

The Outer West of Sydney: Where is the Great Divide?

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By Dr Jonathan Drane

At a university seminar last week, a recognised city strategist ended his talk with the words “what is Sydney going to do with Parramatta?”. The question may be “What is Parramatta going to do with Sydney”. The new Plan for Growing Sydney DOP&E Dec 2014) features a revisionist view of the Sydney metro right out west to the mountains (see attached). The emphasis has been influenced greatly by the considerable voting power of the ‘wild west’ and the strong and sophisticated advocacy machines of such regional centres as Parramatta and Penrith and others. Their position on the map as strategic centres highlights that this is pulling the ‘great divide’ between east and west toward the Blue Mountains. **So where is the great divide between east and west of Sydney?**

If you asked someone from Rose Bay where the west of Sydney starts, they might say Strathfield? If you ask a Penrith or Parramatta person they would see some humour in this. The perception of the great divide between east and west has been the subject of regional irritation by those cities in the west who are forging a new direction for the face and complexion of Sydney to the Blue Mountains. Part of the realisation of a new vision and identity for the west, should surely start with the question “where exactly is the west of Sydney?”.

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<http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-Your-Area/Sydney/A-Plan-for-Growing-Sydney>

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