Conflict and Contradictions of Multiple Hard Planning spaces

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Abstract: Spatial imaginaries feature prominently in contemporary metropolitan strategic planning strategies. In particular, many metropolitan planners have experimented with the use of functional economic corridors, typically although not exclusively based on soft or fuzzy boundaries. In the last 15 years, there have been four strategic planning strategies produced for metropolitan Sydney in 2005, 2010, 2014 and 2018. Whilst the first three experimented with *soft* functional economic corridors, the most recent strategy, a 'metropolis of three cities', which seeks to rebalance the spatial structure of the metropolitan region, witnesses the *hardening* of the Greater Parramatta and Olympic Peninsula functional economic corridor. The insertion of this new planning space alongside and cutting across existing statutory planning areas gives rise to new issues and opportunities. Drawing attention to the coexistence of multiple hard planning spaces, this research examines some ensuing conflicts and contradictions that are not always immediately apparent. Moreover, the paper considers the broader implications of multiple hard planning spaces in both local development and metropolitan strategic planning.

Key words: *Strategic planning; statutory planning; fuzzy boundaries; hard planning spaces; metropolitan.*

Introduction

Metropolitan regions are complex spaces which are necessarily guided by a collection of strategic spatial strategies, some of which are of a non-statutory nature e.g. soft strategies, whereas others are of a statutory nature e.g. hard plans which determine the constraints of development. Whereas the territorial demarcations of soft strategies are often fuzzy, statutory plans are applicable across a defined territory. Thus, it is a messy combination of multiple strategies that influence development within the same place (Allmendinger & Haughton 2009). Until recently, in the Australian context, statutory planning conflicts were limited to an individual bounded space. However, recent hardening of spatial imaginaries, such as functional economic corridors (FECs), have engendered new statutory planning spaces. These new spaces of planning overlap with, although do not necessarily cohere with, existing hard planning spaces. Such a situation gives rise to new challenges and opportunities, which we examine in this paper.

We focus on the case of metropolitan Sydney. In the last 15 years, there have been four strategic planning strategies produced for metropolitan Sydney in 2005, 2010, 2014 and 2018. Whilst the first three experimented with fuzzy FECs, the most recent strategy, a 'metropolis of three cities', which seeks to rebalance the spatial structure of the metropolitan region, witnesses the hardening of the Greater Parramatta and Olympic Peninsula (GPOP) FEC. We trace the evolution of FECs within these metropolitan strategic plans, observing how their form and guidance have become more prescriptive, leading to greater determination over how places are shaped. The vision of the current metropolitan regional strategy, a 'metropolis of three cities' does more than shape the strategy of the region, it seeks to reshape the topology of the metropolis, from a centric city-region towards a polycentric metropolis. This ambition to rebalance the metropolitan region integrates local, metropolitan and global drivers which are complex in their interrelations and often lead towards messy outcomes.

The space of metropolitan regions and metropolitan research engages with a range of urban governance actors who shape the planning, policy and governmental relations within and beyond the region (Nelles, Gross & Kennedy 2018). The intertwining of these scalar relations are complex and have in part been addressed through previous research (Brenner 2004; Pugalis & Townsend, 2013). However, the changing imperatives and ambition of metropolitan strategic planning introduce new spaces of planning which require greater exploration into the scalar relationships between local, metropolitan and global developmental drivers and their subsequent impact on metropolitan restructuring processes in Sydney (Pham 2018). In the case of Sydney, the fuzzy boundaries of strategic plans hide the messiness at the edges of statutory boundaries. Once their veil is lifted, conflicts materialize as new statutory boundaries do not tessellate with existing statutory borders (Pugalis & Townsend, 2014). Thus, when the soft-spaces

and fuzzy boundaries of metropolitan strategic planning harden, rhetoric becomes reality, with consequent implications to be considered.

FECs are a particularly interesting soft space, which are becoming increasingly prominent in the governance, planning and development of metropolitan regions (Allmendinger & Haughton 2009). Indeed, they are a notable feature of many contemporary spatial development strategies (Metzger & Schmitt 2012). Thus, FECs are strategically significant spaces of governance, which warrant critical attention. We analyse the introduction of multiple hard (statutory) planning spaces and the bespoke mechanisms employed to grow FECs and incumbent conflicts when overlaid on existing statutory areas.

The remainder of the paper is structured by five sections. Section two provides the theoretical scaffolding for the research. It is the product of a critical review of literature engaging with soft spatial imaginaries and the growing preference of functional spaces. Section three outlines the development of FECs in metropolitan strategic planning in Sydney since 2005. Section four problematizes the multiple hard planning spaces in the Sydney metropolitan region, at the site of the GPOP FEC. Section five discusses these findings in relation to previous planning strategies uncovering emerging tensions, concluding with future research directions to address the complexities of overlapping hard planning spaces.

Spatial imaginaries, soft spaces and functional economic corridors

Metropolitan regions are simultaneously bounded and boundless (Paasi 2009). Similarly, the rhetorical and physical development of sub-regional spaces occupy both bounded and boundless states of being (Deas & Lord 2006). More recently, across a broad range of metropolitan regions, a proliferation of functional delineations of space at all scales, transposed as alternative planning spaces have emerged (Haughton & Allmendinger 2017). Indeed, they appear to have emerged as a favoured space of governance, planning and development repertoire. Situated between new and existing spatial boundaries, we see antagonisms taking place at the edges where ambiguities and uncertainties need to be addressed.

These antagonisms are not new, as previous research has identified them at a variety of scales, including the sub-regional scale (Allmendinger & Haughton 2009) and the supra-regional or international scale (Metzger & Schmitt). Tensions play out in these new spaces of planning, oscillating between territorial and relational perspectives of urban experiments in the emergence of 'alternative planning spaces' (Haughton & Allmendinger 2017) in various representations which inevitably lead to conflict and confusion (Paasi 2009).

The polymorphic nature of urban spatial relations align with the interaction of a variety of bounded and unbounded spaces, and actors participating in these spaces (Hincks, Deas & Haughton 2017). These complex relations thus require the mediation of multiple perspectives reflective of the sociospatial diversity of metropolitan development (Paasi & Zimmerbauer 2015). Statutory plans, which define administrative boundaries, are useful in ordering sectoral policies. However, they may be combined with a more flexible, functional dimension as "the planning system can achieve only a small part of what is now expected of it through statutory planning" (Haughton & Allmendinger 2017, p. 73).

Until recently, this combination of overlapping strategic (soft) and statutory (hard) planning has had little reason for contestation through the different roles attributed to each, that is, the (softer) guidance which strategic planning offers, and the (harder) development constraints and certainty, which statutory planning affords. Nevertheless, between these two forms of planning there are some exceptions. In the Australian context, for example, additional development provisions and spot rezoning offer landowners the potential to develop beyond statutory provisions (Gurran & Ruming 2016). However, these decisions have been made within a single statutory planning space.

Putting these exceptions to one side, the multiple drivers of metropolitan development have introduced overlapping soft spaces of strategy acting as new spatial fixes. These 'new' spatial fixes are developed both alongside and on top of existing, and enduring scales of planning. These spatial fixes, we suggest, have the capacity to integrate the fragmented approach to spatial planning and governance of metropolitan areas, although are not without limits and deficiencies. Haughton & Allmendinger suggest

that these "alternative spaces and practices emerge together seeking, to greater or lesser degrees, to provide new fixes that suture the 'open' and 'closed' necessity of planning, or that shift the focus of planning towards facilitating growth and development" (2017, p. 77). Similarly, within the field of border studies, Salter (2012) argues that the trope of the suture is useful to imagine the border as a space that stitches together multiple realities, forcing a seam over inside and outside the boundary of territorial and relational perspectives of space. These soft spaces of governance can create new spatial partnerships, or require the cooperation and collaboration of existing institutions, governments and private partners to carry out area-based strategies (Haughton & Allmendinger 2017), and the alignment of their borders ignore political administrative territories, conflicting with existing spaces of government, planning and development.

Rhetorical constructions of space and a proliferation of spatial imaginaries, such as FECs, bears out partly due to their appealing imprecision and flexibility from a policy perspective (Hincks, Deas & Haughton 2017) and the 'fleet-of-foot' nature of these new spatial governance configurations (Pugalis, Townsend and Johnston, 2014). While appealing, there are limits to the flexibility of imaginary spatial demarcations when soft spaces harden: when the rubber hits the road (Metzger & Schmitt 2012). Thus, before strategic planning spaces harden, advocacy is required to transform spatial imaginaries into materialized alliances and cross-sectional support. Support can be garnered, for example, through strengthening alliances within networks to legitimise global connectivity, assembling influential actors to advocate for reconciling potential conflicts and promoting spatial imaginaries as idealized territorial and relational outcomes (Deas & Lord 2006). However, the proliferation of non-standard soft spaces and their overlap and eventual materialization towards statutory spaces of development brings to light the inherent practical component of strategy, in particular, the hardening of strategic plans (c.f. Metzger & Schmitt 2012). These multiple ideal and real logics are required to cohere, supporting the planning and development of metropolitan regional development.

The next section incorporates these theoretical perspectives through the development of strategic planning in Sydney since 2005 and the increasing importance of planning for the hardening of strategic spatial planning towards the planning contradictions of multiple hard planning spaces.

## The development of metropolitan strategic plans: The case of Sydney

Metropolitan strategic planning in Australia has rarely been able to reconcile what we refer to as a *schizophrenic scalar pull*, where a simultaneous focus needs to be situated at different scales of places, precincts and regions (Searle 2013). Although the focus of metropolitan strategic planning has shifted in its priorities, the dominant focus has been consistent in steering the course of change rather than a finer-grained spatial focus that seeks to explicitly direct developmental outcomes and legislate specific statutory objectives. Thus, metropolitan regions are simultaneously an appropriate scale for visioning development, which attempts to respond to both 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' trends, aspirations and objectives. However, their primacy in shaping regional and local relations have led to an undeniably complex spatial and organisational structure.

Spatial imaginaries: Tracking the development of functional economic corridors from 2005-2018

2005 – City of Cities

The *City of Cities* plan produced in 2005 was both extensive and prescriptive. It aligned more to blueprint planning strategies produced in the middle of the 20th century, while moving against the strategic direction outside of Australia (Searle 2006). This can be attributed to a heritage of Australian metropolitan planning which emphasized greenfield development (Searle 2013).

Figure 1. 2005 Sydney metropolitan structure plan
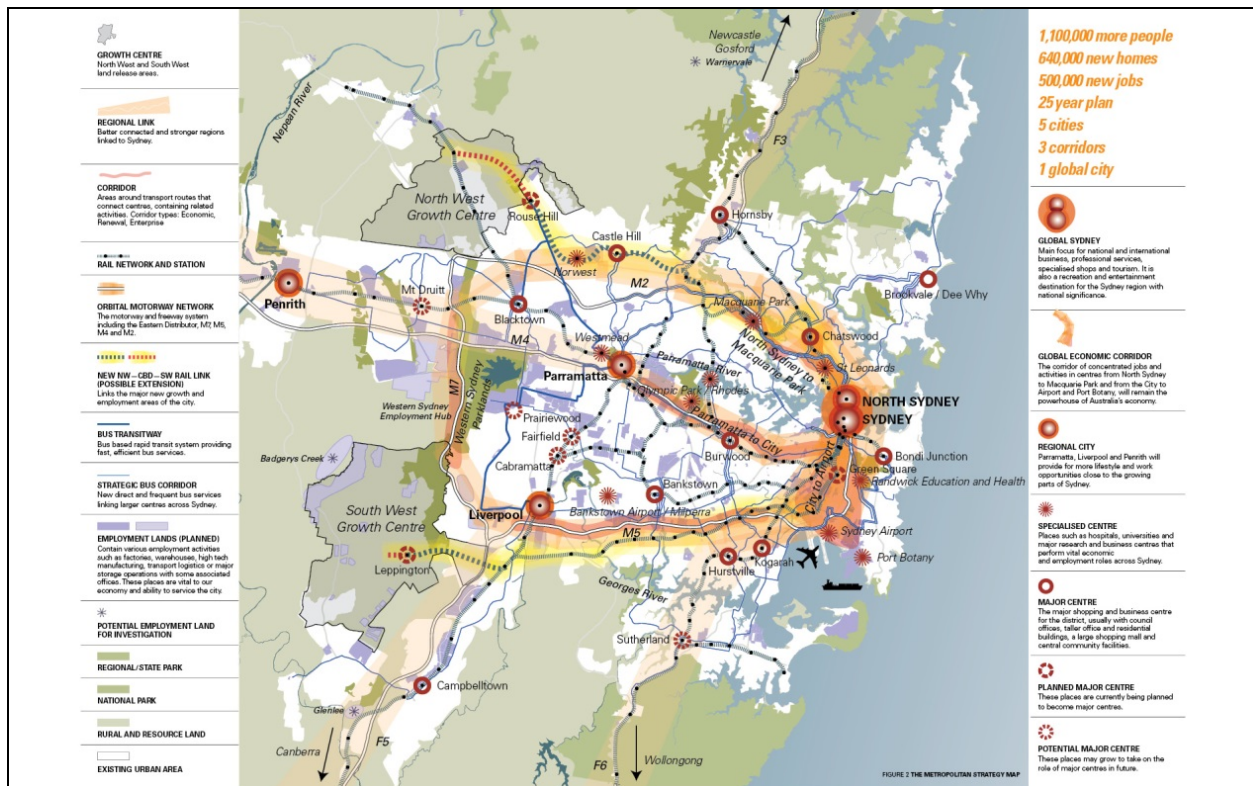
Source. NSW Government (2005, pp. 10-11)

A series of spatial imaginaries were envisioned with a Global arc economic corridor (Global at the apex (see Figure 1). As Searle notes, "While the non-statutory nature of the Global Arc means that it does not override state or local government planning decision-making, it has nevertheless been used as a justification by both levels of government for intensified development along the Arc" (Searle 2013, p. 374). Hence, FECs can be powerful spatial imaginaries used to gain support and influence planning decisions (Hincks, Deas & Haughton 2017).

Renewal corridors, intending to revitalize urban areas, and enterprise corridors, seeking to activate commercial or industrial activity (Searle 2006), were also utilized. Alongside these corridors was a hierarchical formation of around 1,000 sub-regional centers. In addition, two growth centres, land release areas to accommodate urban expansion, were designated, with implementation to be led by a state incorporated development corporation, the Growth Centres Commission. Another state government development authority, Landcom was envisaged as being central to the planning and development of urban renewal projects (Searle 2006).

In summary, the metropolitan plan introduced a proliferation of spatial imaginaries at a variety of scales. There was also a clear spatial economic focus on eastern Sydney centered on the CBD. Indeed, this was envisaged as the epicenter of the 'global arc'.

2010 – A Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036

The 2010 iteration extended and adapted many of the spatial imaginaries published in the previous version, although there is much greater attention focused on the relationship between transport infrastructure and urban development (note, the integration of transport planning explicitly within the metropolitan strategic plan) (NSW Government 2010, p. 1). Corridors without this criteria are relegated, and the global arc corridor is extended to reach Parramatta (see Figure 2). The metropolitan strategic plan is a hybrid mix of relational and blueprint planning, with greater prescription in the short term (Searle 2013). This necessitates the view from Steele & Ruming (2012) suggesting that we should not categorise strategic plans by this dialectic distinction, but distinguish plans by the degree to which they employ this planning mix.

Figure 2. 2010 Sydney metropolitan structure plan
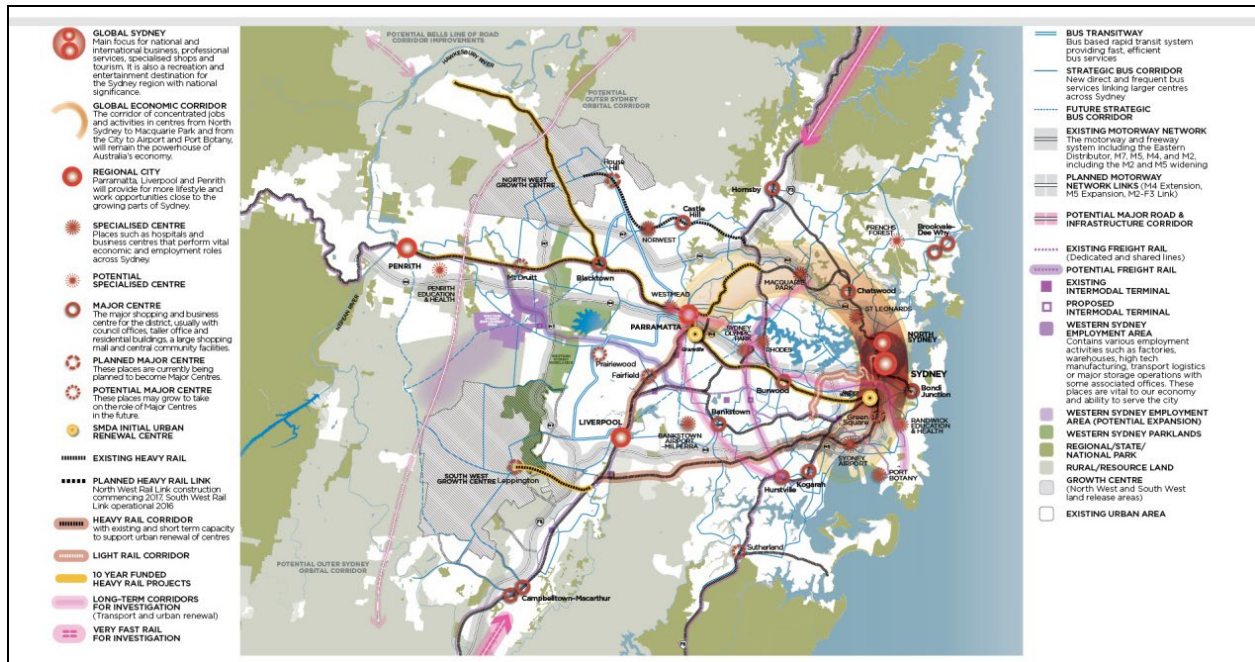
Source: NSW Government (2010, pp. 18-19)

Whilst there is a temporal distinction, hybridity can also be applied spatially, with select strategic centres and corridors requiring greater prescription to shape development futures. The epicenter of the 'global arc' carried forward from the previous strategy sends out a clear message that developing the central CBD is essential to drive Sydney towards a metropolitan region for 2036.

2014 – A Plan for Growing Sydney

The use of FECs remained a key feature in the 2014 plan. Of note, there was a growing emphasis to develop Western Sydney come to the fore (Pham 2018).

The structure plan expands the global arc (in Figure 3), towards a series of vectors connecting strategic centres in Western Sydney. This affirms the explicit vision of the plan, to place Western Sydney as the "key to Sydney's success" (NSW Government 2014, p. 16). The Western Sydney Employment Area is expanded to meet the South West Growth Centre, with the Badgery's Creek airport precinct put back on the agenda to link these two strategic spaces. This direction is indicative of the plan in general tending to grow centres into precincts shaped around a functional profile, such as the Sydney Airport towards the Sydney Airport Precinct, of Frenchs Forest towards the Northern Beaches Hospital Precinct. Although some commentators have labelled the pared back plan less aspirational (Fensham 2015). This lack of prescription can be attributed partly, to the deferral of decisions to both referenced *State Infrastructure Strategy*, and prospective metropolitan strategic agency, the Greater Sydney Commission (GSC). Taking

the FEC as a central strategy for developing the metropolitan region, the decision to connect Parramatta into the 'global arc' demonstrates the significance of rebalancing the region.

Figure 3. 2014 Sydney metropolitan structure plan
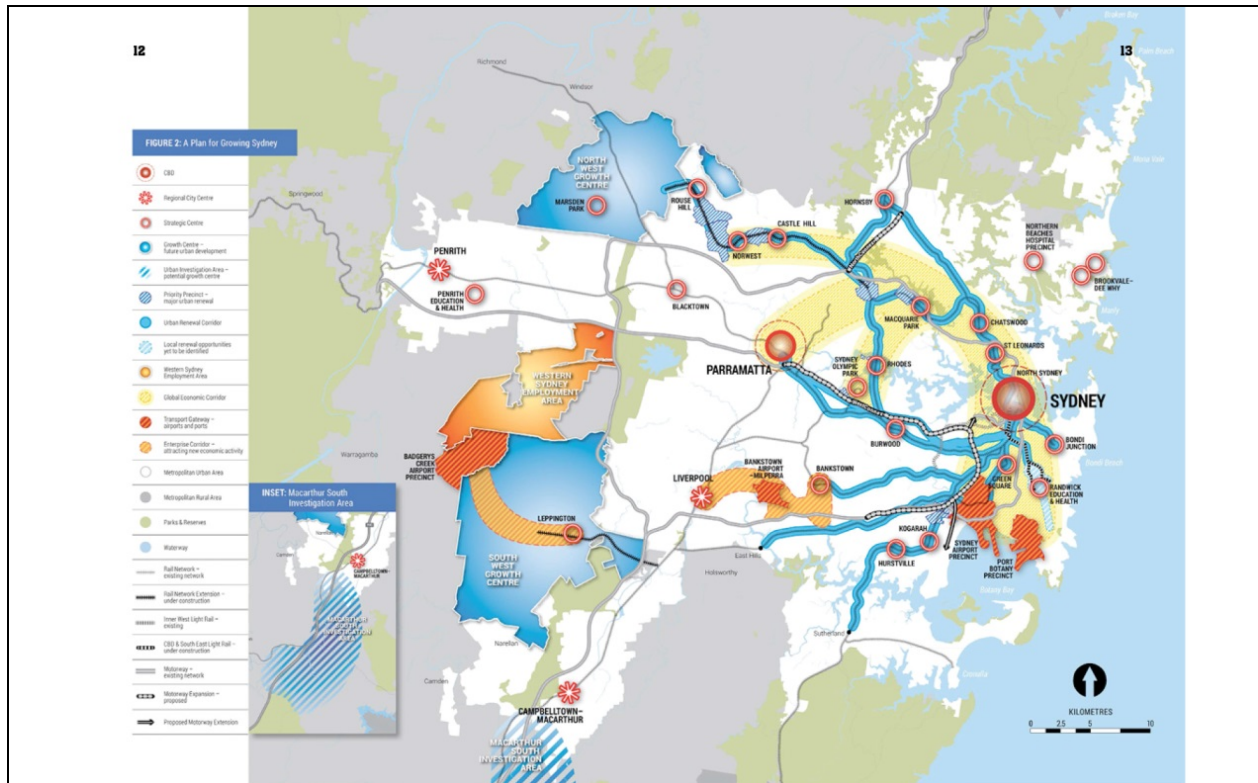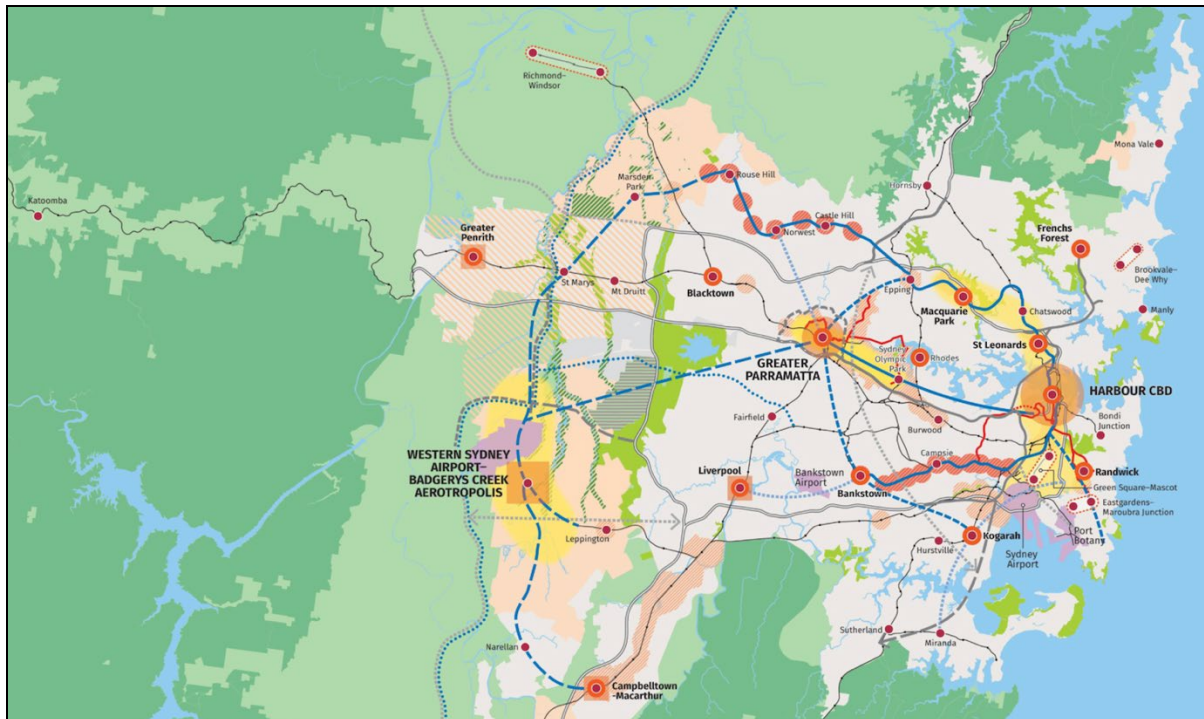

Source: NSW Government 2014, pp. 12-13.

2018 – A Metropolis of Three Cities

The most recent plan aims to set the transformative direction for strategy in the metropolitan region by introducing the headline 'metropolis of three cities'. Materialising this vision towards 2056 is to be achieved by integrating the *State infrastructure Strategy* and *Future Transport* plans into the metropolitan regional plan, and giving statutory weight to the GPOP and Western Sydney Airport economic corridors. By doing so, it seeks to be more akin to a spatial planning strategy than a land-use plan.

A key feature of the 2018 plan is the prominence of Greater Parramatta. Whilst the previous 'global arc' centered around the Sydney CBD is still a larger strategic centre, structurally Greater Parramatta is more centrally configured, with indicative transport and infrastructure connections committed, planned, or planned for investigation. We are informed again by Steele & Ruming's (2012) insight regarding a hybridization, rather than dialectic interpretation of strategic planning where the strategic plan is constructed in a mosaic of partly structural, partly strategic and partly statutory to achieve a selective reference for the future developmental direction of the Sydney metropolitan region.

There is both continuity and change in the evolution of metropolitan plans, where the acceleration of the production of strategic plans mirrors the schizophrenic quality of planning in Sydney in general, moving from an era of an 'unplanned city' (Ashton & Freestone 2008), towards a city-region of too many plans. The next section investigates a key economic corridor within the metropolitan strategic plan, the GPOP FEC unpacking the conflicts which emerge through the overlapping of multiple hard planning spaces.

Figure 4. 2018 Sydney metropolitan structure plan

Source: NSW Government 2018, pp. 14-15.

The hardening of the Greater Parramatta and Olympic Peninsula functional economic corridor

Given that the timeframes of metropolitan strategies are often greater than the continuity or lifetime of strategic ambitions, it is often the case that rhetoric in strategy exceeds what can be delivered. Although it is too early to make this suggestion of the *Metropolis of three cities* plan, we can start to interrogate central components of the strategy and its discourse. What is new, or different about the *Metropolis of three cities* from previous plans, is primarily shifting the locus of the strategic centre from the CBD towards the regional centre of Parramatta, and the statutory weight given to planning the development of this strategic place. Although strategic centres have had statutory plans developed, for example, the North and South growth precincts in Western Sydney. These previous spaces are greenfield sites which require lot specific delivery for infrastructure and associated amenities, which is a harkback to land-use detail writ in metropolitan strategic plans of the mid-20th century.

In the 'Global Sydney arc' developed in the 2005-2014 plans, the central economic corridor did not have statutory plans drawn (or could be argued, was needed) so this strategy represents significant ambition of the state government and the GSC to shape a pathway towards a polycentric Sydney metropolitan region. To that extent, the vision for extending the spatial boundary of Parramatta towards becoming a Greater Parramatta and the Olympic Peninsula economic corridor is strategically central to the metropolitan region. This allows the GPOP boundary to be malleable and scalable, responding to global competition while functioning as a local anchor for infrastructural and transport connectivity, as well as their alignment and integration with development in the region. Although strategic planning from this lens assists in promoting the narrative of opportunity, the complexity and sometimes contradictory language of the strategy can impede its implementation.

The *Metropolis of three* cities is arguably the most ambitious metropolitan strategy promoted since the turn of the century. Although elements from previous strategies have made their way forward to this strategy, for example, a second airport in Sydney's west, there are significant structural changes in store for the Sydney of 2056, if we are to believe the ideals of this plan. Although the strategy seeks to shift the

city-regional structure towards a polycentric metropolitan region, the nomenclature shaped through the strategic plan suggests more of a reshifting of the geographic locus where the sub-region containing the GPOP, is now labelled the Central sub-region (from West Central), while the current CBD is now located in the Eastern sub-region (from Central). Such largescale topological shifts can undoubtedly be a challenge.

The centralization of the GPOP FEC follows similar strategic initiatives where the strategic direction paves the way for realized development to take place. The development of this current metropolitan regional strategy can be seen through institutional change (shifting delivery organization to the GSC), strategic evolution (topologic change centering the GPOP in the strategic direction) and mechanisms of implementation (developing statutory plans alongside strategic planning).

Hardening of planning spaces – conflicting statutory boundaries
The GPOP is a new spatial fix, which has the dual intent of providing 'softer' strategic direction and 'harder' directives. Although the functional area had materialised in 2014, there was little coherence at this stage. At the time of writing, there is greater certainty given to this strategic space, with composite references to different sub-regional labels in separate documents (seemingly located in both West Central and Central sub-regions) but still we find conflict in both its strategic and statutory demarcations of space. This spatial imaginary is problematic for these conflicting reasons where, for example, if one were to develop land within this space, there are implications, both financial and developmental if certain parcels of land had been rezoned negating existing developmental approval, or additional infrastructure contribution requirements which are enacted at both local and regional governance.

So although it may not be necessary to give statutory indications for suggesting zoning requirements or land-use typologies, we interpret the hardening of this soft space to give direction to financing the development of the FEC thus giving statutory weight to strategic planning decisions. To clarify this point, we quote directly from an advisory document specifically addressing this uncertainty "Section 94 and 94A contributions are separate and will not be affected by Special Infrastructure Contributions… Section 94 and 94A contributions plans are made by local government authorities to assist them with funding local infrastructure items within a local government area" (NSW Government 2017), where Section 94/94A contributions are levied directly on local government, and Special Infrastructure Contributions fund the delivery of infrastructure within priority development areas such as FECs. We take the remainder of this section to trace these conflicts.

Representing overlapping hard planning spaces
In Figure 5, we can see the strategic configuration of the GPOP FEC. Taking the fuzzy boundaries of the strategic representation, it appears that the GPOP is enclosed by existing heavy rail at the southern boundary, although areas between Flemington and Auburn train stations are not enclosed within the GPOP statutory boundary. Figure 5 overlays the strategic (coloured quadrants) and statutory boundaries (black outline) to illustrate these differences. We can see that although parts of the GPOP FEC align with their statutory boundaries, there is significant leakage, aligning with a key infrastructural marker such as the rail line in the south and arbitrarily on the northern borderline.

This oscillation between relational and territorial decamarcations of space will likely lead to conflicts at the edges of their respective boundaries (Allmendinger & Haughton 2017; Paasi 2009). This is interesting in many dimensions, notwithstanding the calculation of future residents, housing and employment in the FEC, but also infrastructure and transport provision within this functional area. Where should measurements of all of these metrics take place, at the statutory or strategic extent? What happens when a combination of both are taken. Even simply looking at the areal differences, a significant discrepancy lies between both measures.

**Figure 5. GPOP statutory and strategic boundaries**
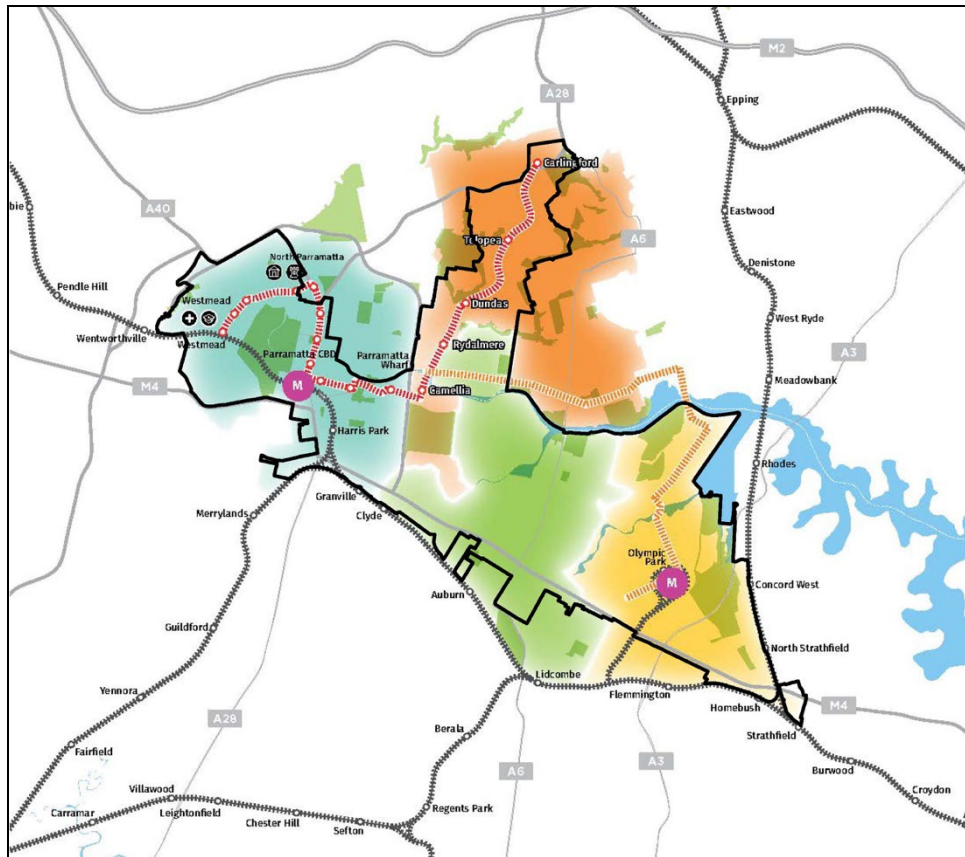
Source. Authors (using NSW Government & GSC data)

Taking a different representation, in Figure 6 we have transposed the GPOP FEC boundary (in black) over the current LGA boundaries (in red). The GPOP crosses over 5 LGAs, Canada Bay, Cumberland, Parramatta, Ryde and Strathfield. This non-standard space requires the cooperation and collaboration of multiple actor spaces. Alone, each LGA already encompass multiple different functional areas from CBDs to residential neighbourhoods and employment precincts.

Using the GPOP FEC as a lens to identify the intersection and congruence of multiple overlapping spatialities, the primacy of the GPOP boundary, and the GSC as plan-making authority and gateway for local government plan-making approval. We have already seen uncertainly regarding development contributions and development controls for parcels of land that are contingent on the rezoning of land and the modification of statutory plans (at a variety of local and sub-regional levels). These decisions affect the quanta of development, developable floor space, type of development allowed, and the financial contribution required to develop within these growth centres (Pham 2019).

Figure 6. Overlay of the GPOP draft statutory boundary and 2018 LGA boundaries
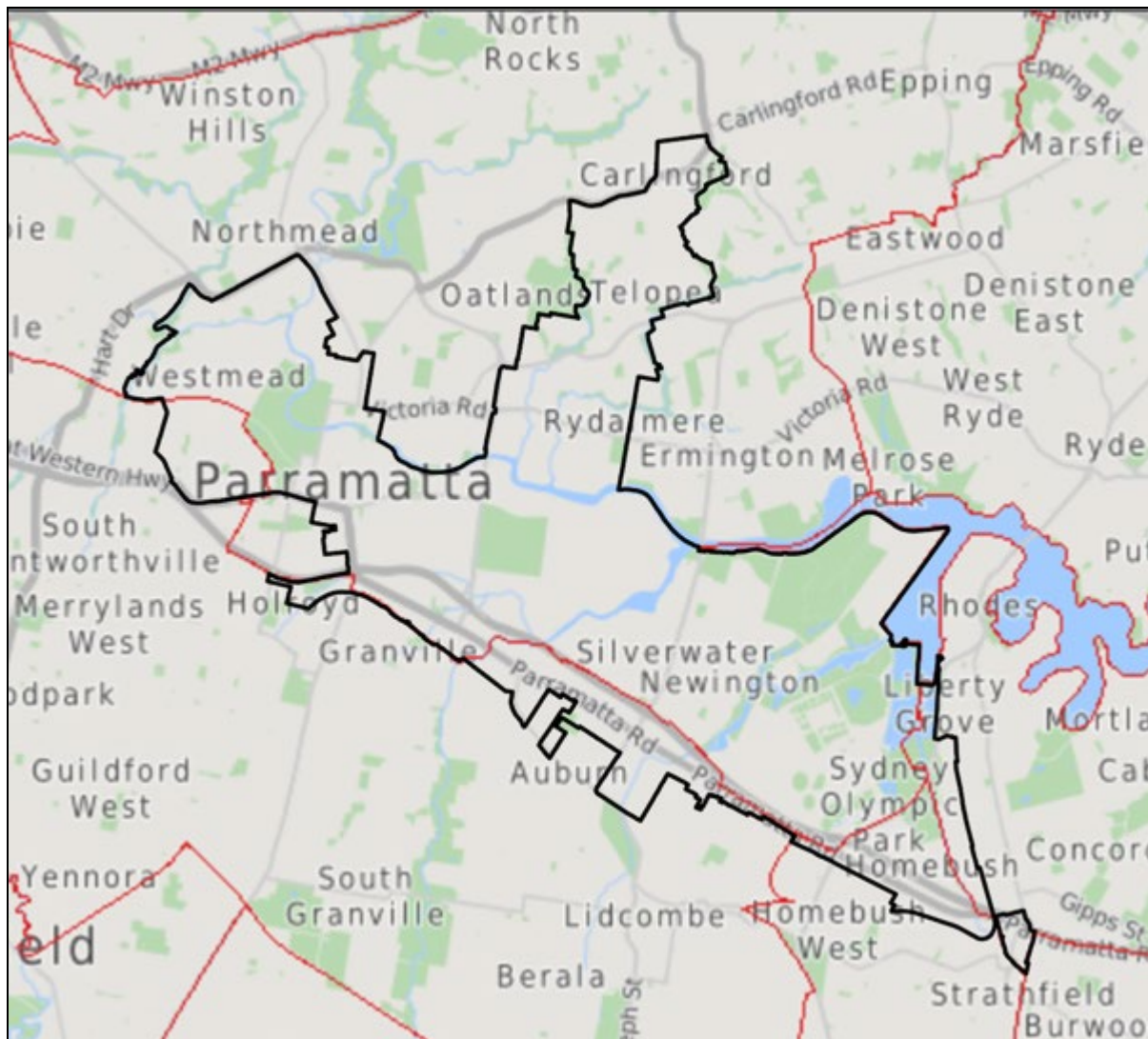
Source: The authors using ABS & NSW Government data.

Uncertainty and conflicts over multiple hard spaces

Although there are many different conflicts which could be selected, within the limited space of this paper we will engage with area wide implications as well as a site-specific conflict triggered by the boundary of the GPOP, and take a brief interlude through real conflicts which have materialised due to the overlapping statutory boundaries. Priority development areas such as FECs often invoke special infrastructure contributions levied on developers. Development of the GPOP was not immune from this process. This develops into conflicts as LGAs already occupy the space in which the GPOP overlaps, each with their own specific infrastructure levies and calculations.

Funding conflicts

The Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) raised the issue of funding conflicts in their response to a draft land use plan for the GPOP (UDIA 2017). They raise uncertainty regarding the extent and constraints of infrastructure to be provided "it is currently unclear what infrastructure is proposed to enable development, how the infrastructure is to be provided and funded" (UDIA 2017, p. 2) and how the collection of contributions will be affected by current levies "it is unclear how the Greater Sydney

Commission's proposed Growth Infrastructure Compacts would interplay with Special Infrastructure Contributions, Section 94, Planning Gain, and betterment levies".

In addition to the extensive transport and infrastructure projects underway within the GPOP including the Parramatta light rail and Parramatta metro project are of regional importance, not just to connect the GPOP, levies are used to connect sites to infrastructure, provide public space amenities and build roads and footpaths.

Land-use conflicts
Conflicts have also been raised at a site-specific location. A submission from SJB Planning on behalf of their client have noted an indicative rezoning of development which has already been approved by Strathfield council (SJB 2017).

There is a dual conflict with the proponent requesting recognition of the site be assessed for potential uplift "we are seeking recognition that the site should be subject to the potential uplift and development opportunity arising from the Transformation Strategy" (SJB 2017, p. 1), while at the same time, have identified a statutory land use conflict in site rezoning "[the GPOP Interim land use plan] indicates that the land comprising 1-5 Derowie Avenue, Homebush is earmarked for the provision of future public recreation space, by proposing to rezone the site to RE1 Public Recreation within a future Homebush Precinct Plan" (SJB 2017, p. 2).

These two agendas of (1) funding infrastructure development with a priority precinct such as the GPOP FEC require alignment between LGA and sub-regional levels of development and planning, and (2) the implications of multiple statutory land-use plans can conflict with existing development decisions and applications also requiring a close working relationship between stakeholders working in these spaces.

Concluding remarks
There are clearly conflicts that emerge when teasing out the impact of developing strategies acting selectively within metropolitan space. These strategies are not without implication when the rubber hits the road, that is, when strategic spaces take a statutory form. Through tracing the interrelated strategic and statutory plans of the GPOP FEC, when placed over existing statutory LGA boundaries, there is no clear alignment over the physical border, nor clarity in policy direction, as in the case presented in this paper.

With the development of the GPOP FEC, there are two statutory spatial layers, already existing local government areas boundaries, and the GPOP boundary. The GPOP is demarcated in the strategic plan both through strategic representation and given statutory weight which gives detail to certainty (or constraints) of development. Clarity is muddled through these misalignments which, from the submissions cited lead to stakeholder confusion. As the use of non-standard spaces within metropolitan regional development, such as FECs are increasingly utilized, we suggest greater attention paid to these strategic sub-regional spaces, both soft and hard.

This research builds on literature tracing the development of metropolitan plans and strategies, with our contribution identifying FECs as strategically significant spaces of governance which require greater attention as they are increasingly utilised within metropolitan strategies. This paper has identified conflicts which materialize in the production of multiple hard planning spaces with tangible issues which affect the entire functional space, and which occur at the site level. Further research into these relationships will support greater cohesion mediating conflicts in this space and sub-regional planning conflicts more broadly.

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