

# Australian Catholic University **Strathfield Campus Concept Plan** Green Travel Plan

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This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client.

It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

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# ARUP

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# 1 Introduction

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An Environmental Assessment (EA) report for Concept Plan approval for the Australian Catholic University (ACU) Strathfield Campus at 167-169 and 179 Albert Road, Strathfield was lodged with the Department of Planning and Infrastructure (the Department) 22 December 2011 and publicly exhibited 18 January – 14 March 2012.

The Concept Plan seeks approval for a masterplan for the site to accommodate student growth over the next 10 years. In summary, this will involve:

- New buildings
- An increase in on-site parking from the current 346 spaces up to 717 spaces
- New and improved pedestrian and vehicular circulation into and within the site, and
- Improved site landscaping and public domain.

Arup undertook a Transport and Accessibility study in 2011 and Revision B of the report dated 14 December 2011 was exhibited. The report described the existing site access, traffic situation, road network performance and transport facilities in the vicinity of the site. It provided an assessment of the transport requirements for the building occupants including pedestrian, cyclist and public transport facilities and analysed the proposed development's effect on the nearby residential streets and road network. An outline construction traffic management plan was also provided.

Arup then completed a Preferred Project Report (PPR) addressing key issues relevant to traffic, access, parking and sustainable transport. A key determinant of the traffic and transport assessment is the student numbers. A detailed description of the existing student attendance numbers and proposed future attendance numbers was provided in the Preferred Project Report and response to Submissions document.

This addendum has been prepared to respond to specific comments raised by the Department following their review of the PPR.

This Green Travel Plan has been developed for Australian Catholic University (ACU). This plan has been prepared to define the Proponent's commitments to travel demand management for staff and students following the redevelopment of the Barker Road Campus, Strathfield and the ACU Strathfield Campus in general.

## 1.1 Planning Application Comments

Schedule 1 of the Department of Planning's request for additional information regarding the Concept Plan for the Australian Catholic University, Strathfield Campus (MP 10\_0231) states:

*Information is to be provided on how the proposed 2,000 students 'at any one time' will arrive at the University, in particular:*

- *Information is to be provided on mode share targets for the proposal and how the University will achieve and maintain these targets on an on-going basis. Targets should be set for all modes of access to the site (in addition to the shuttle bus and private vehicle use), including references to students that walk, cycle or are passengers within vehicles.*
- *Details are sought that provide certainty that the shuttle bus modal split will be maintained at the level of patronage proposed in the PPR (the private vehicle modal split will not be increased).*

## 1.2 What is a Green Transport Plan?

A Green Transport Plan is a means for a business, government body, resident group or other organisation to demonstrate a commitment and take a pro-active step towards improving the environmental sustainability of its activities.

## 1.3 The aim of the Green Transport Plan

The plan will describe measures to encourage greater use of alternative means of travel which have less environmental impact than the car.

## 1.4 Mode Share Targets

The mode share target for the students arriving at the campus is as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Mode share targets

Mode	Mode Target	Number of students in one hour	Number of students in three hours	Number of students in one day
Public Transport	55%	369	1,100	1,540
Private car driver	30%	200	600	840
Private car passenger / drop-off	8%	54	160	224
Motor bike / scooter	1%	7	20	28
Bicycle	2%	13	40	56
Walk	4%	27	80	112
Total	100%	670	2,000	2,800

This plan outlines the proposed strategies to meet these targets.

## 2 Existing Green Travel Commitments

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ACU is committed to encouraging sustainable transport for its patrons and staff. Since opening, ACU has implemented various sustainable transport measures. These have been mentioned in the Arup Transport and Accessibility Report submitted as part of the project application and includes:

- Pedestrian facilities;
- Bicycle parking facilities with change facilities located with new developments;
- Regular nearby STA bus services on Barker Road;
- Shuttle bus services provided free transport between the Strathfield Campus and Strathfield Railway Station promoting public transport usage for staff and students ; and
- Strathfield Railway Station

This information is shown on the ACU website for staff and students.

The Strathfield Campus Shuttle bus is utilised by staff and students who have the need to utilise both campuses in one day. Therefore green travel to Strathfield Campus would not be affected by public transport travel to North Sydney campus.

### 2.1 Pedestrian facilities

ACU Strathfield Campus is in close proximity to pedestrian routes to Strathfield Station and nearby bus stops.

### 2.2 Cycling facilities

Bicycle parking is provided on campus and increased facilities are proposed in the Concept Plan. Showers and lockers are also provided on the campus.

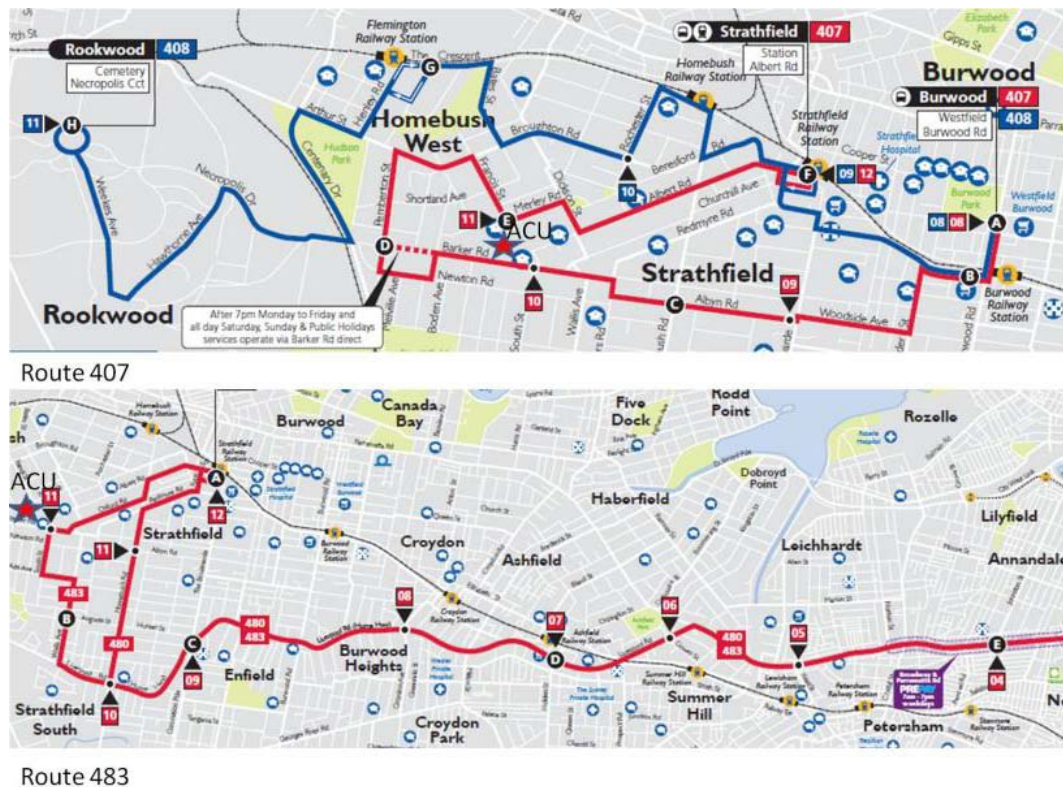
### 2.3 State Transit Buses

Bus route 407 between Burwood and Strathfield stations operates along Barker Road (refer to Figure 1). Service frequency is approximately 20 minutes in both directions in the peak hour.

Route 483 operates between Strathfield Station and the city. This route operates along South Street – a small section of Barker Road – Oxford Street. Service frequency is approximately 20 minutes in the peak period.

A number of bus stops are located near the main campus entrance.

Figure 1: Bus Route along Barker Road



## 2.4 Shuttle bus services

The university has a free shuttle bus operating between the Strathfield campus and Strathfield station (Strathfield Square). This service commenced in 2010, with one bus operating. Approximately 450 students utilised the bus per day. In 2011 services were increased with up to 3 buses running at peak times carrying approximately 1,000 students per day early in the semester when attendance is highest. In 2012 there are now 4 shuttle buses running at peak times. This service is free to both staff and students.

The shuttle bus service is flexible to meet fluctuations in demand. During school holiday and exam periods, for example, services are adjusted to ensure an efficient transport service is provided.

## 2.5 Trains

Strathfield station is located about 2km north-east of the campus which is about a 20 minute walk. As a major transport hub, all trains on the Northern, Inner West, Western and South railway lines and CountryLink services stop at Strathfield resulting in one of the highest frequency station in Sydney. The high frequency trains are connected by bus services in various directions including the two routes mentioned above. There is a large interchange at the station which services route buses, shuttle and community buses, taxis and private vehicle drop-off and pick up activity.

## 2.6 ACU Open Day Application

For the recent campus open day, ACU created a smartphone application for use by prospective students to navigate around the campuses. This included public transport information and encouraged users to utilise these services. This application was part of a trial and will be utilised during the next orientation week for new students and staff members.

## 3 Improvements and Incentives

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The following improvements are currently being investigated with the aim of improving sustainable transport options for travel to ACU Strathfield Campus. These improvements would complement the existing green travel measures currently implemented.

### 3.1 Pedestrian Facilities

- Students living within 2km of the campus will be targeted to walk to the campus;
- A working partnership will be established with Strathfield Council to provide a direct, comfortable and safe pedestrian access between the campus and Strathfield station as per DDA requirements. Initiatives such as the “10,000 steps a day to improve health initiative” will be considered for students and staff of the university; and
- On campus speed limit will be a maximum of 10 km/h which will provide pedestrians with the right of way.

### 3.2 Bicycle Facilities

- Bike parking spaces will be visible and properly signposted. Bicycle lockers and separate male and female shower facilities will be considered.
- A working partnership will be established with Strathfield Council and the RMS to build the cycling infrastructure after a bicycle network study in the locality. This will include a bike route between the campus and Strathfield railway station;
- A fully featured Cycling Map will be published for the university;
- A bicycle buddy scheme will be considered to assist new cyclists taking up cycling to and from the university; and
- A connected bicycle link will be considered between the campus and Bay – to Bay route (west along Barker Road). Bicycle symbols could be inserted in the pavement with some associated signage.

### 3.3 Car parking

There are a number of strategies that can be considered to reduce the parking dependence of the university by staff and students.

- Car-pooling strategies to encourage students and staff who drive to combine trips with a forum on the ACU website



- Staff inductions to include recommendation to take public transport
- Students will be presented with the Green Travel Plan on Open Day and Orientation week.

### 3.4 Small Car and Hybrid/Electric Car Parking

Some parking spaces will be allocated for small and hybrid cars to encourage low carbon emission vehicles into the campus. This could be extended to electric car charging points as demand increases.

### 3.5 ACU Website

It is proposed to update the ACU website for both staff and students to show more information on travel to the Strathfield Campus. These updates would consist of the following:

- Map of public transport hubs with appropriate pedestrian routes
- Map of bus stops
- Map of nearby bicycle routes and bicycle facilities
- Parking Strategy

An outline of these measures is described below.

#### 3.5.1 Public Transport

An interactive map will be provided with nearby bus stops and railway stations, with appropriate walking routes, in the fashion of Figure 2 and Figure 3.

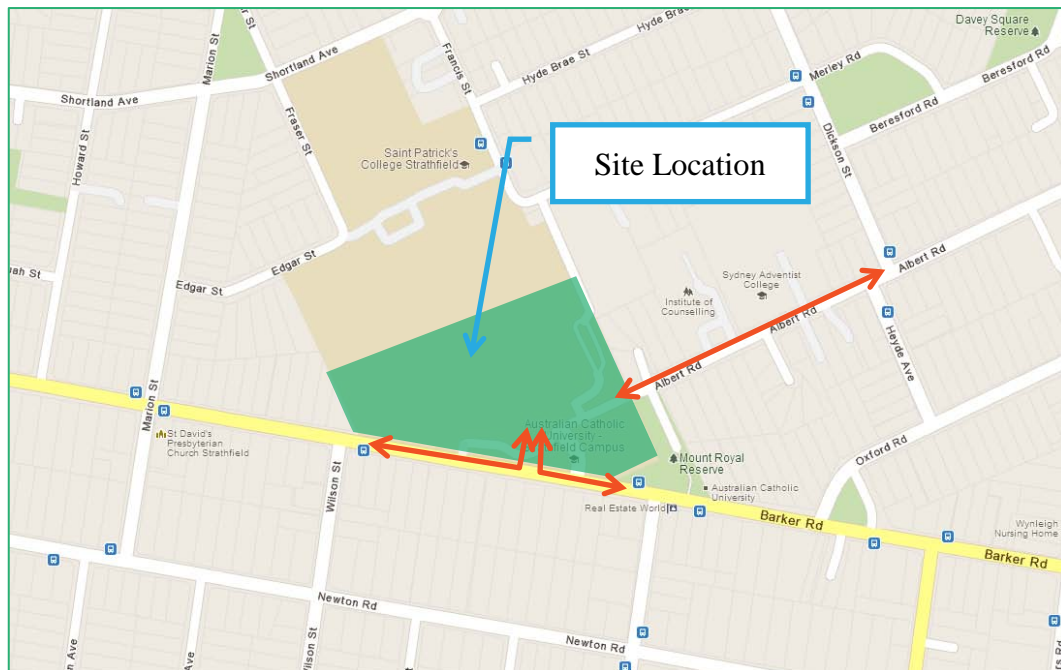


Figure 2: Nearby Bus Stops and pedestrian routes



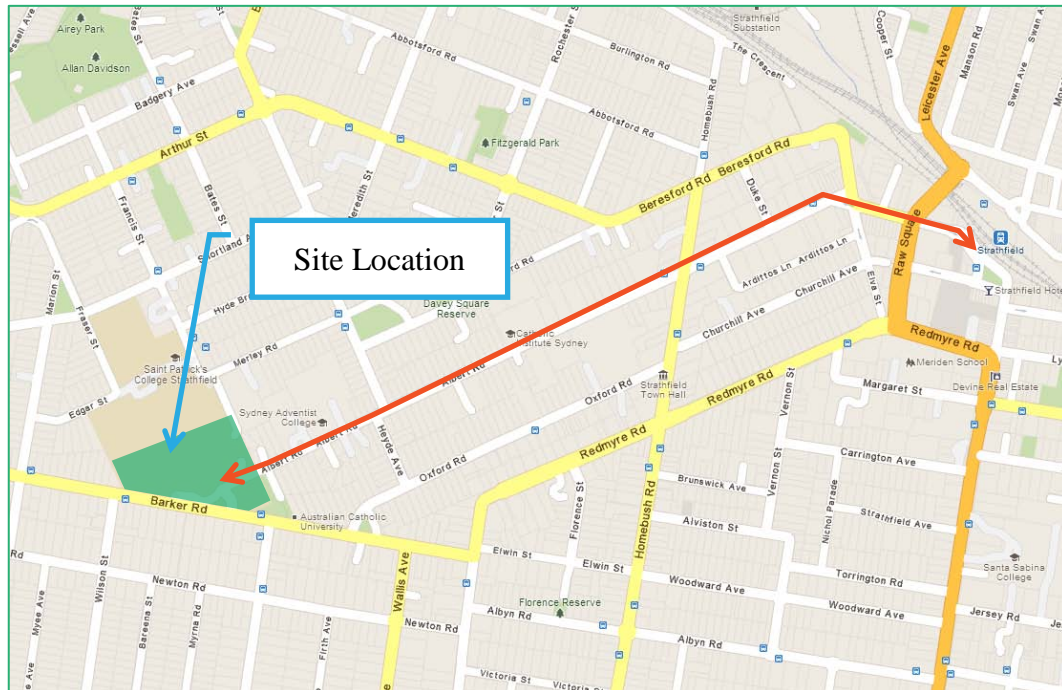


Figure 3: Nearby Railway Station and nominated walking route

### 3.5.2 Cycling Map

Information regarding appropriate cycling routes to the ACU campus will be provided on the website to better inform students and staff about the many dedicated cycling facilities in the precinct.

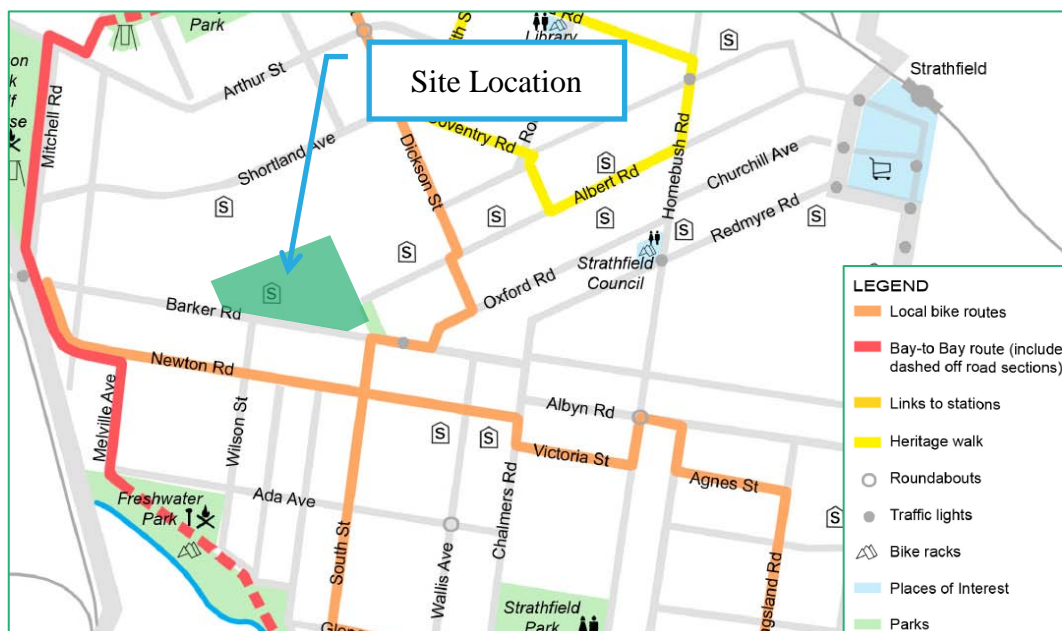


Figure 4: Strathfield Bicycle Network

### 3.6 Green Travel Incentives

Green travel incentives include the implementation of the following:

- Introduction of a Green Transport Committee (reporting to the Sydney Campuses Coordination Committee)
- Consultation with the Students Association
- Investigation of the expectations of green travel through a staff survey
- Dissemination of green travel information in the Newsletter “Sydney Matters”, the staff newsletter
- Travel blending, where several tasks are combined to result in fewer trips.

### 3.7 Travel Blending

Students on site at any one time is proposed at a maximum of 2,000 based on two teaching sessions per day (8.00 am – 2.00 pm and 2.00 pm – 8.00 pm). This clustering of the timetabling of classes for student cohorts is aimed at reducing the number of times they need to come to campus.

Twelve groups of up to 400 students (A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, B3, C1, C2, C3 and D1, D2, D3) would be on campus per session. Each group would have up to 1 full day and 2 half days, so per session there would be up to 2,000 students on site at any one time with a maximum of 2,800 students per day. For example, Group A1 are on site all day Monday and half of Wednesday and Friday.

### 3.8 Travel Demand Management

As groups are on site for whole or half days at a time, the majority of students will only come and go from the site up to three days per week. With the attendance of students occurring in continuous sessions, there will be less movement on and off the campus by students between classes.

The two periods 8am-2pm and 2pm-8pm will reduce the arrival and departure to/from the campus in peak times for school pick-ups and drop-offs in the vicinity of the site.

#### 3.8.1 Healthy lifestyle programs

ACU could implement student and staff encouragement programs for “healthy lifestyle” programs such as Walk to Work day, Cycle to Work day, Walking Buses, etc.

## 4 Administration of the plan

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An essential part of an effective Green Transport Plan is to nominate a co-ordinator of Green Transport Plan activities. The role should be undertaken by an enthusiastic and high quality communicator in order to promote measures that will encourage employees to think about travel other than as a single occupancy car user.

Senior management support is critical to ensuring the success of any travel plan for a number of reasons such as to;

- Lead by example;
- Allow budget allocations for the implementation of measures; and
- Give support to changes or development of policy documentation.

Administration of the Green Transport Plan involves the maintenance of necessary systems, data and paperwork, consultation and promotion.

As part of the administration of the plan, surveys that are currently undertaken every two years on improvements to the campus will include questions on green travel to monitor the effectiveness of the green travel measures.

## 4.1 Consultation

The success of the plan will rely on the support of employees which would be overseen by a Green Travel Plan committee which would be responsible for all liaisons with outside bodies, including local transport operators, planning and council authorities.

A representative of the committee will also seek to join and attend meetings with any local travel forums as appropriate in order to exchange ideas with other like-minded organisations.

## 4.2 Promotion

All staff and students will be made aware of the details of the Green Travel Plan, its objectives in enhancing the environment and the role of individuals in achieving its objectives at its launch. Job applicants will be made aware of the Green Travel Plan at the interview stage. If successful, each new employee will be provided with Green Travel Plan information upon commencement of employment. Students will be presented with the Green Travel Plan on Open Day and Orientation week through marketing material including the ACU mobile application.

Other promotional material will take a variety of forms and will be issued either to individual employees, displayed in a prominent location, staff newsletters and student news or provided in the form of 'one off' marketing initiatives.

The promotional material will advise staff and students wishing to raise specific transport-related matters to discuss them with the appropriate nominated Green Travel Plan co-ordinator who in turn would liaise with the central management team, transport operators and the local authority as required.

## 5 Summary

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ACU has been operating since opening with a wide range of accessible transport choices. ACU is committed to maintaining their current green travel measures. The improvements suggested in this plan encourage continued promotion of non-car mode of travel for access by staff and students of the ACU Strathfield Campus.