

# Greater Penrith to Eastern Creek Investigation Area

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This document answers frequently asked questions about the draft Strategic Framework for the Greater Penrith to Eastern Creek Investigation Area

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## What is the Greater Penrith to Eastern Creek Investigation Area?

The Greater Penrith to Eastern Creek area (GPEC) spans approximately 19,000 hectares from the Nepean River in the west to the M7 Motorway in the east and is comprised of parts of the Blacktown and Penrith local government areas. **Figure 1** at the end of this document shows where GPEC is in the context of the Six Cities Region identified in the Greater Cities Commission's Discussion Paper released in September 2022. The Six Cities Region brings together the Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle City, Central Coast City, Illawarra-Shoalhaven City, Western Parkland City, Central River City and Eastern Harbour City to create a globally competitive city region. The GPEC area was identified in the Western Sydney City Deal and Greater Sydney Region Plan, prepared by the Greater Cities Commission (formerly the Greater Sydney Commission) in 2018. The NSW government committed to investigate the area for growth and change due to its good access to infrastructure and services, as well as the potential to capitalise on the opportunities arising from the Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport line, which will connect directly to the Aerotropolis and commence operation in time for the opening of the Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport.

## What is the draft GPEC Strategic Framework?

The draft GPEC Strategic Framework (the framework) is a strategic planning document that will guide future detailed planning for the area. It consolidates and builds upon the strategic planning and infrastructure work already undertaken in the area to set a clear direction for future growth and development. The framework sets out:

- a vision for growth,
- planning priorities to deliver the vision,
- directions and actions to implement each of the planning priorities; and
- infrastructure that may be required at the regional and district level to support growth.

## Why has the framework been prepared?

The framework has been prepared to support strategic planning for the Western Parkland City. It outlines a clear vision for GPEC, together with a framework of priorities and actions to guide future precinct planning and development aligned with infrastructure.

It also supports local planning to achieve a shared vision for the GPEC area, by guiding precinct planning and planning proposals, and informing new or revised local planning controls like Local

Environmental Plans (LEPs) or Development Control Plans (DCPs). The framework and supporting documents identify:

- special features and characteristics of the area that are valued by the community,
- a spatial framework that includes:
  - locations to focus new development and supporting investment to enable growth and innovation.
  - areas of limited or no change; and
  - places to be retained for open space or environmental purposes.

### How will the framework be applied?

A Ministerial Direction issued under section 9.1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* will require planning proposals within the GPEC area to consider and align with the framework. The framework will also inform ongoing strategic planning by Penrith and Blacktown City Councils, including updates to their local strategies and Local Strategic Planning Statements.

### What are focus precincts?

The framework identifies St Marys Town Centre and Orchard Hills (south of the M4) as priority precincts. This means that these areas will be planned for in the short-term to leverage the potential for growth and investment arising from the Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport line.

Penrith Centre, Kingswood and Werrington and Mount Druitt and Rooty Hill are identified as short-term renewal areas, where there is potential for growth aligned with the strategic role set out in the framework. For example, Kingswood and Werrington will become a health and education precinct to support the continued economic growth of The Quarter and the east-west economic corridor.

### What happens next in focus precincts?

On 19 October 2022, the NSW Government announced the Department of Planning and Environment will lead the precinct planning for Orchard Hills. As a first step in the planning process, the department has released a discussion paper on precinct planning in Orchard Hills to gather community and stakeholder feedback and inform future planning. We will collaborate with Penrith City Council, the community and state agencies to prepare a draft precinct plan and rezoning package for release in mid-2023. To find out more about the Orchard Hills Discussion Paper, visit [planning.nsw.gov.au/orchard-hills](https://planning.nsw.gov.au/orchard-hills)

Penrith City Council is preparing a Structure Plan for St Marys Town Centre to manage growth and change over the next 20 years. It outlines existing environmental, social and economic conditions and proposes a vision, alongside strategic and spatial planning directions. The structure plan will inform the council-led master plan for St Marys Town Centre.

In short-term renewal areas, proponents or councils may initiate change through the planning proposal process. A Ministerial Direction will require planning proposals to align with the framework.

### What happens in the areas that are not focus precincts?

The framework does not prevent development in areas that have not been identified as focus precincts. We expect limited change in these areas as they are largely established precincts. Any proposed land use changes will be subject to an assessment of strategic merit and impact on existing character.

### Does the framework rezone land in GPEC?

The draft Strategic Framework does not rezone land in GPEC. It identifies areas that will need further detailed planning and provides a framework to guide the planning process that would lead to future rezoning in these areas.

The department will continue to work with stakeholders and the community during detailed planning stages and has engaged the Independent Community Commissioner to work with the community to inform precinct planning for Orchard Hills. The Commissioner will help the community to understand the planning process, what proposed changes may mean and raise any issues and concerns with the department during the process.

### Will land be acquired due to the framework?

The framework is a strategic planning document intended to guide development of the area, and it does not identify land for acquisition. Further detailed planning is needed to identify land that may be needed for future infrastructure such as roads and open space.

### How does the department's recent work on flooding in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley affect GPEC?

There is no simple solution to managing or reducing the valley's high flood risk. The NSW Government is delivering the Flood Strategy program, together with local councils, businesses, and the community. The valley has a diverse mix of highly urbanised areas - such as Penrith City Centre, combined with agricultural landscapes, all sharing an evacuation road network. Managing existing and future flood risk in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley requires an integrated approach to infrastructure, land use and emergency management planning.

The NSW Government is committed to delivering growth in the right places putting the safety and resilience of the community at the heart of decision making, whilst providing opportunities for new jobs, housing, and public spaces in Western Sydney.

We will continue to work closely with state agencies and flood experts to align the final strategic framework with the outcomes and recommendations of the [NSW Flood Enquiry](#).

### What does the Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan (CPCP) mean for GPEC?

The CPCP supports growth in Western Sydney by identifying land that is capable of urban development and land that should be protected for biodiversity reasons. This will contribute to the Western Parkland City by supporting the delivery of housing, jobs and infrastructure while protecting important biodiversity including threatened plants and animals.

The CPCP streamlines the development process by providing strategic biodiversity certification under the NSW *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. It will also provide strategic assessment under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, meaning no further biodiversity approvals are needed in certified areas in the Greater Macarthur, Aerotropolis and Wilton growth areas and the Greater Penrith to Eastern Creek investigation area.

To learn more about the CPCP, visit [planning.nsw.gov.au/cumberlandplainconservationplan](https://planning.nsw.gov.au/cumberlandplainconservationplan)

### How has growth been determined?

We have used the [NSW Population Projections](#) released in August 2022 to estimate the growth in population and dwellings in GPEC to 2056. Consequently, these projections differ from those contained in Penrith and Blacktown City Councils' Local Strategic Planning Statements, as these documents were prepared in 2020 using earlier population projection data.

Anticipated jobs growth has been informed by technical expert advice and recent changes in growth patterns resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. We will need to update jobs growth estimates to align with updated Travel Zone Projection data to be released by Transport for NSW, which is expected in late 2022.

The draft growth estimates for each GPEC precinct will be verified as we finalise the strategic framework.

### How will the framework and infrastructure be delivered?

The final strategic framework will be supported by a Ministerial direction that will require planning proposals to align with the priorities, directions and actions in the strategic framework. The strategic framework will also inform ongoing strategic planning by the councils, including local strategies and future updates to local strategic planning statements (LSPSs).

The strategic framework identifies infrastructure that may be needed to support growth. We will continue to collaborate with state agencies as we finalise the framework to determine appropriate funding mechanisms to fast track the provision of infrastructure in the focus precincts. Funding for infrastructure in short term renewal areas will be through a variety of sources including state infrastructure contributions and state voluntary planning agreements for state and regional infrastructure; local development contributions and voluntary planning agreements (VPAs) for local infrastructure; and NSW Government funding in the form of grants or set aside in the State Budget.

We will work with Penrith and Blacktown Councils to further refine implementation of the framework as part of its finalisation.

### What if something changes in the area, will the framework become outdated?

We will regularly review the framework to ensure it reflects evolving strategic planning policies, government funding decisions, the evolution of key centres and completion of major infrastructure projects.

### What are the next steps?

The framework and supporting documents are on exhibition until Friday 16 December 2022. We encourage stakeholders and the community to make a submission on the framework during exhibition. Visit [planning.nsw.gov.au/greater-penrith-to-eastern-creek-area](https://planning.nsw.gov.au/greater-penrith-to-eastern-creek-area) to view the exhibition documents and make a submission.

We will continue to collaborate with the community, key state agencies and Penrith and Blacktown City Councils to finalise the framework, and expect this will happen in the first half of 2023. Following the finalisation of the framework and Ministerial Direction, planning proposals will need to consider and align with its requirements.

### How can I get involved?

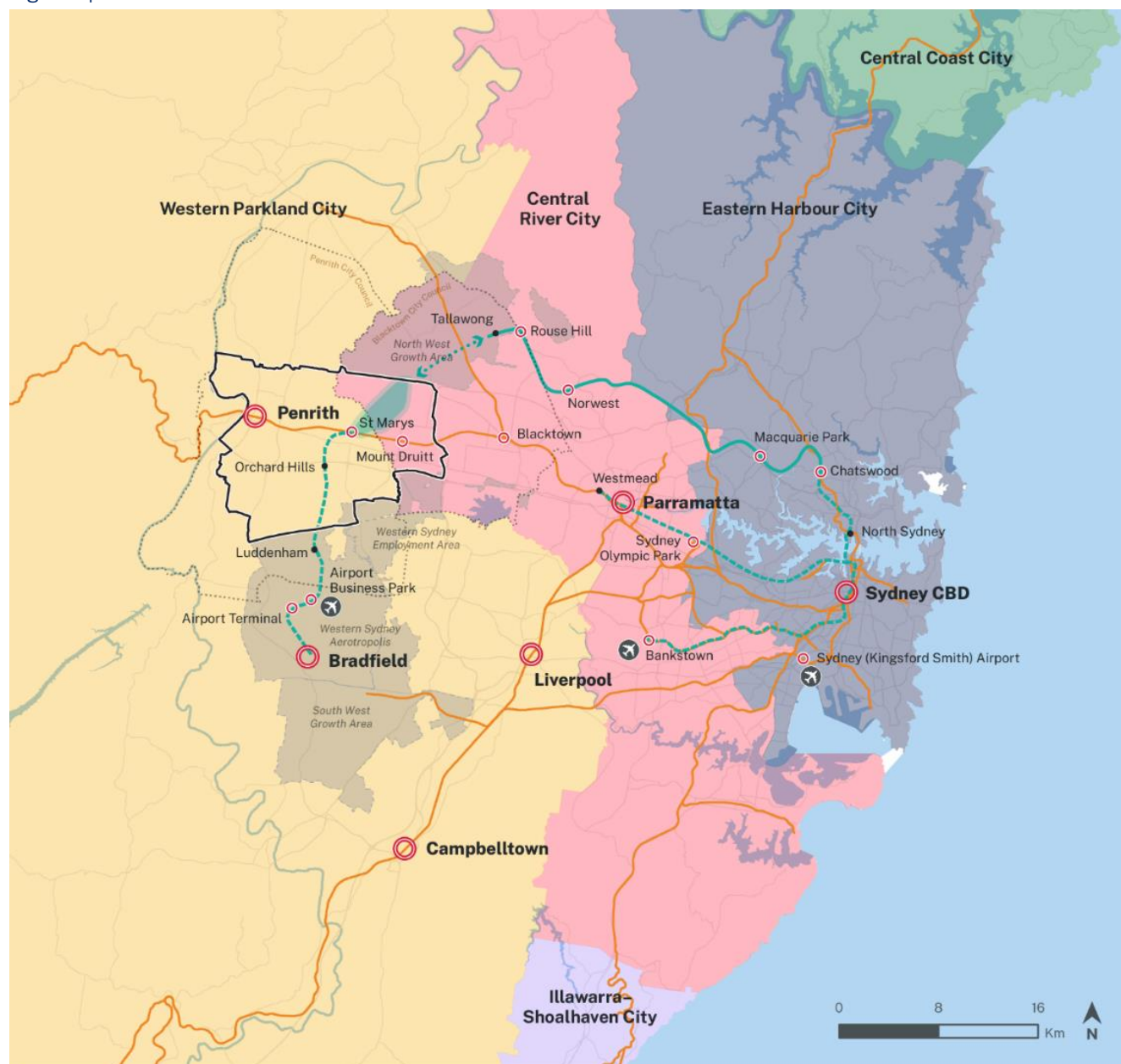
We are encouraging community and stakeholders to provide feedback on the draft strategic framework by Friday 16 December.

Visit our website, [planning.nsw.gov.au/greater-penrith-to-eastern-creek-area](https://planning.nsw.gov.au/greater-penrith-to-eastern-creek-area) to:

- find our more information and how to have your say, and
- sign up for email updates on planning for the GPEC area.



Figure 1 | GPEC in the context of the Six Cities



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|  Metropolitan Centre-Cluster      |  Sydney Metro: planned and underway                             |  Western Parkland City     |
|  Strategic centre                 |  Transport corridor investigation area                          |  Central River City        |
|  Airport                          |  Potential future metro link                                    |  Eastern Harbour City      |
|  Greater Penrith to Eastern Creek |  Penrith City Council and Blacktown City Council LGA boundaries |  Illawarra-Shoalhaven City |
|  Sydney train suburban network    |  Other growth areas   |  Central Coast City        |
|  Major roads and highways         |  |   |
|  Sydney Metro: constructed        |  |   |