



27 January 2022

Economic Development Team
City of Parramatta Council
PO Box 32
Parramatta NSW 2124

Via Email

Re: Submission on draft Late Night Trading Development Control Plan Exhibition

Business Western Sydney is dedicated to creating and promoting Western Sydney as a region of opportunity – a global city to invest, work, live and visit. We represent more than one hundred of Western Sydney’s leading business, community and government organisations and we are vocal advocates in advancing the economic, social, environmental, and cultural life of Western Sydney.

To this end we have championed a stronger and more vibrant night-time economy for Western Sydney. In recent years we have published policy papers outlining some of the barriers to developing our regions late night industries and the policy changes needed to remove these. We’ve campaigned for greater investment in cultural facilities which underpin a vibrant night life and advocated for the preservation of important live performance venues, such as Parramatta’s Roxy Theatre. And we have also argued for the removal of unnecessary red tape and regulation which has made life difficult for the businesses wanting to operate after dark.

The draft Late-Night Trading DCP is a positive first step in encouraging the growth of Parramatta’s night-time economy. By removing many of the restriction on hours of operation, management of sound and streamlining the approvals process for late night activities, Council is sending a clear message to both businesses and the local community that Parramatta wants to become a more vibrant place with a more diverse local economy.

While Business Western Sydney welcomes the draft DCP we would like Council to consider some minor amendments and suggestions before the Plan is finalised and adopted.

Church Street and the Riverside.

Establishing a four-tier hierarchy of Late-Night Trading Areas (**LNTA**) is sensible and supported. Different precincts have unique characteristics, built form and land uses so a tailored approach has merit.

However, we believe that the exclusion of the vibrant restaurant strip on Church Street, as well as the Riverside Theatre, from the LNTA1 should be reconsidered. Over the past few years, the section of Church St linking the Station with the Riverside, Stadium and Parramatta Park has emerged as a vibrant and diverse Eat Street providing entertainment and a quality food and beverage offering to passing foot traffic, both day and night. It is currently the only sub-precinct in the CBD which has an existing and strong late-night economy.

We believe that Church Street, combined with an expanded Riverside Theatre, has the potential to drive the growth and expansion of the late-night economy across the CBD. While the new Parramatta LEP has identified this sub-precinct as a mixed-use area, and has some existing residential buildings, this should not preclude local businesses from being able to access the more liberal controls contained in the adjacent LNTA 1 area of the CBD core. Evidence from late-night precincts in other parts of Sydney and from cities across the world show that they are best supported and thrive in mixed-use precincts. That a strong late-night economy can go hand in hand with other land uses and often complement each other. That residential development can add activity and improve the safety of a place and likewise a strong and diverse late-night economy can make a precinct a more interesting place to live. Indeed, we believe that Parramatta's late-night economy is more likely to flourish in the mixed-use precincts of the CBD, than in the less diverse Commercial Core areas.

Consideration of expanding the DCP to other precincts.

While we support the areas in the LGA covered by the draft DCP, we believe there should be some consideration to expanding its coverage to include some emerging precincts which have the potential to support a late-night economy. The owners of the former Parramatta Goal are currently exploring repurposing the precinct into a creative and cultural hub with a focus on the visual arts and film production. Should this occur, it could also become an important part of the local nighttime economy, and this should be supported by the draft DCP. Likewise, the heritage precincts of North Parramatta are likely to be renewed in coming years with a diversity of economic activities, including the creative industries, arts, and entertainment. This area would also benefit from the more liberal approach to regulation contained in the DCP.

Further Considerations.

While the draft DCP is strongly supported, it is not the only policy tool needed to drive the re-emergence of Parramatta as a centre for Western Sydney's late-night economy. If Council is to achieve its goal, further policy reforms and investments are needed.

Inclusionary zoning and incentives for the Night-time economy.

Successful late-night precincts offer a diversity of activities and things to do. While they have a strong food and beverage offering, they also have places of entertainment, live performance, and cultural facilities. They support a range of service industries, such as late-night chemists, medical services, and the like. Importantly, they are not solely reliant on bars and the sale of alcohol.

As the CBD grows and new development is supported there will be a need to incentivise and encourage the provision of a range of activities and uses which can operate 24 hours a day and which can underpin a nighttime economy. Sydney City Council has recently adopted density and height incentives to encourage the provision of cultural spaces, galleries, entertainment venues and theatres in the sub-stratum of new developments. By putting these activities and uses underground Council can manage noise and other impacts, while also underpinning and diversifying the local economy. Their aim is to revitalise late night precincts like Oxford Street and the southern CBD as places of public entertainment and culture.

As Parramatta emerges as a pedestrian and transport-oriented CBD, and decouples its economy from the private vehicle, there is an opportunity for Council to adopt a similar incentive scheme to support cultural and entertainment venues and theatres underneath new developments. Places less likely to be needed for underground parking.

Heritage Floor Space Trading.

Parramatta CBD is blessed with a built form rich in heritage significance. However, many of our best heritage items sit empty and idle, without an economic purpose and at risk of neglect. Many of Parramatta's best heritage items have been boarded up for years and are undermining the local amenity and the local economy. A heritage floor space trading scheme could provide a mechanism to renew and restore some of these buildings and allow them to achieve economic function which can contribute to the local economy. Similar schemes in other cities have been very successful in restoring heritage theatres, churches, and other buildings and returned them to economic and cultural use. A similar scheme in Parramatta could support the renewal of places like the Roxy Theatre and other heritage buildings.

Business Western Sydney is interested in collaborating with Council to build and support a strong and vibrant late-night economy in Parramatta. We welcome the opportunity to put our members' views to Council and look forward to hearing the outcomes of the Commission deliberations.

Recommendations:

- Expand CBD LNTA1 to include Church Street and the Riverside Theatre.
- Consider expanding the remit of the draft DCP to include emerging precincts such as North Parramatta and the Goal.
- Develop incentives to support the inclusion of places of cultural activities, theatres, and live performance in future developments in the CBD.
- Establish a heritage floor space trading scheme to renew the CBD's heritage buildings.

Please contact Chris Taylor, Senior Manager – Advocacy, at chris.taylor@businesswesternsydney.com if you would like to discuss this submission in further detail.

Yours sincerely



David Borger
Executive Director