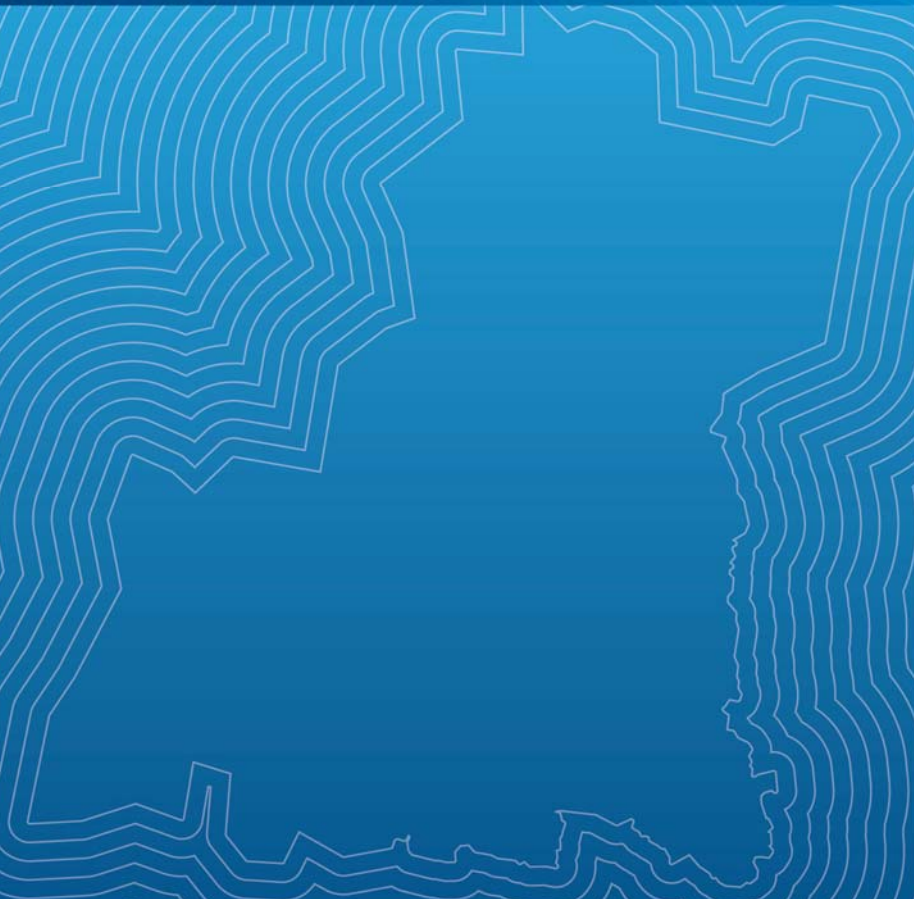


REGIONAL ACTION PLAN:

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION PAPER

WESTERN  
SYDNEY



# REGIONAL ACTION PLAN

## Local communities set priorities

A Western Sydney Regional Action Plan is being developed to identify the immediate actions the NSW Government can take to deliver on community priorities, increase opportunities and improve the quality of life for people living in Western Sydney.

This Community Discussion Paper has been prepared to begin the conversation with the Western Sydney community.

### NSW 2021

The Western Sydney Regional Action Plan will be aligned to NSW 2021, guiding policy and budget decision-making.

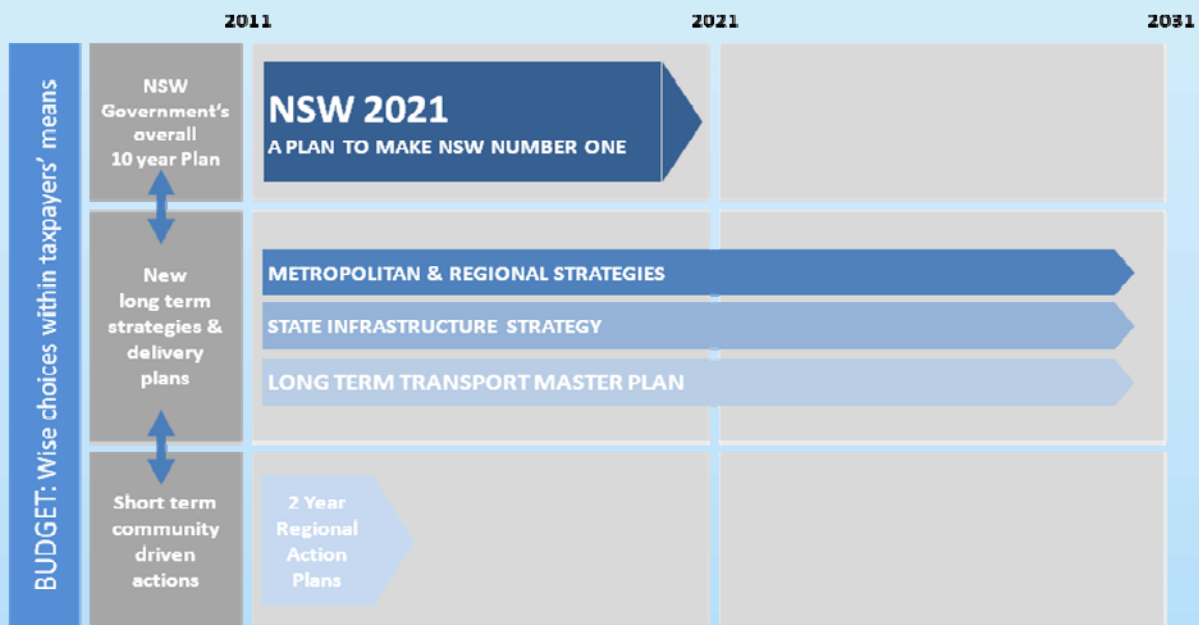
NSW 2021 is the Government's 10-year strategic business plan to rebuild the economy, return quality services, renovate infrastructure, strengthen our local environment and communities, and restore accountability to government.

Regional Action Plans will complement the longer term strategies shown below by identifying actions that can be delivered in a shorter timeframe.

### Have your say

During late February and throughout March, Ministers and Government officials will be travelling around NSW to talk to communities about their local priorities and the actions Government can take to address them.

Input to the development of the Regional Action Plans can also be provided online at [www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/nsw2021](http://www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/nsw2021)



The outcomes of consultation with local communities and key stakeholders will inform final Regional Action Plans which will be released in mid 2012.

# VISION FOR WESTERN SYDNEY

The vision for Western Sydney is to strengthen its regional economy through the development of additional employment land, extensive unique parklands, modern housing options, first-class educational facilities and new transport linkages, while maintaining its unique urban and rural residential lifestyles.

### **An economic powerhouse**

Western Sydney is a key engine room of the NSW economy and will continue to grow and diversify, maintaining its position as the largest manufacturing region in Australia. It will continue to be a pivotal transport and logistics hub due to its strategic location, strong skills base, significant road and rail infrastructure, extensive freight services and market access.

### **A well connected region**

Western Sydney will become even better connected by fast, efficient and regular transport services within Western Sydney and to other regions, including improved connections to major airports and ports, and reduced travel times.

### **More support for the disadvantaged**

Vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in the region, including the homeless, will be receiving more support.

### **Better access to education and training**

Strategies will be developed to deliver education and training to young people in the region to address youth unemployment and provide better access to employment support, taking advantage of Western Sydney's outstanding educational facilities and research institutions including the University of Western Sydney and the Western Sydney TAFE Institute.

### **Environmentally sustainable**

The high social, economic and environmental value of the Hawkesbury–Nepean River and its catchment will be supported in step with urban development.

# ABOUT OUR REGION

Western Sydney is part of the Greater Western Sydney Region, one of Australia's economic powerhouses. It includes the Local Government Areas of Auburn, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury, Holroyd, Parramatta, Penrith and The Hills.

It is forecast that half of Sydney's population will be living in Greater Western Sydney by 2036, requiring the construction of about 87,000 new homes in Western Sydney.

### Population

1,168,844 people

### Area

5,387 square kilometres

### Regional overview

- One of Australia's largest and fastest growing regional populations
- Strong manufacturing sector and business parks

- A strategic distribution hub for goods throughout Australia with a significant transport and logistics sector
- A strong professional services sector with major commercial centres including Parramatta, Norwest and Penrith.

### Competitive advantages

- A large, multicultural workforce and a diverse industry base
- Easy access to the Sydney CBD
- Excellent telecommunications and transport infrastructure
- Affordable industrial property and office space
- Established infrastructure including rail, roads, schools, tertiary education institutions and hospitals
- Plentiful supply of employment land.

## WESTERN SYDNEY MAP



### Local Government Areas

1. Hawkesbury
2. The Hills
3. Blue Mountains
4. Penrith
5. Blacktown
6. Parramatta
7. Holroyd
8. Auburn

## LOCAL PRIORITIES

**Based on discussion with regional leaders and contributions from individuals on the NSW 2021 'Have your Say' website, the NSW Government has identified the following priorities for consideration by the Western Sydney community:**

- ❖ Grow the economy of Western Sydney
- ❖ Improve access to jobs and facilitate employment growth, particularly for young people
- ❖ Improve strategic planning to protect valuable agricultural land
- ❖ Provide greater access to affordable housing options
- ❖ Reduce travel times
- ❖ Deliver appropriate services to disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our community
- ❖ Improve local natural environmental assets and the health of the Hawkesbury-Nepean River.

**The NSW Government would like your thoughts on the priorities for Western Sydney.**

## Grow the economy of Western Sydney

Western Sydney is one of Australia's fastest growing regional populations. An important priority for Western Sydney is to grow its economy to:

- Maintain its position as the largest manufacturing region in Australia
- Continue to grow and diversify the economy
- Position key sectors of the economy for strong growth, resilience, improved innovation and productivity, global competitiveness and new investment opportunities.

*This local priority relates to NSW 2021 Goal 1: Improve the performance of the NSW economy and Goal 3 Drive economic growth in regional NSW.*

## Priority Actions

### Support economic diversification and increase business investment

- Develop 10 Year Industry Action Plans which will provide a framework for government and industry engagement to ensure NSW can take advantage of growth opportunities for five initial sectors: Manufacturing, Professional Services, Tourism and Events, International Education and Research and the Digital Economy
- Establish the Greater Western Sydney Economic Development Taskforce to develop strategies to increase productive capacity, with a focus on maximising skills and entrepreneurship
- Build awareness of Western Sydney as a tourist and event destination and increase visitor numbers, specifically:
  - Developing and delivering cooperative marketing campaigns
  - Improving the capacity and capability of tourism operators.

### Increase education and training opportunities

- Expand customised training and other services to industry and businesses to foster innovation and improve productivity
- Increase the skills base and productivity of manufacturing sector workers through implementation of work based competitive manufacturing training initiatives
- Consider the potential contribution of a Norwest Grad School.

### Identify new employment lands

- Investigate possible locations for a future Western Sydney Regional Business Park in partnership with local councils.

## ECONOMY

### **Improve access to jobs and facilitate employment growth, particularly for young people**

Western Sydney has a young population and a higher than average level of youth unemployment as well as lower levels of school completion. New strategies need to be developed to improve education and training for young people and provide better access to employment support.

*This priority relates to NSW 2021 Goal 6: Strengthen the NSW Skills Base and Goal 13: Better protect the most vulnerable members of our community and break the cycle of disadvantage.*

#### **Priority Actions**

##### **Provide training and support**

- Provide support to students at risk of withdrawing from school through targeted programs such as the Participation Phase Initiative which works in partnership with schools to help students to access further education, training or employment options
- Deliver customised training solutions through TAFE NSW to assist unemployed people gain the skills needed to successfully find jobs
- Expand the range of employment services offered to students by TAFE NSW to assist them in gaining employment, including services at Mount Druitt College. Increase access to these services by making them available to other Western Sydney Institute College students and the broader community
- Provide more options for people to move from schools to tertiary education – this will include expanding the types of higher education courses offered by TAFE NSW to build on their existing degree programs in accounting and early childhood education and care.

##### **Provide targeted employment options**

- Provide the Indigenous Police Recruitment Our Way Delivery program which supports Aboriginal people to join the NSW Police Force
- Encourage partnerships between schools and the tertiary sector to improve engagement, retention and attainment of young people to Year 12 or equivalent (in particular Aboriginal young people) and to assist their transition to employment or further study.

## Improve strategic planning to protect valuable agricultural land

Improved strategic planning will address loss of valuable agricultural land and food production in the Sydney Basin as a result of housing development, coal seam gas mining and the impact on water resources, agricultural land and residential sites.

*This priority relates to NSW 2021 Goal 3: Drive economic growth in regional NSW and Goal 22: Protect our natural environment.*

### Priority Actions

#### Boost a sustainable agricultural industry

- Facilitate sustainable agriculture within the region through strategic land use planning of land on the urban fringe
- Develop business skills within the agricultural industry by delivering programs such as the Western Sydney Parklands Trust Future Farming program, which promotes economic growth and sustainable agriculture practices.

#### Coal seam gas reforms

- The NSW Government will reform coal seam gas regulation including:
  - Requiring new state significant mining or petroleum projects which might affect agriculture to submit an Agricultural Impact Statement
  - Developing an Aquifer Interference Policy to guide activities that affect aquifers
  - Reviewing environmental regulations for the natural gas industry to ensure they are safe and environmentally appropriate for coal seam gas development
  - Requiring exploration licences to be publicly exhibited and ensuring all public submissions are considered when determining exploration licences
  - Banning the use of evaporation ponds in coal seam gas production.



## ECONOMY

### **Provide greater access to affordable housing options**

Purchasing or renting a home is the main cost of living faced by most individuals and families. Making sure there is sufficient supply of land for new housing is one way of managing costs.

Many families and individuals are reliant on government support for housing (including social housing) and other services. Private rental accommodation is limited and is often beyond the means of these families.

*This priority relates to NSW 2021 Goal 5: Place downward pressure on the cost of living and Goal 13 Better protect the most vulnerable members of the community and break the cycle of disadvantage.*

### **Priority Actions**

#### **Maximise land supply for housing**

- Deliver 10,000 home sites in Greater Western Sydney, including 5,600 in South Western Sydney and 4,400 in North Western Sydney
- Develop a 4 year delivery program for home sites in Greater Western Sydney, identifying land to be brought into the program and critical infrastructure
- Review new housing opportunities to consider the possibilities of all potential land release areas that can deliver new housing in the short term.

#### **Provide affordable housing options**

- Provide affordable housing options through the Housing Pathways process (a single assessment process), including access to:
  - Private Rental Assistance
  - Existing social housing vacancies
  - Additional supply of social housing.

## QUALITY SERVICES - TRANSPORT

### Reduce travel times

There is a need to reduce road congestion and improve public transport in Western Sydney, particularly for the AM and PM commutes on the M4, M5 and M7. Better public transport services and cross-regional coverage are also needed to help reduce congestion.

Many of the region's workers commute long distances to employment, placing a strain on productivity and families. More skilled employment opportunities in the region would reduce travel times and costs, lift productivity and improve family life.

*This local priority relates to NSW 2021 Goal 7: Reduce travel times and Goal 20: Build Liveable Centres.*

### Priority Actions

#### Improve transport planning

- Develop a NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan\* which will identify the role of each transport mode (including rail, road, buses, ferries, taxis, cycling and walking) in meeting future needs for NSW.

#### Provide greater transport choices

- Deliver the North West Rail Link which will provide approximately 300,000 residents in the north west with rail access to Epping, Macquarie Park, Chatswood, St Leonards, North Sydney and the CBD, new rail services to existing suburbs in the Hills District and a major increase in services to the Macquarie University and Macquarie Park area.

#### Improve road based travel efficiency and connectivity

- Deliver road infrastructure upgrades, including:
  - Construction of Erskine Park Link Road which will connect Erskine Park with the M7 Orbital
  - Upgrading of the Great Western Highway to four lanes between Emu Plains and Katoomba and to mostly three lanes between Katoomba and Mount Victoria. Upgraded sections will include: Woodford to Hazelbrook; Lawson; upgrades at Bullaburra and between Bullaburra and Wentworth Falls; Wentworth Falls East
  - Planning for the replacement of the Windsor Bridge over the Hawkesbury River
  - Planning for Stage 1 of the Werrington Arterial between the M4 Motorway and the Great Western Highway
  - Completion of the three kilometre Erskine Park Link Road will provide a vital link through the NSW Government's Western Sydney Employment Area, forming a connection between Lenore Lane, Erskine Park and Old Wallgrove Road, Eastern Creek
  - Upgrade of the Great Western Highway, which will improve travel times for motorists and a safer road environment for all motorists, pedestrians and cyclists
  - Deliver the Pinch Point Program to improve road based travel efficiency in Metropolitan Sydney, including projects on the Cumberland Highway and Old Windsor Road.

## QUALITY SERVICES - TRANSPORT

### Improve public transport

- Review CityRail and Western Sydney Bus timetables to deliver more consistent and reliable timetables, with frequencies reflecting demand and better rail and bus connections
- Implement bus priority measures on Strategic Bus Corridors 10: Parramatta to City (via Ryde) and 40: Parramatta to Castle Hill, including:
  - Bus lanes on Victoria Road at Ermington and Rydalmere
  - Southbound bus lane on Church Street between Barney Street and Pennant Hills Road, North Parramatta
  - Bus lane / bus bay on Windsor Road northbound between Hammers Road and Thomas Street, Northmead.

### **\*Long Term Transport Master Plan**

There is an opportunity to provide feedback via the formal submissions process following the release of the Discussion Paper in late February 2012. Outcomes of the consultation process will inform the Transport Master Plan and the development of the regional transport strategies. For more information visit <http://haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/transportmasterplan>

## QUALITY SERVICES – HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

### **Deliver appropriate services to disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our community**

Greater Western Sydney accounts for 18% of homelessness in NSW. The region includes areas with families and individuals facing severe economic disadvantage, who are vulnerable to economic downturns and need increased support and opportunities.

*This priority relates to NSW 2021 Goal 13 - Better protect the most vulnerable members of our community and break the cycle of disadvantage and Goal 14 – Increase opportunities for people with a disability by providing supports that meet their individual needs and realise their potential.*

#### **Priority Actions**

##### **Improve access to affordable housing options and reduce homelessness**

- Develop the One Place One Plan Program in Mount Druitt and Auburn to deliver regional, place-based planning for disadvantaged communities
- Reduce social disadvantage within housing estates through upgrades of estates, sale of properties and redevelopment to achieve mixed income communities to improve social outcomes, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged estates
- Deliver projects in the Greater Western Sydney Regional Homelessness Action Plan, which provide better-integrated service delivery to the homeless and those at risk of homelessness, including early intervention strategies.

##### **Promote healthy lifestyles**

- Deliver the Healthy Children's Initiative in disadvantaged areas including Auburn, Holroyd, Mt Druitt, St Marys, which help children and their families to be fitter, healthier and happier
- Reduce smoking through targeted community programs including: Aboriginal Smoke Free Home Register, Smoking in Pregnancy project, Arabic Smoking Strategy and the establishment of the Western Sydney Aboriginal Tobacco Reduction Coalition
- Increase immunisation rates of children in disadvantaged areas, particularly focusing on Auburn, Mount Druitt and areas with high numbers of Aboriginal people.

##### **Deliver quality health services to improve health outcomes**

- Provide high quality health services to the community and improve access to services through initiatives such as the Telehealth Technology Centre at Nepean Hospital
- Deliver the Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Strategy to increase access to early intervention programs for mental health and drug and alcohol services to Aboriginal pregnant women and their families
- Deliver sustained mental health interventions for 0-7 year old children at high risk of disruptive behaviours and education failure.

## QUALITY SERVICES – HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

### **Improve access to services**

- Improve access to Children's Therapy Services (speech pathology and occupational therapy) for disadvantaged families before children commence school
- Provide timely health assessments and priority health services for all children on entering the Out of Home Care system through establishing a system for ongoing review and monitoring health service access
- Deliver a range of coordinated and integrated early childhood, health and family support services to Aboriginal children and families through two Aboriginal Child and Family Centres in the Blacktown Local Government Area
- Improve service delivery to people with a disability by supporting the capacity of the non-government sector to deliver services which meet the needs of individuals and their families; undertaking proactive community engagement activities; and delivering client centred services and individualised funding packages.

## LOCAL ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITIES

### Improve local natural environmental assets and the health of the Hawkesbury-Nepean River

The Hawkesbury–Nepean River and its catchment have high social, economic and environmental value and support significant agriculture, recreation and tourism in the region. With 70% of Sydney's population growth expected to be located in Greater Western Sydney, the NSW Government is protecting natural environments for continued support of social, economic and environmental outcomes.

*This priority relates to NSW 2021 Goal 22: Protect our natural environment and Goal 23: Increase opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments.*

#### Priority Actions

##### Manage river health

- Deliver river health programs to sustain the important economic, social and environmental values of the Hawkesbury Nepean River System
- Develop a Lower Hawkesbury Nepean River Health Improvement Program to:
  - Address aquatic weed management
  - Investigate issues around in-stream works and bank erosion
  - Investigate options for a sustained river health improvement fund.
- Review and upgrade the Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Action Plan to identify opportunities for improving river health
- Implement strategies improve the quality of the Hawkesbury Nepean River in its capacity as a recognised Hawkesbury Water Keeper.

##### Limit the impacts of urban development on the environment

- Support Local Government in developing Regional Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategies to improve waste and recycling outcomes through joint activities, better information and capacity sharing between councils
- Deliver environmental protection programs in Western Sydney as part of the biodiversity offset for the Growth Centres.

##### Protect wildlife

- Establish Wianamatta Nature Reserve (Cranebrook) to protect and expand wildlife corridors in Western Sydney.

##### Increase green skills education and training opportunities

- Develop new training products and services to meet the emerging sustainability challenge and needs of the emerging green collar workforce
- Provide access to industry and the community to state of the art sustainability technology and practice through the Nirimba GreenSkills Hub at Quakers Hill and the EcoSkills Centre at Richmond.