was a major, four-year, $1 billion undertaking as it passed through greenfield lands as well as established areas and other rail lines. Construction included a rail tunnel under Sefton junction, a rail bridge crossing over the passenger lines north of Glenfield to take the freight line onto the eastern side of the passenger rail network, upgrades of three existing road bridges, upgrades to six existing suburban rail stations, 1,800 metre long passing loops at Leightonfield and Glenfield and the unexpected relocation of utilities, which delayed construction for 10 months. However, in the end, the SSFL is considered a success, operating at near capacity on a daily basis and having saved an average seven hours of transportation time between Melbourne and Brisbane, nine hours on average from goods being transported to Port Botany from within NSW and removed over a million trucks from Sydney roads since opening.

The SSFL has reportedly attracted large businesses and investors with many extensions and upgrades planned to increase the rail freight capacity in NSW. This includes the WSFL, a new 240-hectare intermodal terminal in Moorebank and further upgrades to the SSFL with passing loops to be constructed and operational by 2023 in Cabramatta and Warwick Farm.

5.5   Intermodal Terminals (IMT)

Intermodal Terminals (IMTs) are facilities that enable the transfer, storage, distribution and other associated services such as cleaning or quarantining, as needed of containerised goods. They can range from simple rail sidings or docks to purpose-built terminals. In terms of rail IMTs, the infrastructure is often expensive and have a higher risk of becoming obsolete given the difficulty in relocating or expanding as compared to road based IMTs or distribution centres. The location of rail IMTs are limited only by availability of land and proximity to an appropriate rail line and the most successful IMTs are those capable of processing large volumes & large containers (1,500m+); connected to distribution centres/other transport hubs; not constrained by passenger trains; and have capacity to expand. These IMTs often attract businesses willing to invest in and operate the IMT. In terms of the Western Sydney Freight Line (WSFL), there are no IMTs planned and according to Transport for NSW, *"Intermodal terminal sites are generally delivered and operated by the private sector".* However, Fairfield City is investigating whether an IMT along the WSFL within the established industrial areas would be of benefit to these areas.

As outlined in Figure 5.4 below, there are currently seven Intermodal Terminals (IMT) serving the Greater Sydney Freight network as well as two proposed IMTs, one on Mamre Road, Kemps Creek for the Aerotropolis and one in St Marys to be operated and owned by Pacific National. Table 5.1 outlines the features of the current IMTs.

Figure 5.4: Greater Sydney Freight Network & IMTs
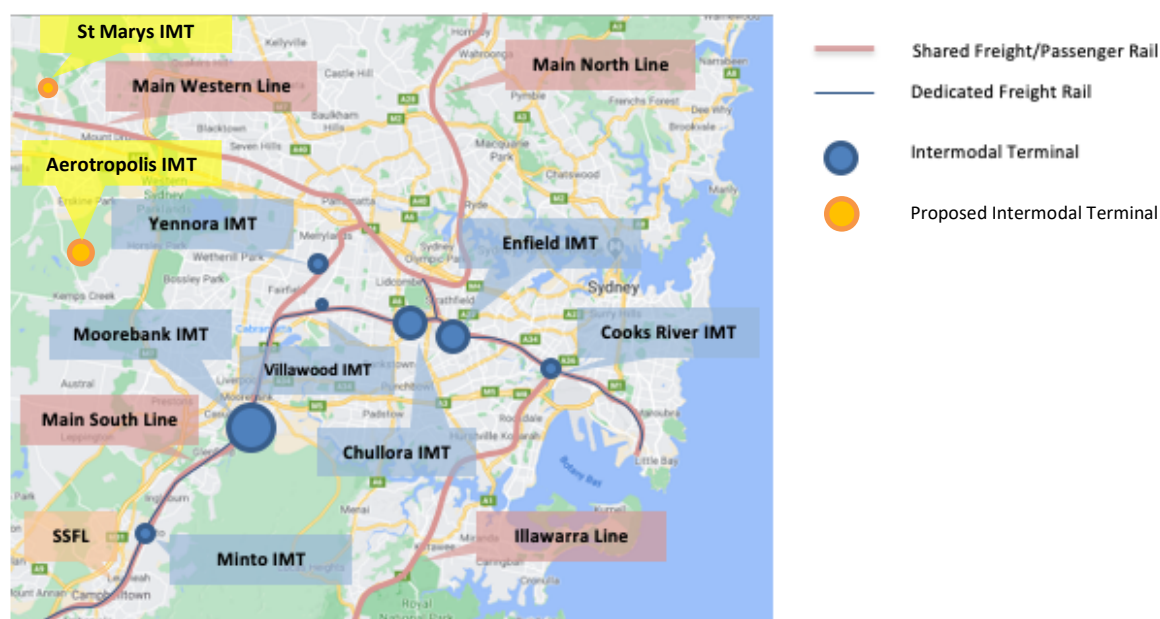
Source: Norling Consulting, Transport of NSW, Google Earth

Table 5.1: IMT Features

Terminal	Owner	Operator		Land (ha)	Planned TEU Capacity per annum ('000)	Services/ Week	Service Type	Open Access?
		Rail	Terminal					
Chullora	Pacific National	Pacific National	Pacific National	80	600+	25	Domestic + IMEX	No
Enfield	NSW Ports	Aurizon	NSW Ports	60	300+	12	Domestic + IMEX	No
Moorebank	Moorebank Intermodal Company	Qube	Moorebank Intermodal Company	240	1,500+	5	Domestic + IMEX	Yes
Yennora	Stockland	Qube	Stockland	70	150	5	IMEX	No
Minto	Qube	Qube	Qube	45	200	5	IMEX	No
Villawood	LOGOS	TBD	Toll	15	200+	5	IMEX	No
Cooks River	MCS Freight	Various	MCS Freight	20	100	5	IMEX	Yes

Note: + is the planned capacity following completion of intended expansions
Source: Norling Consulting, Google Maps, PcW Analysis, Parsons Brinkerhoff Analysis

Moorebank IMT spans across 240 hectares, is currently under construction and will by far be the largest IMT in Greater Sydney to date. Moorebank has been a major investment for both the government and the private sector and is envisioned to reduce the number of trucks on Sydney's roads related to Port Botany by more than 2,700 vehicle journeys per day, reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to 110,000 tonnes of CO2 per year and create around $9 billion in economic benefits over 30 years, including $120 million a year for the economy of south-western Sydney, through the improvements to productivity as well as reduced business costs, reduced road congestion and better environmental outcomes.

Chullora and Enfield are the next largest IMTs on the network and are both reportedly close to capacity with plans for expansion. Chullora is owned and operated by Pacific National, one of the major owner operators of IMTs in NSW. Pacific National has announced that it intends to expand its operations by constructing and operating a state of the art, 10 hectare IMT facility in its 43 hectare St Mary's site, northwest of Fairfield City.

In line with market observations that Rail IMTs need to be of sufficient size to compete with the strong road freight network, the smaller IMTs have in recent years struggled. According to PwC, Cooks River has had negative growth in recent years and Aurizon, a major operator, has relocated from the smaller, congested Yennora IMT to Enfield IMT to enable improved operating hours and more services both domestically and internationally per week. In 2019, LOGOS completed their staged sell down of a 32 hectare property in the heart of Yennora in favour of investing in Villawood (details below). Of all the IMTs listed in Table 5.1, Yennora is of highest risk of becoming obsolete without direct connection to the WSFL and without further investment.

Villawood is currently a small IMT, however, there have been plans since 2015 to expand Villawood to increase capacity from 20,000 TEUs (Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit) to 200,000 TEUs per annum and to directly connect the IMT to the SSFL. Toll had planned to collaborate with DP World Australia to invest $200 million in the project, however, the site was sold to LOGOS in 2019 in a partial sale and leaseback agreement.

LOGOS has announced they intend to continue Toll's vision by investing and expanding the Villawood IMT in the near future. In August 2020, Qube announced it was interested in acquiring parts of Toll after Toll's annual profits fell 55% to $87.5 million. If successful, it would significantly strengthen the position of Qube in NSW's freight and distribution sector.

5.6   Rail vs Road Freight

Research has shown that rail freight is more cost effective than road freight where larger volumes need to be transported over great distances whereas road freight offers greater flexibility in terms of final destinations and unplanned orders as well as cost efficiency for smaller volumes and shorter distances. In many instances, the most efficient transportation route involves a combination of methods. As such, although there is a strong case for rail freight to reduce congestion and improve efficiency, there will still always be a need for road freight as well.

According to Transport for NSW, the majority of freight in NSW was transported via the road network in 2016 as shown in figure 5.5 below. The largest industries for rail freight comprised coal, agriculture and import/export containers. From the displayed industries, the most significant to Fairfield City are Manufacturing, Construction and Wholesale/Retail Distribution, all of which are dominated by road freight transportation.

Figure 5.5: Road vs Rail Transportation in NSW
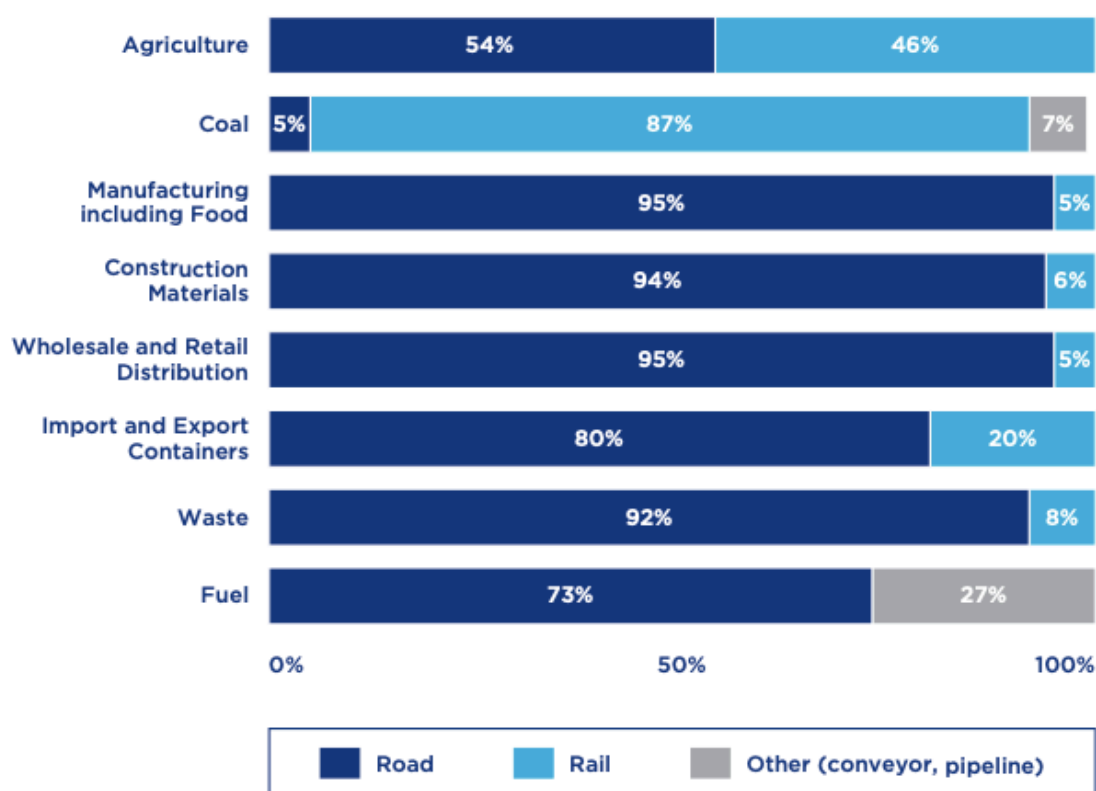
Source: Transport for NSW

5.7   Implications

As shown in the SWOT Analysis, Fairfield City's industrial areas currently benefit from a strategic, central location and a strong road network. Although there are potential opportunities presented by the WSFL such as a faster connection to the Aerotropolis and Port Botany, it will be extremely difficult to convert any industrial area in Fairfield to an IMT of sufficient size to attract investors or be of significant benefit to existing or future businesses for the following reasons:

- IMTs are capital intensive; require at least 20 hectares of land to be of significance; are not currently planned for the WSFL; and are usually privately owned and operated. Given the lack of greenfield lands and lack of interest from known IMT investors and operators, it is unlikely existing business owners in Wetherill Park, Yennora or Fairfield have the capacity or motivation to invest in an IMT;
- The main industries in Fairfield City are still heavily reliant on road transportation;
- The majority of businesses in Fairfield City's industrial areas are small scale that benefit more from the flexibility and mobility of road freight;
- The proposed IMT in St Mary's reduces the need for an IMT in Wetherill Park; and
- The apparent gradual decline of the small, congested Yennora IMT reduces the need for an IMT in the older industrial areas of Fairfield City.

The main benefit for Fairfield City from the WSFL will not be from connecting directly into the freight line, but from the partnerships with proposed IMTs serving the line such as the proposed St Mary's IMT, the expanded Villawood IMT, Moorebank IMT and the Aerotropolis IMT. Fairfield City is not located far enough from the Aerotropolis to truly need a rail freight IMT of its own due to the strong road connectivity.

Furthermore, one of the weaknesses of Fairfield City's industrial areas identified in the SWOT Analysis is the fragmented distribution of businesses, which implies it will be crucial for Council to advocate a path for the WSFL that does not sever any industrial area from the road network or result in a diminution of industrial activities due to resumptions. It will be important to have a mix of flyovers and/or tunnels for the WSFL, especially in the eastern part of Fairfield City.

However, continued reliance on the road connectivity does not help to relieve the rising congestion challenges in Greater Sydney. To help reduce congestion, infrastructure projects will need to be diversified to cater for freight, workers and commuters. Examples of infrastructure projects/upgrades that would benefit Fairfield City include:

- **Freight Priority Road from Smithfield/Wetherill Park to the Aerotropolis (Mamre Road) IMT**
  A suggested route would be via Victoria Street, Chandos Road and the proposed Southern Link Road
- **East-West Passenger Rail**
  Suggested local stations include Cecil Park, Prairiewood/Fairfield Showground and Smithfield-Wetherill Park to reduce congestion by catering for the working population commuting to employment centres such as the WSA, Aerotropolis, Wetherill Park and Parramatta

5.8   Proposed Strategies

The most important strategy for Council regarding the WSFL will be connectivity. Similar to Council's initiative in the 1970s to upgrade a significant proportion of roads to arterial level to support industrial growth, a similar vision is crucial in the short term to ensure the viability of Fairfield City's industrial areas. Road quality and road connectivity between Fairfield City's industrial areas as well as between IMTs and the Aerotropolis are critical to the viability of the industrial Estates.

Table 5.2: Proposed Strategies & Actions for Western Sydney Freight Line

GOAL: To understand the impacts & benefits of the Western Sydney Freight Line & to ensure the longevity & prosperity of Fairfield City's industrial estates & hubs.				
Strategies	**Actions**	**Stakeholders**	**Timeframe**	**KPI/Outcome**
Infrastructure Connectivity	• Identify roads that require maintenance • Analyse available routes to significant sites such as IMTs & other industrial areas. Determine which ones are sufficient, which ones need alternate routes	• Local Government • Industrial Workforce • Business Owners	**Short**	• Reduced congestion • Wide, safe, smooth roads • Clear connections between economically significant sites such as IMTs, Industrial Estates/Areas, Aerotropolis
Preserve Functionality of Industrial Areas	• Survey business owners about WSFL. Which ones would benefit? Which ones want a connection? Which ones willing to give land for infrastructure?	• Local Government • Business Owners	**Short**	• Well connected industrial estates/areas
Prepare for New Partnerships	• Create mailing list to keep local businesses informed • Hold information sessions to disseminate information eg. new projects, new businesses, grants	• Local Government • Business Owners	**Medium**	• Increased interest and awareness from local businesses

6 LOCAL SERVICING INDUSTRIES

This chapter addresses the skills gap present in Fairfield City, especially within the Local Servicing Industries and proposes strategies to close the observed skills gap.

6.1 Skills Gap

The Skills Gap is defined as the difference between the skills employers are desiring and the skills employees/potential employees actually possess. The concept of the skills gap was first introduced in the US in the early 2000s to explain the high unemployment rate, which reached double digits for the first time since 1982 despite a growing economy and a high number of advertised positions. Sceptics denied the skills gap, claiming it as a political concept to remove responsibility from government and to allow more immigrants into the country as opposed to a real world problem. However, studies have shown that there was and still is a skills gap driven largely by the fast growth of technology, with some claiming the next industrial revolution is just around the corner, to be known as the digital revolution.

A study by Deloitte in 2018 into the decline of manufacturing estimated that the skills gap may leave an estimated 2.4 million positions unfilled between 2018 and 2028, with a potential economic impact of 2.5 trillion globally. A study by PwC Australia revealed that 75% of Australian CEOs are concerned about the availability of key skills and a study by Adecco showed that 92% of American Executives believe that their workforces aren't as skilled as they need to be.

The advancement of technology has had tremendous impact on the world in recent years. Some examples include:

- Automation making many traditional manufacturing/warehouse based jobs obsolete and creating new, higher level, technology-based jobs;
- Online retailing prompting the decline of traditional retail stores and changing consumer expectations/behaviour;
- Social Media enabling a new way to sell, market and advertise, leading to an influx of new small businesses/sole traders hoping to supplement or replace traditional jobs;
- Social Media enabling new independent income-generating opportunities such as becoming a YouTuber or Influencer;
- Smart phones and Apps making transactions seamless, reducing the need for customer service/check out positions;
- Smart phones and Apps enabling the Gig Economy, allowing people to use their own assets such as a car or home or skillset to generate income;
- Data Analytics has allowed tailored advertising and customised productization to cater to an increasingly egocentric consumer base;
- Internet of Things (IoT) allowing consumer data to be gathered from a variety of sources from fridges to TVs to watches, completely changing how services and products are bought/sold;
- Driverless Cars potentially leading to the decline of the automotive industry; and
- Cryptocurrency changing the way money is transacted and stored.

The threat of technology lies in the speed at which it develops and is adopted, enforcing constant learning and adapting.

6.2   Upskilling

To counteract the Skills Gap, the general consensus is that the workforce needs to be upskilled. Upskilling is a complex process involving employers, employees, educational institutions and government and extends beyond just training. PwC found that 67% of CEOs globally believe upskilling is an ongoing responsibility rather than discrete training events and that CEOs have a responsibility to retrain employees whose jobs and tasks have been automated by technology. The study also found that 75% of employees surveyed were eager and willing to be retrained to remain valuable, highlighting that successful upskilling is a partnership between employers and employees as both parties must be willing to be flexible and adapt to changing needs. Amazon provides a good example of employee/employer partnership with their $700 million Upskilling 2025 program, which aims to provide skills to all employees in corporate centres, tech hubs, fulfillment centres, retail stores and transportation networks that will prepare them for the digital revolution both inside Amazon and beyond. The program intends to help employees move into more highly skilled roles within or outside Amazon.

In recent months, a plethora of research and articles has been published about Upskilling due to the global pandemic locking cities down and highlighting the discrepancy between the skills people have and the skills needed to thrive in the digital world. The interesting result is the obvious need for both technical skills and human skills. The first wave of realisation was the need for technical skills such as learning how to use Zoom, how to set up home offices, how to connect to servers and so forth. However, as the weeks became months, organisations realised the need for skills such as resilience, diligence, time management, communication and connection with colleagues and peers.

Before COVID-19, a large amount of research regarding upskilling was focused on the globally declining manufacturing industry. A study by Deloitte in 2018 also highlighted the importance of both technical skills and human skills, stating that skills such as critical thinking were just as vital as technical skills. The study also observed that the skills shortage was a result of the retirement of baby boomers, the misconception of the manufacturing industry by the younger generations as well as the shifting skill sets required due to technology and automation.

A study by the Wilson County located in North Carolina, USA into their manufacturing skills gap was conducted, prompted by a high unemployment rate of 13%. Manufacturing is a key sector in Wilson County, providing 22% of all jobs and accounting for 36% of the local tax base. The study found that the skills shortage was due to a misconception of the manufacturing industry, which in turn failed to attract applicants that had the skills businesses were seeking, as well as innovative and technologically advanced workplace environments that were expanding faster than the available educational opportunities, resulting in approximately 500 unfilled positions at any one time. The top five skills employers were looking for but couldn't find were mechanical skills, problem-solving skills, basic understanding of Maths/Science, Communication skills, teamwork skills and most importantly responsibility and reliability. To combat the problem, Wilson County established a campaign to renew the perception of the local manufacturing industry and partnered with local educational institutions and local businesses to better prepare the workforce for expectations of businesses.

6.2 Fairfield City Local Servicing Businesses

Fairfield City Council is interested in yet another level of the skills gap, focusing on local servicing businesses, which for the purposes of this report are defined as small businesses providing services and products to the local community as opposed to regionally and beyond. Previous research undertaken by Council officers has found that one of the common themes with local businesses is the challenge in finding good staff, particularly locally. Council considers this feedback to imply the skills gap to be a barrier to business growth and that a skilled workforce would be a huge asset for the City. In addition to the skills gap, Council also found that there is relatively limited presence of local business on the internet and poor take-up of digital technology to support business performance, which indicates the skills gap faced by Fairfield City has more contributing factors than just the digital revolution.

Based upon our experience with other regions, it is Norling Consulting's view that Council is not alone with this concern. Businesses around the country continually lament the difficulty of finding suitable staff, despite high regional unemployment rates. It is considered to be a national and global problem rather than a problem constrained to Fairfield City.

The ABS's 'Counts of Australian Businesses' data set contains counts of actively trading businesses, rates of entry to and exit from the market sector of the economy, and rates of business survival. Unfortunately, only the business counts are available on an LGA level and this data was used to gain a better understanding of the local servicing businesses in Fairfield City. The data shows that as of June, 2019, 16,253 businesses were actively trading in Fairfield City, 98% of which were either non-employing businesses (eg. sole traders) or small businesses with less than 20 employees. This proportion is slightly higher than the NSW proportion (96.9%) and the Australian proportion (97.4%), signifying the importance of this sector to the local economy.

Of the actively trading businesses, the industries with the largest amount of registered businesses were Construction (23%); Retail Trade (14%); Transport, Postal and Warehousing (10%); Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (7%); and Other Services (7%). Between 2018 and 2019, 601 new businesses started trading, the vast majority of which were non-employing businesses (89%), which was 11% more than the increase between 2017 to 2018, indicating a rise in entrepreneurship.

Of the non-employing businesses, the majority were trading within the Construction industry (22.8%); Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services (16.2%); Transport, Postal and Warehousing (15.3%); Financial and Insurance Services (7.4%); and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (6.4%). The industries with the highest amount of growth in terms of number of businesses registered between 2018 and 2019 comprised Education and Training (29.2%); Information Media and Telecommunications (17.4%); Accommodation and Food Services (17.0%); Health Care and Social Assistance (16.2%); Arts and Recreation Services (16.0%); and Transport, Postal and Warehousing (13.8%).

Of the small business with less than 20 employees, the majority were trading within the Construction (23.9%); Transport, Postal and Warehousing (12.6%); Retail Trade (9.1%); Manufacturing (8.2%); and Other Services (8.1%). The industries with the highest amount of growth in terms of number of new businesses registered between 2018 and 2019 were Arts and Recreation Services (14.6%); Transport, Postal and Warehousing (7.4%); Financial and Insurance Services (6.1%); and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (3.3%).

In terms of turnover, the majority of the registered businesses were earning between $50k to $200k per year (39.4%), followed by the $200k to $2M bracket (33.2%) and the less than 50K bracket (20%). The industries with highest turnover in 2019 were Construction; Wholesale Trade; Manufacturing; Retail Trade; and Transport, Postal and Warehousing.

Council is also interested in the emergence of business/industry clusters to help identify future industries to attract to the City as well as to support growing small businesses to expand to a regional level. Clusters are reviewed and discussed in more detail in section 7.3 in relation to the Aerotropolis, but for the purposes of understanding local servicing businesses, it is sufficient to outline the following clusters as relevant to this segment:

- Based on the heat maps provided in the Fairfield City Economic Profile, there is a **Transport, Postal and Warehousing** cluster as well as an emerging **Professional, Scientific and Technical Services** cluster; and
- Based on the Western Sydney Investment Attraction Working Group Data, there are strong manufacturing clusters, especially in **medical equipment manufacturing** and **food manufacturing**, specifically meat and meat products as well as bakery products.

These clusters are supported by ABS data and Google searches. Council has also indicated a potential Allied Health cluster, however, this is not supported by other online sources. Although, it should be noted that Health Care and Social Assistance was one of the highest growth industries within the non-employing businesses segment between 2018 and 2019, which could imply many of these businesses do not have an online presence. According to Allied Health Professions Australia, Allied Health includes Arts Therapy, Audiology, Chiropractic, Dietetics, Exercise Physiology, Genetic Counselling, Medial Radiations, Music Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Optometry, Orthoptics, Orthotics/Prosthetics, Osteopathy, Perfusion, Physiotherapy, Podiatry, Psychology, Rehabilitation Counselling, Social Work, Sonography and Speech Pathology. Given the large range of services, there possibly could be an Allied Health cluster, but such a diversified cluster would be difficult to nurture, grow and attract to the City as an industrial/economic cluster.

6.4   Demographic and Employment Profile

As outlined in sections 2.2 and 2.3, the population of Fairfield City is characterised by a mixed age profile with a high proportion of families, strong level of ethnic diversity, a low level of tertiary education attainment and a high level of blue collar workers. Furthermore, according to the Fairfield City Plan, 40% of refugee arrivals to NSW initially settle in Fairfield City, 20% of the population does not speak English well or at all, 25% of dwellings do not have internet connection and 65% of residents aged over 15 do not have post-school qualifications of any type. Such a profile coupled with a much higher unemployment rate compared to Greater Sydney (10.5% vs 6.0%) and lower workforce participation (63.3% vs 79.2%) indicates the presence of a skills gap, which exists not just because of the rapid advancement of technology. This demographic profile poses particular additional challenges to the prospects of this community obtaining suitable employment opportunities.

Of most concern is the low level of English fluency, low level of dwellings with internet connection, low level of skill qualifications and integration of refugees.

6.5   Integration and Language Proficiency

It has been identified that the skills gap present in Fairfield City extends beyond the rapid rate of technology advancement. High levels of immigration, low levels of English proficiency and low exposure to the internet may also be contributing to high unemployment rates and skills gap. Australia has a much higher control of borders than other areas of the world, aided by geography since Australia is an island surrounded by ocean. The European Union, for example, has experienced far higher levels of immigration and cultural integration. Germany is a country that has evolved rapidly since World War II and has emerged as one of the strongest economies in the European Union and the world. Some say the advancement is due to the acceptance of the country's limitations and clear expectations of migrants wishing to find employment and start a new life in the country. Success in Germany is defined not just by language proficiency, but also understanding of the culture, education system and laws, which aides greatly in integration.

One tool Germany uses is immersive language schools, which focus not just on learning the German language, but the ways of the country. One of the leading institutes is known as the Goethe Institute, which offers options for attending in Germany or in the home country. The institute describes itself as more than just a language course, but rather, an opportunity for people to discover Germany and its culture, get to know the people of the country and their everyday lives and to experience something new. The school offers intensive options such as full-time classes extending from 9am to 5pm or half day options, evenings or weekends. Classes are flexible and cater to all skill levels and ages, with different courses for adults, teens and children. All classes are taught entirely in German.

Similar institutes exist across Europe with a focus on culture as well as language. These include Institute Francais (France) and the British Council.

6.6   Council Initiatives

Beyond language and culture, technical skills are also required to close the skills gap. In this regard, Council is beginning the construction of a Community Business Hub, which is intended to be an innovative, co-working space to support all businesses such as start-ups, freelancers, entrepreneurs, home-based businesses and established small businesses to become more productive, competitive and sustainable to thrive in a changing and complex business world. The Hub will provide access to a range of resources including hot desks, kitchen facilities, meeting rooms, printers and Wi-Fi, which will free smaller businesses from the burden of rent and other capital costs.

The Hub will also have a community precinct dedicated to supporting residents, young people, migrant and refugee groups as well as non-government organisations and community groups such as multicultural associations.

The Hub is a multi-million dollar initiative of Fairfield City, with construction beginning in 2021.

6.7 Implications

Fairfield City has some very successful medium (20 to 199 employees) and large (200+ employees) businesses (predominantly in the manufacturing industry). However, the majority of businesses are either non-employing or have less than 20 employees. Research indicates that all industries will be affected by the digital revolution, with Manufacturing; Transportation, Postal and Warehousing; Retail Trade; and Financial and Insurance Services expected to bear the largest impacts, especially in the short term. This is an impending problem for Fairfield City, given that many of these industries play a significant part in the City's local economy.

Global and national research into the Skills Gap has attributed the rapid evolution of technology as the main driver. However, in Fairfield City, the situation is more complex, also involving integration of refugees, low English proficiency, low levels of education, low connectivity to the internet and subsequently technology skills are all contributing factors to the widening skills gap. With the looming digital changes in major industries in Fairfield City, if the other factors are not addressed, the skills gap will no doubt grow and potentially increase the unemployment rate.

Council has already taken a positive step towards closing the skills gap with the impending introduction of the Community Business Hub that is intended to support both businesses to progress and the community to upskill. It will be crucial for the Hub to have information available in all the main languages in the City and to have multilingual, experienced employees. The challenge will be to include Council as a trusted source of information and ongoing assistance for the community, especially refugees and immigrants. This will assist in a better understanding of the various community groups and reduce segregation of newcomers as a result of seeking information and help solely from local cultural groups or people that may be a source of misinformation.

The Hub will require promotion and will require proactiveness from Council, with ongoing active campaigns. For example, to assist small businesses to take on technology, Council could have a technology-based campaign that offers multifaceted techniques such as workshops, subsidies, mail box drops and ads to encourage businesses to have an online presence.

Another commendable initiative by Council is the annual Local Business Awards. Annual Council Business Awards to promote and acknowledge various types/sizes of businesses is a positive way to get in touch with local businesses and local community as the Awards can include 'people's choice' awards as well as Council endorsed awards.

Beyond the Hub and Local Business Awards, Council may consider starting initiatives to focus on integration of refugees and immigrants such as dedicated cultural-based language schools like the Goethe Institute, which focus on teaching culture, laws, governmental and educational systems as well.

Fairfield City has a large non-employing and small business sector, the majority of which were trading in the Construction industry in 2019. These were most likely tradies working as contractors. One of the largest growth industries in the non-employing business sector was in Transport, Postal and Warehousing. This industry includes taxi drivers and the growth was most likely boosted by the rise of Uber drivers.

Clusters are emerging in Fairfield City, which include Transportation, Postal and Warehousing and Manufacturing, mainly medical equipment and food manufacturing. Although manufacturing itself as an industry is predicted to decline in the future, having strengths in food manufacturing and medical equipment manufacturing will be a great asset for the City given that health and food are robust industries with longevity to also survive through pandemics. Transportation, Postal and Warehousing is also a high potential industry of Fairfield City. This industry currently has a high number of business registrations across all size segments, from non-employing to large companies, indicating opportunities for growth and mentoring. The industry is also considered one of longevity given the rise of online shopping prompting the rise of warehouses and distribution networks. These industries present the greatest opportunities for growth and employment in the local servicing business segment.

6.8   Proposed Strategies

The most important strategy for Council regarding local servicing industries will be upskilling, which includes upskilling of the workforce as well as local businesses.

Table 6.1: Proposed Strategies for Local Servicing Industries

GOAL: To enable local businesses to grow & prosper by closing the observed skills gap.				
Strategies	**Actions**	**Stakeholders**	**Timeframe**	**KPI/Outcome**
Upskilling the local employed workforce	• Identify business owners who want to upskill their staff • Encourage businesses with grants/subsidies to upskill staff through regular training • Encourage businesses to have a continuous improvement program for employees through policies • Partner with local TAFEs/other approved RTOs as well as business owners to offer courses/training that are free to employees	• State Government • Federal Government • Local Government • Industrial Workforce • Business Owners • Educational Organisations	**Short**	• Employees gain additional skills/qualifications • Businesses become more efficient
Upskilling local unemployed workforce	• Survey unemployed workforce to identify barriers to finding work • Partner with local TAFEs as well as local Community/Religious organisations & local businesses to offer volunteering opportunities • Offer opportunities to learn English, Australian culture & laws, how to write resumes, practice interview skills	• State Government • Federal Government • Local Government • Business Owners • Educational Organisations • Community Groups	**Short**	• Higher number of Applications • Lower rate of unemployment

Provide Innovative Community Business Hub	• Have campaigns to encourage local businesses to innovate & use technology • Ensure availability of multilingual staff/mentors	• Local Government • Business Owners	**Short**	• More businesses on the internet • More recognition of local businesses • More engagement from local businesses
Encourage growth of Business Clusters	• Identify high value businesses such as medical equipment and food manufacturing, which are also resilient against pandemics • Highlight strengths of clusters and location of Fairfield City to attract similar investors/entrepreneurs	• Local Government	**Medium**	• Growth of business clusters
Upgrading & Integrating Technological Connectivity	• Advocate for and ensure all residents and local businesses have access to fast, reliable internet & phone connection	• Local Government • Federal Government • State Government	**Short**	• Higher level of connectivity • Higher level of productivity
Infrastructure Connectivity	• Ensuring strong public transport connections to enable convenient access to employment centres and educational facilities	• Local Government • Federal Government • State Government	**Short/ Medium**	• Higher public transport usage to employment centres

7 AEROTROPOLIS

This Chapter explores the Aerotropolis and the opportunities it creates for Fairfield City.

7.1   Aerotropolis

The Aerotropolis is a multi billion-dollar project, $20 billion of which is to be sourced from public funding. The project is of great significance to all levels of government and is predicted to become Australia's third-largest economy by 2036. Set across 11,200 hectares, the Aerotropolis is envisioned to comprise ten precincts as outline in Figure 7.1 below. It should be noted that the Aerotropolis refers to all the precincts around the Western Sydney Airport (WSA) and does not actually include the WSA.

Figure 7.1: Aerotropolis & Western Sydney Airport
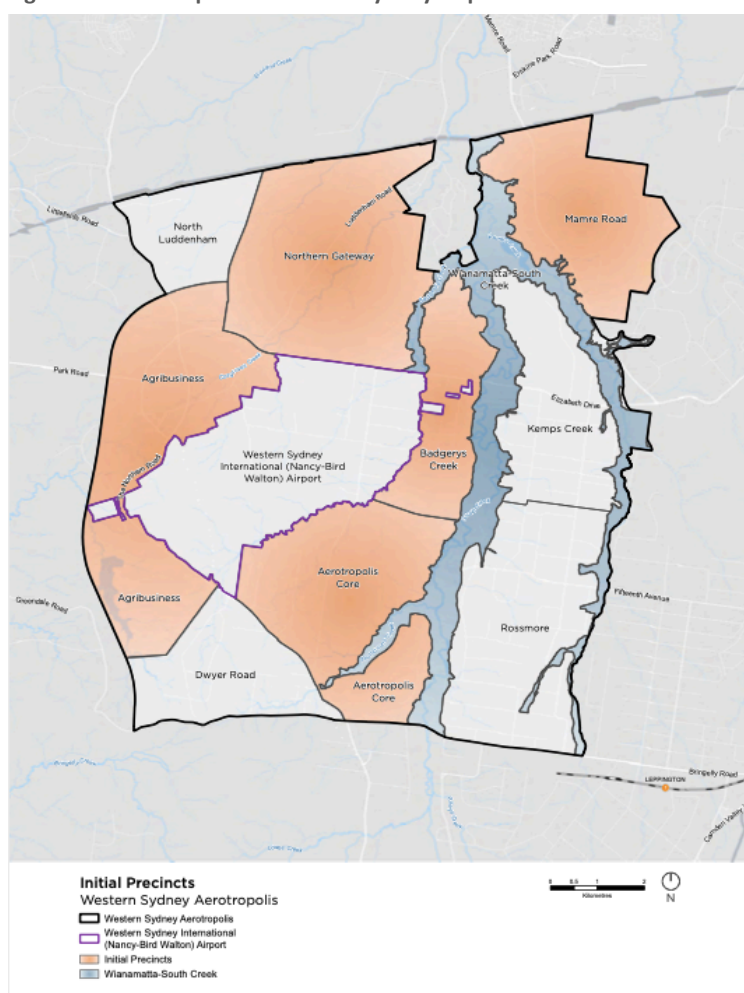
The six precincts highlighted in orange and blue in Figure 7.1, namely the Aerotropolis Core, Agribusiness, Badgery's Creek, Northern Gateway, Mamre Road and Wianamatta–South Creek, will be developed first with the remaining four re-zoned as required and developed at a later stage. The intended purposes for each precinct is outlined in Table 7.1 below.

The targeted industries for growth in the initial stage of the Aerotropolis will be Defence and Aerospace, Advanced Manufacturing, Technology, Food and Agribusiness, Freight and Logistics, Building and Construction, Education and Research, Health and Tourism.

Table 7.1 Intended Purposes of Initial Aerotropolis Precincts

Precinct	Purpose	Size (Ha)	Jobs ('000)	Residents ('000)	Focus Industries
Aerotropolis Core	Central Business District. A place for workers, residents & visitors, which provides rich cultural experiences & open space	1,332	50 – 60	20 – 24	Advanced Manufacturing, Technology, Education, Retail, Hospitality
Agribusiness	Produce fresh food in climate controlled greenhouses ready for same day domestic export & within 36 hours for global export	1,572	8 – 10	Minimal	Food & Agriculture
Badgerys Creek	Support airport operations & development	612	9 – 11	Nil	Defence & Aerospace, Technology, Retail
Mamre Road	Industrial Precinct, Intermodal Terminal for Western Sydney Freight Line	1,002	17	Nil	Warehousing, Freight & Logistics, Manufacturing
Northern Gateway	Entry & Exit to Airport. Residential Area & Visitor Accommodation	1,616	19 – 21	8 - 10	Warehousing, Freight & Logistics, Retail, Tourism
Wianamatta-South Creek	Lifestyle features promoting liveability through crafted public spaces. Water Management & Environmental Protection	1,392	Minimal	Nil	Retail, Food (Restaurants & Cafes), Community Facilities

Before COVID-19, 12.2 million visitors were expected annually to the Aerotroplis, growing to 80 million visitors annually by 2050. The Western Sydney Airport, also to be known as the Nancy-Bird Walton Airport, will operate curfew free and will anchor the Aerotropolis, stimulating strong economic growth. The Aerotropolis Core is envisioned to be NSW's third CBD along with Harbour CBD (the current CBD) and Greater Parramatta CBD. The Aerotropolis is projected to create over 200,000 new jobs and over 100,000 new dwellings across the Western Parkland City (Figure 7.2 below) to accommodate a projected population of 1.5 million.

Construction of the WSA commenced in late-2018 and it is planned to be operational by late-2026.

7.2   Aerotropolis and Fairfield City

Fairfield City's boundary is located within 2km of the north-eastern boundary of the Aerotropolis.

The urban areas of Fairfield City are located less than 30 mins away from the Aerotropolis based on the current infrastructure. However, various infrastructure projects are in the works, which will significantly improve this connectivity. At a national and state level, the $3.6 billion Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan (WSIP) will provide a direct link between the existing M7 to the Aerotropolis via the proposed future M12 motorway, as shown in Figure 7.3 below. Also shown in Figure 7.3 are the local upgrades to Smithfield Road, Wetherill Street and the Cumberland Highway, which are also part of the WSIP, designed to improve connectivity and productivity.

Figure 7.3: Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan
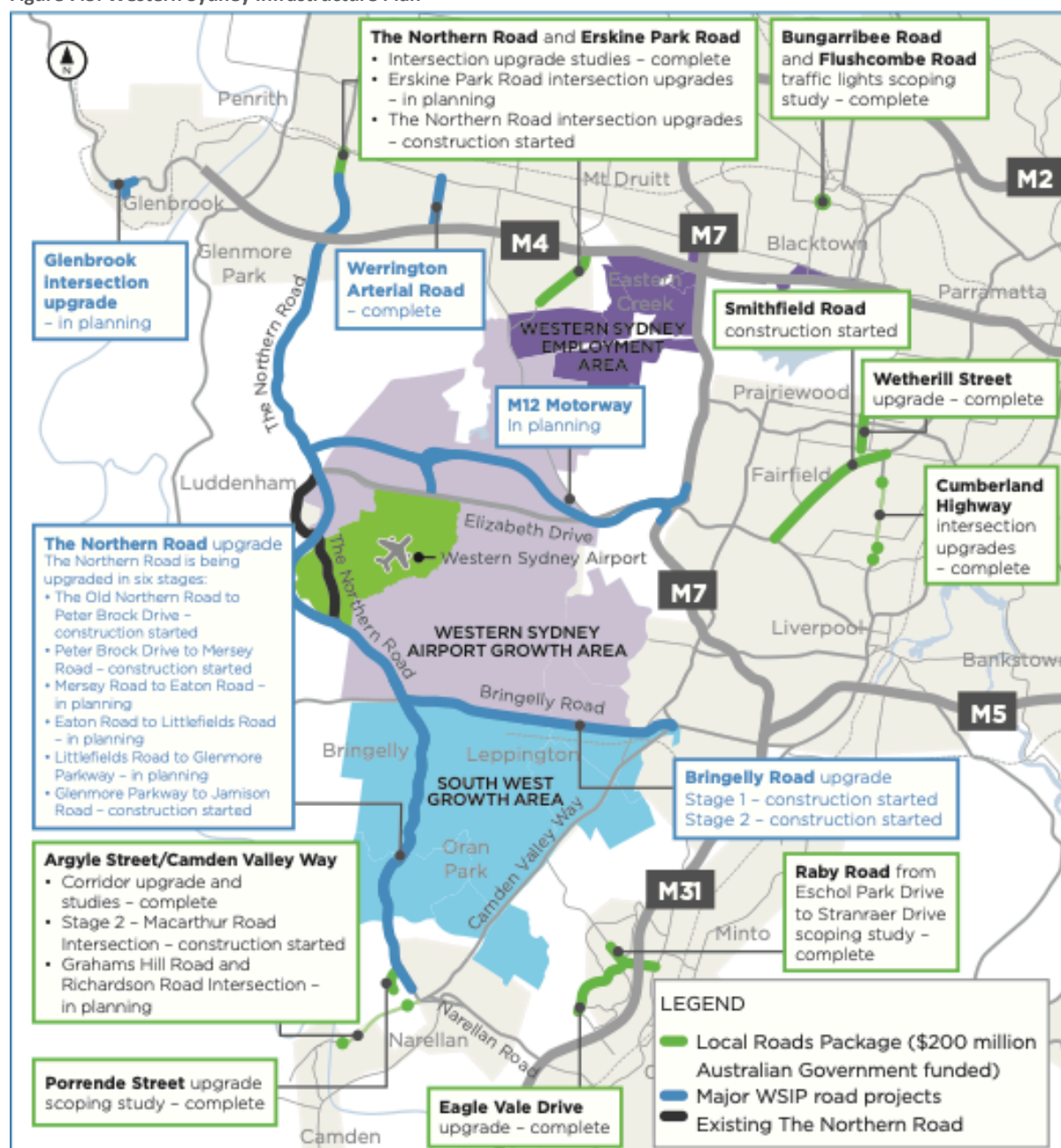
The Fairfield City Structure Plan highlights the importance of the proposed future M12 Motorway, as well as the upgrading of Wallgrove Road to arterial status, to provide a stronger connection between Horsley Park to Mamre Road Industrial Precinct and the widening of Elizabeth Drive to a dual carriage way from Cecil Park to the Aerotropolis. Beyond road infrastructure, TfNSW is also undertaking investigations into a potential east-west Passenger Rail Link from Parramatta to the WSA. Council has identified opportunities for a rail station at the existing Prairiewood Town Centre and is collaborating with TfNSW regarding a possible further station at Cecil Park, located within the Fairfield Urban Investigation Area (UIA).

The Western Area of Fairfield City's Structure Plan is shown in Figure 7.4 below and highlights the various infrastructure initiatives. The extensive undeveloped lands in the far west of the City have been identified as an Urban Investigation Area, suggesting significant potential for this area to be redeveloped for a variety of urban uses.

Figure 7.4: Fairfield City Structure Plan – Western Area
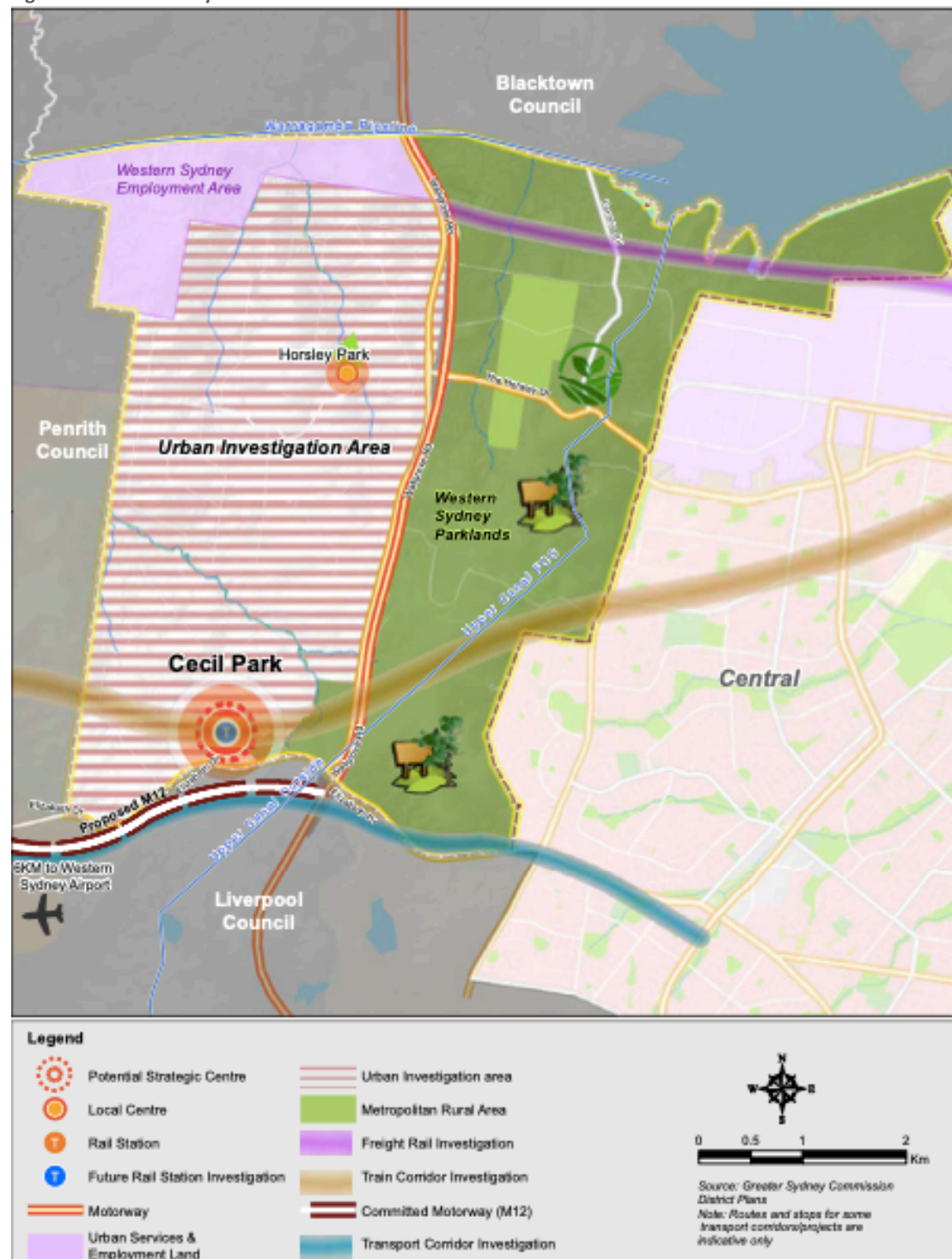
The close proximity of Fairfield City to the Aerotropolis creates clear potential for stimulation of the local economy. In light of the above structural characteristics of the Fairfield economy, Council is seeking advice on initiatives that will help maximise opportunities associated with the new economy as well as emerging opportunities associated with the Western Sydney Airport and the Aerotropolis.

7.3 Synergies and Opportunities Analysis

To identify the synergies and opportunities associated with the Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis, it is necessary to understand Fairfield City's economic profile in terms of industries. According to Fairfield City's 2019 Economic Profile, the Top 5 largest industries in terms of employment were Manufacturing, Retail Trade, Construction, Healthcare and Social Assistance and Education and Training as shown in Figure 7.5 below.

Figure 7.5 Largest Employment Industries, 2019

In terms of revenue generated in 2019, the strongest industries were Manufacturing, Construction, Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services, Transport, Postal and Warehousing and Wholesale Trade (Figure 7.6).

Figure 7.6 Strongest Revenue Generating Industries, 2019
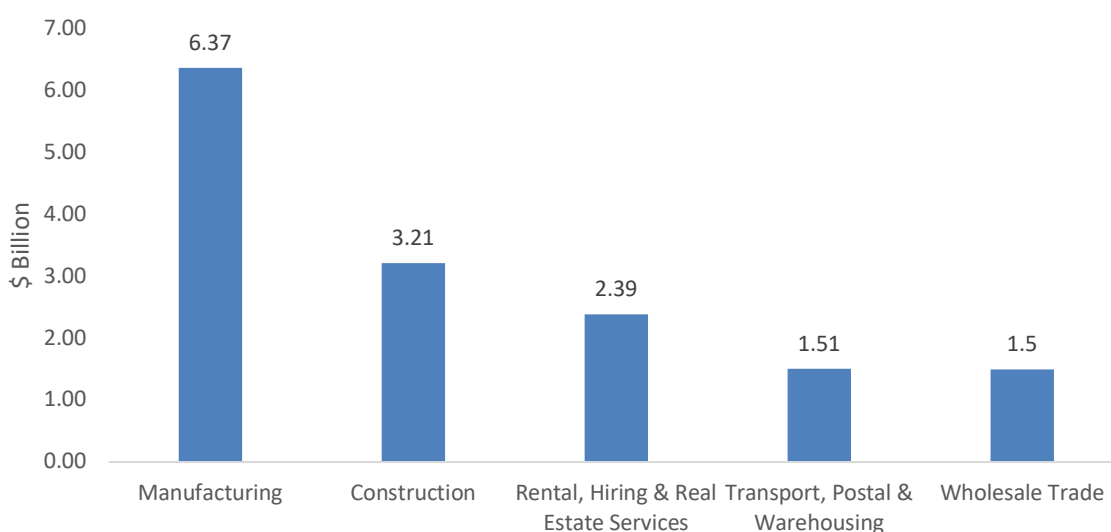
Based on ABS Census data, the industries that experienced that largest historic growth from 2001 to 2016 were Accommodation and Food Services, Public Administration & Safety, Education and Training, Healthcare and Social Assistance and Construction (Figure 7.7).

Figure 7.7: Highest Growth Industries 2001 to 2016
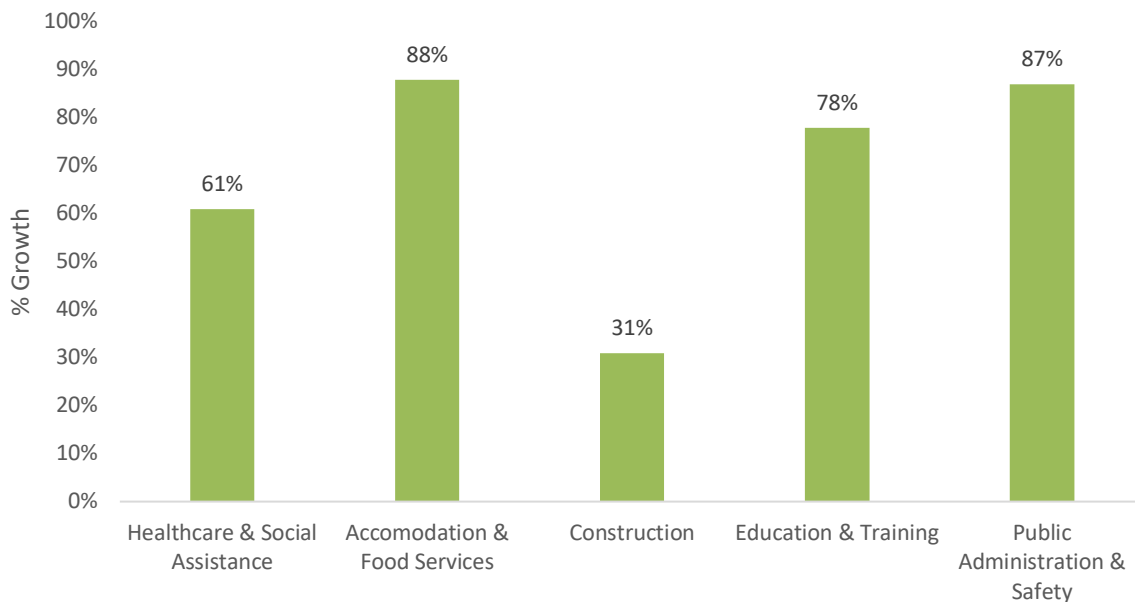
Looking into the future, the current Fairfield City Economic Profile also provides a projection of industry growth to 2041. It is projected that the largest industries in Fairfield City will largely remain the same, despite a decline in Manufacturing (Figure 7.8). The industries projected to have the largest growth are Transport, Postal & Warehousing, Wholesale Trade and Construction.

Figure 7.8: Projected Industries, 2019 vs. 2041
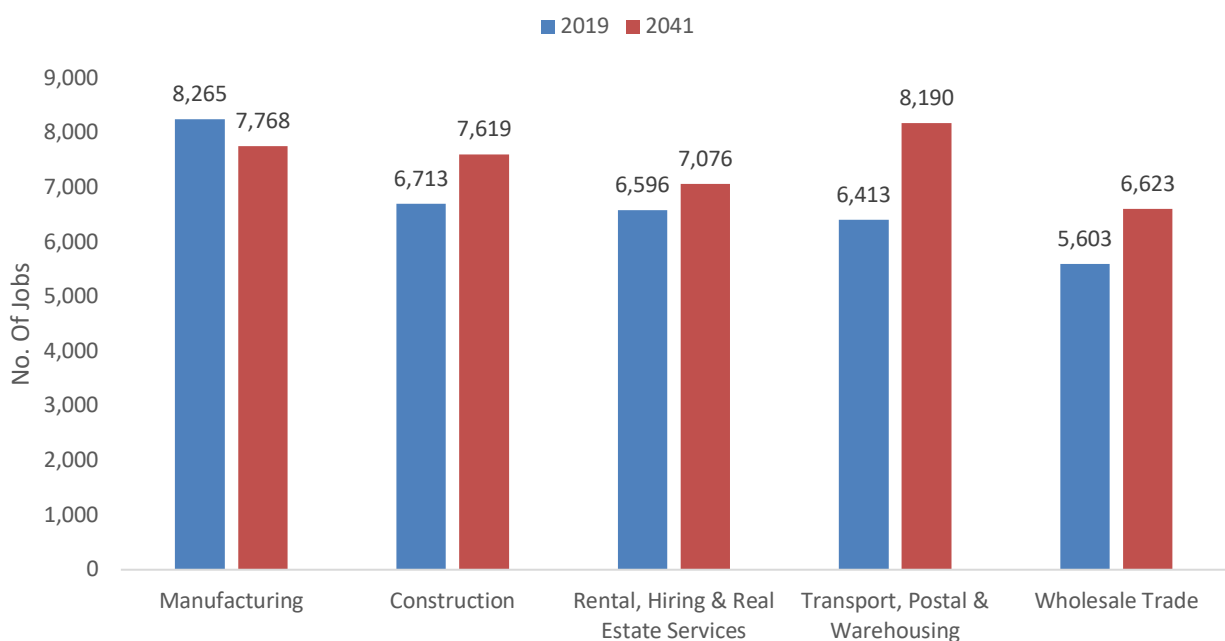
Fairfield City Council has also provided thermal maps to indicate business clusters, including Transport, Postal and Warehousing as well as Professional, Scientific and Technical Services Business as shown in Figures 7.9 and 7.10 below. These clusters are mostly grouped around Fairfield and Cabramatta.

Figure 7.9: Transport, Postal and Warehousing Clusters
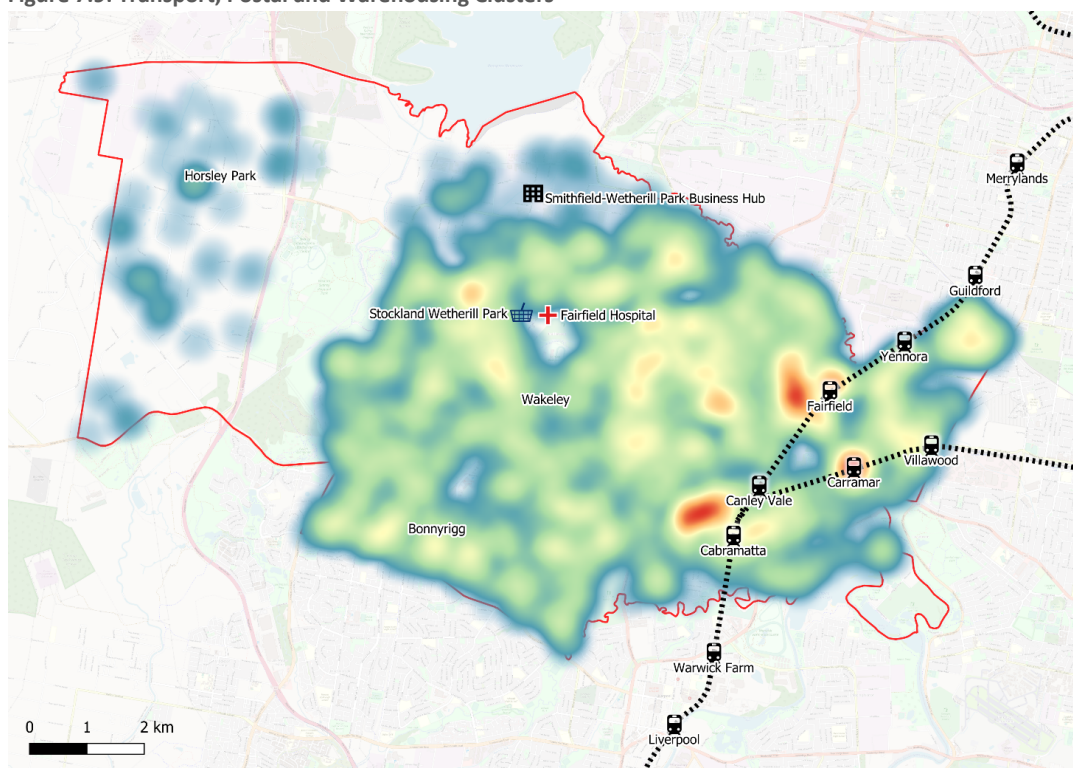
Figure 7.10: Professional, Scientific & Technical Services Clusters
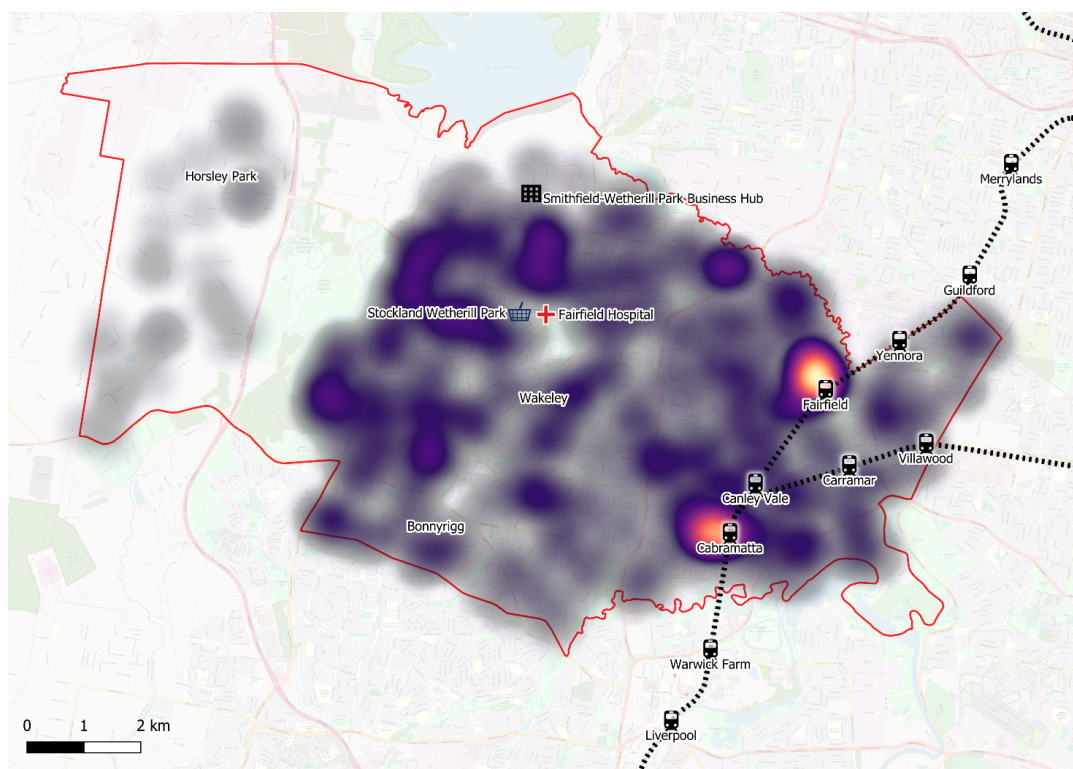
When comparing the industrial strengths of the LGAs located in the Western Parkland City, Fairfield City is clearly dominant in manufacturing. According to 2019 data from the WSIA Working Group as provided by Council, in terms of manufacturing subsectors, Fairfield has particular strengths in medical equipment manufacturing and food manufacturing.

Figure 7.11 outlines the number of Life Science businesses registered in the Western Parkland City (WPC). 15.1% of businesses were registered in Fairfield City, which is one of the largest proportions in the WPC along with Blue Mountains and Liverpool. Of the Life Science businesses, the majority of Medical and Surgical Equipment Manufacturing businesses were registered in Fairfield City, which is 21.1% of all registered businesses and more than any other LGA.

Figure 7.11: Registrations of Life Science Businesses in Western Parkland City

Service	Blue Mountains	Camden	Campbelltown	Fairfield	Hawkesbury	Liverpool	Penrith	Wollondilly
Human Pharmaceutical & Medicinal Manufacturing	4	3	3	3	3	8	2	0
Medical & Surgical Equipment Manufacturing	14	6	20	23	6	20	15	5
Scientific Research	75	28	29	36	14	37	40	17
Total Services Offered	93	37	52	62	23	65	57	22
% of WPC	22.6%	9%	12.7%	15.1%	5.6%	15.8%	13.9%	5.4%

Figure 7.12 outlines the number of registered Food Manufacturing businesses registered in the WPC. Although not as comparatively strong in Beverage Manufacturing, 33% of all Food Manufacturing businesses were registered in Fairfield City, 10% more than any other LGA in the WPC. Of the Food Manufacturing subsectors, meat and meat product manufacturing as well bakery product manufacturing were the strongest sectors, with 36.8% of Bakery Product manufacturing (factory and non-factory) and 35.8% of Meat and Meat Product manufacturing located in Fairfield City.

Figure 7.12: Food Manufacturing Businesses in Western Parkland City

Sub sector	Blue Mount	Camden	Campbelltown	Fairfield	Hawkesbury	Liverpool	Penrith	Wollondilly	#
Meat and meat product man.	0	4	3	19	6	13	5	3	53
Seafood Processing	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
Dairy product manufacturing	0	0	3	5	2	7	3	2	22
Fruit and Vegetable Processing	1	1	2	5	3	4	1	2	19
Oil and Fat Manufacturing	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Grain mill and cereal product man.	2	2	1	8	0	3	1	1	18
Bakery product manufacturing	14	12	25	82	8	53	29	5	228
Bakery Product (Non-factory based)	13	7	17	64	6	37	22	5	171
Sugar and confectionery man.	0	0	4	5	1	2	3	0	15
Other food product manufacturing	6	3	7	19	8	21	13	4	81
Prepared Animal and Bird Feed Man.	0	0	0	2	3	1	3	2	11
Other Food Product Man. n.e.c.	6	3	7	17	5	20	10	2	70
TOTAL Food Man. businesses	23	22	45	145	28	104	55	17	439

Sub sector	Blue Mount	Camden	Campbelltown	Fairfield	Hawkesbury	Liverpool	Penrith	Wollondilly	#
Soft Drink, Cordial and Syrup Man.	1	0	1	2	1	2	3	2	12
Beer Manufacturing	0	2	0	0	2	1	1	3	9
Spirit Manufacturing	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Wine and Other Alcoholic Bev. Man.	2	3	0	1	6	1	1	0	14
TOTAL Beverage Man. businesses	3	5	1	3	10	4	5	5	36

Collating the industrial data from Fairfield City with the intended industries in the Aerotropolis results in the Venn diagram shown in Figure 7.13 below.

Figure 7.13: Industry Synergies between Fairfield City and the Aerotropolis

AEROTROPOLIS

FAIRFIELD CITY

Defence
Aerospace
Technology
Health
Education

CLEAR SYNERGY
Manufacturing
Building
Construction
Freight Logistics
Warehousing
Transport

POTENTIAL SYNERGY
Food
Agribusiness
Tourism
Retail

Public Administration
Public Safety
Health
Social Assistance
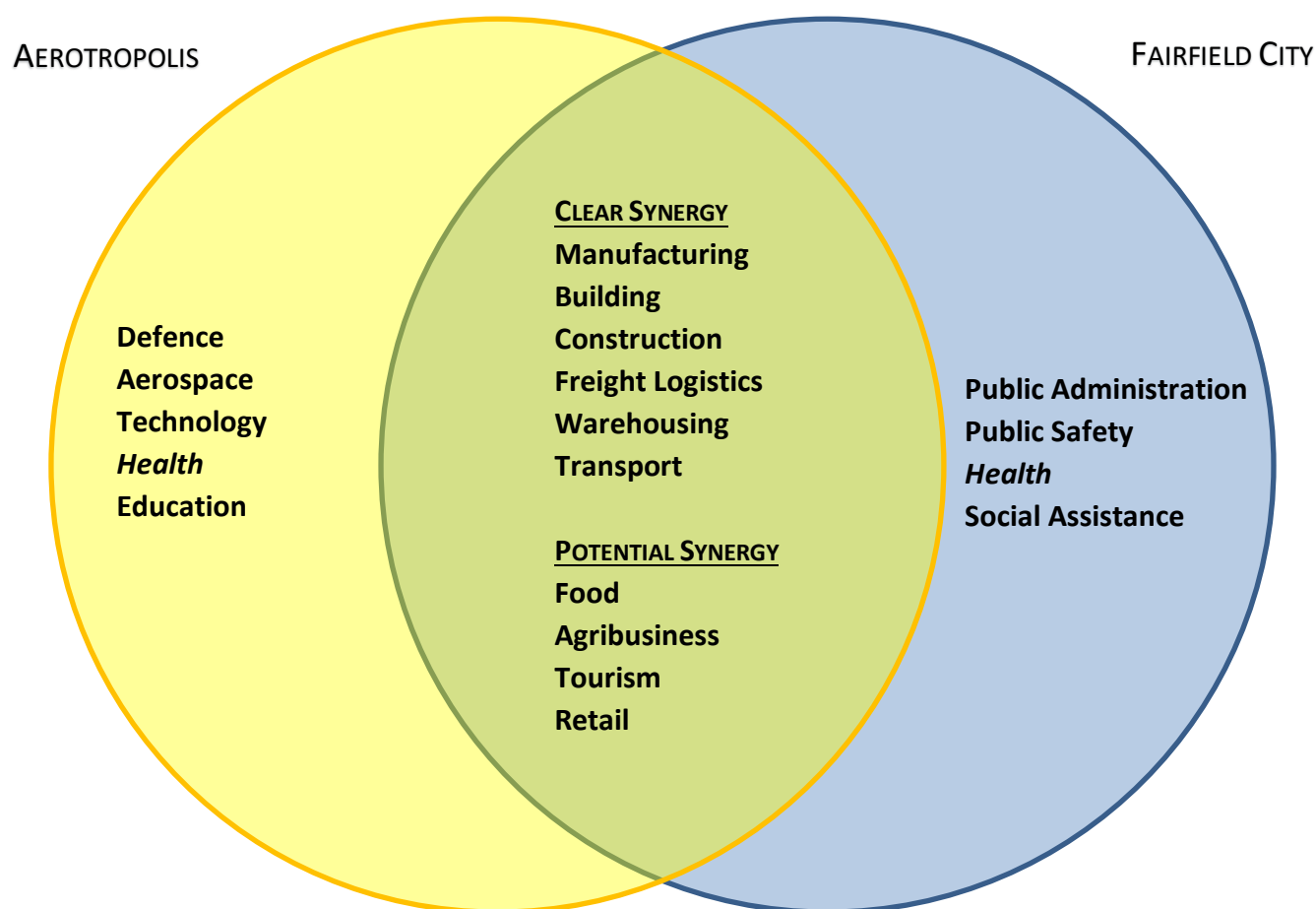
Fairfield City has clear strengths in Manufacturing, Building, Construction, Freight Logistics, Warehousing and Transport, which align with target industries of the Aerotropolis. These synergies have great potential to stimulate the industry and possibly slow the decline of the critical manufacturing industry in Fairfield City.

Potential Synergies include Food, Agribusiness, Tourism and Retail. Although these industries aren't currently the largest or strongest in Fairfield City, there is potential for growth given the right partnerships with the Aerotropolis to support the supply chain. For example, businesses supplying baked goods and supplying foods to cafes, restaurants and other outlets in the WSA and the Aerotropolis or businesses sourcing fresh produce from the agribusinesses in the Aerotropolis.

The WSA is to operate 24 hours per day with no curfews, allowing for potential growth of businesses through longer trading times and clientele for the Night-Time Economy as well as more customers during normal trading hours as passengers potentially travel though Fairfield City to Sydney CBD upon arriving or back to WSA upon leaving. This presents tourism possibilities and growth of retail, which have been growing sectors in Fairfield City, as shown in Figure 7.7. Beyond the traditional industries, opportunities also exist for Fairfield City's Gig Economy, including Uber (and similar) drivers, or those offering their skills on Air Tasker or those offering their homes on Airbnb, given the central location

between the WSA and Sydney CBD. Multilingual residents will have opportunities to offer unique, safe and comfortable experiences for visitors who may not be fluent in English but are interested in what Australia has to offer.

Health is both a target industry for the Aerotropolis and a large employment industry in Fairfield City. However, the synergies are considered low as it seems the focus and strengths are in different subsectors with the Aerotropolis focussing more on advanced biotech research and manufacturing, which has more synergies with Fairfield City's manufacturing industry, than the provision of health services to Fairfield City's urban population.

7.4   Implications

It is considered that the Aerotropolis poses significant opportunities for Fairfield City, as well as providing a significant threat. Opportunities are likely to arise by the City being able to leverage off the Aerotropolis, whereas the significant greenfield lands that would be well-served by infrastructure pose a competitive threat to the City by attracting successful businesses to relocate from the City to the Aerotropolis (particularly within those industry sectors where there is a significant overlap).

Manufacturing is Fairfield City's largest employment industry and historically has generated the highest revenue and contributed the most to the local, state and national economy as compared to other industries in Fairfield City. As such, it will be important for Council to prioritise synergies and potentials for growth of this sector and the Aerotropolis to mitigate against the continuing sharp decline of the manufacturing sector.

Analysis of Fairfield City's business clusters as well as its strengths as compared to other LGAs in the WPC has shown clear strengths in medical and surgical manufacturing as well as food manufacturing, specifically bakery products and meat products. Both these subsectors have potential for growth given the lack of price sensitivity for health-related products and quality food experiences.

Regarding medical manufacturing, the NSW Government is committed to establishing a world class health and education precinct in the Aerotropolis that includes a 'Multiversity' that will deliver world-class, industry-engaged teaching and research across a breadth of STEM-specialist disciplines, including engineering, aerospace, advanced manufacturing, and defence. The focus is to establish Australia as a dominant player in the fast growing medical technology industry, worth $600 billion in 2019, of which the Asia-Pacific was the second largest region in the world. Already in the Aerotropolis Investor Guide, several references are made to the Smithfield-Wetherill Park Industrial Estate as a hub of manufacturing in close proximity to the Aerotropolis with capabilities of manufacturing developments from the Aerotropolis. Cross-promotion and information dissemination from all stakeholders needs to continue to build strong ties for mutual growth.

Regarding food manufacturing, the 24-hour WSA presents a significant potential market for businesses in Fairfield City to supply to. With 80 million passengers projected by 2050 (before COVID-19) who will most likely eat at the airport before and between flights and potentially upon arrival, there are opportunities for food manufacturers to either supply or even expand their businesses to offer shopfront retail options. Communication is key to informing and engaging with local businesses to appraise them of these opportunities.

The next largest industry and strength of Fairfield City is Freight and Logistics and related services such as warehousing and transport. Fairfield City is centrally located on a strong road network, which has allowed a strong road freight network to develop since the 1970s. These businesses are established and are in a very good position to support the current and upcoming intermodal terminals as well as transporting directly to and from the Aerotropolis.

On the flip side, there is also the potential to lose high-skilled residents/workers seeking affordable, modern housing close to the Aerotropolis close to their potential new place of work. To counter this, it will be important for Council to establish strong connectivity via infrastructure as well as to provide attractive housing options in the LGA to retain these workers, for example the Horsely Park and Cecil Park Urban Investigation Area. Infrastructure projects could include a dedicated freight route between Smithfield/Wetherill Park to the Aerotropolis via Victoria Street, Chandos Road and the proposed Southern Link Road as well as an East-West passenger rail with stations located at Cecil Park (only 6 mins from the WSA and 10 mins from the Aerotropolis), Prairiewood, Smithfield-Wetherill Park Industrial Estate and Fairfield Entertainment Precinct (Fairfield Showground). There is also potential to lose businesses seeking to expand and looking for affordable greenfield lands available in the west. In many instances it may not be possible to retain these businesses and to counteract, Council should focus on attracting new businesses that align with what is available in Fairfield City.

7.5   Proposed Strategies

The most important strategies for Council regarding the WSA and Aerotropolis will be connectivity in terms of infrastructure and communication. The proximity to the WSA and Aerotropolis is a clear advantage for Fairfield City and will need to be supported and enhanced with robust infrastructure to minimise congesting and travel time for freight as well as the workforce. Communication is also key. Businesses in Fairfield City will benefit from a centralised information source regarding communication that is available in all the dominant languages in Fairfield City.

GOAL: To create a strong partnership with the Western Sydney Airport (WSA) and maximise economic opportunities.				
Strategies	**Actions**	**Stakeholders**	**Time**	**KPI/Outcome**
Infrastructure Connectivity	• Advocate for fast connections between Fairfield City & Aerotropolis (M12, Passenger Rail) • Identify roads that require maintenance • Analyse available routes to significant sites such as IMTs & other industrial areas. Determine which ones are sufficient, which ones need alternate routes	• Local Government • Industrial Workforce • Business Owners	Short	• Reduced congestion • Wide, safe, smooth roads • Clear connections between economically significant sites such as IMTs, Industrial Estates/Areas, Aerotropolis
Empowering Local Businesses to create Partnerships & seek opportunities	• Create dedicated team or individual who stays up to date with developments in the Aerotropolis and connected to organisations such as the Western Sydney Investment Attraction Office • Establish a mailing list of local businesses interested in the Aerotropolis, send out regular updates	• Local Government • Business Owners	Short	• Well informed & engaged businesses

	• Work with local businesses who enquire about the Aerotropolis to maximise opportunities				
Preparing & upskilling the local workforce	• Partner with local TAFEs/other approved RTOs, as well as business owners to offer courses/training, focus on technology usage & Aerotropolis targeted industries	• State Government • Federal Government • Workers • Business Owners • Educational Organisations • Training Providers	**Short & Medium**	• Employees gain additional skills/qualifications
Pursue investigation of the Urban Investigation Area at Horsely Park & Cecil Park	• Undertake the necessary studies into constraints, opportunities and infrastructure • Negotiate with the State Government	• Local Government • State Government • Consultants	**Short & Medium**	• Changes to the LEP • Residential (mainly) and employment growth in the Urban Investigation Area
Attract new Businesses that align with growing clusters, land availability & strengths of Fairfield City	• Research & define high potential industries that align with existent & growing clusters • Investigate potential industrial precincts that encourage growth of certain industries • Update Fairfield City Investment Profile to reflect target industries for growth	• Local Government	**Short**	• More defined industrial precincts • Growth of target industries • Growth of business clusters

8 YENNORA/EAST FAIRFIELD INDUSTRIAL AREAS

This Chapter explores the role of the Yennora and East Fairfield Industrial Areas and considers how the areas can best contribute to the economic activity of Fairfield City.

8.1 Yennora and Fairfield East Industrial Areas

Highlighted in Figure 8.1 below, the Yennora and Fairfield East Industrial Areas are located on the eastern boarder of Fairfield City LGA and occupy approximately 100 hectares of land, none of which are vacant. Established after World War II, Fairfield East and Yennora were the first to be established as industrial areas and represent the older industrial precincts of Fairfield City.

Whilst both of these Industrial Areas are co-located with larger industrial precincts located outside Fairfield City, they are physically separated from those other precincts and share little synergies with the businesses located within them.

Figure 8.1: Yennora & Fairfield East Industrial Areas
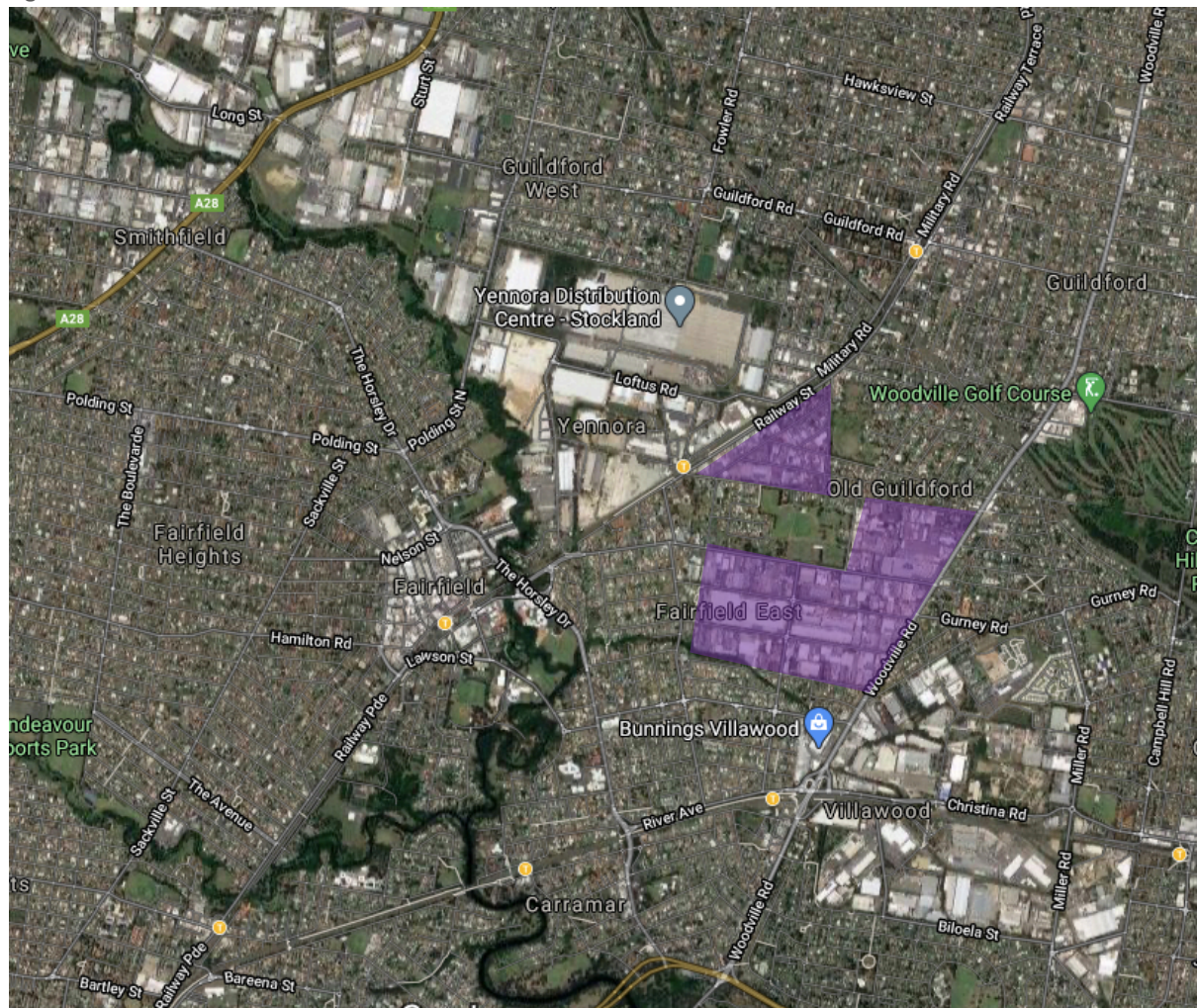
Source: Norling Consulting, Google Earth, Fairfield City FLEP

The Yennora precinct comprises largely narrow-lot factory units with direct street frontage that have become a niche light industrial area, particularly dominated by automotive repairs. The precinct is surrounded by residential land uses and is largely isolated from other industrial areas, with poor road quality and connectivity. Physically, the precinct is in close proximity to the larger and more recently developed Yennora Distribution Centre. However, the Yennora precinct is almost entirely segregated due to the passenger railway line and can only access the larger Yennora Distribution Centre & IMT via Pine Road, which is reportedly in need of maintenance.

Fairfield East comprises a broader cross-section of lot sizes and industry types, including larger scale industries, logistics and manufacturing associated with such activities as metal fabrication and recycling. Fairfield East has better access to main roads (Fairfield Street and Woodville Rd) as well as passenger rail.

Both the Yennora and Fairfield precincts provide a role as an incubator for smaller industrial businesses. However, this role is considered to be limited by the lack of vacant developable land, with this role being dependent upon the turnover of businesses within existing building structures.

8.2   Characteristics of Yennora and Fairfield East Industrial Precincts

As part of the current brief, Council requests up-to-date data on economic development issues relevant to the role and opportunities for the Yennora and Fairfield East industrial precincts in making an ongoing contribution to economic activity and employment in the City. Figure 8.2 below outlines the characteristics of both industrial precincts.

Figure 8.2 Characteristics of Yennora and Fairfield East Industrial Precincts
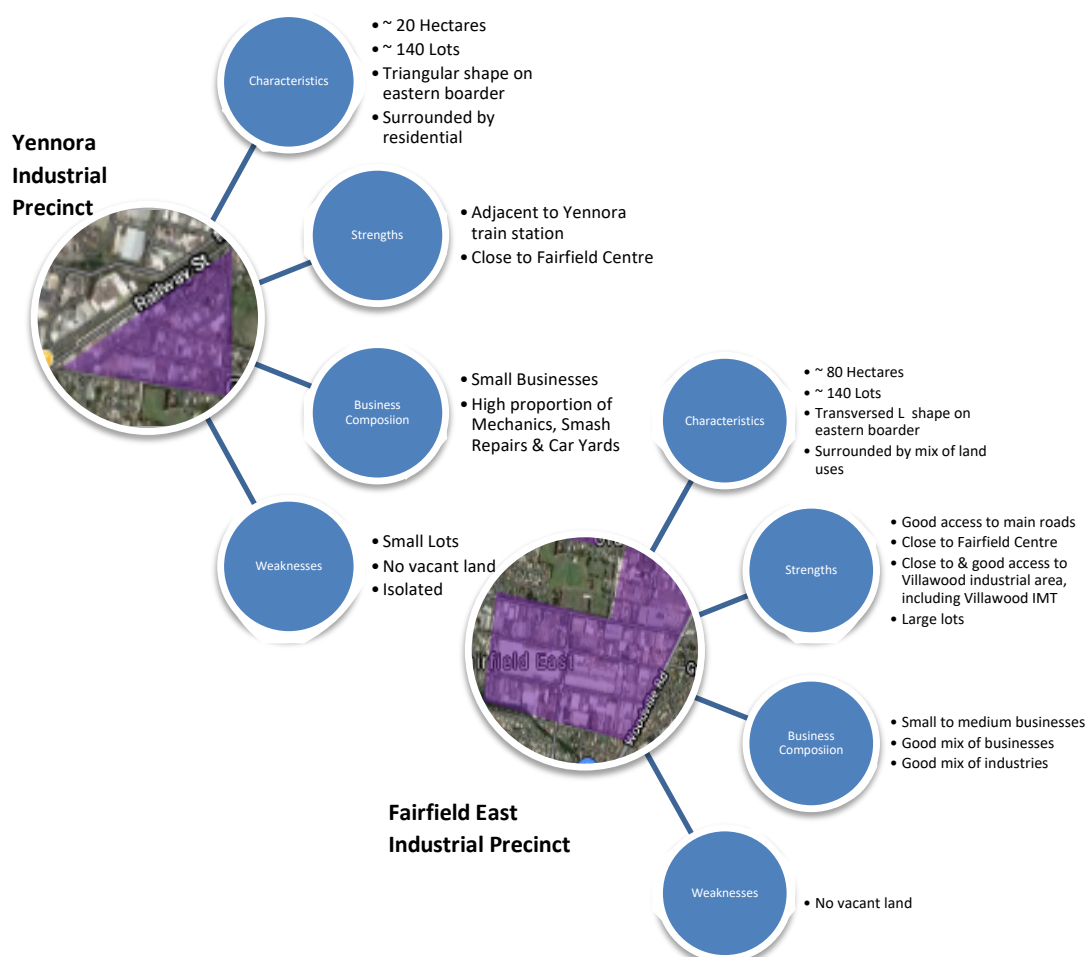
Both the Yennora and Fairfield East industrial precincts represent the older industrial areas of Fairfield City, comprising many established businesses and offer opportunities for small businesses to establish themselves. Both precincts contain approximately 140 lots, however, Fairfield East has larger lots, better road connections and a wider variety of business in terms of type and size.

8.3   Historical Demand

Typically, demand for industrial land is measured in terms of take-up of vacant land – quantum of vacant land being built upon per annum. However, this measure does not apply with respect to these two precincts, with both having been fully developed for several years, if not decades. In these cases, it is relevant to examine sales of allotments, providing evidence of the likely turnover of businesses within these precincts (recognising that a small proportion of sales may reflect only a change of ownership, rather than business).

Due to some comparisons being made with the Yennora industrial area located within Cumberland City, that precinct will be referred to as Yennora Distribution Centre, whereas the Yennora Industrial Precinct located in Fairfield City will be referred to Yennora.

Over the past decade, Fairfield East has demonstrated a larger turnover of businesses than Yennora. Yennora has maintained a greater level of stability (Figure 8.3). Figure 8.4 shows a comparison between lots sold in Yennora, Fairfield East and Yennora Distribution Centre. In this comparison, Yennora still demonstrated the lowest level of turnover.

Figure 8.3: Lots sold 2010 to 2020, Yennora vs. Fairfield East
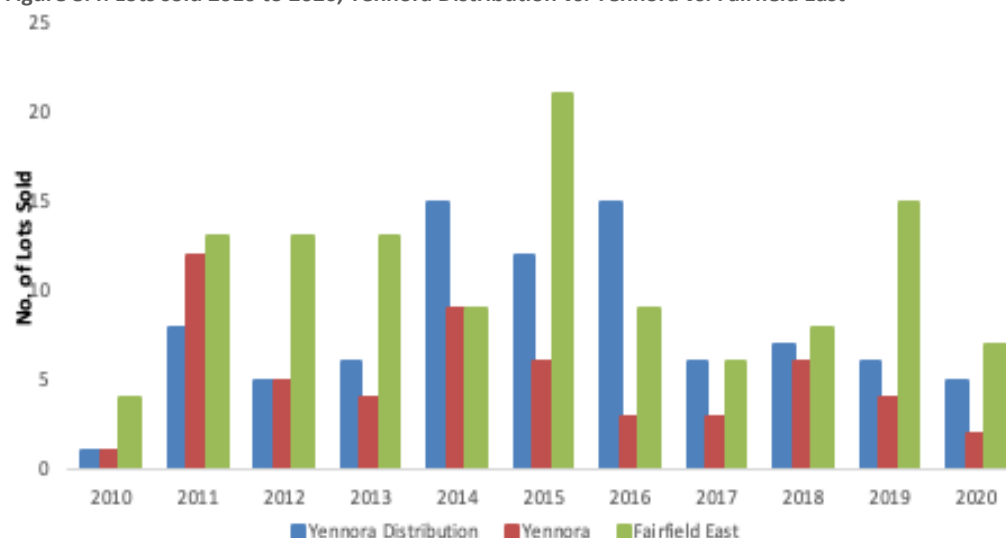
In terms of median price per m², Fairfield East has traditionally commanded a higher median price except for in 2020 when a large lot (3,100 m²) with two frontages to Whitaker Street as well as The Promenade was sold for nearly $10 million (Figure 8.5). The site was previously owned by a furniture designer and manufacturer and it was the first time the site was on the market for 40 years, indicating there is still demand for well positioned, large sites in Yennora.

Figure 8.6 shows a comparison between Fairfield East, Yennora and Yennora Distribution Centre. In general, Fairfield East has attained the highest median price/m² except for 2017 when a large 55,000 m² site was purchased for a record $46.7 million, which is currently used as The Iconic's new 19,000 m² fulfilment centre (double the size of its previous expansion) and 2020 for reasons outlined previously. Allotments in Yennora have generally garnered the lowest price/m² despite having the smallest lot sizes. This is considered to be due to its lower utility in industrial terms.

Figure 8.5: Median Price per m² 2010 to 2020, Yennora vs. Fairfield East
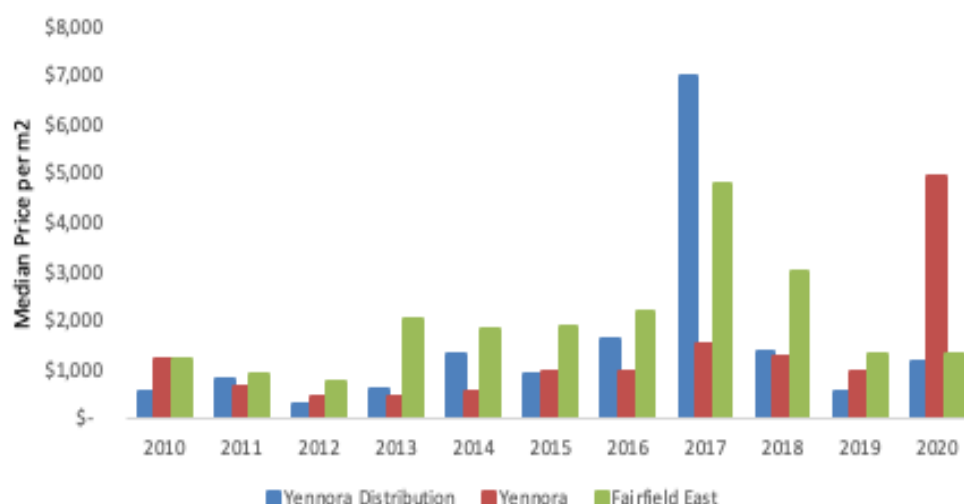
8.4   Future Industries

To understand potential future investors and businesses for the precincts, Development Applications (DA) have been analysed. Although no time restrictions were entered into the enquiry, all resulting DAs were lodged within the past two years, indicating a new wave of investment and potential for reinvigorating the precincts. As seen in Figure 8.7 below, 30 applications were lodged within the last 2 years. The most popular industries comprised Manufacturing (20%), Mechanic/Smash Repair (20%) and Warehousing/Distribution (16.7%).

The majority of the Manufacturing applications (66.7%) were located in Fairfield East, with the most promising developments within the food and cosmetics subsectors, based on the nature and size of investment. Nimco Foods was established in 1989 and is a leading wholesaler of ethnic foods. Previously located in Old Guildford, the company bought two sites in Fairfield East for $8 million in 2019 and has million dollar plans to construct an office and warehouse to expand its business. The cosmetics/skin care application was for a $800,000 facility to manufacture, produce and distribute skin care products and was approved in 2020. The site was purchased in 2017 for $2.88 million, however, it seems the property has been sold in June, 2020 for $3.1 million, possibly to Australian United Pharmaceuticals (AUP). AUP was established in 2015 and specialises in the manufacturing of health products and cosmetics. In terms of industry, the majority of applications were related to the furniture subsector (50%). Most of these applications were for smaller businesses located in Yennora.

Yennora has a high concentration of automobile businesses such as mechanics, smash repairs, tyre repairs, panel beaters and car yards. Based on recent development applications, there seems to still be investors and business owners wanting to either grow or establish these types of businesses. All applications were for small businesses with investment values up to $50,000.

Applications within the Warehousing/Distribution industry were mostly modifications and expansions to existing facilities in both Yennora and Fairfield East.

In terms of high value investments, beyond the food and cosmetics applications mentioned above, there has also been a recent application to convert an existing commercial facility to a commercial laundry facility to service hotels, restaurants and healthcare related businesses.

This is a high value investment worth approximately $5 million in terms of acquisition and construction costs and has the potential to contribute well to the local and possible regional economy.

Figure 8.7: Recent Development Applications – Yennora & Fairfield East

Industrial Precinct	Address	Lodgement	Commercial/ Showroom	Mechanic/ Smash Repair/ Car Yard	Vet Cremation	Warehouse/ Storage/ Distribution	Liquor License	Community Facility	Office	Furniture	Steel	Food	Cosmetics/ Skin Care	Indoor Recreation/ Gym	Utility	Laundry Facility
Yennora	26 Whitaker St	< 1 Year														✓
Yennora	21 The Promenade	< 1 Year		✓												
Yennora	29 The Promenade	< 1 Year			✓	✓										
Yennora	54 Whitaker St	< 1 Year		✓												
Yennora	7 Donald St	< 1 Year							✓							
Yennora	31 Yennora Ave	< 1 Year								✓						
Yennora	31 Yennora Ave	< 1 Year				✓										
Yennora	23 The Promenade	< 1 Year				✓										
Fairfield East	37 Lisbon St	< 1 Year						✓								
Fairfield East	27 Lisbon St	< 1 Year								✓						
Fairfield East	44 - 46 Mandarin St	< 1 Year												✓		
Fairfield East	22 Seville St	< 1 Year				✓										
Fairfield East	41 Fairfield St	< 1 Year												✓		
Fairfield East	9 Malta St	< 1 Year													✓	
Fairfield East	752 Woodville St	< 1 Year	✓													
Fairfield East	7 Malta St	< 1 Year							✓							
Fairfield East	12 Donald St	< 1 Year											✓			
Fairfield East	71 Malta St	< 1 Year										✓				
Fairfield East	64 Seville St	< 1 Year													✓	
Fairfield East	110 Fairfield St	< 1 Year		✓												
Fairfield East	127 Lisbon St	< 1 Year													✓	
Yennora	63 Larra St	< 2 Year		✓												
Yennora	58 Railway St	< 2 Year					✓									
Yennora	54 Whitaker St	< 2 Year		✓												
Yennora	75 Railway St	< 2 Year								✓						
Yennora	101 Fairfield St	< 2 Year									✓					
Fairfield East	23 - 25 Fairfield St	< 2 Year				✓										
Fairfield East	682 - 692 Woodville Rd	< 2 Year	✓													
Fairfield East	74 - 76 Seville St	< 2 Year		✓												
			2	6	1	5	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	2	3	1

8.5   Implications

Although older and smaller than Wetherill Industrial Park, both Yennora and Fairfield East still have potential to serve as significant industrial nodes for Fairfield City. They provide different roles to other larger industrial precincts located both within Fairfield City and nearby.

There are no vacant lots and as of September 2020, only 5 properties (4 in Yennora and 1 in Fairfield East) were listed for sale, which is only 1.8% of all available lots. The scarcity of industrial land, especially land that is centrally located and close to commercial centres has aided both Fairfield East and Yennora to command relatively high prices for sites. There is not a high turnover of sites with many established businesses operating in the area for decades, however, demand seems to be high with newly listed sites sold for a premium in recent years.

Although not large enough to attract national or international corporations, there is certainly potential for small- to medium-sized businesses with potential to serve either a local and regional catchment in both a direct-to-consumer or business-to-business capacity. Given the size of lots, good access to major roads and proximity to other industrial precincts, Fairfield East has a higher potential to attract higher value businesses that cater to larger businesses and contribute to larger supply chains. For example, businesses such as Nimco Foods that could serve local restaurants, export domestically or supply ingredients/food to businesses in the Aerotropolis.

Yennora is more likely to serve a local market, attracting mainly small businesses that cater to local consumers or to other local businesses. Businesses in Yennora are constrained by small lots, relatively older and narrower roads and closer proximity to residential lots as compared to Fairfield East, which also limits operating times and types of businesses that can operate.

8.6   Proposed Strategies

To encourage growth, road connectivity will continue to be crucial with emphasis on infrastructure such as wide, good quality roads and clear connectivity to other businesses, industrial sites and intermodal terminals. Given the dominance of auto-related businesses in Yennora and the smaller allotments within Yennora, on street parking is in high demand and appears to be insufficient.

Beyond infrastructure, connectivity to networks and other businesses is important for businesses to flourish. Connectivity will not only allow existing businesses to prosper, but also attract new businesses.

GOAL:
To allow the Yennora & Fairfield East Industrial areas to continue to thrive & make ongoing contributions to economic activity & employment in the City.

Strategies	Actions	Stakeholders	Timeframe	KPI/Outcome
Infrastructure Connectivity	• Identify roads that require maintenance • Analyse available routes to significant sites such as IMTs & other industrial areas. Determine which ones are sufficient, which ones need alternate routes	• Local Government • Industrial Workforce • Business Owners	**Short**	• Reduced congestion • Wide, safe, smooth roads • Clear connections between economically significant sites such as IMTs, Industrial Estates/Areas, Aerotropolis
Empowering Local Businesses to create Partnerships & seek opportunities	• Create dedicated team or individual who stays up to date with developments with potential opportunities such as the Aerotropolis • Establish a mailing list of local businesses interested in opportunities & send out regular updates	• Local Government • Business Owners	**Short**	• Well informed & engaged businesses
Attract new Businesses that align with growing clusters, land availability & strengths of Fairfield City	• Research & define high potential industries that align with existent & growing clusters • Investigate potential industrial precincts that encourage growth of certain industries • Update Fairfield City Investment Profile to reflect target industries for growth	• Local Government	**Short**	• More defined industrial precincts • Growth of target industries • Growth of business clusters

9 WETHERILL PARK SERVICE CENTRES

This Chapter explores the need for additional and/or expanded Service Centres to be located in the Wetherill Park Industrial Estate to better cater to the needs of the large workforce.

For the purposes of this Chapter, a Service Centre has been defined as a retail, business and commercial hub located within an industrial precinct that specifically caters to the needs of industrial businesses and their employees. Of course, it is also relevant to identify the role that traditional centres located outside, but proximate to, these industrial nodes serve in catering to the same demand sources.

9.1   Wetherill Park Industrial Area

The Smithfield-Wetherill Park Industrial Estate is the largest industrial estate in Greater Sydney, accommodating around 30,000 jobs and is a prominent hub for manufacturing and distribution with more than a third of businesses belonging to these industries. More than 5,300 businesses occupy sites in this precinct, which range from large global companies such as BMW to small local businesses.

This large industrial area may conveniently be split into three discrete parts. The Smithfield Industrial SA2, housing 10,000 workers, is located outside Fairfield City and will be ignored for the remainder of this chapter. Prospect Creek, together with the road layout, conveniently separates this part of the industrial node from Fairfield City.

Wetherill Park Industrial SA2 (also referred to as Wetherill Park Industrial Area in this chapter) accommodates about 18,000 workers and is the dominant industrial area within Fairfield City. It is estimated that the smaller industrial estate within the Fairfield City part of Smithfield houses about 2,000 workers. This latter industrial estate is conveniently located adjoining the Smithfield Local Centre.

Currently, the Wetherill Park Industrial Area is serviced by two industrial Service Centres, located at Greenway Plaza and the Victoria Centre. Both Centres are located centrally in the southern part of the Estate. These Centres comprise a cross section of retail outlets, offices, restaurants and takeaway facilities that provide for the day-to-day needs of the businesses and the industrial workforce. Greenway Plaza is a large Service Centre comprising approximately 26,000 m^2 of mixed use floorspace containing over 57 stores from eateries to the Good Guys & Officeworks. Victoria Centre is a smaller Centre containing a tavern, offices and a small number of retail outlets.

Council requires a review of the service needs of the industrial workforce with key objectives to gain a better understanding of the day-to-day needs of the workforce and to reduce the level of vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) within the Estate. Whilst the focus of this chapter will be on the Wetherill Park Industrial Area, due to its relative proximity, consideration will also be given to the Smithfield Industrial Area (that part located within Fairfield City).

9.2   Retail Expenditure Base (REB)

The Retail Expenditure Base is an estimate of the proportion of household expenditure directed towards retail facilities. The level and direction of this expenditure is dependent on a multitude of factors including the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the population, as well as the location and mix of retail facilities available to the community.

The retail expenditure base for New South Wales has been derived from the results of the 2015/16 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Household Expenditure Survey, as inflated by changes in retail turnover (ABS Retail Trade) per household to 2019 dollar values. It is estimated that the average retail expenditure base for New South Wales households is $37,890 in 2019 dollar values. A household could have one, two or more income earners. When looking at Wetherill Park workers, we are examining individual incomes to determine the likely REB of each worker and how they are likely to distribute their REB during the work-day as opposed to expenditure near their place of residence.

By applying the NSW ratio of 1.2 resident workers per household, the NSW individual REB is estimated at $31,600 per individual in 2019 dollar values. Applying the same methodology and based on the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of workers in the Wetherill Park Industrial SA2, the average worker annual retail expenditure is estimated to be **$31,000**.

To estimate the retail expenditure base of the entire workforce, the average annual retail expenditure is multiplied by the number of workers, which equates to $558 million as at 2019 for Wetherill Park and $62 million for Smithfield. Of this figure, it is estimated that approximately 15% **($83.7 million per annum** at Wetherill Park and **$9.3 million** at Smithfield) would be used for day-to-day retail needs, such as lunch, convenience goods and personal services, at or near their place of work.

It is not considered necessary to factor in growth of worker numbers at either of these two Industrial Areas. This is due to both of these Areas being at effective build-out (no additional greenfield land for development) and an expectation that, over time, technological advances are more likely to result in less workers per land or building area that is the case at present.

9.3   Supply of Service Centres

The current supply of Service Centres is shown in Figure 9.1 and outlined in Table 9.1 below. Wetherill Industrial Park currently contains two Service Centres, two fast food outlets not attached to a centre, three sit down restaurant/cafes and eight take away/lunch bars. Places to eat are evenly dispersed through the Estate, with a higher concentration of services located centrally.

Figure 9.1: Services in Wetherill Park
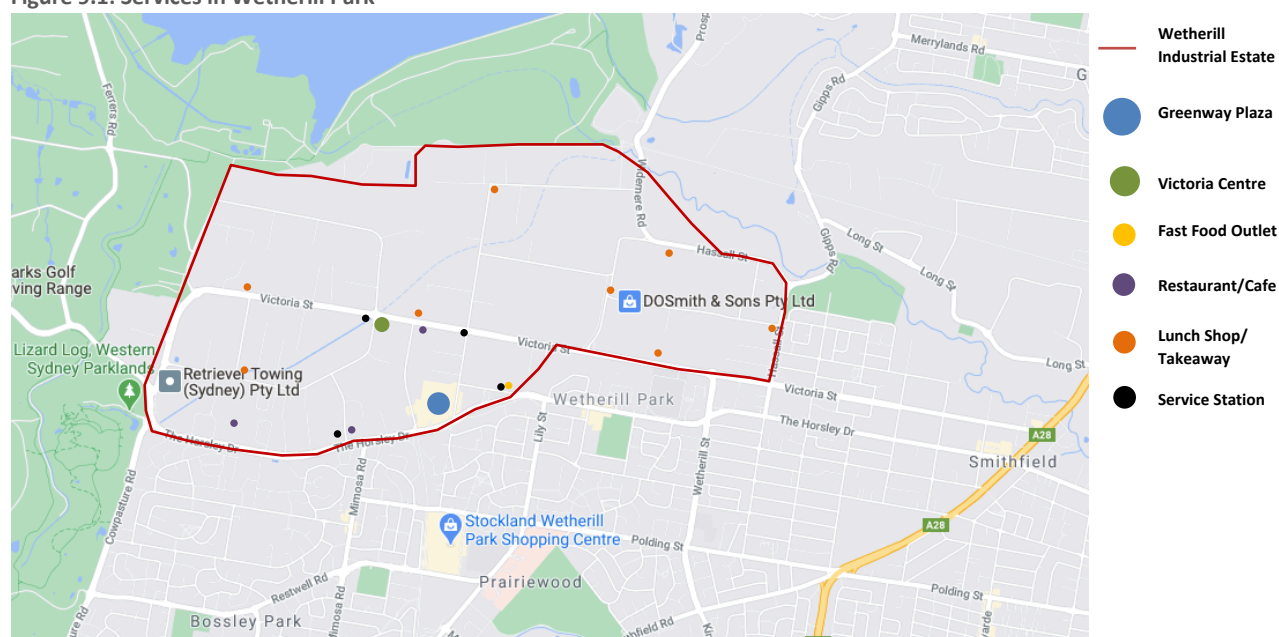
Source: Norling Consulting, Google Earth

Table 9.1: Services in Wetherill Park

Map Symbol	Type/Name	Retail Floorspace (m2)	Description
🔵	Greenway Plaza	~30,000	Large service centre containing over 57 stores from eateries to bulky goods such as Good Guys & Officeworks
🟢	Victoria Centre	~3,000	Smaller service centre with tavern, offices, places to eat and shops. ~2,000 m² of office space in additional to retail.
🟡	Fast Food	~1,000	Stand alone MacDonald's & Oportos attached to service station
🟣	Sit Down Restaurant/Café	~1,000	As listed in SWP Business Hub webpage. Includes Siena Italian Restaurant, Yara's Café & Primo Café
🟠	Lunch Shop/ Takeaway	~800	As listed in SWP Business Hub webpage. Includes a variety of small takeaways such as Balfours Sandwiches & Burgers, Salt N Pepper Food Bar & Lizzies Café & Takeaway.
⚫	Service Station	~1,200	4 Service Stations with retail component
Total:		**37,000**	

Source: Norling Consulting, Google Maps, SWP Business Hub

Greenway Plaza operates a dual role in this location. It serves the convenience needs of local businesses and workers, as well as providing for the bulky goods needs of a large residential catchment. Consequently, the above floorspace is well in excess of what would be utilised by visitors to its role as a Service Centre for the surrounding industrial area. It is therefore considered necessary to remove about 17,000m² of floorspace from this centre in order to represent the scale of retail facilities serving a Service Centre role. It is therefore estimated that the combined retail floorspace operating as a Service Centre in the Wetherill Park Industrial Area is 20,000m².

It should also be noted that within 3 kms from the Estate lies one sub-regional centre, the Prairiewood Town Centre (also known as the Stockland Wetherill Park Shopping Centre), which provides hundreds of specialty stores and anchored by Target, Big W, Coles and Woolworths; and two popular local centres, Smithfield, anchored by a Coles and Wetherill Park Market Town, anchored by an ALDI.

The Smithfield Local Centre also adjoins the Smithfield Industrial Area, which is anchored by a Coles supermarket and provides a total retail floorspace of about 6,000m^2 plus associated non-retail facilities and services.

9.4   Demand for Retail-Based Service Centre

There are many methods to calculate demand from high level indications to detailed analyses. Given the available data and for the purposes of Wetherill Industrial Estate, the retail expenditure method will be used.

Retail Expenditure Method

The benchmark for new retail productivity is assumed to be $5,500/m^2 per annum. The retail expenditure base of the working population is $83.7 million per annum, which implies a demand for about 15,000 m^2 of retail floorspace. Given that there is currently about 20,000m^2 available and operating as a Service Centre in the Wetherill Park Industrial Area, it is concluded that there is sufficient supply of Service Centre facilities to cater for current and likely future demand.

With respect to the Smithfield Local Centre, it is estimated that demand for its Service Centre role is estimated at around 1,700m^2. Again, with the total retail floorspace at Smithfield Local Centre estimated at 6,000m^2 to satisfy its role as a Service Centre to the neighbouring Smithfield Industrial Area and its role as a Local Centre to a residential catchment, it is concluded that the Smithfield Local Centre has sufficient capacity to service the needs of current and future demand from the Smithfield Industrial Area.

Observations

Based on desktop research and Google Earth aerial photos, Wetherill Park Industrial Estate seems well served by the current centres. When compared with other large industrial parks in adjacent LGAs, such as King's Park Industrial Park in Blacktown LGA, Wetherill Park has a much higher proportion of service centres and a higher proportion of the land (10%) is zoned as B5 (Business Development). On a day-to-day basis, places to eat would be the main reason for travel away from the workplace and the Estate has over 30 places to eat that are distributed across the Estate.

9.5   Implications

This chapter has identified that there is not a demand for more retail floorspace in the Estate as shown by the retail expenditure method, this implies that:

(a) There is not a need for a further Service Centre based on the REB of the current workforce; and

(b) Over 80% of workers in the Estate travel to work via car and, although there is no Service Centre in the eastern part of the Estate, according to Google, it is possible to reach the current service centres within 5 to 12 mins from anywhere in the Estate at any time of the day including peak times of 8:30am, 12pm and 5pm; and

(c) Over time, customers' preferences will change and there will be a need for the Service Centres to replace tenants from time to time, including their renewal and redevelopment. It is possible that existing premises may seek expansion onto adjoining land. Council should look more favourably on such an incremental expansion of an existing Service Centre or retail business than upon a new Service Centre or otherwise in an out-of-centre location.

9.6   Proposed Strategies

From an economic, retail expenditure base perspective, the current workforce is well served by the current Service Centres. But that does not necessarily mean that the workforce is completely satisfied with the array of service facilities currently available to them.

A survey of businesses and their employees as to what facilities they patronise within the Industrial Areas, the degree of satisfaction with those facilities and whether there is anything lacking would assist in informing Council and the Service Centre operators of workers' needs and wants. Such a survey could be undertaken collaboratively with those operators.

Table 9.2 outlines suggested strategies and actions for improving the amenities of Wetherill Park Industrial Estate.

Table 9.2: Proposed Strategies for Wetherill Park Industrial Estate Service Centres

GOAL: To make Wetherill Park Industrial Estate a balanced Estate that not only provides jobs, but adequately provides services to meet the day-to-day needs of the Industrial Workforce and Businesses				
Strategies	**Actions**	**Stakeholders**	**Timeframe**	**KPI/Outcome**
Connect & Communicate with current workforce & businesses	• Conduct survey of workforce & businesses • Conduct interviews with workforce & businesses • Observe daily movements in Estate to identify peak times, reasons for leaving workplace, most popular services	• Local Government • Industrial Workforce • Service Centre Operators • Business Owners	**Short**	• Understanding of business needs • Understanding of workforce needs • Reduced level of VKT within Estate • Reduced level of discontent
Prepare for future workforce & businesses	• Identify business clusters & possible precincts • Identify level of amenity/services required to serve & attract future business	• Local Government	**Medium**	• Understanding future Estate needs • Creation of appropriate planning tools • Structure Plan

10 WESTERN CITY INDUSTRIAL LANDS DATA

This Chapter reviews the Employment Lands Database and Mecone's 'Snapshot' Report to identify any broader economic trends that may impact the industrial lands of Fairfield City.

10.1   Mecone Snapshot Study

Mecone was tasked by the Greater Sydney Commission to review employment lands identified within the Greater Sydney Region Plan (A Metropolis for Three Cities) as "Review and Manage" and advise on further refinements. The Greater Sydney Regional Plan defines "Review and Manage" lands as lands that need to be reviewed to either confirm its retention or manage uses to allow sites to transition to higher-order employment activities such as business parks. It should be noted that not all of Fairfield City's employment lands belong to this category, although all lands were included in the Mecone Study.

According to the Study, Employment Lands are defined as *lands that are zoned for industrial or similar purposes in planning instruments. These lands are generally lower density employment areas containing concentrations of businesses involved in manufacturing; transport and warehousing; service and repair trades and industries; integrated enterprises with a mix of administration, production, warehousing, research and development; and urban services and utilities.* Within Greater Sydney, there is a total supply of 13,826 hectares across 287 precincts with a potential additional supply of 6,654 hectares.

The Employment Lands reviewed in the Study are outlined in Figure 10.1 below and include the LGAs of Blacktown, Cumberland, Fairfield, Hornsby, Liverpool, Parramatta and the Hills.

Figure 10.1: Reviewed Employment Lands
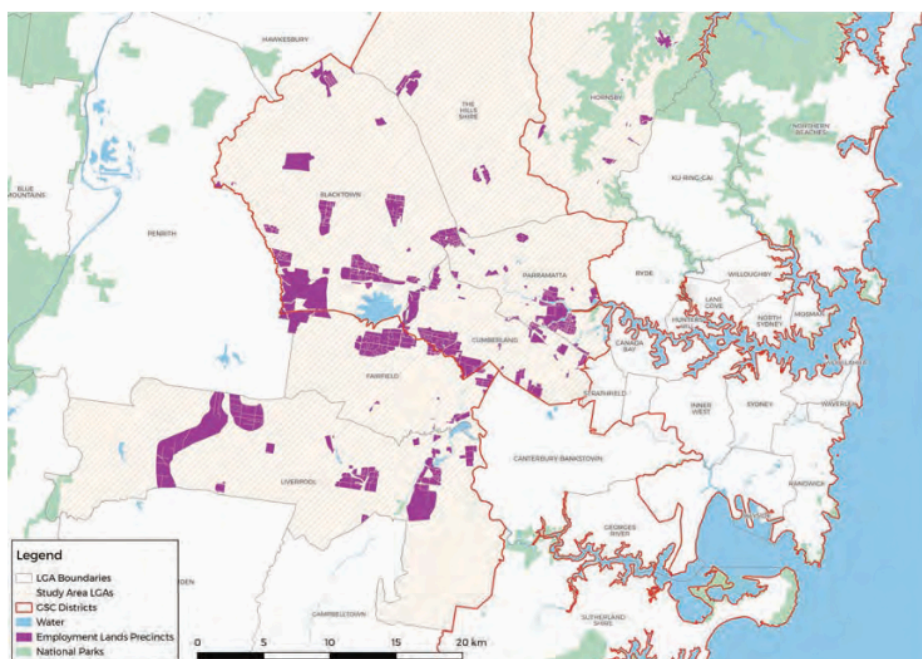
Within the Study area, 104 zoned employment land precincts were identified and are summarised in Table 10.1 below.

Table 10.1: Employment Lands in Study Area

Local Government Area	Number of zoned employment land precincts	Precinct area hectares (ha)			Average Precinct size	Contribution to Greater Sydney employment lands
		Smallest	Largest	LGA Total		
Blacktown	23	3.9	561.6	2547.9	110.8 ha	18.4%
Cumberland	22	1.8	352.5	1112.7	50.6 ha	8.0%
Fairfield	12	1.3	559.1	1081.6	90.1 ha	7.8%
Hornsby	13	0.1	65.6	176.3	13.6 ha	1.3%
Liverpool	11	1.8	493.1 ha	1114.9	101.4 ha	8.1%
Parramatta	18	0.2	235.9	447.2	39.5 ha	5.1%
The Hills	5	1.0	144.9	284.8	57.0	2.1%
Review and Manage study area	104	0.1	559.1	6765.4	66.1 ha	50.8%

The resulting Mecone Snapshot incorporated 32 measures across 27 criteria. The criteria were broadly grouped into the categories of Investment and Business; Location; Functionality and Connections; and Economic Output, Jobs and Growth.

The Study identified eight key drivers of demand for employment lands. These comprised:

- **Structural Change and Rise of the Logistics Sector** – Influenced by changes in technology and JIT (Just In Time) inventory management systems, which has led to a transition towards larger distribution centres located on major arterial roads and rail networks;
- **Transition from Manufacturing to Warehousing** – Increased price competition globally has led to the nation-wide decline of the manufacturing industry, with many companies transitioning from factories to warehouses;
- **Infrastructure –** The expansion of good quality infrastructure has allowed businesses to re-locate further away from metropolitan areas;
- **Clustering –** Clustering of like-minded businesses facilitates the creation of business networks and generates new market opportunities through collaboration;
- **Affordable Land** – New affordable employment lands emerging in the west, located on arterial roads has provided an incentive for businesses to relocate;

- **Competing uses in Inner/Middle Suburban Areas –** Industrial lands in suburban areas are being sourced for higher order commercial and residential uses, leading to the loss of industrial lands for industrial purposes. There has also been a trend towards subdivision to smaller lots, restricting the types of industrial businesses than can locate in metropolitan areas;
- **Online Retailing –** The growth of this sector has seen increased demand for well-located warehouses;
- **Technology –** Technology has not only changed the type of infrastructure required by companies, buy also where companies are located. Advanced Geographic Information Systems (GIS) enable investors to quickly find locations that maximise operational success by minimising the combined cost of transport and property, faster service times to stores, access to skilled labour and access to target demographic markets.

In addition to these key main drivers, the Study acknowledges the extreme undersupply of employment lands from 2015 driving up prices. The shortage was a result not only of strong demand and strong economic growth, but also the loss of land. For example, the re-zoning of industrial land in inner city locations for higher and better uses led to the loss of an estimated 44.6 hectares of industrial land over 2015 and 2016, mostly in the south west and outer north west precincts.

The Study categorises each industrial precinct into three categories:

1. **Metropolitan –** Large Scale Logistics and some General Industrial. These precincts are of a large scale and contribute significantly to regional economy and are vital to the function of Greater Sydney and include uses such as manufacturing, transport and logistics.
2. **Local –** Local Services and some General Industrial. These precincts provide employment and service functions that service mainly the LGA and some broader districts and include uses such as manufacturing, automotive, warehousing and other services.
3. **Mixed –** Bulky Goods, Independent sites, working waterfront, specialized uses and undefined or undeveloped precincts. These precincts are population serving and are largely retail in nature. They are under pressure of rezoning and are not critical to Metropolitan functions.

The number of precincts in each category by LGA is shown in Table 10.2 below.

Table 10.2: LGA Precinct Significance

LGA	Metropolitan	Local	Mixed	Total Precincts	Total Hectares
Fairfield	5	6	1	12	1,082
Blacktown	12	5	6	23	2,548
Cumberland	15	5	2	22	1,113
Hornsby	2	2	8	12	176
Liverpool	4	1	11	16	1,115
Parramatta	6	9	2	17	447
The Hills		3	2	5	285

Fairfield City, along with Blacktown, Cumberland and Liverpool is a significant contributor to economic functionality of Greater Sydney, aided by its central location and strong road network.

Fairfield City's overall scores are outlined in Table 10.3 below.

Table 10.3: Mecone Snapshot Findings – Fairfield City

Area	Score	Comments
Investment & Business	Below Average	Few new planned investments identified, below average rents except Fairfield East, below agerage capital investments. Strong land values
Location, Functionality & Connections	High	Good connectivity, central location, however potential for residential conflicts with poor buffers between industrial and residential lands
Economic Output, Jobs & Growth	Above Average	Several precincts had high gross value add. Good clustering with clear primary c lusters. Eg. Bulky Goods and Retail (Bonnyrigg/Fairfield), Manufacturing (Wetherill Park), Transport & Logistics (South of Water Pipeline), Automotvie Repairs (Yennora & Cabramatta)

It is Norling Consulting's view that this Study confirms the current important role of Fairfield City's industrial areas to the City, the lack of vacant industrial land to attract new businesses, the likely competition from newly emerging industrial precincts to the west and the need to manage the natural transition of businesses within its existing industrial areas.

10.2   Employment Lands Data Base

The Greater Sydney Commission Employment Lands Database was developed by SGS Economics and Planning. It is a highly comprehensive database covering all lots of Employment Lands in Greater Sydney in varying detail from 2010 to 2017. The Database covers all 28 LGAs that comprise Greater Sydney and has identified 295 industrial precincts across the 28 LGAs. Employment Lands have been defined as lands zoned as either IN1, IN2, IN3, IN4, B5, B6 or B7. As shown in Table 10.4 below, Greater Sydney contained 20,811 hectares of Employment Lands in 2017. Of this land, only 3,032 hectares remained undeveloped.

Table 10.4: Greater Sydney Employment Lands

LGA	Land (Ha)
Penrith	5,714
Liverpool	3,267
Blacktown	2,591
Cumberland	1,139
Fairfield	1,088
Canterbury-Bankstown	976
Campbelltown	843
Camden	759
Parramatta	715
Sutherland	602
Bayside	434
Randwick	356
Wollondilly	289
Strathfield	288
Inner West	278
The Hills	277
Northern Beaches	196
Hawkesbury	189
Hornsby	182
Sydney	174
Blue Mountains	121
Georges River	99
Willoughby	94
Lane Cove	62
Ryde	39
Canada Bay	30
North Sydney	7
Hunters Hill	0
	20,811

Fairfield City has the fifth largest amount (5.2%) of industrial land in Greater Sydney. However, only 46 hectares (4%) remained undeveloped. In terms of lot sizes, the majority are less than 2,000 m^2, as shown in Table 10.5 below. Liverpool, Penrith and Blacktown have the greatest concentrations of large lots, with Fairfield having a moderate amount in comparison.

Table 10.5: Prevalence of Varying Lot Sizes

LGA	< 2,000 sqm	2,000-5,000 sqm	5,000 sqm-2 ha	> 2 ha	Strata
Bayside	884	144	84	43	68
Blacktown	1,215	486	366	244	253
Blue Mountains	353	99	30	7	14
Camden	142	170	106	93	70
Campbelltown	320	409	149	77	132
Canada Bay	157	17	7	2	10
Canterbury-Bankstown	1,786	326	217	101	157
Cumberland	726	253	248	116	98
Fairfield	822	392	251	103	132
Georges River	425	59	19	4	49
Hawkesbury	148	136	57	13	54
Hornsby	228	58	53	14	86
Hunters Hill	3	-	-	-	-
Inner West	1,572	79	56	18	53
Lane Cove	61	12	24	5	14
Liverpool	159	232	319	448	123
North Sydney	77	4	1	-	5
Northern Beaches	704	88	32	7	138
Parramatta	1,101	220	138	69	56
Penrith	321	457	291	347	140
Randwick	102	14	20	31	11
Ryde	94	18	12	2	9
Strathfield	257	47	65	33	19
Sutherland	600	141	77	22	130
Sydney	197	77	51	12	42
The Hills	5	6	52	34	30
Willoughby	372	43	27	4	44
Wollondilly	17	58	39	28	6
	12,848	**4,045**	**2,791**	**1,877**	**1,943**

In terms of land value and rents, Fairfield City, on average across all precincts within the LGA, had below average $/Sqm land values and rents as shown in Table 10.6 below. This appears to be consistent with the pattern of land values and rents being heavily influenced by proximity to the Sydney CBD, with values and rents falling the further the LGAs are located from the CBD.

Table 10.6: Industrial Land Value & Rents

LGA	Average Land Value across Precincts ($/Sqm)
Sydney	2,323.94
Inner West	1,628.54
Hunters Hill	1,500.00
Canada Bay	1,386.81
North Sydney	1,334.73
Bayside	1,303.00
Randwick	1,300.00
Willoughby	1,193.25
Georges River	1,027.84
Hornsby	952.07
Northern Beaches	848.34
Lane Cove	745.85
Ryde	744.43
Canterbury-Bankstown	741.36
Cumberland	732.11
Parramatta	688.81
Fairfield	655.35
Sutherland	589.87
Strathfield	537.22
Blacktown	474.76
The Hills	455.82
Penrith	410.17
Campbelltown	342.27
Hawkesbury	328.28
Liverpool	296.75
Blue Mountains	246.26
Camden	192.35
Wollondilly	119.14

LGA	Average Rents across Precincts ($/Sqm)
Sydney	271
Inner West	269
Hunters Hill	250
Randwick	250
North Sydney	238
Bayside	234
Willoughby	230
Northern Beaches	222
Georges River	205
Canada Bay	187
Sutherland	186
Ryde	164
Canterbury-Bankstown	159
Strathfield	154
Lane Cove	140
Hornsby	138
Parramatta	128
Blacktown	108
Cumberland	108
Fairfield	100
Blue Mountains	100
Penrith	97
Campbelltown	84
Hawkesbury	82
The Hills	69
Liverpool	65
Wollondilly	58
Camden	37

The database also contains information regarding the percentage of residential land or properties within 100m of industrial precincts. The average across all precincts within an LGA is shown in Table 10.7 below. With Fairfield City having an above average percentage of residential lands within 100m of its industrial lands, there is a presumption that buffers may be inadequate in some areas. Other research indicates that this is likely to be the case for Yennora and Fairfield East.

Table 10.7: Percentage of Residential within 100m of Industrial Precincts

LGA	Residential %
Canterbury-Bankstown	51.4%
Georges River	49.5%
Inner West	47.8%
Canada Bay	45.8%
Bayside	45.7%
North Sydney	39.4%
Northern Beaches	35.8%
Hunters Hill	35.1%
Cumberland	33.6%
Fairfield	30.1%
Parramatta	29.4%
Sydney	26.5%
Willoughby	25.2%
Hornsby	25.1%
Ryde	24.6%
Camden	21.2%
Blue Mountains	20.4%
Lane Cove	19.1%
Sutherland	19.1%
The Hills	17.3%
Strathfield	16.9%
Penrith	16.5%
Wollondilly	15.7%
Liverpool	13.9%
Hawkesbury	13.4%
Campbelltown	9.2%
Randwick	9.0%
Blacktown	7.4%

In 2017, 587,745 jobs were contained within industrial lands across 48 million m² of floorspace as shown in Figure 10.8 below. Fairfield City provided approximately 34,000 jobs (6%) for Greater Sydney and almost 4 million m² (8.3%) of floorspace.

Table 10.8: Jobs and Floorspace provided by Industrial Lands

LGA	Jobs	LGA	Floorspace (m2)
Blacktown	57,445	Blacktown	6,697,145
Parramatta	48,576	Cumberland	4,960,309
Cumberland	41,517	Canterbury-Bankstown	4,831,941
Canterbury-Bankstown	40,072	Penrith	4,076,048
Bayside	39,254	Liverpool	4,000,645
Inner West	35,585	Fairfield	3,987,936
Fairfield	34,317	Parramatta	3,080,458
Northern Beaches	28,578	Campbelltown	2,669,989
Penrith	26,202	Bayside	1,837,764
Sydney	24,922	Sutherland	1,577,555
Liverpool	23,775	Inner West	1,325,335
Willoughby	22,400	Sydney	1,135,636
Sutherland	22,397	Northern Beaches	1,098,231
Campbelltown	19,088	Camden	959,484
Hornsby	18,196	Strathfield	953,964
Strathfield	16,424	Willoughby	710,521
Hawkesbury	13,132	Hornsby	627,355
Canada Bay	11,826	Randwick	621,102
The Hills	11,557	Georges River	615,032
Georges River	10,003	Hawkesbury	602,685
Camden	9,332	The Hills	494,957
Blue Mountains	8,556	Lane Cove	259,233
Wollondilly	6,917	Wollondilly	211,376
Randwick	5,986	Canada Bay	197,714
Lane Cove	4,448	Ryde	161,024
Ryde	3,494	Blue Mountains	41,377
North Sydney	3,331	North Sydney	34,544
Hunters Hill	415	Hunters Hill	941
	587,745		**47,770,300**

When looking at Economic Contribution in terms of Gross Value Add (GVA), Fairfield City contributed nearly $4 billion to Greater Sydney in 2017, as shown in Table 10.9 below.

Table 10.9: Economic Contribution

LGA	Economic Contribution (GVA $M)
Blacktown	8,142
Parramatta	8,064
Bayside	6,691
Cumberland	6,157
Canterbury-Bankstown	5,262
Inner West	4,796
Willoughby	4,207
Northern Beaches	4,016
Fairfield	3,986
Sydney	3,696
Penrith	3,374
Liverpool	2,959
Sutherland	2,763
Campbelltown	2,352
Strathfield	2,237
Hornsby	2,160
Canada Bay	2,150
Hawkesbury	1,492
The Hills	1,372
Wollondilly	1,356
Georges River	1,281
Camden	1,262
Randwick	1,066
Blue Mountains	946
Lane Cove	758
North Sydney	598
Ryde	543
Hunters Hill	62
	83,748

When looking at individual industrial precincts within Fairfield City, Wetherill Park has the largest lots, the most amount of undeveloped land, employs the most amount of people, has the largest amount of floorspace and has contributed the most to the regional economy. In terms of land value, Cabramatta commanded the highest amount per m^2 and Fairfield East commanded the highest rent per m^2. Cabramatta, Lansvale, Fairfield East/Yennora and Fairfield CBD all have large amounts of residential land and developments surrounding the estates.

10.3   Implications

Fairfield City's industrial precincts have been shown in a favourable light by both the Mecone Study and the Employment Lands Database. Fairfield City generally compares well against other LGAs and contributes significantly to the regional economy.

However, some salient points need to be considered and mitigated for Fairfield City's industrial precincts to thrive in the future. These include:

- Emergence of larger, more affordable industrial estates in the west. This is probably the largest threat to Fairfield City's Industrial precincts. Both the Mecone Study and the Database highlight the lack of vacant lands in Fairfield City. Should Council consider offering more? Are there other areas that could provide employment lands? Land values and rents are still relatively affordable in Fairfield City, however, it is not as affordable as Liverpool or Penrith, the LGAs that will contain the Aerotropolis;
- Balancing higher order uses and industrial uses in metropolitan areas. The Mecone Study indicated that there is potential for conflict between residential uses and industrial uses in the older industrial areas. Although the Employment Database doesn't reflect this on an LGA level, on an industrial precinct level, Cabramatta, Lansvale, Fairfield East/Yennora and Fairfield CBD all have significantly high amounts of residential uses within 100m of industrial estates, suggesting that conflicts between uses may arise (potentially resulting in constraints to the use of some industrial lands). Council should review the adequacy of these buffers and develop planning solutions where conflicts arise (a buffer of less than 100m may not necessarily result in a conflict);
- Technology prompting the decline of traditional manufacturing and enabling investors to find optimal sites using advanced GIS technology, which aren't necessarily centrally located. Council needs to reinforce the strength of the City's central location with strong infrastructure to ensure sites remain attractive;
- Plan for and invest in new infrastructure. Sydney's infrastructure does not stand still, as is evident with the quantum of infrastructure being invested at the present time. The City will be left behind if it simply relies upon historically developed infrastructure. This infrastructure needs to be upgraded, reassessed, improved and augmented in order for the City to remain competitive with the newer industrial estates being developed on the fringes of Greater Sydney. For example having a dedicated Freight Route between Smithfield/Wetherill Park to the WSA and Aerotropolis would decrease the advantage of new industrial estates located further west. Having an East-West passenger rail line with stops between Cecil Park, Wetherill Park and other employment centres such as the Aerotropolis and Parramatta will help reduce congestion and increase accessibility for workers within and beyond Fairfield City;
- The City's real challenge is to manage the transition of businesses within the industrial areas due to the inevitable loss of some businesses to greenfield lands to the west of the City;
- Reevaluate Mecone's assessment of Fairfield City's Industrial Precincts. Does Council agree with the categorizations of Metropolitan, Local and Mixed? Is Fairfield CBD really a 'Mixed' precinct at risk of losing its employment lands? If so, does Council need to re-zone?
- The Mecone Study identifies clear business clusters in Fairfield City. Does Council agree? Does it want to encourage these clusters or define different ones?

10.4   Proposed Strategies and Actions

Figure 10.2: Proposed Strategies based on Mecone Study & Western City Employment Lands Database

GOAL:				
To ensure the long term viability of the Industrial Precincts of Fairfield City based on the information contained within the Mecone Snapshot Study and the Greater Sydney Commission Employment Lands Database				
Strategies	**Actions**	**Stakeholders**	**Timeframe**	**KPI/Outcome**
Infrastructure Connectivity	• Advocate for fast connections between Fairfield City & Aerotropolis (M12, Passenger Rail) • Identify roads that require maintenance • Analyse available routes to significant sites such as IMTs & other industrial areas. Determine which ones are sufficient, which ones need alternate routes	• Local Government • Industrial Workforce • Business Owners	**Short**	• Reduced congestion • Wide, safe, smooth roads • Clear connections between economically significant sites such as IMTs, Industrial Estates/Areas, Aerotropolis
Enable clear distinction of priorities regarding Employment Lands	• Assess which Industrial Precincts (if any) are ready to move to higher order uses • Clearly define buffer area around Industrial Precincts, especially the older precincts • Create policies and planning tools to benefit both residents and businesses • Evaluate undeveloped lands & determine possibility of providing more industrial lands to remain competitive and retain growing businesses	• Local Government	**Short**	• Clearly defined buffers • Fewer residential complaints • Faster approvals for developments
Attract new Businesses that align with growing clusters, land availability & strengths of Fairfield City	• Research & define high potential industries that align with existent & growing clusters • Investigate potential industrial precincts that encourage growth of certain industries • Update Fairfield City Investment Profile to reflect target industries for growth	• Local Government	**Short**	• More defined industrial precincts • Growth of target industries • Growth of business clusters

11 RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES

Council has provided a brief to assess eight significant issues affecting the economic growth of Fairfield City. Although mostly discrete, overlaps between the issues emerged during the research and analysis process, enabling an emergence of an overriding strategy with four recommended Strategic Priorities that cover all the proposed strategies and actions for the eight issues. These are outlined in Table 11.1 below.

Table 11.1: Recommendations

Strategic Priority 1: Connectivity		
Strategies	**Importance**	**Related Issues**
Infrastructure Connectivity	• Fairfield City's central location to significant industrial estates, IMTs & major business districts coupled with a strong road network has significantly contributed to the city's growth & economy. Maintaining and upgrading significant corridors should be a high priority for Council to maintain competitiveness & relevance. Local infrastructure such as roads, walkways, lighting, facilities etc. will also be important for establishing a NTE. • Suggestions for infrastructure projects include a Freight Priority road from Smithfield/Wetherill Park to the Aerotropolis via Victoria Street, Chandos Road and the proposed Southern Link Road as well as an East-West Passenger Rail with local stops at Cecil Park, Prairiewood/ Fairfield Entertainment Precinct (Fairfield Showground), and Smithfield-Wetherill Park Employment Lands.	• 2 – Night-Time Economy • 3 – Western Sydney Freight Line • 4 – Local Servicing Industries • 5 – Aerotropolis • 6 – Yennora & Fairfield East • 8 – Mecone Study & EL Database
Telecommunication Infrastructure Connectivity	• Fairfield City has a large proportion of homes and businesses that may not have access to adequate internet services. Although the situation may have changed since the last Census, it is still critical to assess the reliability and strength of internet connections to all businesses & homes, especially due to the rise of flexible working times and working from home as well as the rise of home based businesses. This elevates the importance of Libraries and the proposed Business Hub, offering access to the internet.	• 1 – COVID-19 • 4 – Local Servicing Industries
Community Connectivity	• Fairfield City's diversity makes it a unique place to live and visit. However, high diversity can also lead to conflict and misunderstandings. It is important for the community to feel connected to place and identify as being Australian or a valuable member of their local community alongside with their home nation. Having facilities & services like the Community Business Hub is a great start. High levels of connectedness leads to a fast, free flow of information that will benefit everyone.	• 4 – Local Servicing Industries • 5 – Aerotropolis • 7 – Wetherill Park Service Cent.

Strategic Priority 2: Empowerment		
Strategies	**Importance**	**Related Issues**
Upskilling	• Fairfield City has a high unemployment rate, despite local businesses reporting difficulties finding staff, indicating a skills gap. This skills gap is a result of not only the rapid advancement of technology, but also the challenging demographic profile of the City. It is important to create facilities/services and to partner with local businesses & educational institutions to provide resources aimed at reducing the skills gap, which will provide more opportunities for both residents and businesses.	• 4 – Local Servicing Industries • 5 – Aerotropolis
Supporting Local Businesses	• As of June, 2019, there were over 16,000 businesses actively trading in Fairfield City, the majority of which were non-employing. The larger, more established businesses will have significant opportunities in the near future given Fairfield City's prime location in between Parramatta and the Aerotropolis, the two new CBDs of Greater Sydney. Smaller businesses will also have opportunities locally & the surrounding regions, but will require Council to advocate & promote their strengths & offerings to the local community and beyond. The Community Businesses Hub will also greatly assist smaller businesses to upskill, grow and potentially expand.	• 1 – COVID-19 • 5 – Aerotropolis • 6 – Yennora & Fairfield East • 7 – Wetherill Park Service Cent. • 8 – Mecone Study & EL Database
Encouraging Partnerships	• Partnerships will be crucial for both the local businesses and for Council. For example, Council joining the NTECC and advocating for Fairfield City's night-time offerings (once established) will greatly assist the City's NTE. Partnering with the Western Sydney Investment Attraction Office will allow Council to stay up to date with the progress of the Aerotropolis & to share the information with local businesses, allowing them to form partnerships as well. Local businesses will benefit from partnering with larger businesses to become a crucial part of the larger supply chain.	• 2 – Night-Time Economy • 3 – Western Sydney Freight Line • 5 – Aerotropolis • 6 – Yennora & Fairfield East

Strategic Priority 3: Industrial Identity

Strategies	Importance	Related Issues
Identify Industry Clusters & attract new businesses to support Clusters	• Several Industry Clusters have been identified in Fairfield City, with the most promising ones being Food Manufacturing, Medical Equipment Manufacturing & Transport, Postal & Warehousing. These clusters are high value, contribute to the local & regional economy & have longevity as they will be impacted by pandemics such as COVID-19 to a lesser degree than other industries. Promoting and attracting further businesses from these industries will be an asset to the City.	• 5 – Aerotropolis • 6 – Yennora & Fairfield East • 8 – Mecone Study & EL Database
Preserve Functionality of Industrial Precincts	• Fairfield City's central location to significant industrial estates, IMTs & major business districts coupled with a strong road network has significantly contributed to the city's growth & economy. Maintaining and upgrading significant corridors should be a high priority for Council to maintain competitiveness & relevance. Connectivity should not be severed in any way by new developments such as the Western Sydney Freight Line. • Fairfield City's industrial precincts are all at different stages of development and serve different purposes for the City. For example, Wetherill Park comprises large, established businesses that are of regional significance whilst Yennora & Fairfield East have smaller lots & serve a more localised role. These different roles are both required and should be assessed and preserved as appropriate.	• 3 – Western Sydney Freight Line • 5 – Aerotropolis • 6 – Yennora & Fairfield East • 7 – Wetherill Park Service Cent. • 8 – Mecone Study & EL Database

Strategic Priority 4: Dedication

Strategies	Importance	Related Issues
Develop Dedicated Policies & Frameworks	• Similar to Parramatta's dedicated Night City Framework, Council will also need to develop strong, clear, dedicated policies that will shape the future of the City in terms of growth & focus areas, which should be determined with further research.	• 1 – COVID-19 • 2 – Night-Time Economy • 5 – Aerotropolis • 8 – Mecone Study & EL Database
Create Dedicated Committees	• Dedicated Committees are also recommended to establish new strategic focus areas such as a NTE or upskilling businesses and the local workforce.	• 2 – Night-Time Economy • 4 – Local Servicing Industries

12 ADDITIONAL ISSUES

In August, 2020, Council has requested additional advice regarding a further five issues, based on a new draft Economic Profile (EP), which was also dated August 2020. These issues are addressed briefly below, with advice based on the data provided in the EP and previous research conducted for this Report.

The EP provides a snapshot of key economic data. It also provides a projection of population, employment and economic activity. Relevantly and impressively, the EP has addressed the likely impact of the COVID-19 pandemic upon these projections. Whilst great uncertainty exists over various aspects of COVID-19, Norling Consulting accepts the positions taken by the EP as being reasonable under the circumstances. Essentially, the EP has found that population growth of the City is likely to be retarded by about five years and employment numbers will fall short of pre-COVID-19 projections until about 2024.

In summary, the EP has projected that whilst manufacturing will maintain its position as the City's most important economic sector, it will continue to lose ground to other sectors, such as health care and social assistance and education and training. Norling Consulting concurs with these overall findings.

12.1 Rezoning Land

Council has requested advice on rezoning land in the City for employment uses, particularly to land around existing town centres and industrial precincts.

A previous Centres Study conducted for Council in 2018 revealed that Fairfield City only had an estimated 31,900 m^2 of vacant Centre zoned lands available across the four Town Centres, as shown in Table 12.1 below. This is approximately 9% of the total land available.

Table 12.1: Fairfield City Town Centre Lands

	Retail (m2)	Office (m2)	Community/ Other (m2)	Service Industry (m2)	Vacant (m2)	TOTAL (m2)
Fairfield	85,000	36,900	31,900	1,700	17,100	172,600
Prairiewood	41,200	6,500	2,400	800	4,500	55,500
Bonnyrigg	23,800	1,500	18,900	2,000	800	47,000
Cabramatta	60,200	22,500	19,400	1,900	9,500	113,500
TOTAL	215,000	67,400	66,000	6,400	31,900	386,800

The Study further estimated that an additional 91,000 m^2 of retail floorspace will be demanded by 2036, as shown in Table 12.2. This estimation was conducted before the COVID-19 pandemic and will need to be revised in light of the aftermath of the pandemic (where the way we shop may have been changed forever by the pandemic, both in terms of the public's assessment of the future risks posed by shopping centres and the public's greater acceptance of online retailing). However, it is clear that the available vacant lands will be insufficient to meet demand. Table 12.3 provides an estimation of where the floorspace will be required.

Table 12.2: Estimated Retail Floorspace Demand

Detail	Retail Floorspace Estimate (m²)
2018 Floorspace Demanded by Fairfield City Residents	420,000
2018 Actual Floorspace Provided within Fairfield City	350,000
Gap	70,000 (or approximately 17%)
Additional retail floorspace generated from population growth to 2036	50,000
Additional retail floorspace generated from real growth to 2036 (at 0.5% p.a.)	20,000
Additional retail floorspace through improvement in escape expenditure	21,000
TOTAL additional to 2036	91,000

Table 12.3: Suggest Allocation of Floorspace

Centre	Percentage Allocated	Retail Floorspace
Sub-Regional	50%	46,000
Local	20%	18,000
Neighbourhood	10%	9,000
Bulky Goods	20%	18,000
TOTAL	100%	91,000

Due to the reduced population growth caused by COVID-19 and a continuing change to the retail scene (accelerated by COVID-19) it is expected that the additional floorspace required over the next 20 years could be reduced by about 30%, that is, about 60,000m². This quantum of floorspace would typically require the provision of about 20-25ha if all floorspace is provided at ground level with at-grade car parking. However, this is not how additional floorspace is or should be provided in mature centres located in Greater Sydney. Whilst multilevel retailing only works in the larger centres, these increases in retail floorspace are typically provided through the conversion of single level car parking to multi-level car parking.

With respect to Fairfield City, it is also relevant to note the following:

(a) Bonnyrigg Plaza has the potential to expand on its existing site;
(b) Wetherill Park Shopping Centre appears to be nearing its ultimate development potential, being bound on all sides of its property by roads; and
(c) Fairfield Forum has the potential to expand on its existing site (although it is understood that the owner wishes to expand by adding residential towers to the site).

On balance, it is recommended that Council exercise caution in rezoning additional lands at this time for retail or centre purposes. Such an exercise necessarily involves an element of 'picking winners,' which could prove counter-productive in the absence of demonstrated support by the relevant property owners.

Rather, it is recommended that Council:

(a) Support the expansion of existing retail and other commercial facilities on appropriately zoned lands; and

(b) Consider favourably applications for expansion of existing facilities onto adjoining lands (requiring rezoning) in circumstances where a need can be demonstrated, there is no change to the role and function of the centre and site impacts can be appropriately managed.

Regarding Industrial precincts, Chapter 8 and Chapter 10 has highlighted the lack of industrial land as well as the lack of appropriate buffering between employment lands and residential lands around some precincts. Only 46 hectares of industrial land (4% of total available land) is vacant, which will decrease Fairfield City's competitiveness against large greenfield sites emerging to the west in Liverpool and Penrith. The employment lands in Fairfield CBD, Cabramatta, Lansvale and Yennora/Fairfield East were shown to have high levels of residential lands less than 100m from industrial lands, suggesting that buffers may be inadequate. This appears to be an issue for Yennora, in particular. Furthermore, the Mecone Study assessed the Fairfield CBD employment lands precinct as 'mixed', implying the area is at risk of being lost to higher order uses.

Norling Consulting has reviewed the zoning of lands surrounding the existing industrial zoned lands. Apart from the SEPP (Western Sydney Parklands) 2009 lands located to the north (partly) and west of the Wetherill Park Industrial Area, it is difficult to identify additional lands that could potentially be rezoned for industrial purposes without encroaching onto long-standing parks (some of which may be affected by flooding) and simply creating a new conflict between industrial and residential housing. It is also noted that relevant parts of the Western Sydney Parklands may also be affected by flooding, as well as political issues.

It is therefore not recommended that Council seek to expand existing industrial estates. However, that should not prevent Council from embarking upon an examination of the extent to which adequate buffers exist surrounding each industrial area. Such an exercise may result in enforcement proceedings to enforce existing approval conditions, changed conditions to future industrial applications located on the edge of industrial areas and the rezoning of selected residential allotments for buffering purposes (to improve amenity of nearby residents and the utility of nearby industrial lands).

As mentioned previously, the Urban Investigation Area in the western part of the City presents a significant opportunity for the City to expand its residential and/or industrial lands.

12.2   Smart Cities

Council is seeking advice on actions to promote the principles of Smart Cities under its land use planning and economic development programs.

The federal government released its Smart Cities Plan in 2016 to help cities rethink how they are planned, built and managed. Smart Cities embrace technology in all aspects from infrastructure to leadership and the plan sets out the Australian Government's vision for maximising the potential of cities through three pillars of Smart Investment, Smart Policy and Smart Technology. This means smarter investing in infrastructure, with priority given to regionally beneficial projects that meet broader economic and city objectives such as accessibility, jobs, affordable housing and healthy environments and smarter policies that are based on open data driven solutions and collected from a wide variety of smart technology that is energy efficient and accurate.

In Queensland, there has been a rise in advertised positions in local governments that are based on data analytics. Local Governments are looking to make smarter decisions based on open data driven solutions, which means creating a centralised database of information collected from all local government departments. This data is analysed by a dedicated data analytics department to provide executives on other perspectives on the combined data. Previously, government executives would typically receive reports from their own departments upon which to make decisions. However, these reports are now being regarded as insular and too limited in scope.

Making the data open and available through a central database and department has the potential to save costs from fewer repetitious data collection efforts from the community and so on. The centralised department can also provide a real-time digital dashboard that provides an instant snapshot of a city's health and progress for all residents and government officials.

Smart investment also means investing in long term, regional and multipurpose results. For example, green space. Multifunctional green spaces could operate as family-orientated parks during the day and event spaces at night. In Thailand, inner city greenspaces, such as the CU Centennial Park, also serve as a flood mitigator with the capacity to hold 1 million gallons of water through innovative design. Investing in a Circular Economy is another example. A Circular Economy is one in which emphasis is placed on reducing waste. It is about a conscious effort to consider what is being disposed of and whether or not materials can be recycled, reused, repurposed or renewed. According to the CSIRO, investing in innovation to make a Circular Economy viable has the potential to generate new businesses and revive the manufacturing industry in Australia. From an economic point of view, real benefits are possible in three main sectors, namely Food, Transportation and Built Environment. Research by KPMG has indicated that reducing food waste and constructing energy efficient dwellings have the largest impact with a potential economic benefit of $23 billion in present value GDP by 2025. The benefit of a Circular Economy is estimated to rise to a present value of $210 billion in GDP and an additional 17,000 full-time equivalent jobs for Australia by 2048.

Smart Technology serves the function of making cities more liveable, sustainable and connected. Examples include public transport hubs that can interact seamlessly with personal smart devices to inform them when the next bus/train is arriving, as well as alternative options or solar powered signs/information boards. The Internet of Things (IoT) refers to smart devices that can collect data and inform choices, which may include smart watches with health data capacity or fridges that can tell a person how often the fridge is opened during the day and which products are eaten the most. The resulting data allows a person to be more informed and make better decisions regarding health.

Several federal programs exist to support the development of Smart Cities, such as the Smart Cities and Suburbs Program.

KPMG has released a snapshot of the status of Australian Smart Cities in 2019. The snapshot shows that the majority of Councils are in the Strategy development phase (42%). However, a significant proportion (18%) are yet to commence the process and only 13% are operationally rolling out programs. The main priority for Councils at this stage is the development of an appropriate platform for collecting, integrating, analysing and transforming data into actionable insights, whilst the biggest challenges include lack of clear leadership, financial constraints and availability of resources.

Clearly Fairfield City is not the only Council concerned with commencing the Smart City process. To promote Smart City principles, Council should consider:

- Creating a dedicated committee to develop a Smart City Strategy as discrete actions will not be sufficient to truly create a Smart City;
- Chapter 6 has identified that there is poor internet connection for potentially a large proportion of residents and businesses. This will be a critical factor to address since the network load will increase significantly whilst transitioning to a Smart City; and
- Set up an appropriate platform to begin and monitor the transition to becoming a Smart City.

12.3   Local Clusters

Council is interested in understanding the implications of industrial clusters and is seeking advice on how to support and enhance clusters, particularly in relation to local planning controls and strategy.

Industry clusters are defined as groups of similar or related businesses in a specific geographic area that share common markets, technologies, inputs and/or worker skills.

Norling Consulting can confirm that local clusters, whether of industrial, retail or office businesses, have the potential to provide significant community and economic benefits through capitalisation upon shared infrastructure, skilled labour, shared technology, etc.

The process of developing clusters has been interesting. The majority have developed organically (businesses gravitating to each other with little planning involved) rather than through design (proactive planning). However, once a cluster becomes established, there is a planning role to foster, nurture and encourage its development and expansion.

As mentioned in Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9, Fairfield City has several Industry Clusters with potential for growth. These include Medical Equipment Manufacturing, Food Manufacturing as well as Transport, Logistics and Warehousing. These clusters belong to particularly resilient industries, with the latter playing a major role in distribution networks in support of online retailing. Clusters have the potential to enhance business growth through collaboration, innovation and efficiency. There is already good progress in fortifying these sectors, even in the older industrial areas, for example with applications from Nimco on a large site in Fairfield East.

Given that the City has limited vacant industrial lands for expansion, it is considered that Council's scope for planning intervention is somewhat curtailed, due to the difficulties of imposing use restrictions on appropriately zoned lands and the negative impacts of preventing a non-cluster industrial use from operating on an appropriately zoned site of its choosing. However, it is considered that Council has greater scope to influence change through economic development.

To support clusters, Council should consider:

- Identifying specific locations of clusters and define how much of the relevant industrial precinct should be dedicated to each cluster;
- Identifying and encouraging an appropriate business representative to champion each cluster;
- Committing its economic development unit to work with each champion to develop an action plan to promote each cluster, overcome identified weaknesses and target identified opportunities;
- Committing its economic development unit to promote each cluster through promotional material and business prospectuses;
- Advocating for these clusters in meetings with regional committees such as the Western Sydney Aerotropolis Community Liaison Group;
- Granting faster approvals of compliant development applications within these identified clusters;
- Taking necessary identified actions to improve the infrastructure needs of identified business clusters; and
- Encouraging renovation and rejuvenation of older sites, which may also prompt a turnover of sites allowing new businesses to establish themselves.

12.4   Attracting New Business

Council seeks to identify particular economic, social and land use characteristics of the City that would help attract new business/industry to Fairfield City.

Based on the research conducted for this report and the information contained in the draft Economic Profile, the most attractive features of Fairfield City include:

- Central Location supported by a strong road network;
- Variety of lot sizes to suit most businesses;
- Close proximity to both Parramatta and the Aerotropolis, Greater Sydney's new CBDs;
- Good connectivity to all major IMTs such as Moorebank;
- Established businesses with a strong manufacturing and distribution focus;
- Strong passenger rail and bus networks, enabling access to the local workforce and beyond;
- Affordable land and rents (compared to locations to the east of the City); and
- Growing strong industry clusters.

Typically, a region would seek to promote its skilled labour force as a major advantage. However, it is considered that this feature should be carefully worded and used where it is considered to directly advantage in interested business. As set out previously in this Report, the City's labour pool has a high level of ethnic diversity, has a low level of education, is dominated by blue collar workers and the City has identified a skills gap in its labour force. This labour force could certainly be attractive to some businesses, but unfortunately is not attractive to a number of businesses.

12.5   Impact of Home-Based Businesses

Council wishes to understand the growing trend of home-based businesses and the implications this poses for employment lands in the City.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a sharp rise in home-based businesses due to the advancement of technology and the growing Gig Economy, allowing people to make money with assets they already own and skills they could offer to supplement their regular income. 'Side hustles' are particularly popular with Millennials who grew up in the technology age and are leveraging their skills to start online businesses, which are traditional in nature such as retail-based operations and non-traditional jobs such as becoming a You Tuber or Influencer.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many people have unfortunately lost their jobs and may have had to start their own businesses to quickly find work as a contractor, further increasing the amount of home-based businesses. In addition to people who were made redundant are employees who are now working from home in a full time or part time capacity due to lock down restrictions.

Social distancing imposed upon the office sector meant that these businesses had to fundamentally change the way in which staff worked and travelled. Many were forced to work from home for long periods. It is understood that in Sydney, many office workers continue to work from home. This has forced many to make changes to the layout of their homes. There are reports that some staff now prefer to work from home (at least some of the time), whilst others miss the social interaction of the office environment.

It is also relevant to note that COVID-19 came at a time when technology has directly facilitated the work-from-home model, including the ability to hold virtual business meetings.

Flexible work locations and times was an increasing trend before COVID-19 and the pandemic has simply accelerated this trend.

Norling Consulting believes there will continue to be a rise in home-based businesses for the variety of reasons advanced above. Its likely effects on the employment zones of the City are set out below:

- There will be greater occupation levels of residential zoned lands during the daytime. This is likely to increase the demand for air-conditioning units, increase the sales of home office furniture and equipment, increase internet usage during the day and lower property crime levels and lower usage levels of public transport;

- There will be a significant shrinkage of office space caused by businesses seeking to reduce office costs in response to changed staffing levels in the office. This will lead to lower levels of internet usage in office precincts and lower usage levels of public transport in traditional high density office locations. However, it is noted that the City has a relatively low level of office buildings currently, thus limiting these impacts. Further, there is likely to be an increase in demand for serviced offices and business incubators (such as the proposed Business Hub), which would ameliorate the shrinkage in demand for office space; and

- With the exception of government-mandated restrictions of industrial business activity in Victoria during the pandemic, the evidence suggests that staffing levels at industrial businesses have largely remained intact. This is due to the majority being regarded as essential businesses and the focus upon the movement and/or processing of goods, activities that cannot be undertaken remotely. The continuing growth of home-based businesses is therefore not expected to undermine industrial zoned lands.

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Business & Property Economics

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