LSPS and LEP Review Engagement Report –
Summary of Registration Survey Findings

Prepared for Penrith City Council

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KJA

an ERM Group company

What do you value most about your local area/Penrith City?

Respondents were asked about what they value most in their local area. They were encouraged to think about the characteristics that are unique to the identity of the Penrith LGA.

Infrastructure and Collaboration (infrastructure, partnerships)

Sub-theme	Detail
Government funded infrastructure	Many respondents were happy with the standard of current infrastructure given the level of demand. Specific infrastructure that people were satisfied with included: ・ Availability of medical and health services ・ Good schools ・ Good university ・ Maintenance of existing infrastructure ・ Plenty of public transport connections ・ Improved roads and easy access to the M4 and surrounding areas ・ Fast train connections to Sydney CBD Some respondents also felt that current council rates were reasonable.
Privately funded infrastructure	Satisfaction with infrastructure was not limited to government owned or funded facilities/services, but also extended to privately owned infrastructure in the Penrith LGA, including: ・ Shopping precincts (with respondents noting they were not crowded) ・ Whitewater & Rowing facilities ・ Indoor skydiving ・ Panthers and the Stadium ・ Growing restaurant and café culture Verbatim comments: ・ "I value that we have access to quality housing and transport. I enjoy Penrith's facilities such as the pool and public play spaces and we have plenty of sports facilities. Council are creating a strong restaurant and entertainment vibe and this is important to the success of the area."
Tourist attractions	Respondents also made reference to local tourism infrastructure, including: ・ Nepean River and Regatta centre ・ Penrith's location at the foot of the blue mountains – which means the local government area benefits from 'pass through' tourism

Liveability (housing, communities, places)

Sub-Theme	Detail
Cultural pride	The sense of community and cultural pride was very apparent in the survey responses. Comments around the sense of community, happiness and pride in the region were the most common in response to this question. Respondents loved the lifestyle, history, natural environment and fellow community members. The Penrith Panthers were highlighted as a great source of community pride for many residents. The collaborative approach to solving issues and improving the City as it grows and changes was also raised.

Sub-Theme	Detail
	Verbatim comments:
	· "Penrith has a wonderful and important historical identity and a proudly growing cultural scene, it's semi-rural surrounds lend a unique beauty to the area, the Nepean river is a major part of Penrith's identity and affords the community several wonderful leisure activities, having so many wonderful aspects definitely makes Penrith an up and coming force to be reckoned with."
	· "Laid back lifestyle"
	· "progressive and consultative" (describing Council's support of the community)
	· "you can say g'day to anyone and they will say g'day back"
	· "Our city doesn't feel too big, people smile and say hello in the street, but we have all the services, shops and amenities we need – it's the best of both worlds!"
Community spaces and resources	Respondents noted that they value a number of local community spaces including:
	· Parks and open spaces
	· Sports facilities
	· Dog parks
Mix between urban and rural	Residents appreciated the preservation of the rural and country-town feel to the community, with large blocks and green space – while still maintaining suitable density for convenience and infrastructure.
	Verbatim comments:
	· "CBD areas maintain a country town feel, while catering to all the community's needs"
	· "A great place to raise kids, with a semi-country lifestyle with city convenience"
Historic elements	Respondents made reference to local heritage including:
	· Aboriginal heritage
	· Historic significance – e.g. Red Cow, Thornton Estate, High Street

Productivity (connectivity, economy)

Sub-Theme	Detail
Employment	It was suggested that the geographic diversity of the area creates a lot of varied work opportunities for people, particularly in the service, hospitality and primary industry sectors. Some residents were supportive of the rapid growth and emerging opportunities for work, especially in the new airport, but also in emerging the restaurant and café culture.
	Verbatim comments:
	· "The uniqueness of our identity is that in covering a range of almost 500 square km we have a mix of both urban and rural landholdings, which in itself lends to a diversity in population, inclusiveness and service based, entertainment and primary production sectors, all of which create employment opportunities for local residents"
	· "I love the growth, and am excited about the new airport"

Sustainability (environment, sustainability, resilience)

Sub-Theme	Detail
Natural Environment	The location of Penrith at the foot of the Blue Mountains and along the river with many natural areas to explore is very valued by most respondents. The Nepean River was highlighted as a valued asset and planning to make river the focus of recreational life was widely endorsed. The rural and agricultural areas are valued by community living in more densely populated areas in the region. Verbatim comments: · "Penrith City has a list of natural sites including the river, lakes, parks, fauna and even farms. It suits all moods, including the need to get away for some peace and quiet or to be more active with exercise!"
Interaction with the environment	Respondents made reference to the sustainable balance in planning between residential and recreational areas. Children's playgrounds, walking and bike tracks that allow residents to immerse themselves in the environment were raised, as well as recreational areas around the river. Verbatim comments: · "I really enjoy the natural scenery and environment. I enjoy going to the Nepean River and Blue Mountains"

What is the greatest need in your local area/Penrith City?

Respondents were asked about what they thought the greatest need in their area is.

Infrastructure and Collaboration (infrastructure, partnerships)

Sub-theme	Detail
Parking	Parking was a key area of interest for respondents, with concerns about availability and cost of parking in the CBD area close to shops and transport connections. Some residents were also concerned with parking and accessibility close to other points of interest in the LGA. Verbatim comments: · "All day parking in or close to CBD" · "Need much more all day free parking in central area!" · "Improvement for parking at station" Residents requested parking restrictions to stop cars from parking on foot paths and forcing pedestrians onto the road. Specific locations mentioned include: · River Road · Factory Road – concern that it has no pedestrian walkways, but is an access point for pedestrians accessing the River Walk
Road infrastructure and traffic management	Many residents thought additional road infrastructure was needed to support future development in Penrith LGA, as well as increased demand on road infrastructure due to the airport and growing commercial demand in the area. Verbatim comments: · "Better roads from one side of Penrith to the other during peak traffic times" · "Infrastructure to deal with the vast influx of people moving into the area due to increased development" · "Roads – widening, adding cycle/footpaths, fixing potholes" A handful of residents highlighted issues about pedestrian priority and traffic management as an important need. Verbatim comments: · "Noise control & speeding motor vehicles" · "Reducing pollution and congestion" · Prioritising pedestrians more around city centres to encourage more active transport
Public transport infrastructure and connections	Respondents highlighted their reliance on personal vehicles as an issue, highlighting the challenge of connecting the city centre with rural outskirts of the LGA. The need for improved and more efficient public transport was raised. Verbatim comments: · "Public transport to connect our various city centres and key activity areas are not very connected. We need to find ways to connect our various community hubs and economic centres so that we are not entirely reliant on personal vehicles as a mode of transport." · "Connecting all areas from CBD to all the rural outskirts with public transport and roads that can deal with the huge volume of trucks and commuters"

Sub-theme	Detail
	· "With the development of Badgery's Creek Airport, the paramount need is that of infrastructure, particularly transport to reduce traffic congestion" · "Bus stop seating & protection from the weather" · "Light rail within the suburbs"
Social infrastructure	Many comments were made that Council should ensure social infrastructure is in place to support future development. Suggestions included schools, childcare, and universities, community centres/libraries, parks, playgrounds, sports facilities and public toilets. Verbatim comments: · "more public schools, especially secondary schools" · "parenting programs/support that include childcare to better support parents from diverse backgrounds and a growing number with disabilities and behavioural challenges" · "public library in Glenmore Park" · "more open spaces, environment for people to enjoy"
Health infrastructure	Many residents requested better access to improved healthcare, citing issues with after-hours hospital access and waiting times at Nepean hospital. Verbatim comments: · "I found our local hospital is also stretched to its limits"
Emergency services and law enforcement	Some respondents raised concerns about emergency services and police. These residents cited concerns about unsatisfactory responses from police regarding anti-social behaviour. It was suggested that the local police not resourced well enough. Slow waiting times for Ambulance services was also raised.

Liveability (housing, communities, places)

Sub-Theme	Detail
Population density and future development	Residents were concerned about the future development of the LGA and the need for changes to planning controls. Many suggestions were not against further development of the area, but requested a median between development and maintaining the semi-rural aspects of Penrith. One suggestion included a reference to long-standing Canberra building height controls. Verbatim comments: · "The need for well thought balance is key, culturally, developmentally and environmentally. We need people who understand the balance of moving forward with development and infrastructure while retaining what makes the area such a unique and desirable place to live and do business" · "Getting the right balance and not over developing"
Housing affordability	Many residents wanted to ensure that housing remained affordable in the area. Concern for homelessness, and better homeless support was a common piece of feedback Verbatim comments: · "affordable houses to rent and purchase for disadvantaged people including the homeless" · "Community welfare and shelter for homeless" · "Aged care for those with low incomes"

Recreation and entertainment	There was some discussion around local recreation and entertainment options.
	Verbatim comments:
	· "More community style entertainment at affordable prices e.g. night movies at the river"
	· "Summer activities to enjoy the water in the sweltering heat… It's such an effort for families to pack up and travel to the beach"
	Dining and night life options were also raised by some respondents, with a focus on safety.
	Verbatim comments:
	· "there is nowhere safe and inviting to go for a drink if you are 40 years or older"
	· "Creation of alternate night life options to cater for different demographics."
	· "The CBD and surrounding streets could do with more lighting and CCTV to make it feel safe when going out for dinner."
	· "It needs a food culture with alleys like in Melbourne full of cafes and restaurants."
	· "I think Penrith needs a larger outdoor dining area with places to sit afterwards like a fountain with chairs and tables surrounding. I love the triangle space in Penrith with live music"
Culture and the arts	There was some interest in the arts and creative expression.
	Verbatim comments:
	· "Better focus on cultural activities, evening activities, worthwhile live music, independent films, library spaces, art making spaces."
Inclusive spaces	Disability access was raised as an area of interest.
	Verbatim comments:
	· "Improve disability access to the wider Penrith community"
Local identity	Improving the perception of Penrith and the wider Western Sydney area was raised by some respondents:
	Verbatim comments:
	· "Transforming the brand of Western Sydney in order to attract more investors, tourists and well-rounded citizens to be part of our local community."
	· "Improve the perception of Penrith (being seen as westies)."

Productivity (connectivity, economy)

Sub-Theme	Detail
Future employment opportunities	Survey respondents felt that future employment opportunities, particularly in higher skilled jobs is a notable area of need for the LGA.
	Verbatim comments:
	· "More big companies and government departments to bring more employment to the area"
	· "Local jobs from corporate businesses to avoid the need to commute to the city"
	· "Jobs especially those at senior levels of industry/business/government."
	· "Appropriate level of employment opportunities. There is a significant deficiency in the provision of appropriately zoned land for these purposes, particularly for large sections of the business community."

Tourism	The need to leverage tourism opportunities was raised by some respondents, highlighting flow-on impacts such as job creation.
	Verbatim comments:
	· "Tourism opportunities which in turn create employment - we need to raise and utilise the profile of Nepean River and our position as the gateway to the Blue Mountains"
	· "Tourism - more focus on Penrith being the gateway to the mountains and as such employment opportunities through accommodation and other facilities."
	· "I believe there needs to be more revitalisation in beautifying places and spaces to achieve maximum potential. Such places like The Nepean river has so much to offer. I also believe there are many areas in Penrith LGA that can be redeveloped to bring out more tourism to the area"

Sustainability (environment, sustainability, resilience)

Sub-Theme	Detail
Biodiversity	Preserving biodiversity was raised as an area of interest.
	· "To balance overdevelopment with maintaining rural landscapes. To end developer speculation and land-banking with definitive mapping of metropolitan rural areas and to ensure that biodiversity corridors are integrated into strategies as the first layer of land-use instead of the last"
Urban cooling	A number of residents recognised the importance of more greenery in urban spaces as a way to manage heat in summer.
	Verbatim comments:
	· "Greening to cool during summer months"
	· "Maintaining Greenspace to help with the increasing heat and less building density"
	· "Greening of the new areas in order to combat radiant heat"

What are the greatest challenges that our community will face over the next 20 years?

Respondents were asked to share their thoughts on the greatest challenges that the Penrith community will face over the next 20 years.

Infrastructure and Collaboration (infrastructure, partnerships)

Sub-theme	Detail
Population growth	Many comments were concerned about the potential for continued population growth to outweigh infrastructure development. Respondents made reference to population growth impacts on road infrastructure (i.e. congestion), parking, health services, schools, parks and crime management. Verbatim comments: · "The greatest challenge over the next 20 years (are)…. to meet ever increasing demands on the council to provide services, while maintain reasonable increase in land rates."
Western Sydney Airport	Many residents are supportive of the airport and its benefits for the employment and the economy in the region, however there is concern about the pressure the airport will put on infrastructure, particularly roads in the area. Air-traffic noise was also raised as a concern of many residents. Verbatim comments: · "I also think that the proposed rail and transport corridors for Baderys Creek will enable St Mary's to boom. The risk then is that the Penrith CBD may suffer if investment is draw to St Marys, which would be fantastic for St Marys itself (and sorely needed) but needs to be encouraged in a way without placing Penrith at risk" · "The greatest challenge will be the impact the new airport will have on our way of living, from changes on our roads with more trucks going to and from the airport, the planning of rural land to be available for new industrial development and the need for more housing to accommodate these changes" · "The coming of the international airport… (which) will bring a wave of change, if Penrith could retain that special entity of standing as a city in our own right it would be wonderful" · "A large influx of people coming to work at the airport"

Liveability (housing, communities, places)

Sub-Theme	Detail
Demographic change and community connectedness	Changes in the demographic profile of the area was raised as a potential challenge. The need to maintain an equitable and connected community was highlighted as a priority for some. Verbatim comments: · "Division between well off and not well off" · "To continue to provide for all people that visit the community in friendship. That no one sector of the community is marginalised" · "Engaging our youth and young adults in being community conscious" · Issues around an increasingly diversified cultural and religious background in the area and maintaining harmony in the community

Sub-Theme	Detail
	· "Keeping connected as the population grows, maintaining the sense of community"
Housing affordability	Housing affordability was raised as a key challenge. The increase in supply of affordable housing managed by community housing providers was also discussed by respondents. Verbatim comments: · "Units/high density development has a place in the community but it needs to be balanced with the population need. Penrith is a family area so an oversupply of 2 bedroom units will prove hard to let and cramped over-crowding accommodation"
Technology	The impacts of technology was briefly touched upon. Verbatim comments: · "Technological advancements and increased leisure time (as a result of technological innovation, reduced hours, job sharing, etc.) will also impact over the next 20 years – this should drive increased requirements for leisure activities.

Productivity (connectivity, economy)

Sub-Theme	Detail
Local identity	Protecting local heritage and defining the identity of Penrith was identified as a potential challenge. Verbatim comments: · "Protecting Penrith's heritage" · "Defining Penrith as a destination, not just west of Sydney populated by 'westies'"
Economy	The local economy was discussed in some responses to this question. Generally, residents were positive about the opportunities for economic growth in the region, including the Western Sydney Airport. There was an appreciation that challenges come with opportunities. Verbatim comments: · "Designing an economic system that doesn't rely solely on population growth" · "The new airport. It will bring massive opportunities that need to be planned for an managed well to maximise the benefits for our city" · "Getting ready for jobs that don't exist yet"
Employment	Employment opportunities were highlighted as a challenge, however some respondents provided solution focused comments. Verbatim comments: · "More jobs in Penrith LGA to reduce long distance commuting" · "Development – Connecting infrastructure to airport and attracting business to Penrith with local hiring and employment opportunities" · With increased population growth in the area "without attracting industry it could possibly lead to an increase in unemployment and socio-economic problems"

Sustainability (environment, sustainability, resilience)

Sub-Theme	Detail
Development pressure on the environment	Many residents valued the environmental diversity of the area and raised concerns around the impact of development on the environment. The natural environment, rural industries and open spaces have significance for the local community. Respondents identified pressure from residential and commercial development, and the new airport as challenges to these environmental assets over the next 20 years. Verbatim comments: · "Development pressures, the desire to retain the environmental aspects of the region, accommodating a sophisticated growing city." · "Loss of green spaces, loss of connectivity to local natural areas, and the heat island effect" · "Maintaining green space" · "Air quality with the new airport" · "Protecting parklands" · "Loss of the peri-urban agricultural landscape and the development of the most fertile soils in Sydney"
Climate change	Climate change and its challenges was raised by multiple respondents. Verbatim comments: · "Reducing Co2 output" · "Responding to climate change" · "More renewable energy installations to achieve 100% renewables"

What do you think Council should prioritise over the next 20 years?

Participants were asked to rank the following priorities from 1-10 (1 – highest priority; 10 – lowest priority). Based on the priorities selected by respondents, a 'mean score' was generated. The closer to 1, the higher the priority.

Rank	Theme	Mean score (1 is highest priority)
1	Infrastructure	3.61
2	Transport/Connectivity	3.89
3	Employment	4.29
4	Housing	4.96
5	Open space and recreation	5.06
6	Social, cultural and community facilities	5.33
7	Environment	5.53
8	Tourism	6.6
9	Agriculture	7.01
10	Other	7.65

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