

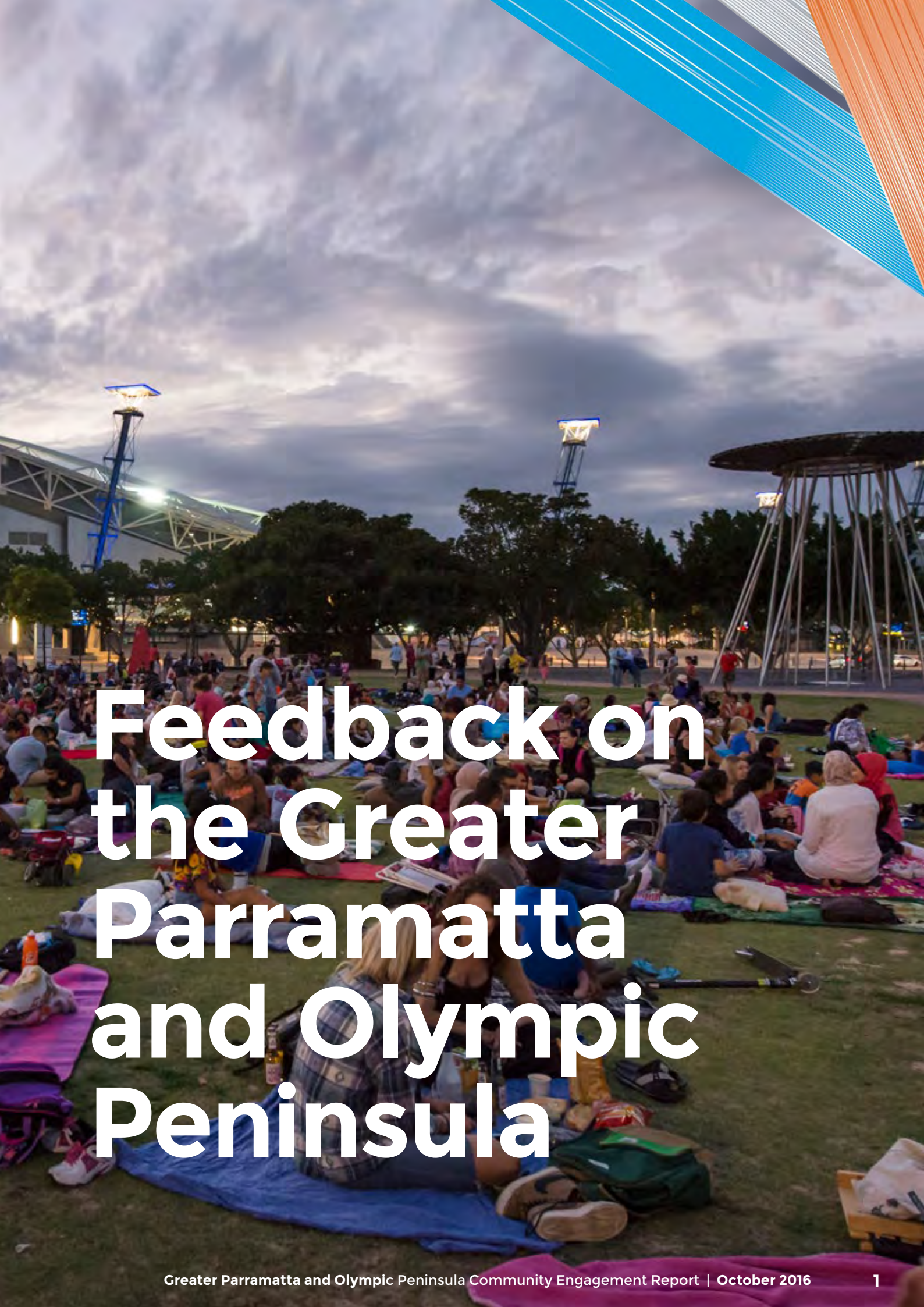
Greater Sydney
Commission

Greater Parramatta and Olympic Peninsula Community Engagement Report

October 2016







Feedback on the Greater Parramatta and Olympic Peninsula

Where is the Peninsula?

The Greater Parramatta and Olympic Peninsula (GPOP) is a 4,000 hectare area in central Greater Sydney spanning 13 km east-west from Strathfield to Westmead, and 7 km north-south from Carlingford to Lidcombe and Granville.

GPOP is the geographical centre of Greater Sydney. The iconic Parramatta River flows east through the heart of GPOP and embraces the north-western edge of GPOP between Silverwater and Rhodes. The proposed Parramatta Light Rail forms the GPOP spine.

The four quarters within the proposed GPOP area are:

1. Parramatta CBD and Westmead: Health and Education Super Precinct
2. Next Generation Living: Camellia to Carlingford
3. Essential Urban Services, Advanced Technology and Knowledge Sectors in Camellia, Rydalmere, Silverwater and Auburn
4. Olympic Park: Lifestyle Super Precinct.

The GPOP area is located mostly within one of Greater Sydney's six districts – the West Central District. For more information about the West Central District see the detailed Community Engagement Report.

About this document

This document provides an overview of the feedback and ideas we received from members of the community through engagement activities held between May and October 2016 including targeted engagement activities within the GPOP area. The engagement activities were designed to raise awareness of the district planning process, understand community members' values, needs and aspirations for the GPOP area, and contribute to a vision for GPOP. More than 700 members of the community were engaged in events. This document covers:

- An overview of the engagement program
- Feedback on the draft vision for GPOP
- Feedback on the themes of jobs and transport, housing, great places and the environment.



Towards the vision

Members of the community have provided valuable feedback on the strengths of the GPOP area and what they would like to see improved. These conversations have been instrumental to the development of the city-shaping vision for GPOP.

Our 2036 vision

GPOP will be Greater Sydney's true centre: The connected, unifying heart.

A city-shaping vision for GPOP

If decisions are guided by a coordinated vision for success, GPOP can realise its potential over the next 20 years and beyond to be:

A central city close to Sydney's people

GPOP will be a thriving, accessible and inclusive civic heart with its own rich history. It will be situated close to Greater Sydney's growing population and strategically positioned between Sydney CBD and the new Western Sydney Airport.

A link forging one Greater Sydney

GPOP forms a physical bridge between Global Sydney and Western Sydney. Renewal of the GPOP area will help build a unified, coherent and integrated city: one Greater Sydney for all.

A jobs hub within reach of more skilled workers

GPOP will be an employment and entrepreneurial centre, with Parramatta CBD-Westmead and Olympic Park providing key work and business opportunities. This will help address the deficit of skilled work opportunities in the west and lessen the daily west-east travel to Sydney CBD.

An attractive place to invest

GPOP has the foundations to be a magnificently diverse 21st century urban economy that can service the city's needs, its people and its enterprises – including

managing the fundamentals like waste, water, energy, freight and logistics.

A place of celebrated natural beauty

GPOP will be known for its own city-scale natural treasures – its river, its parklands and its landscapes. It will be loved and enjoyed by Greater Sydney's

extraordinary mix of people. It will be a truly attractive and liveable place.

Engagement for GPOP

Why we engaged prior to the release of draft District Plans

Between May and October 2016, the Greater Sydney Commission ran a community engagement program designed to understand what people value about their district, and Greater Sydney as a whole, and what they would like to see changed over the next 20 years as Sydney grows.

Sydneysiders shared their thoughts through a range of engagement events and across multiple online platforms.

Our questions targeted the following themes:

- Vision, values and aspirations for the district
- Jobs and transport
- Housing
- Great places
- Environment.

Engagement with the community is continuing with the release of the draft District Plans. We encourage you to read these District Plans, tell us what you think, and get involved in planning for the future of Sydney.

How we have engaged

Active Discussion

Community engagement to raise awareness of district planning and gather feedback to inform draft District Plans

MAY – SEPTEMBER 2016

Developing and refining draft District Plans

Feedback used to inform draft District Plans

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER 2016

Public exhibition and active discussion of draft District Plans

Draft District Plans on public exhibition

Engagement outcomes report publicly released

Continued community engagement to finalise District Plans

NOVEMBER 2016 – MARCH 2017

HAVE
YOUR
SAY

INITIAL PHASE OF ENGAGEMENT



ONGOING ENGAGEMENT



Who we have engaged

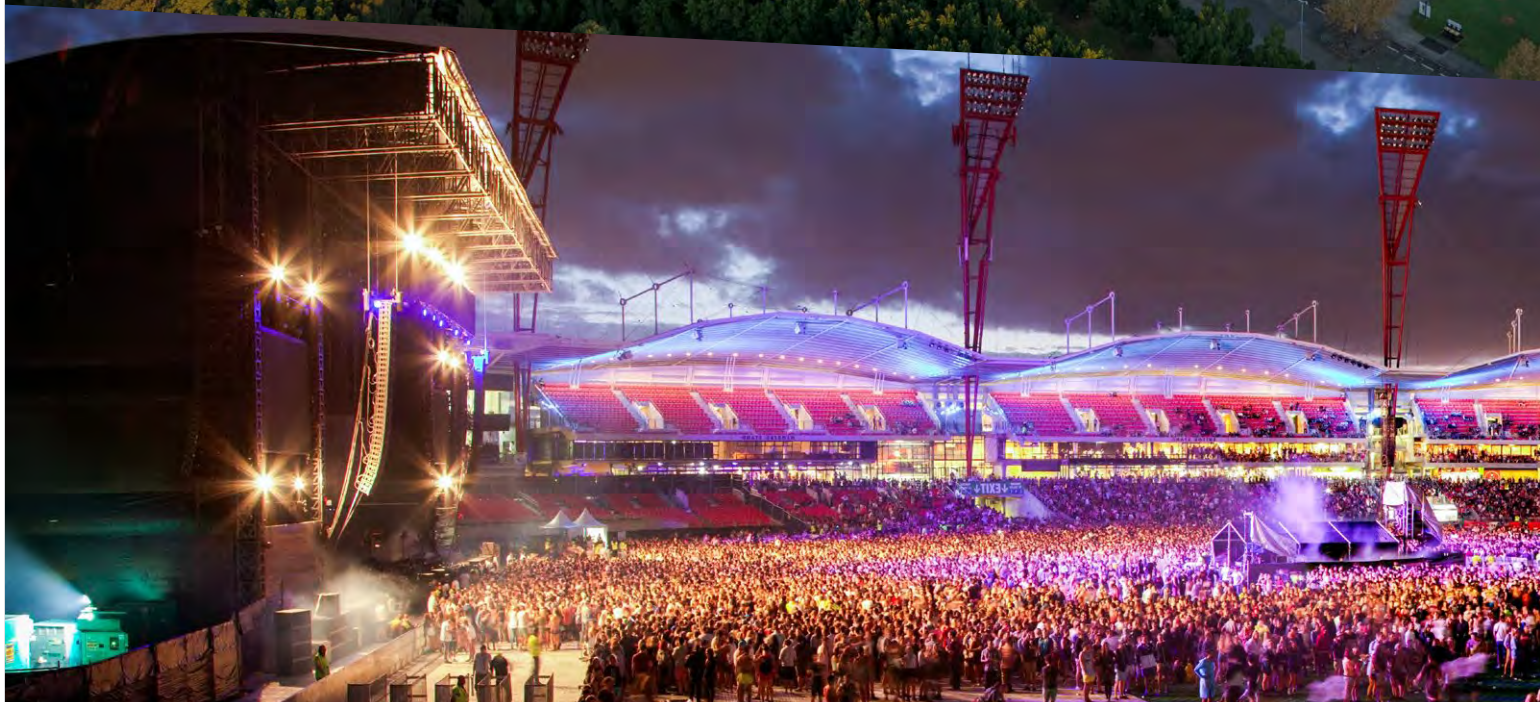
We have had more than 2,000 face-to-face conversations with Sydneysiders about planning for Greater Sydney's future. This was complemented by online engagement. In the GPOP area we ran specific engagement activities to support the creation of the 2036 vision for GPOP.

Diverse members of the community shared their comments and ideas for the GPOP area, including residents, school students, community groups, businesses, and peak groups.

Opportunities for the community to get involved in the early stages of the GPOP vision process included:

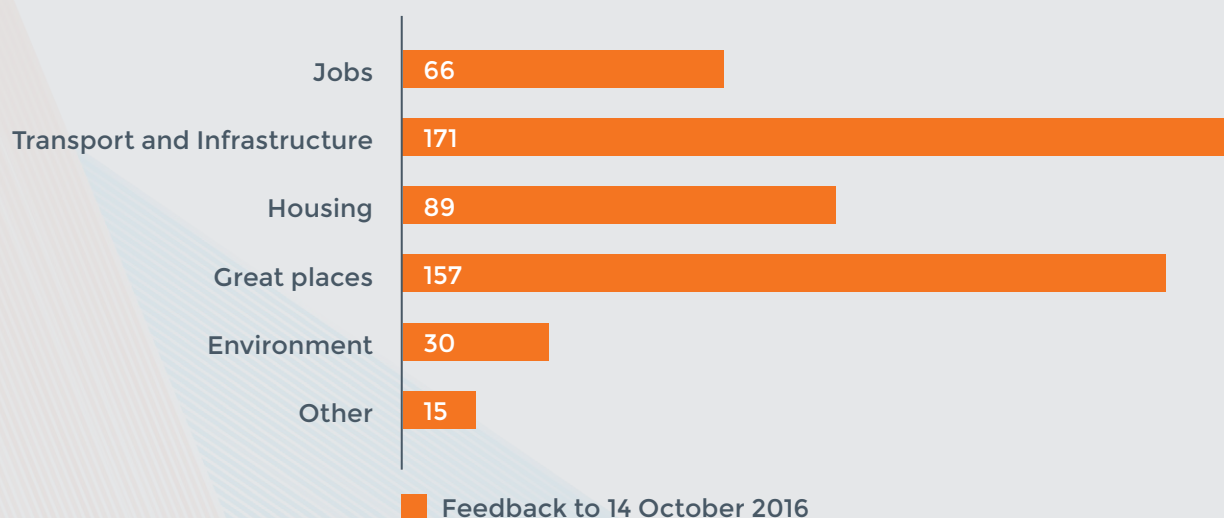
- AFL Multicultural Festival at Sydney Olympic Park and Parramatta vs Panthers NRL game at Pepper Stadium, Penrith (our travelling Talk Bus involved conversations and other feedback opportunities, through which people were invited to share their ideas for the future of Greater Sydney)
- Nine information and feedback sessions in the GPOP area
- Interviews and site visits with key stakeholder representatives including Sydney Olympic Park and Westmead Hospital
- Round table meetings with peak groups who are active on social, economic and environmental issues across Greater Sydney
- Meetings and briefings with local community groups including North Parramatta Resident Action Group, Parramatta Artists Studio, and Information and Cultural Exchange which gives voice to young people in Western Sydney
- Map It online engagement, allowing people to make location based comments on an online map
- Information and discussion questions on our social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter)
- Email and 1800 hotline
- Four technical working group workshops led by our District Commissioner with Councils in the West Central District, in which the GPOP area is located.





What we have heard

More than 700 members of the community were engaged at events within the GPOP area. This figure below provides an overview of community feedback on the key themes of jobs and transport, housing, great places, and the environment.



Total responses for GPOP area equals 136. This graph shows the number of issues raised in responses. Responses received via online discussion forum, Map It, GSC mail box and engagement phone line and email (including GSC website enquiry). Note: Feedback received as at 14 October 2016.

Greater Parramatta to Olympic Peninsula

Transport and infrastructure was the theme most commonly raised in community feedback. However great places received a similar volume of feedback over the reporting period.

A summary of feedback on each of these themes is provided below.





Jobs and transport

Jobs

Comments focused on the need for more jobs close to home, and for greater job diversity – across areas including professional services, health, tourism, trades, art and culture. People were looking for greater convenience and better work / life balance. Youth employment was identified as an important priority.

Feedback focused on strengthening the knowledge based economy in the GPOP area, supporting our ‘shrinking’ manufacturing industry, and enabling small business.

Opportunities to support education and training, employment and growth across science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) were emphasised. Suggestions included new linkages between educational institutions and employers; and supporting transitions to emerging sectors (for instance, for people currently undertaking training in areas of science that are becoming automated).

There was strong interest and support for the proposed Westmead Health and Education Precinct. Existing investments in the GPOP area – such as at the Children’s Medical Research Institute at Westmead – were highlighted, as were opportunities to build on these. Staff from the Children’s Medical Research Institute in Westmead discussed the ProCan cancer research project. The significant investment made towards this project will enable the Institute to work in partnership with cancer researchers, clinicians, tumour banks and technology experts to undertake the research.

Key factors to encourage growth and investment in the GPOP area were: strategic planning and a stronger focus on governance; collaboration and creativity, to encourage investment in access and amenity; and improved liveability to attract and retain talent. The latter includes quality housing and more diverse housing types, better night life, and more art and cultural activities.

Appropriate transport solutions and co-location of complementary uses were seen as critical to support light and heavy industry on key sites within the GPOP area.

Current and future (5-10 year) prospects for business and jobs growth in the GPOP area identified by participants of the GPOP Business Round Table included:

- Opportunities for Australian manufacturing firms to tie into global supply chains.
- Co-location of firms within the GPOP area – through provision of incubator space and links to innovative academia. For instance, co-location of medicine alongside research, building on Westmead’s current offering.
- Engagement with Western Sydney University Academy which houses 1,500 millennials who are in demand from Western Sydney businesses.
- Potential opportunities in the healthcare space, for Australian firms to globally leverage our excellence in clinical trials.

Sydney Olympic Park (right)
Westmead Hospital (far right)
(Source: Greater Sydney Commission)

- Greater focus on the commercialisation of Australian research.
- A current need for robotics programmers, and a longer term need for engineers.
- A STEM focus for business and industry growth.
- Job opportunities in the tourism sector – linked with the new stadiums, the growth of Sydney Olympic Park, and redevelopment of Rosehill Racecourse.

Libraries as knowledge hubs, and improved mobile and internet access were also raised.

“I’d like my area (Westmead) to be known for providing jobs in the medical profession...”

“I’d like my area (Auburn) to be known for providing jobs in medical, computing and engineering...”

“Parramatta needs to be the financial centre – main city of Sydney. Camellia is the second valley...”

“...Emphasis on higher education should be lessened. More degree holders cannot find jobs and there are no tradespeople. They need to be brought in from overseas...Maintenance of heritage to integrate with the tourism industry...”



Transport

Feedback focused on the desire for better public transport to connect the GPOP area to Greater Sydney, initiatives to address traffic congestion, and more opportunities for walking and cycling.

A regular heavy rail service connecting Sydney Olympic Park to Greater Sydney, extension of the Western Sydney Light Rail network, and a more dense bus network were commonly discussed.

Staff from Westmead Hospital – which employs approximately 1,800 plus people and services more than half of NSW – suggested a transport hub in Westmead. They commented that it is difficult for staff based in Western Sydney to

access Westmead Hospital by public transport. An express train service to Westmead and review of the T-Way were proposed.

More frequent bus and train services were called for during the day and night (for instance, at Telopea and Dundas). Train station upgrades – including lifts to meet the needs of older people, families and people with disability – were also proposed.

Strategic land use and transport planning was seen as critical to maximise jobs growth and opportunities associated with projects including Western Sydney light rail, fast rail and Western Sydney Airport.



People talked about the importance of more walkable neighborhoods to reduce car dependency, and better connections to attractions such as cultural facilities.

“I’d like to see better public transport. New housing is adding to transport chaos.”

“My vision for Sydney is...A city with more affordable public transport (like Melbourne).”

“It takes me three trains to get to work (from Ashfield to Rydalmere). Terrible!”

“Light rail is fantastic, especially going to campus. It should connect to the city, Bankstown, Penrith, Campbelltown and Liverpool...”

“Our vision is for a connected and world class public transport – that is frequent and reliable with a dense bus network...”





Housing

Feedback focused on the lack of housing affordability in the GPOP area and Greater Sydney more broadly – with impacts on social inclusion and diversity.

People told us that greater housing choice is required, to meet the needs of people from a range of income groups.

Young people were identified as being particularly impacted by affordability issues. Some university students from the GPOP area believed they would need to move away from the area, or from Sydney, in order to find affordable housing in the future.

Members of the community had mixed views on the appropriate level of housing density for new development in the GPOP area. Some wanted to see more high density housing, whereas others wanted to see less high density housing, due to concerns about impacts on local character and congestion. Locations suggested for higher density housing included Sydney Olympic Park, Blacktown and Parramatta North.

Government leadership in social and affordable housing was identified as being central to protecting vulnerable people and ensuring social equity across Greater Sydney.

The importance of heritage considerations, design excellence, access to parks and open space areas, and family-friendly facilities were discussed.

People also commented that housing should be designed to support people from a range of cultural groups, to support community building and reduce social isolation.

“We need cheaper housing in our area (Westmead).”

“Housing is too expensive without financial assistance from family.”

“Affordability needs to be solved by decentralising and improved / increased transport.”

“I’m going to move to Perth once I’ve finished my degree. Housing is cheaper over there, and there are bigger and nicer houses that are affordable...”

“I’m moving out of Sydney due to the pace [of the city] and lack of lifestyle...”

“I would like more high density buildings with shops on lower levels and housing on top....”

“I would like more tall buildings...a modern city plus more housing. I would like more jobs and schools and less traffic.”

“...I’m concerned about the cost of housing...I’d prefer a house, but think I will buy an apartment at the end of the year...”







Great places

People enjoy the cultural diversity, character of local neighbourhoods, and liveliness of centres within the GPOP area. For instance, places like Dundas, Telopea and Harris Park were described as offering peace and quiet, yet in close proximity to Parramatta. Comments focusing on the Parramatta CBD highlighted the importance of public places and landmarks such as Centenary Square, Parramatta Park and the Parramatta River foreshore. People talked about Parramatta's heritage buildings and regular activities, including Parramatta Farmers Market, as key attributes of the area. People valued many aspects of the lifestyle offered by places like Sydney Olympic Park and surrounds.

Opportunities to tell the story of the GPOP area and its people were identified as important. Suggestions included creating a visible precinct identity, building collaborations, and telling stories of progress, success and lessons learned. Through building cross precinct links and fostering a collaborative environment, it was thought the region as a whole could become more than the sum of its parts. Opportunities include co-working spaces, networking activities and engagement.

Feedback identified opportunities for the GPOP area to be better serviced by schools, universities and TAFE, community and recreational facilities (such as libraries), childcare, youth activities, and other amenities such as more shops, cafes and restaurants. People also wanted to see a more vibrant night time economy.

Parks and open spaces (from pocket parks to major new parklands) were also seen as critical for existing and future communities. Comments focused on protecting and better activating

these spaces. More opportunities for residents, workers and students to get outdoors and be healthy and active were suggested. People were looking for pleasant places to walk and cycle, parks to sit and eat lunch in, places to exercise before or after work, and places for dogs to exercise.

Students in Westmead talked about the need for indoor and outdoor spaces to promote healthy living and improve quality of life – including gyms and exercise stations. They commented on the need for more cafes and restaurants, places to socialise, and grocery shops in the Westmead area, to meet the needs of the thousands of people who work in or visit the precinct each day.

Cultural and sporting activities and events were seen as an important contributor to the economy and to promote identity, liveability and social diversity. Within the GPOP area an opportunity exists for places like Rosehill to become part of a culture and recreation 'ribbon' or network, linked to the proposed new Powerhouse Museum, Sydney Olympic Park and stadium.

Inclusiveness, equity and diversity was a central theme to underpin many aspects of creating great places. Feedback included more opportunities to celebrate cultural diversity, support young people, artists and the wider community through appropriate spaces, and support not for profit organisations and initiatives that are already working well – such

Parramatta Park (right)
Museum of Applied Arts
and Sciences (far right)
(Source: Greater Sydney Commission)

as Parramatta Artists Studios. Other suggestions included more community and cultural activities and events (with better public transport).

People also wanted to see quality urban design, including safer streets and a better maintained public domain.

"When planning for the area, start with getting to know the people." (Auburn Girls High School)

"Expand eat street and create a pedestrian friendly plaza / promenade plus lighting..."

"Parramatta is very busy/fast. Love the community events, libraries and multicultural community - I don't feel alone."

"...Lake Parramatta is well frequented and a great space for kids...[We need] quality public spaces and transport. We need a pool to replace the loss of Parramatta Pool..."

"More facilities and activities to choose from, more restaurants, free activities, smaller, frequent night time entertainment. We need a community here (heart and soul). We need 'grunge'. Think of Olympic Park as a CITY." (Homebush West)

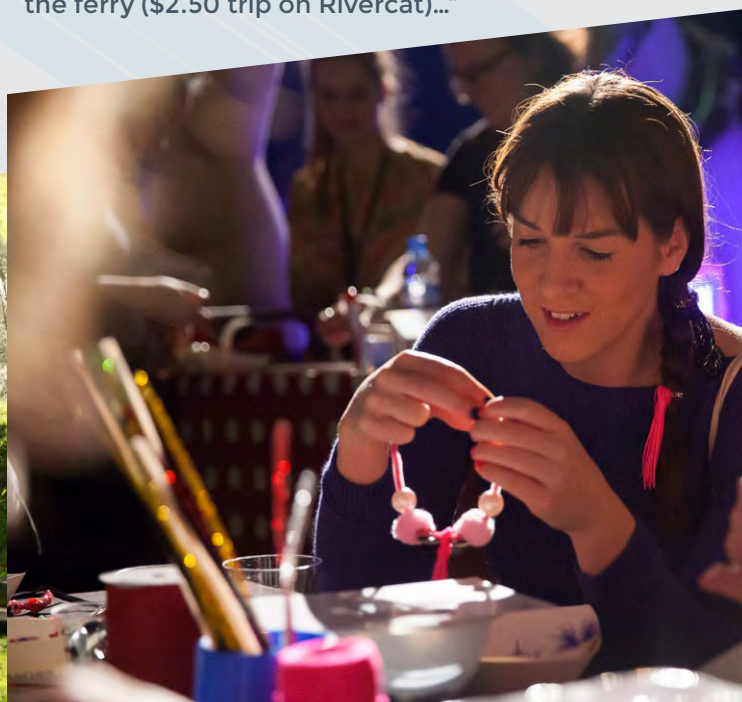
"Better facilities with cultural / heritage places - perhaps cafes / tourist shop at Parramatta Park."

"Keep heritage facades but build around them... Give Parramatta CBD a Times Square big screen...Continue to revitalise the Parramatta River area. Improve bike tracks."

"...Create community hubs for people, such as a North Parramatta 'clubhouse' for mental health clients..."

"...We need nice parks for children and activities for them to do...I'm very excited about Parramatta being the next CBD...Love that this place (Harris Park) is central - half way to the west and city."

"...I love being central in Silverwater. Love the sports, attend the events and I like that it is low density. I'm okay with density - that's the city for you. People have to live somewhere. We have great walking tracks. We've got it all. I love the BBQ facilities, river, kids play equipment. Love the ferry (\$2.50 trip on Rivercat)..."





Environment

Feedback showed that members of the community place great value on the natural environment in and around the GPOP area including parks, open space areas and waterways. Comments focused on the importance of protecting mature trees, green spaces, waterways and biodiversity. The industrial past of certain areas within GPOP was highlighted, and people commented on the significant environmental improvements over the last few decades.

Air quality was seen as a critical issue, to support healthy and active lifestyles into the future as the area continues to grow. More opportunities for public transport, walking, cycling, exercising and enjoying the outdoors were suggested. People were also keen to see more street trees, landscaping and community gardens in the GPOP area.

Environmentally sustainable development and climate change mitigation measures were proposed. Opportunities to promote sustainable living (for instance to reduce waste, energy and water consumption) among residents and businesses were also highlighted – with suggestions including more recycling facilities and education programs. It was noted that Sydney Olympic Park provides an exemplar of advanced environmental management (water recycling program, biodiversity protection) that could be applied to other parts of the GPOP area and Greater Sydney.

“...The Olympic site provides our area with more than enough nature and public living areas...”

“We need better outdoor places including dog parks, cafes and hang out spots...I find it hard to get to exercise but this will be more important in the future if I have my own family.”

“We need to be a lot better with the environment – green energy, water tanks, solar panels...”

“...The area (North Strathfield) has access to parks including Bicentennial Park and the Olympic precinct and has many amenities suitable to active people or those that just enjoy nature including the Mason Park wetlands that are well known for being a bird sanctuary...”

“...Don’t want high rise everywhere. Need to allow native animals to move around. [Manage] impacts on water quality [to avoid] too many hard surfaces. Establish Cumberland Plain forest in Parramatta Park. Plan for open space as backyards become smaller. Future generations need to know what open space is.”



“When I moved here (North Strathfield) to start a family in 1960 it was because we didn’t drive and wanted to be walking distance to a station, and we had two to choose from, each less than 10 minutes walk away. Back then there were factories all along the eastern side of George Street. The tannery and chemical factories would smell horrible, but when the wind blew the other way the Arnotts Biscuits smell would make it all good. When the factories closed and were converted to units, it partly changed the area to a younger demographic with more people. I am old now, my family has moved on and I would be happy to give up my house for development to allow more younger families

to enjoy the fabulous amenities this area has to offer. With the new primary school, several day care centres, the wonderful Bakehouse Quarter, the planned Strathfield to Parramatta light rail, multiple bus services, and soon the WestConnex motorway, it will make North Strathfield a perfect place younger people can live, raise families and with fewer cars polluting our city. They can enjoy the beautiful Mason Park wetlands, Bicentennial Park and Olympic Park district that have replaced the polluting factories of the past.”



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