

26 April 2012

SUBMISSION ON THE NSW LONG TERM TRANSPORT MASTERPLAN BY URBAN TASKFORCE AUSTRALIA

The Urban Taskforce Australia congratulates Transport for NSW on undertaking this Masterplan in a comprehensive and detailed manner. Our submission will concentrate on areas where we believe the property industry is most involved and on areas where we believe further action is needed.

The Urban Taskforce is a non-profit organisation representing Australia's most prominent property developers and equity financiers. We provide a forum for people involved in the development and planning of the urban environment to engage in constructive dialogue with both government and the community

1. SOME CONCERNS ABOUT SUCH BROAD CONSULTATION

The Urban Taskforce has concerns about the effectiveness of consultation on such a big topic as transport across the whole state, over the next 20 years. This is particularly in relation to the billions of dollars that transport infrastructure and operating costs require. Clearly each community group cannot have equal expectations for unlimited funds. It is essential that each local community group, or each local council, has a realistic understanding of national and state criteria and budget constraints. Local groups must also understand the population growth targets and that change to their environments will come from that.

We believe that some parties in NSW are misunderstanding the United Kingdom's Localism Act as being about giving decision making back to local communities. Our reading of the Localism Act and its companion document the Draft National Planning Policy Framework, is that community involvement only comes with the responsibility to take on national and state agendas from a local perspective. In the context of the Transport Masterplan this means that issues like the planning implications of increased density to give viability to public transport and an understanding of likely budgets and priority areas are important considerations for communities to be aware of.

RECOMMENDATION 1: It is important that local communities in their involvement in the Transport Masterplan are fully aware of national and state criteria, priorities and budgets. Without this, unrealistic wish lists are likely to be submitted.

2. LEADERSHIP ROLE BY TRANSPORT FOR NSW IN DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Transport for NSW owns land in many locations along rail lines and bus interchanges. It is important that on behalf of the government that Transport for NSW drives the development of this land particularly around railway stations. A good example is the development at St Leonards station that won the Urban Taskforce Development of the Year in 2002.

The Hong Kong rail system is famous for its role in driving development in association with rail infrastructure. NSW needs a similar attitude to get good quality Transit

RECOMMENDATION 2 Transport for NSW needs to take a proactive role in ensuring development around stations, along railway corridors and on other transport related land.

3. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

The Transport Masterplan must relate closely to the Metropolitan and Regional Plans being prepared by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure and to the State Infrastructure Plan being prepared by Infrastructure NSW. While the discussion paper states that there will be co-ordination it would be useful to have a document indicating how the three plans will intermesh.

RECOMMENDATION 3: There needs to be a document that explains how the Transport Masterplan, The Metropolitan and Regional Plans and the Infrastructure Plan, all being developed by different agencies and all involving communities and industry, are sequentially meshed together. The document should also clarify how implementation of projects from the three plans will occur.

4. TRAVEL TO WORK

The most significant travel is that related to work which includes commuting and work-related business. The discussion paper (p28) demonstrates that the work related travel accounts for 25% of all travel and covers 43% of the distance of all trips. Clearly these distances need to be reduced to improve our transport system. This can only happen through the interaction of the three plans and particularly through land use planning. The Urban Taskforce believes that more needs to be done to ensure that jobs are located closer to where people live.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Specialist research and studies need to be undertaken on how to diversify work locations so that travel between homes and work is minimised.

5. POPULATION GROWTH IN NSW

As well as transport for the existing population, the state must plan for future populations. It is good that the discussion paper identifies the 1,873,311 increase across the state by 2031 and the 1,359,580 increase in Sydney. Our concern is that these figures could be higher depending on immigration levels and birth rate. The use of transport in the future will also be compounded by people living longer, therefore effectively increasing population further. As the discussion paper demonstrates that past planning practices have led to excessive home to work travel, there is a real opportunity to improve on this for future populations.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Land use planning in conjunction with transport planning must achieve dramatically improved commuter and work-related travel distances. This requires new approaches to zoning, densities and transport planning.

6. PARRAMATTA ROAD CORRIDOR - AN EXAMPLE

The corridor of land along Parramatta Road between the Sydney CBD and the Parramatta CBD is in need of renewal as much of it is in a degraded state. If some key infrastructure and transport projects are co-ordinated with new dwellings and jobs along the corridor there can be significant gains in commuting time.

The M4 East needs to be completed to get traffic off Parramatta Road and a light rail could run along Parramatta Road. This could be complimented by a metro line

under the corridor. The Urban Taskforce estimates that 100,000 jobs and 100,000 apartments could be realised as part of a renewal project.

RECOMMENDATION 6: The NSW Government should establish a Parramatta Road Renewal Authority to co-ordinate transport, infrastructure and urban planning to deliver 100,000 jobs and 100,000 apartments over the next 20 years.

7. SYDNEY AIRPORT

The Urban Taskforce supports the need for a second Sydney Airport and we prefer the Badgery's Creek location as the land is purchased, the location is good and many jobs would be generated for Western Sydney. Clearly, a decision on the second airport will have significant flow on affects into the transport system of the state.

RECOMMENDATION 7: The NSW Government should make Badgery's Creek the site of Sydney's second airport and develop a transport strategy around this.

8. STRATEGIC TRANSPORT CORRIDORS

The discussion paper talks in detail about 46 corridors across metropolitan Sydney. They are seen only as connectors from one end to the other, rather than as wider corridors where adjacent growth can occur. With the increased population proposed for Sydney it would seem that clustering higher density dwellings at centres and along corridors is going to have the least impact on vast areas of low density suburbs. We believe that the government should look in more detail at making the transport corridors and the urban renewal corridors align.

RECOMMENDATION 8: That the NSW government, through land use planning and through transport planning, look at the potential to accommodate significant parts of Sydney's growth along or nearby the strategic transport corridors.

9. METRO LINES

Sydney will ultimately need a metro system but it must relate to where densities are now or will be located in the future. A long term transport plan should work with the Metropolitan Strategy to develop new areas of urban living that reinforce the potential for a viable metro system.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Long term planning for urban Sydney should develop denser living and working areas that reinforce the potential for a new metro system.

10. LIGHT RAIL

Sydney once had one of the best tram/ light rail systems in the world. The discussion paper indicates locations where light rail is planned. It is important that light rail routes have sufficient density along them of residential accommodation and commercial space for jobs. A good example is Anzac Parade which is now developing 8 storey apartment buildings along both sides. Barangaroo is another example where new densities of jobs and apartments makes light rail viable. The renewed Convention and Exhibition Centre precinct is another project that should lead to an adjacent light rail route.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Light rail routes should relate to areas of inner city redevelopment and the NSW Government should actively plan both the routes and the increased densities.

11. PRIVATE PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS

Clearly, the cost for transport infrastructure and operation are very high. The Urban Taskforce supports the use of PPPs where the private sector is involved in the construction and operation of roads, rail and light rail systems. In some cases this can relate to value uplift by rezoning key areas like corridors and then contributions could help with infrastructure funding. This needs to be carefully handled as excessive infrastructure costs will affect the viability of private sector projects.

RECOMMENDATION 11: Private Public Partnerships are encouraged for transport infrastructure and this could include development opportunities as long as the viability of projects is maintained.

Yours sincerely,



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