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Vice-President External Engagement

8 July 2024

Councillor Pierre Esber

Lord Mayor

City of Parramatta Council

PO Box 32, Parramatta NSW 2124

By email: Parramatta2050@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au

Dear Lord Mayor,

Draft *Parramatta 2050*

The University of Sydney commends the City of Parramatta Council for the proactive and innovative approach it is taking to position the LGA, and the Western Sydney region, with a global audience through the draft *Parramatta 2050* strategy.

As a major provider of education, healthcare and research in the Parramatta LGA, we are pleased that Council is taking steps to enhance opportunities for investment, employment, education and liveability.

The University's *2032 Strategy* articulates a vision to further develop our presence in the region, with the stated ambition: "We will expand our education offerings in Western Sydney, providing new opportunities for skills development that progress our commitment to build a greater presence in this vibrant, diverse area at the heart of our city".

At the heart of this commitment are our plans to develop a world-leading, multidisciplinary University of Sydney campus adjacent to Westmead Hospital. The University is currently in discussions with the NSW Government about this exciting opportunity to serve the future generations of Western Sydney students and support the region's economic growth.

The *Parramatta 2050* strategic directions – *gather, create* and *accelerate* – will serve the community well and align with the University's ambitions to expand our presence and impact in the Western Sydney region. Embracing and celebrating different cultures, nurturing creative talent, and delivering world-class education and research are priorities we share with Council.

The University welcomes the composition of five precincts along the future Metro and Parramatta River into an integrated *Global Parramatta* offering. We are particularly pleased with the identification of the Health and Innovation District in Westmead, including Parramatta North, as one of these precincts. As a foundation partner, the University has played a vital role in the development of the Westmead Health Precinct during the past 45 years. We maintain a deep commitment to its world-class health, education and research capabilities and will continue to invest in its potential.

The Council's recognition of the ongoing importance of the Westmead Health and Innovation District in delivering cutting-edge research, critical health services, and world-class education is warranted.

We welcome Council's advocacy for 50,000 jobs in Westmead, in line with industry, government, and our University's ambitions to increase employment opportunities in Western Sydney. Since 2016, the University has invested more than \$85 million into our presence in the precinct, which provided new education facilities, upgrades to existing spaces, a suite of new academic programs, new initiatives with our partners, and the state-of-the-art Westmead Innovation Centre. Our presence on the ground in Westmead remains strong, with an estimated 1,300 staff and affiliates supporting more than 2,100 students. Our plan is to grow our high-value education, research and employment opportunities through the expansion of our world-class activities in the region.

Council's aspiration for Parramatta to become "Asia Pacific's centre for best-in-class education" also aligns with the University's ambitions. Our multidisciplinary campus will deliver future-focused education which meets the needs of diverse student communities, builds workforce readiness, and grows key and emerging industries in the region. It will connect and augment Westmead as a NSW centre of innovation, realising Council's ambitions for the district to lead in solving pressing challenges through integrated research, education, technology and collaboration, and supporting the economic growth and global impact of Western Sydney.

The University is dedicated to delivering transformational education and student experiences and we are pleased with Council's priority to deliver "optimal student experience, including access to housing, employment and engagement with the vibrant city life of Parramatta". In particular, we welcome Council's commitment to advocating for appropriate planning controls for student housing. We encourage Council to continue to take meaningful action to ensure that its current and future residents, including students and workers, have access to diverse housing supply that enables them to live, work and play locally.

Finally, Council's commitment to embedding culture into Parramatta's fabric, positioning the city as the "epicentre of creativity" is aligned with the University's ambitions for expanded creative arts and industry offerings in Western Sydney. We encourage Council to continue to advocate for greater access to creative arts practice, education and spaces throughout the region, as well as deliver the conditions to stimulate vibrant precincts that support optimal student experiences.

The University of Sydney will continue our commitment to supporting Western Sydney's growth through our distinctive education, research and partnership activities. We look forward to supporting the acceleration of Parramatta as a global city through *Parramatta 2050* and are available for future discussions to help shape the strategy and action plans that follow.

Yours sincerely

(signature removed)

Kirsten Andrews