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To: [PPO Engagement](#)
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Subject: Webform submission from: Western Sydney Aerotropolis Draft Precinct Plans
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Attachments: [submission-to-public-exhibition-of-western-sydney-aerotropolis-precinct-plan-2021.docx](#)

Submitted on Fri, 12/03/2021 - 11:28

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Submission Type

I am making a personal submission

Name

First name

Tania

Last name

De Bortoli

I would like my submission to remain confidential

No

Info

Email

[REDACTED]

Suburb/Town & Postcode

Katoomba 2780

Submission file

[submission-to-public-exhibition-of-western-sydney-aerotropolis-precinct-plan-2021.docx](#)

Submission

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to the planning process for the Western Sydney Parkland City.
My submission is contained in the document attached.

Yours sincerely,
Dr Tania De Bortoli

I agree to the above statement

Yes

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Submission to public exhibition of Western Sydney Aerotropolis Precinct draft Plan.

12 March, 2021

Thankyou for the opportunity to provide input to the planning process.

It is apparent from the language used in the draft plan that all levels of government are seeking to align with contemporary concerns of the scientific, professional and general communities (for example, sustainability, resilience, liveability, circular economy, social infrastructure). This is to be commended and encouraged, however there are a number of significant obstacles to achievement of the drivers set out in the draft plan. There are also a number of popular alternatives that may be more likely to achieve the governments stated objectives for the Western Sydney Parkland City. These points are dealt with under thematic headings below.

Liveability

The draft plan emphasises a landscape led approach based on connected natural systems. It appears that basically this mean keeping the existing creeks/waterways in the area. It is also stated that significant tracts of Cumberland Plain Woodland (an Endangered Ecological Community) will also be set aside.

The draft plan also emphasises green corridors/ space and open spaces, including parks, green streets and tree canopy in residential and employment areas. It is stated that this principle is designed to: to make the precinct liveable; to attract people to live and work; to achieve local character; and to bring people together.

Both of the above objectives are to be commended and should be retained in the final plan with sufficient funding to maintain these valuable assets in good condition.

Extensive, dense development of business and residential infrastructure is, however, the priority in this draft plan. This includes the actual sealed tarmac area and other airport infrastructure, housing, social infrastructure, transport infrastructure and employment hubs. This intensity is compounded by a targeted population for the Western Sydney Parkland City of 1.5 million people by 2056.

This density of population and development is not compatible with the maintenance of intact/healthy riparian ecosystems or with connected corridors of Cumberland Plain Woodland. Riparian areas are at risk of significant degradation, and tracts of Cumberland Plain Woodland to be fragmented and reduced to such a size that they are: unusable by wildlife; and cannot maintain the required genetic diversity of native flora for species to remain viable.

With this density of development, it is also unlikely that the objective of creating streets and open spaces with sufficient tree canopy will be met.

The geographical location of the precinct is incompatible with such over development. The precinct sits within a basin that traps hot air from inland blow over the range by westerly winds. See breezes that bring cooler air from the coast do not reach that far inland. Pollution is also trapped in this basin, creating a toxic soup of heat and pollution. The type and density of development proposed in this draft plan would increase temperatures of this already hot area more than what would be attributable to regional climate change. Without the facilitation of 'cool suburbs', new residents and workers will find the spaces intended to promote liveability unusable on most days. Otherwise, they may find these spaces to be overused and degraded when local temperatures are more amenable. In

addition, the operation of a 24-hour airport and metropolitan area, with the consequent noise, pollution, and human and traffic congestion, will seriously negatively impact the quality of life of residents and workers.

Recommendations:

1. Targeted population density to be reduced to a maximum of 100, 000 people by 2056
2. Density of built development to be reduced by at least three quarters and redesigned consistent with temperature projections for the area, and recommendations of the scientific community. This includes, for example, design principles such as underground construction, use of earth mounds over buildings, and green roofs.

Sustainability

The draft plan aims to create a circular economy, which involves cycling resources and achieving net positive outcomes. The draft plan states that the aerotropolis will be sustainable, regenerative and avoid waste.

These principles should be included in the planning of modern precincts.

The single most contraindicative factor in the achievement of a circular economy is the construction and operation of the airport. It is essentially impossible to consider the precinct sustainable when it is based on an industry that is one of the most intensive greenhouse gas emitters. There is no feasible/scalable technology for avoiding waste or recycling the resources, such as fuel, used by this industry. In its present form, with an airport at its centre, this precinct could not be considered regenerative.

There would be ways for this issue to be remediated, while progressing with a Western Sydney Parkland City.

Biodiversity conservation, specifically provision for habitat and movement of wildlife, is also a necessary consideration in relation to sustainability. The extent of proposed development, as well as 24-hour operation of the airport runway in the precinct is incompatible with preventing aircraft collision with bats and birds. This has negative implications not only for client aircraft but also for migratory birds, some of which are endangered that continue to try to use the waterway corridors and fragments of Cumberland Plain Woodland.

Recommendations

3. Replace an airport as the centre of the precinct and city with a design much more consistent with the evolution of a Green Economy, including a High-Speed Rail hub. See also recommendation 5 below
4. Implement a biodiversity conservation plan for the area that includes restoration of remnant areas of Cumberland Plain Woodland as well as significant investment in riparian ecosystems. This will include a clear target for assisted natural regeneration as well as revegetation (planting).

Resilience

The draft plan identifies that resilience includes the ability to prepare for and respond to threats, such as heatwaves (heat island effect) and flooding.

There are also other very real threats not mentioned in the draft plan, that are likely to be ongoing and increasing problems for the Greater Sydney area. These include pandemics and other likely global trends in terms of climate risk. The insurance industry globally and the Insurance Australia Group nationally are withdrawing financial and other forms of support from projects with climate risk. Terrorism is another global risk that would hit our shores. Airports and international travel are immediately both implicated in and impacted by these threats.

Therefore, a major weakness of the draft plan is the design of an economy and urban development based on the operation of an airport. This effectively renders the entire Western Sydney Parkland City extremely vulnerability to the very real threats of climate change, climate-related changes to finance and investment, and terrorism related activities.

Recommendations

5. Replace an aviation industry-based economy for the precinct and Western Sydney Parkland City with a centre for innovative, high tech, modern green industries, such as renewable energy technology, conversion of waste/landfill, development of products to replace plastics, development of battery technology and recycling....
6. The Science Park concept can be expanded for this precinct as well to include research/innovation/development of technologies, design principles/strategies and planning for net zero emissions/a decarbonised economy. In addition, the geographical location of the precinct and Western Sydney Parkland City within remnants of an Endangered Ecological Community (Cumberland Plain Woodland; there are other ecological communities, however this is being used as an example), and on a floodplain can be utilised to conduct research into biodiversity conservation. This should focus particularly on how ecosystems respond/adapt to climate change. The precinct could therefore can be promoted as a model of how to design cool suburbs for climate adaptation and be promoted as a tourist destination for these reasons.

Productivity

Another major emphasis of the draft plan is on economic growth for this area. Under the framework of productivity, it is stated that the precinct will create at least 100, 000 jobs, and envisions a Western Sydney airport as a catalyst for Western Sydney's future urbanisation.

This narrow focus suggests that an aerotropolis is only way to create employment for Western Sydney. This is an assumption that should be challenged. Great places for people to live and work in the area, and investment in public transport is not dependent on an aerotropolis model.

Recommendations

7. Highly qualified and skilled jobs to be created in engineering, technology, research and development for a green industries economic and science/research/development/innovation hub. As many, if not more jobs can be created by a high-speed rail hub as well as other public and active transport connections.

8. Many more additional jobs to be created through restoration and maintenance of the endemic riparian and woodland ecosystems, as well as appropriate/sensitive recreational access to these beautiful natural areas.

Finally, the draft plan states that amendments could be made to the plan to accommodate development applications that are not consistent with the plan. This statement is concerning given that overdevelopment of the Western Sydney area is a major problem for a number of significant reasons, including but not limited to those outlined in this submission.

Recommendation

9. Development applications for this precinct and the Western Sydney Parkland City must be subject to stringent green economic and environmental planning policies and laws. The process of approval cannot work in a reverse direction; that is, plans will not be modified to accommodate development applications that are not appropriate to safeguarding the sustainability, liveability, resilience or productivity of the area.

Dr Tania De Bortoli

Email: 

12 March, 2021