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Mr Robert Hodgkins
A/Director Central (Western), Metro West
Department of Planning and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

Dear Mr Hodgkins

Exhibition of the draft Greater Penrith to Eastern Creek (GPEC) draft Strategic Framework

Thank you for your letter dated 18 November 2022 advising of the exhibition of the draft Greater Penrith to Eastern Creek (GPEC) Strategic Framework. Blacktown City appreciates the opportunity to review the exhibited draft documents and to provide our response.

The draft GPEC Strategic Framework is intended to set clear directions for future growth and development in the GPEC investigation area and to inform future regional and local planning decisions, building on the regional and district strategic plans, the draft Western Parkland City Blueprint and ongoing strategic planning by Blacktown City to implement local planning priorities in our Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) and Housing Strategy.

Blacktown City broadly supports the intent and approach being taken in planning for GPEC including the vision statement and six planning priorities.

There are three GPEC precincts within Blacktown City.

- Mount Druitt Centre and Rooty Hill Precinct – this precinct includes the Mount Druitt Strategic Centre, Rooty Hill Town Centre, and all of the land north of the M4 up to Woodstock Avenue.
- Luxford Precinct – this precinct includes the land between Woodstock Avenue, the Castlereagh Connection, Ropes Crossing and Ropes Creek.
- Ropes Crossing Precinct – this precinct includes Ropes Crossing between the LGA boundary with Penrith City, Palmyra Avenue and Forrester Road.

Mount Druitt and Rooty Hill Precinct

The Mount Druitt Centre and Rooty Hill Precinct is identified in the draft Strategic Framework as having opportunities for renewal. Blacktown City supports the identification of this precinct as a renewal area with the planning pathway to be through

our strategic planning framework and current and future planning proposals. This aligns with our prior feedback for future planning to be in accordance with Blacktown City's masterplans and focussed on strategic centres and is consistent with relevant local planning priorities in our LSPS and Local Housing Strategy.

Luxford precinct

The Luxford Precinct is identified as having opportunities for urban renewal and growth in the longer term, including opportunities to renew social housing. Blacktown City supports the identification of this precinct as a long-term renewal area with renewal opportunities aligned with future transport and community infrastructure investment. This is consistent with the feedback previously provided by us that in the short term, it is not appropriate to consider higher densities in this precinct until there is greater certainty on transformational transport infrastructure to support growth, including the proposed extension of the Sydney Metro from Tallawong to St Marys and the Castlereagh Connection.

Ropes Crossing Precinct

The draft Strategic Framework identifies that this precinct has limited opportunity for further development. Again, this reflects our prior feedback to the Department and is supported.

Remaining established GPEC precincts

We note that limited land use change is expected in the remaining established GPEC precincts, and these precincts are in the Penrith LGA. Blacktown City agrees that any proposed land use changes in these areas should be subject to an assessment of strategic merit and consideration of impacts on existing character and necessary infrastructure provision. This is the case currently for any proposed land use changes through the planning proposal process, with specific reference to the draft Strategic Framework, the LSPS and relevant land use strategies.

Draft Ministerial Direction

Blacktown City supports the final strategic framework being supported by a Ministerial direction to ensure that the framework is a matter for consideration when considering future planning proposals.

Castlereagh Connection

Blacktown City requests that the proposed Castlereagh Connection is shown on the transport infrastructure map on page 41 and 72 and listed in Table 6 on page 73 as supporting infrastructure for both GPEC, the North West Growth Area and wider transport network. The Castlereagh Connection also forms a critical future role in the flood evacuation of the Hawkesbury-Nepean floodplain.

Population forecasts

It has been acknowledged by the Department that the population projections in the draft Strategic Framework differ to that used by councils when developing the LSPS and Local Housing Strategy. We also note that the GPEC open space draft report, dated September 2022 stated that 273,590 people lived in GPEC, forecast to be total

of 494,820 people representing growth of 221,230 people and a need for approximately 626 hectares of additional open space.

The draft Strategic Framework states that at the 2021 Census, GPEC was home to around 293,000 people and accommodated more than 75,000 jobs and that this is expected to increase by around 135,000 people by 2056, with the number of jobs projected to approximately double. There is a further discrepancy observed in the population figures in the Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment report prepared by Urbis, dated 18 October 2022.

We recommend that these discrepancies are corrected when finalising the Strategic Framework.

We look forward to continuing collaboration with the Department during the finalisation of the Strategic Framework and the forthcoming Project Control Group meetings. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact our Helen Budd, Acting Manager Strategic Planning on 9839 6206.

Yours sincerely



Peter Conroy
Director City Planning and Development