



Transport
for NSW

New Cumberland Line Underground Rail Corridor

Underground corridor protection using the State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021

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Greater Parramatta underground rail corridors

The Greater Parramatta underground rail protection was a joint project between Transport for NSW (Transport) and the (former) Greater Sydney Commission. The study area is defined as Greater Parramatta, which includes the suburbs of Parramatta, Westmead, Mays Hill, North Parramatta, Rydalmere, Granville, Rosehill and Harris Park (refer to **Figure 1**).



Figure 1 Study area (Greater Parramatta)

The objectives of the project are:

- Identify service and customer preferences and network options for a future rail network within the study area
- Collaborate across government agencies to integrate transport network considerations with place visions and outcomes
- Support financial sustainability and deliverability through identification and consideration of subsurface constraints and asset co-location opportunities
- Identify and confirm the preferred corridors through a collaborative multi-criteria assessment process
- Develop and implement an approved preservation mechanism to identify and protect subsurface railway corridors within Greater Parramatta.

The project aims to further define the rail corridors identified in Future Transport (refer to **Figure 2**).

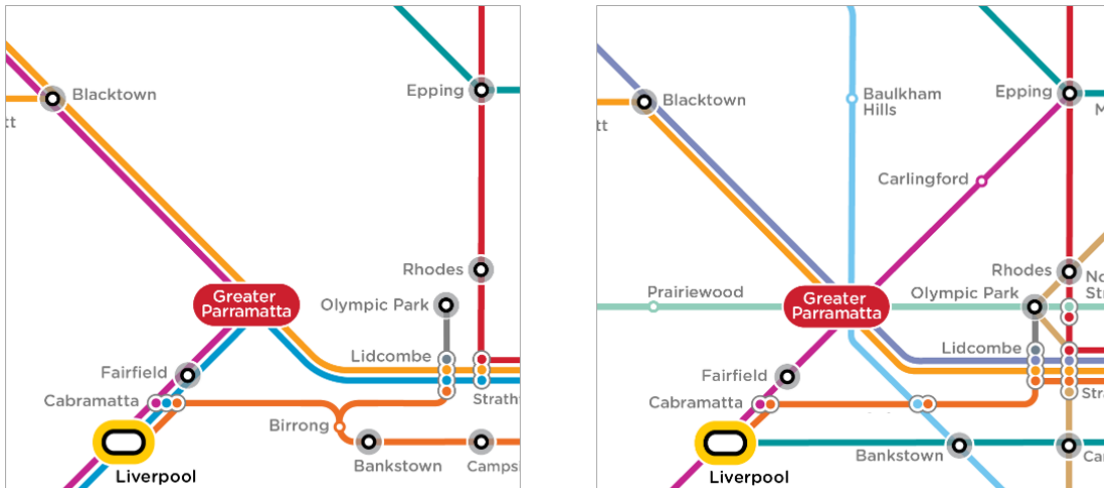


Figure 2 Current and future rail network for Greater Parramatta

The project has identified the preferred alignment within Greater Parramatta for the New Cumberland Line - from Epping to Bradfield via Parramatta and Liverpool as identified in Future Transport.

The preferred tunnel corridor is an outcome of extensive consultation with key NSW Government agencies and local councils. The tunnel corridor provides flexibility for station location options.

The corridor was identified through a comprehensive co-design approach, co-led with the Greater Sydney Commission, with key Government stakeholders including NSW Health, Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure including Property NSW (DPHI – formerly Department of Planning and Environment), Department of Education, Department of Premier and Cabinet, and staff from Parramatta City Council and Cumberland Council.

The preferred corridor aligns with areas that are anticipated to experience growth over the coming decades, provide the best outcome for customers in terms of interchange with existing and committed rail lines and provide the opportunity to optimise the use of Government-owned land.

The preferred corridor is shown in **Figure 3**.

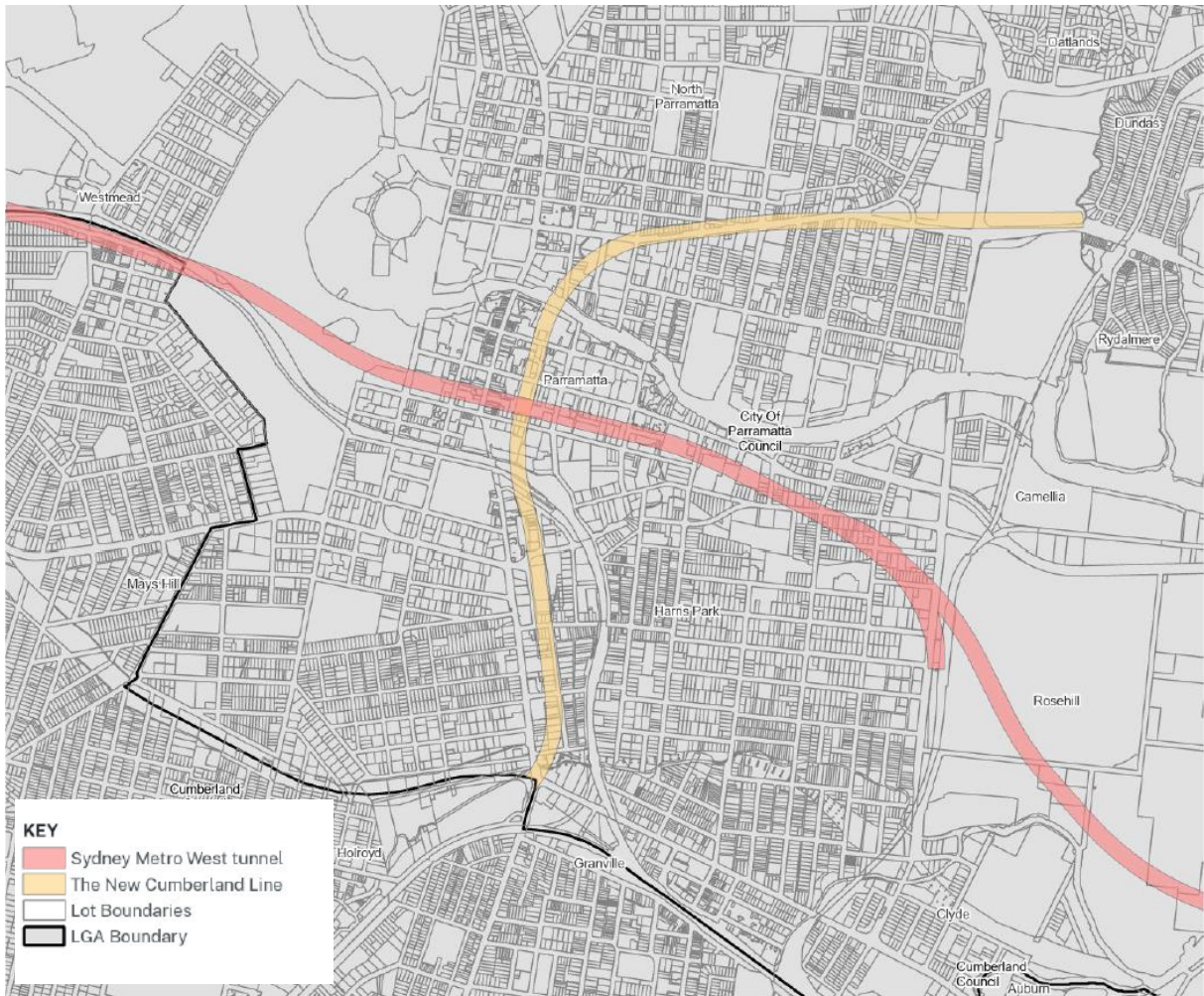


Figure 3 Preferred corridor for the New Cumberland Line within Greater Parramatta

Project context and need

1.1 Overview

Greater Sydney is on track to become a metropolis of three cities with a total population of more than 12 million residents by 2056. Planning is underway to ensure the three cities, and the communities that support them, have access to essential infrastructure such as schools, hospitals and public open space. To ensure the productivity, liveability and sustainability of these communities it is vital that a world-class transport system is developed to support continued growth.

Future Transport is an overarching strategy which aligns long-term transport planning with strategic land use planning. It identifies the desired future transport network for New South Wales. For Greater Sydney, it means an integrated transport network to achieve the vision of a 30-minute city. The success of Greater Sydney's integrated transport network relies on stations striking the right balance between place-making and providing effective interchange with other transport modes.

Transport, with the Greater Sydney Commission, and other stakeholders have identified a new tunnel corridor within the Parramatta CBD and its supporting precincts. The corridor caters for the need for interchange between transport modes to support the integrated transport network, while ensuring place-making opportunities are realised.

The alignment considers multiple criteria including customer experience, place-making opportunities, network integration and construction complexity. The alignment balances the needs of the customer while supporting the growth of Greater Parramatta. The change to the State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021 will provide an appropriate protection mechanism to ensure the land required is available for use when the new line is delivered.

There are two main drivers which support immediate action on protecting the tunnel corridor. Firstly, Sydney Metro West are progressing the design for the Parramatta CBD station and integrated station development. It is imperative that this design allows for future interchange with the new line. Transport and Sydney Metro are working closely to ensure this can be achieved. Secondly, Greater Parramatta is seeing immense investment, particularly in the CBD. If the tunnel corridor is not protected, the delivery of the future line will result in more complex construction methods, potentially delaying delivery and resulting in a poorer outcome for the customer.

1.2 Strategic alignment

The objective of the Project is to give effect to Future Transport — the Government's long-term transport plan for Sydney and NSW—by identifying and protecting land that can be used to deliver transport infrastructure in the future when it is needed. A summary of the strategic alignment with the relevant planning documents is provided below.

Future Transport Strategy 2056

Future Transport is the State's overarching transport strategy and provides a 40 year vision for the transport system. It recognises that the growth and development of Greater Parramatta will require improved public and active transport access.

To support this, Future Transport identifies a number of mass transit initiatives for investigation in the next 20 years connecting Greater Parramatta to the remainder of Sydney. This includes:

- Sydney Metro West (SMW), a new metro line between Greater Parramatta and the Harbour CBD, which is in the planning phase and is expected to open sometime around 2032

- The Western Sydney Airport to Greater Parramatta train link (also known as the East West Rail Link), which will work with SMW to connect the three metropolitan centres;
- A new north-south mass transit link (The New Cumberland Line), connecting Epping to Greater Parramatta and onward to Liverpool
- The Parramatta-Norwest mass transit/train link, which will support longer-term population growth on this corridor which is currently served by bus services.

The Project is aligned with the key outcomes as set out in Future Transport 2056 as summarised in **Table 3**.

Table 1 Alignment with Future Transport 2056 outcomes

Future Transport 2056 Outcomes	Relevance
Customer Focused	Early confirmation of corridor locations would allow for a more integrated station design that would provide a better customer experience
Successful Places	Early planning and site protection would provide better opportunity for place-making in the precincts
A Strong Economy	By confirming the location of the corridors, appropriate development can be undertaken in the precincts while ensuring that future infrastructure can be delivered.
Accessible Services	Early confirmation of corridor locations would allow for a more integrated precinct design that would reduce interchange time in Greater Parramatta, resulting in more accessible services to customers.
Sustainability	The protection of public transport corridors will support more environmentally sustainable travel, whilst avoiding complex construction methods in the long term.

Central City District Plan

The vision for the Central River City, described in the Central City District Plan, emphasises the role of Greater Parramatta as a key focus for growth with an economy centred on world-class health, education and research institutions as well as finance, business services and administration.

The District Plan sets out a range of district specific priorities and actions to realise the vision established in the Greater Sydney Regional Plan. Those of relevance to this Project are captured in **Table 5**.

Table 2 Alignment with Central City District Plan

Central City District Plan Priorities	Relevance
Planning Priority C1 – Planning for a city supported by infrastructure	Aims to align infrastructure with forecast growth areas and planned precincts, linking these areas to a variety of employment opportunities, infrastructure, and services to support the 30-minute city. The subject investigations respond directly to this priority by taking a place-based approach to the future location of catalytic transport infrastructure.
Planning Priority C2 – Working through collaboration.	The co-design approach adopted by Transport for this investigation is an example of the project team actively responding to this District Plan objective.

Central City District Plan Priorities	Relevance
Planning Priority C5 – Providing housing supply, choice and affordability with access to jobs, services and public transport.	The District Plan identifies the Study Area as a location for additional housing capacity and supply in the future. The subject investigations respond to this priority by considering the potential for land use change and increased housing supply in the consideration of preferred outcomes.
Planning Priority C8 - Delivering a more connected and competitive GPOP Economic Corridor.	The District Plan identifies Greater Parramatta as needing a radial transport network to make the most of its location at the centre of Greater Sydney. The outcomes of this project will significantly improve connections within and to Greater Parramatta, creating a more economically competitive region.
Planning Priority C9 – Delivering integrated land use and transport planning and a 30-minute city.	The District Plan notes that the delivery of the three cities concept is contingent on the integration of land use and transport. Land use analysis supporting this project has considered opportunities to improve public transport accessibility within the Study Area

1.3 Future growth of Parramatta

1.3.1 Parramatta as a future transport hub

The vision for Greater Sydney is one where people can access jobs and services in their nearest metropolitan city and strategic centre within 30 minutes by public transport, seven days a week. To support the vision, Transport have developed a network plan that will enable people within each city to access their nearest metropolitan and/or strategic centre within 30 minutes by public transport.

As per Future Transport, Greater Parramatta will become the central node of Sydney’s passenger rail network.

By 2061, there will be three new rail lines connecting Greater Parramatta to other parts of Greater Sydney:

- 1) **Bradfield to Epping (new Cumberland Line)** – the New Cumberland Line will offer 30-minute access from the North District and south-west Sydney to Greater Parramatta, Liverpool and Bradfield.
- 2) **Norwest to Miranda** – The Norwest to Miranda line will offer 30-minute access from the South District and north-west Sydney to Greater Parramatta, Bankstown and Kogarah.
- 3) **East West Rail Link** – New rail link from Bradfield and Western Sydney (Nancy Bird Walton) International Airport to Parramatta via Prairiewood to reduce journey times between these centres and the Harbour CBD. It is anticipated that this line is an extension of Sydney Metro West.

1.3.2 Rapid growth of Greater Parramatta

The City of Parramatta Local Government Area (the City) is currently home to almost 300,000 residents. The City is experiencing a significant amount of population growth. By 2056, the City is expected to reach a population of over 523,000 people which will require additional 80,000 dwellings to accommodate the growth.¹ The majority of the growth will occur in the growth precincts (**Figure 4**) as planned by the City and/or the NSW Government, such as Westmead, Parramatta North, Parramatta East and Granville.

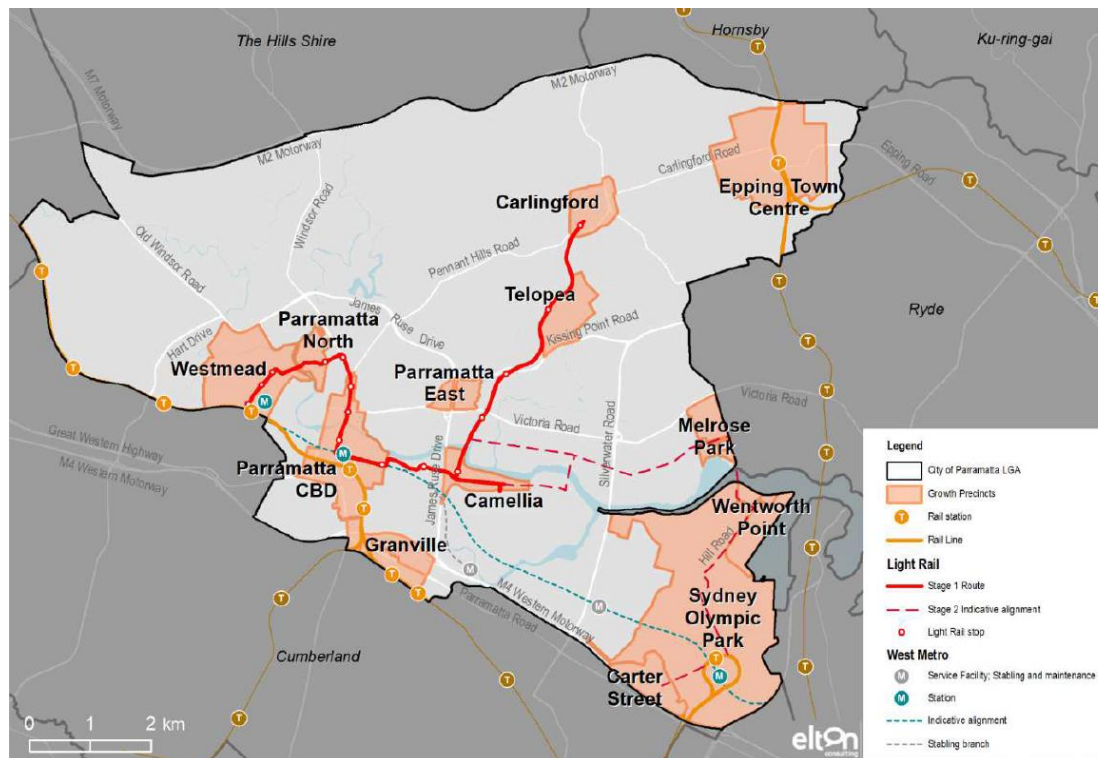


Figure 4 City of Parramatta growth precincts²

Source: City of Parramatta – Local Housing Strategy (2020)

Not only being the home to the local residents, Parramatta is the second largest economy outside of the Sydney CBD. As the commercial, civic, cultural and educational centre of the Central River City, the City of Parramatta’s contribution to the NSW economy was estimated to be around \$31 billion.³ The number of jobs in the City is expected to grow by 54 per cent from around 192,000 jobs in 2021 to 286,000 jobs in 2056, which is even higher than the growth rate of the City of Sydney at 39 per cent.⁴

The projected growth will lead to increase in the housing and employment supply in the City. From 2015 to 2019, the City approved around 18,000 dwellings to facilitate the growth. Similar to the growth in housing supply, the commercial floor space was also estimated to increase by 34 per cent between 2016 and 2021.⁵

In line with the anticipated growth, there are already many development applications (DAs) in the study area. While high levels of development activity represent a positive sign in response to the growing population and employment, the development activities should ideally be integrated with future transport infrastructure so that the strategic planning outcome can be achieved.

¹ Transport for NSW, TZP19 ERP by LGA 2016-2056

² Source: City of Parramatta – Local Housing Strategy (2020)

³ <http://economy.id.com.au/parramatta>

⁴ Transport for NSW, TZP19 Employment by LGA 2016-2056

⁵ City of Parramatta (2020), Local Housing Strategy

Conclusion

The success of Greater Sydney's future integrated transport network relies on stations striking the right balance between place-making and providing effective interchange with other transport modes. The NSW Government has worked with key stakeholders to identify locations for future rail infrastructure and to protect the land required for future use. Protection can be thought of as a planning intervention to minimise the risks that further development could inhibit the future delivery of the infrastructure.

The preferred corridor is an outcome of extensive consultation with key NSW Government agencies and local Councils. The tunnel corridor provides flexibility for a number of station locations.

Transport are seeking to protect the tunnel corridor within Greater Parramatta using the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021*.

Corridor protection is proposed as it would:

- Enable conversations with potential developers about the implications and opportunities for their development
- Provide Parramatta City Council with the information and tools required to consider the tunnel corridor as part of planning proposals and development applications
- Provide other NSW Government agencies with the certainty needed to plan for growth.

Interim corridor protection is critical for the successful delivery of the projects. Specifically, the protection is needed to:

- Reduce potential risks associated with future developments impacting on proposed rail infrastructure
- Ensure future rail infrastructure is viable and able to be constructed
- Help in managing orderly development along rail corridors and give more certainty to developers.