



Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc

ABN 38 686 119 087

PO Box 29 Wentworth Falls NSW 2782

Phone: (02) 4757 1872 - E-Mail: bmc@bluemountains.org.au

Web Site: www.bluemountains.org.au

Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow

Metropolitan Strategy Team
PO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

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SUBMISSION ON *SYDNEY OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS. A DISCUSSION PAPER.*

The Blue Mountains Conservation Society (BMCS) is the largest and oldest operating environmental conservation group in the Blue Mountains, with some 850 members. The Society is pleased to present its submission on the Discussion Paper for the new Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney, which includes the Blue Mountains Local Government Area.

Sydney Over the Next 20 Years. A Discussion Paper focuses on issues related to Sydney's anticipated population growth and desired economic development. These issues mainly concern provision of housing, jobs and major infrastructure in the Sydney basin. Like the *Western Sydney Regional Action Plan Community Discussion Paper* (February 2012), *Sydney Over the Next 20 Years* omits the Blue Mountains entirely except for a mention of the Great Western Highway upgrade. As the Society said in a letter to the Premier about the *Western Sydney Regional Action Plan*, the omission of the Blue Mountains from a strategic plan that claims to include it is a serious oversight. It indicates a failure to recognise that the Blue Mountains LGA is very different in its geography and natural environment to the other western Sydney LGAs cited in the document. Again, in *Sydney Over the Next 20 Years*, there is no recognition of the unique environmental, economic and social issues and priorities, including limits to growth and development, that flow from the Blue Mountains LGA's unique location as a city within a national park and World Heritage Area.

The omission of the Blue Mountains from the government's thinking on the new Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney is most obvious in the section on 'protecting our environment and building resilience to natural hazards' where priority areas relate to growth centres and water catchments. And while there is a section in the document on 'protecting productive rural and resource lands' in the Sydney basin, there is no mention of protecting national parks and, of particular concern to us, the Blue Mountains National Park and World Heritage Area and the tourism industry that these support.

In his response to our letter about the *Western Sydney Regional Action Plan*, the Premier informed us that the Plan will now be amended to "ensure specific Blue Mountains priorities

are presented as a discreet element". It seems to us that the same should apply to the revised Metropolitan Strategy for Sydney.

Yours Sincerely,

Lachlan Garland
President
M: 0415 317 078
E: lachlan.a.garland@bigpond.com

cc. Roza Sage, Member for Blue Mountains; Barry O'Farrell, Premier of NSW